

Opinan (Gairloch)



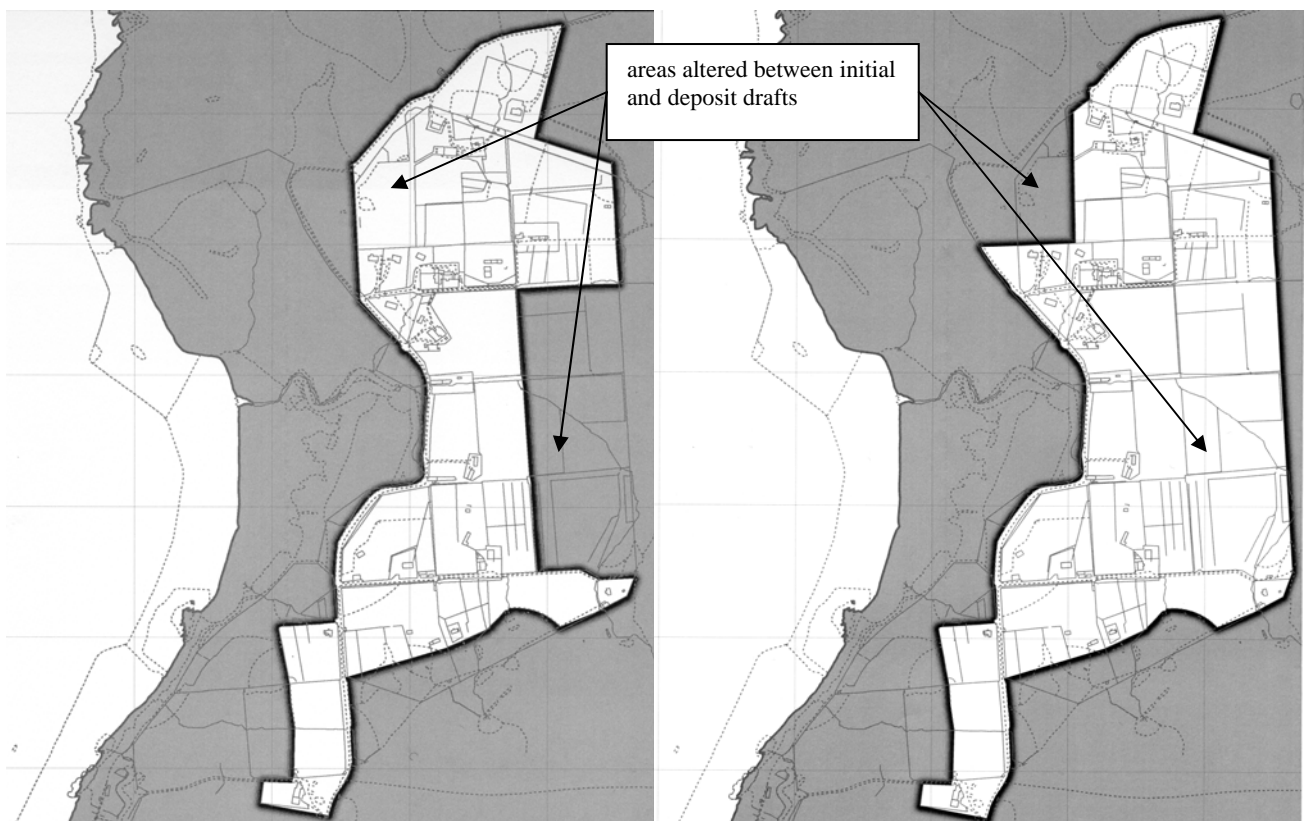
Chapter No:

39

65 - Scottish Natural Heritage [Written Submissions]

BACKGROUND

1. As in the previous chapter (Chapter 38: North Erradale), the boundary of the Settlement Development Area was altered between the initial draft of the plan and the deposit draft. In this case, an area at the north end was excluded following observations by the objector on the maintenance of views over the settlement. It was further altered to include additional land on the east side of the settlement.



Extract from the initial draft local plan
Proposals Map Opinan Inset

Extract from deposit draft local plan
Proposals Map Opinan Inset

2. The **objector** considered these adjustments to be satisfactory in landscape terms, provided that development at the north end did not affect views over the settlement. The objector requested that a note be included on the inset map to this effect.

3. The **council** confirmed that the Settlement Development Area boundary had been drawn to reflect the principal seaward views gained from the road as it descended to the settlement and turned south. To allow for this however, the council agreed that an additional development factor should be added to the existing list on the inset map as follows (additional text shown underlined):

“• Any development at the north end should allow for views over the settlement from the road.”

4. On this basis, the objector withdrew, not wishing to take the objection any further.

CONCLUSIONS

5. The objector has asked for certain protective measures to be taken, and the council has agreed, suggesting the addition of the development factor set out in paragraph 3 above. On the face of it therefore, the situation might appear to have been resolved.

6. However, I find the council’s form of words to be an inadequate response to the concerns of the objector. On the one hand, the objector wished to ensure that development at the north end did not affect views over the settlement; while on the other, it is proposed that the plan should state that development should “allow for” such views. I consider that either this development factor would give insufficient warning of the constraint to be applied by the council; or the council is simply intent on allowing development, provided the views to the south are at least (partially) retained. In my opinion, the objector is correct to be concerned about the standard of the views obtained at this point. Accordingly first, the development factor to be added to this inset map should be re-worded to achieve the level of preservation sought; and second, the area in question at the north end of the settlement should be identified as an Area of Avoidance in terms of Policy 1D, as set out in Chapter 21 of this report.

RECOMMENDATION

7. I therefore recommend that

- (i) the following development factor be added to the Proposals Map Opinan (Gairloch) Inset in place of that shown in paragraph 3 above (my further re-wording shown double underlined):

“• Development at the north end of the settlement should be avoided where it would affect views over the settlement from the road.”; and

- (ii) the area at the north end of the settlement which has been removed from the Settlement Development Area be identified on the inset map as an Area of Avoidance in terms of Policy 1D, as set out in Chapter 21 of this report.