

Port Henderson



Chapter No:

43

50 - Ms Elizabeth A Taylor [Written Submissions]

BACKGROUND

1. Port Henderson, as identified on the deposit draft Wester Ross Local Plan Proposals Map Inset, consists of three Settlement Development Areas set within an area of low sensitivity. This reflects the scattered nature of the settlement on the ground. It lies on the seaward side of an unclassified road to the south west of Gairloch, at the outer end of, and overlooking Loch Gairloch.

2. The inset map appears in the plan as follows:



Extract from deposit draft local plan Proposals Map Port Henderson Inset, showing the location of the objection site.

3. The **objector** owned croft land in the area indicated (left) which had been omitted from the Settlement Development Area and, in her opinion, should have been included.

4. The **council** accepted that this land could have been included within the Settlement Development Area boundary without affecting the landscape adversely, as it had not been identified in the Landscape Capacity Study as an area which would be inappropriate for development. However, an additional development

factor would require to be added by modification to the plan to state that (additional text shown underlined),

“Any development at the eastern end of the southern part of the village should be set down the slope to protect views from the road out to sea.”,

and the inset map should be altered to include the objection site, so that it would appear as shown (below):



Copy of revised Inset Map, showing council's proposed modification

CONCLUSIONS

5. It appears to me that, had there been a need for the identification of additional housing land in this settlement, and that this particular area was suitable in landscape terms, then it would have been identified in the first place. In addition, if it requires the proviso that development should be set down the slope, then that part of the land which is further up the slope should be omitted from the boundary of the Settlement Development Area. No reason has been

produced by the objector of any identifiable need for development land, no reason given as to why she considers the land to be suitable, and no indication as to what she wishes to develop.

6. I find this to be a good example of the council's readiness – and in some cases it amounts to over-readiness in my opinion – to accede to any objector's request for development land, however loosely or ill-supported such a request may be. In such circumstances, I can only conclude that there is no need to allocate further land in this settlement; that the Settlement Development Area boundary already allows for more than adequate development land; that there appears to be no justification for extending the boundary to include the objection site; and that it should not therefore be altered from its present alignment.

7. Perhaps it should be added in this case that if the council does not wish to follow my recommendation, for whatever reason, as the development of a single house would not conflict with the existing scattered pattern of the settlement, nor with the terms of the Landscape Capacity Study, and if retained on the lower ground away from the public road, its impact on the surrounding area, on possible precedent and on policy is likely to be less than most of the other proposed relaxations advocated by the council in its submissions.

RECOMMENDATION

8. I therefore recommend that the areas further up the slope, between the Settlement Development Area boundaries where the Landscape Capacity Study recommends that housing should be avoided, be identified as such in terms of Policy 1D, as set out in Chapter 21 of this report; but that no other change be made to the plan in order to accommodate this objection.