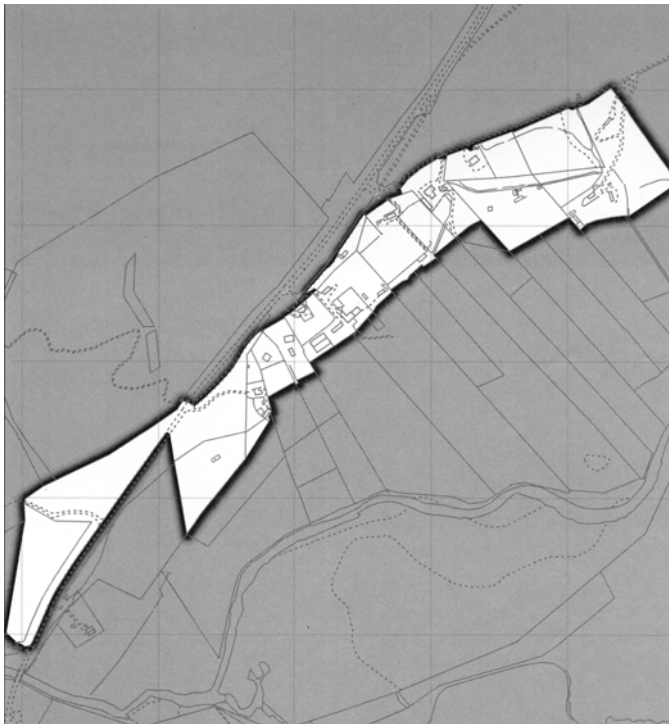




Strathkanaird



Extract from Proposals Map Strathkanaird Inset

BACKGROUND

1. Strathkanaird is a small settlement spread along the south-east side of the A835 Ullapool to Ledmore road. On the opposite, or north-west side of the road is a level area of low-lying agricultural land. The settlement lies in a valley surrounded by hills.

2. In the deposit draft Wester Ross Local Plan, the Proposals Map Strathkanaird Inset (left) shows the settlement to lie within an area of low sensitivity.

3. The **objector** referred to the extant adopted Lochbroom Local Plan Alteration No 2: Landward, which showed a reduced settlement boundary compared with that now proposed in the deposit draft local plan (see extract from extant Lochbroom local plan - below), so that an area to the north-west

of the road had been included. It was considered that development in this location had the potential to have significant adverse landscape and visual impact. This area was therefore the subject

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Extract from extant → Lochbroom Local Plan
Alteration No 2:
Strathkanaird Inset Map

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of the objection.



Council's modified version of the deposit draft
Strathkanaird Inset Map

4. The **council** accepted that the area to the south of the access road leading in to the objection site comprised elevated land where any development could be prominent. The council therefore proposed that this area be excluded from the Settlement Development Area. On the other hand, it considered that the area to the north of the access could accommodate limited development in landscape terms if set back, away from the road, and against the break in the slope beyond. Consideration of any development proposals in this area would require to take account of the proximity to a previously worked quarry (now dormant), and a development factor would be added to this effect.

5. The council therefore proposed that the plan be modified to amend the Strathkanaird Settlement Development Area to exclude the land to the south of the access, as shown in the modified Inset Map (above); and that a development factor be added to the Strathkanaird Inset Map to state the following (additional text shown underlined):

“• Development west of the A835 should be by means of shared access and should be located against the break in the slope to reflect the land form. Any development in the area would require to take account of the proximity to the presently dormant quarry.”

6. Although the objection had not been sustained as sought, the objector nevertheless withdrew the objection on the basis of the above modification.

CONCLUSIONS

7. The A835 is the main road in this area and carries all through traffic. I consider it to be the ideal boundary for the Settlement Development Area at Strathkanaird, so that any necessary extension to the village ought to be found on the south-east side of this road. However, it seems to me that there is adequate land already identified within the boundary on this side of the road. There is open level land at the south end; and there is further land at the start of the slope at the north end; there are potential infill sites between. I consider this to be more than sufficient for the development of this settlement over the plan period.

8. There therefore appears to be no justification to seek yet more development land, or therefore to extend the settlement boundary, as has been done. Even less in my opinion is there any justification for extending the settlement across the road, which is so evidently the natural boundary for the settlement. The council appears to consider that by reducing the size of such an extension, it would reduce its impact, but I find that even this is unlikely. The approach to the settlement from the north is down a steep slope, and wherever development were to be sited at this end of the village, if it

were to be on the north-west side of the road, it would appear prominent from this approach. Accordingly, I agree with the objector that development has the potential to have a significant adverse landscape and visual impact.

9. The north-west side of the road remains almost completely undeveloped. Over a large area there is only the former quarry and an occasional croft. To invade this attractive countryside with new development as proposed in the deposit draft of the plan would be totally contrary to the tenets of good planning in my opinion, and I find it at the least surprising that the objector withdrew on such a basis. For all these reasons I am in no doubt that the Settlement Development Area boundary should be amended, and amended to confine it to the south-east side of the A835.

RECOMMENDATIONS

10. I therefore recommend that
- (i) the Settlement Development Area boundary be amended to eliminate any land on the north-west side of the A835; and
 - (ii) the additional Development Factor proposed by the council and set out in paragraph 5 above be deleted.