

Torridon



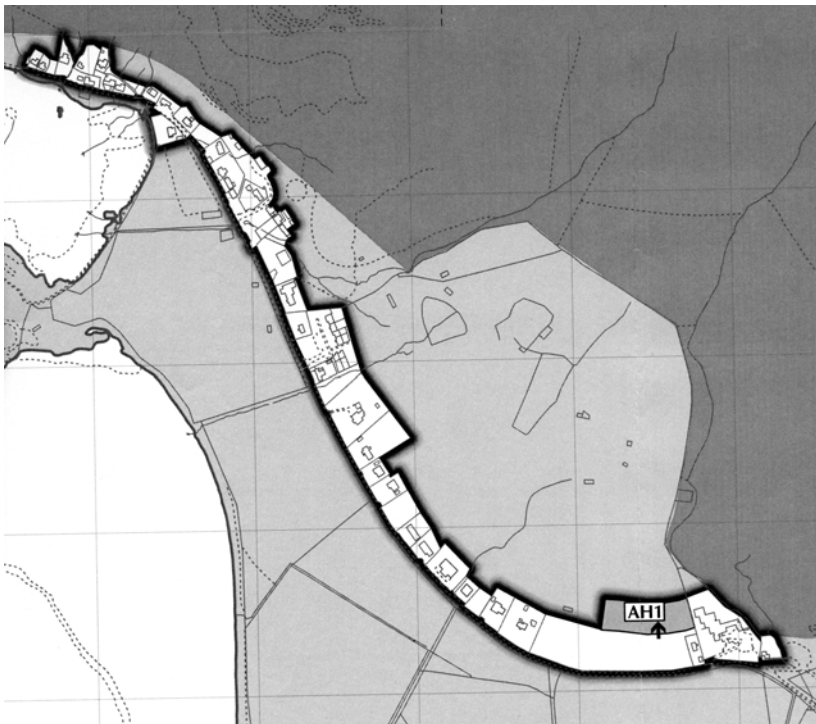
Chapter No:

47

10 - Ms M and K Cooper [Written Submissions]

BACKGROUND

1. Torridon is a linear settlement spread along the side of an unclassified road close to the A896 Annat to Kinlochewe road. It lies within a National Scenic Area and a Site of Special Scientific Interest, identified as an area of medium sensitivity and close to an Area of Special Conservation, identified in the plan as an area of high sensitivity. An allocation (AH1) for five affordable houses is made on the Proposals Map Torridon Inset. These would be built immediately behind an existing scheme of recently developed affordable houses (see Inset Map – left).



Proposals Map Torridon Inset, showing AH1 allocation (lower right)

These would be built immediately behind an existing scheme of recently developed affordable houses (see Inset Map – left).

2. The **objectors** were concerned about a number of detailed matters relating to the proposed extension to the settlement. First, in order to minimise the visual effect on the area, the AH1 development should include the planting of trees and shrubs to the rear and side of the development. Second, they wished to see the new phase of development aligned with the

existing first phase. Finally, they sought confirmation that a pumped sewage system would be adequate for the additional houses and would have the capacity to operate safely in the event of a pump or supply failure; and that sewage effluent would not have a detrimental effect on the coastal environment.

3. First, the **council** opposed the planting of trees and shrubs to the rear and side of the proposed development, on the grounds that it would be inconsistent with the rest of the settlement where the landscape is large, open and rugged. In such a context, a small belt of trees would not be in character with the landscape. Scottish Natural Heritage had supported the identification of the development site in the plan, but had not requested any landscaping.

4. Second, the council confirmed that the allocation shown in the deposit draft version of the plan would be aligned with the existing recently constructed housing.

5. Finally, the council also confirmed that the existing pumping main was adequate for an additional five houses and had the capacity to operate safely in the event of a pump or supply failure, although the capacity of the treatment plant would require to be assessed in more detail at the time of any application. Planning permission would only be granted for development if the drainage system worked. The presence of the European Union Shellfish Water area in Loch Torridon would ensure the highest standards of drainage would be required. The council therefore gave an assurance that sewage effluent would not have any detrimental effect on the coastal environment.

CONCLUSIONS

6. These are not objections to the local plan but matters of detail which would normally be subject to determination at the time of any planning application. Accordingly, although I have added my observations to the responses given by the council, the plan should remain unaffected by these objections.

7. First, I cannot agree with the council's response to the objectors' wish to see trees and shrubs to the rear and side of any future development and it is simply incorrect to allege inconsistency with the remainder of the settlement. There are thick belts of trees immediately to the south-east of the settlement and, while the overall landscape may be large and rugged, it cannot be said either that a stand of Scots Pines would be out of character, nor that the existing development would be less attractive with such an addition. Be that as it may, a condition of any planning application that follows can determine this matter – and can be the subject of these objectors' scrutiny.

8. The council has confirmed the question of alignment, and must therefore have the advantage of a preliminary layout of the houses proposed. At this stage, the question before me is merely whether this area is suitable for its intended use, and I am satisfied of that. Provided drainage of additional houses is possible, and the council confirms as much, matters of drainage will also fall to be determined as part of any planning application.

RECOMMENDATION

9. Accordingly, I recommend that no alteration be effected to the plan in response to these objections.