

Ullapool: Royal Park



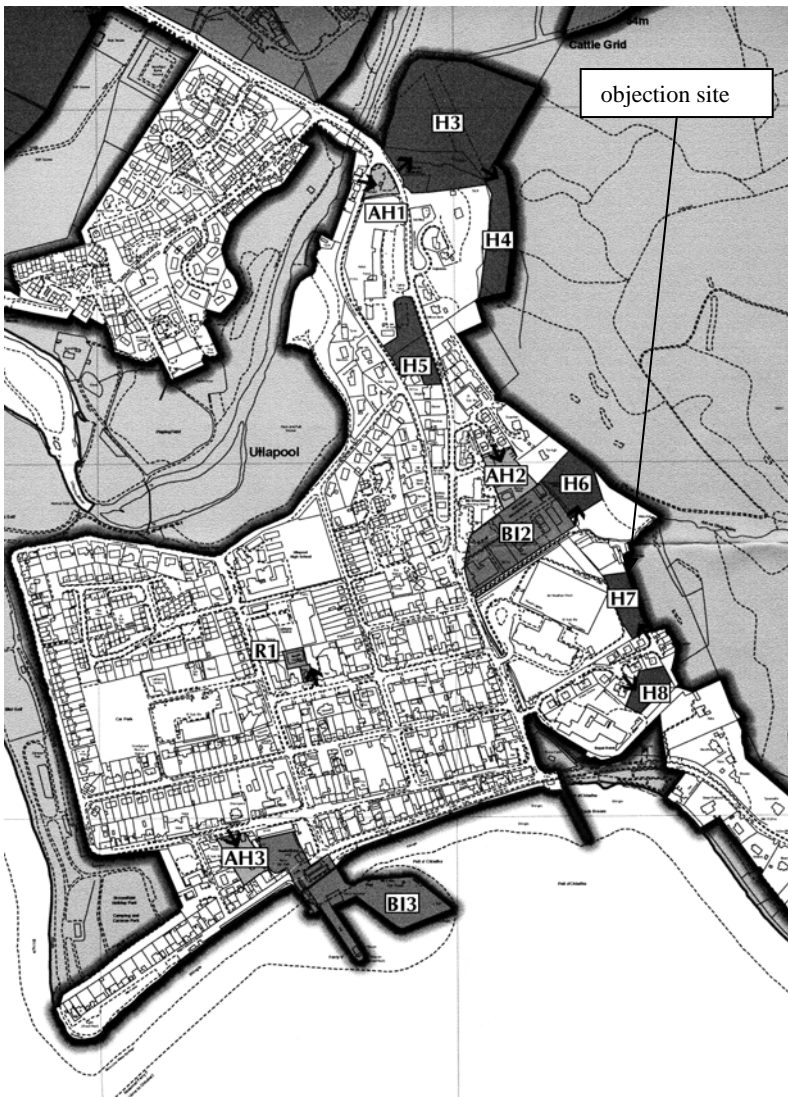
Chapter No:

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1 - Mrs Alison Anderson [Written Submissions]

BACKGROUND

1. The site which is the subject of this objection lies at the foot of the retaining hills on the east side of Ullapool. Designated as housing allocation H7, the site is located to the rear of the line of existing houses on Royal Park, and adjacent to the local school's all-weather floodlit football ground. In the land allocations box on the Ullapool Inset of the deposit draft local plan Proposals Map, it is identified in the following terms:



Extract from the Proposals Map Ullapool Inset showing the location of the objection site

“Reference: H7
Location: Far end of Royal Park
Indicative
Capacity: 6
Requirements: Potential for shared ownership housing.”

2. The **objection** was based on the grounds that development of the objection site would involve a loss of trees and a loss of wildlife habitat. Six houses would be too many for the site, and its development would involve a loss of privacy to the adjacent dwelling house. A maximum height should be required of a single storey only. The floodlights of the games field would affect the amenity of any proposed houses, and there was additional concern over the increase in traffic and road safety.

3. The **council** responded to all these matters. It accepted that development of the site would involve the removal of some mature trees. However, the trees were in poor condition and had

a limited life expectancy. Scottish Natural Heritage had not objected to the site, which would still be bounded to the north by woodland and this would provide a continuing wildlife habitat.

4. The council also recognised that new housing on the objection site would have some impact on the residential amenity of the existing properties. For this reason, a modification was proposed adding a new requirement to the allocations table to ensure (a) replacement tree planting along the northern boundary, and (b) landscaping to assist in absorbing the new development. Accordingly, the relevant section of the allocations table would be amended to read as follows (additional text shown underlined):

“Reference:	H7
Location:	Far end of Royal Park
Indicative Capacity:	6
Requirements:	Potential for shared ownership housing. <u>Replacement tree planting along the eastern boundary and landscaping at the entrance to the site.”</u>

5. The indicative capacity of the site, at six houses, was a scale of development which could be accommodated, particularly if some of the houses were semi-detached. Such a density would be consistent with other established housing areas in Ullapool. As development would have little impact on the landscape or on views, it was not considered necessary to limit the height of any development on the site to a single storey.

6. The council did not consider the impact of the floodlights on the houses would be significantly greater than for the existing houses on Royal Park. They were currently used only on a limited number of occasions in the week and were never used later than 10.00pm. In addition, the council’s Roads Department had advised that there would be no problem in terms of road safety with an additional six houses which would take access from the existing hammer-head turning area at the end of Royal Park.

CONCLUSIONS

7. This objection site seems to me to be a logical infill between the developed area of the town and the hills behind. However, it is always disappointing when a line of mature trees needs to be removed to make way for development and I agree with the objector that the inevitable loss of this line of trees along the east boundary of the site will have a visual impact on the area. Nevertheless, there are mature trees and uncultivated ground beyond them which are outwith the objection site, and it seems to me that any wildlife will retreat only as far as there. In any case, the council has proposed a modification to replace the trees, and at the least this should assist in softening the visual appearance of the development. I therefore support the modification.

8. Of the other matters raised, I accept the advice of the Roads department in relation to traffic levels and road safety. However, I consider that perhaps the council has over-easily dismissed the impact of the floodlighting on the amenity of any development of the objection site. Houses on this site would abut the line of lighting poles and there will inevitably be an intrusive impact on their amenity. The council asserts that the lights are not used frequently and never beyond 10.00pm at night. Unless there is a planning condition to this effect, there would be little that could be done if this pattern of use were to be exceeded, with deleterious effect upon the adjacent houses.

9. As to the height of development on this site, I agree with the objector that houses of several storeys would affect the scale and privacy of the adjacent development. However, as it

comprises buildings of one-and-a-half storey, it seems to me that, provided the new housing was of the same scale, it would not be out of keeping with the existing development; also, with the site lying at right angles, privacy issues would be limited and can be safeguarded at planning application stage.

RECOMMENDATION

10. I therefore recommend that
- (i) the proposed modification to the allocations table on the Proposals Map Ullapool Inset be amended as set out in paragraph 4 above;
 - (ii) a further requirement be added to the inset map to state (additional text shown underlined):

“development on the site should not exceed one-and-a-half storeys in height.”; but that
 - (iii) no other change be made to the plan in relation to this objection.