

Ullapool: South of Braes



Chapter No:

50

65 - Scottish Natural Heritage [Written Submissions]

BACKGROUND

1. The objection site is the housing allocation H9 on the Proposals Map Ullapool Inset.



Extract from Proposals Map Ullapool Inset, showing location of the H9 objection site.

It is located at the south-east end of the town, close to the A835 Ullapool to Dingwall road. It comprises a wooded hillside at the south end of a lay-by formed by a realignment of the main road. Between the trees and the road is an area of rough ground. Further self-seeded birch trees form a barrier between the main road and the objection site.

2. In the land allocations box on the Ullapool Inset of the deposit draft local plan Proposals Map, it is identified in the following terms:

“Reference: H9
Location: South of Braes
Indicative
Capacity: 10
Requirements: Subject to suitable access approved by trunk roads authority and retaining access to potential future development to the south-east.
Protection of trees between the site and the road to act as a visual screen.
Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland must be preserved.
Re-alignment of existing 33kv overhead power line.”

3. The **objector** sought additional appropriate screen planting at this location, together with a note on the inset map to this effect.

4. However, the **council** disagreed. It considered that there was adequate screen planting at the road edge of the site, but accepted that additional planting along the top end would provide visual containment to any development when viewed from the Braes and from across the

other side of Loch Broom. It was proposed therefore to add an additional requirement to the Allocations Table to state the following (additional text shown underlined):

“Additional tree planting along the top end of the site.”

CONCLUSIONS

5. It is not clear which “top end” of the site it is to which the council is referring. I agree that the self-seeded trees which have grown up at the roadside will provide a natural appearance to any development, but doubt if they have sufficient depth to provide a screen to the development. It seems however that it is not this roadside screening to which the council is referring. I suspect that, with references to ‘views from Loch Broom’ it may be the “top end” (ie furthest up the slope away from the road), or it may be the “top end” as shown on the inset map (ie the north end of the site). Whatever the intention, I can see real benefit to the local environment in supplementing the existing line of trees at the roadside in order to create improved screening from this tourist route, but in my opinion, in order to achieve this, the additional requirement suggested by the council should be amended as follows (my amendments shown double underlined):

“Additional tree planting along the roadside.”

First, I consider this to be a necessary addition; and second, it would appear to satisfy the objection in this case.

6. If the council was intending additional planting elsewhere on the site, I can see no objection to it also being added at this stage, although it will require to be described more accurately (ie ‘along the north-east boundary’; or ‘around the north-western end’, etc).

7. Although not the issue raised in connection with this objection, reference in the “Requirements” section of the inset map to yet more “future development to the south-east” makes me concerned that this part of the town is spreading so far away from the centre, or core of the town that residents of this area will be disadvantaged, and I consider that it is an issue that should be considered by the council at the least before further allocations are made in this area.

RECOMMENDATION

8. I therefore recommend that the allocations table in the Ullapool Inset Map be amended as shown in paragraph 5 above.