

Appendix 2: Working with other strategies

Local Housing Strategy (approved by Communities Scotland, 2003) – The Local Housing Strategy sets out how we and our partners aim to meet housing needs and tackle housing issues across all types of tenancies throughout Highland. An important part of the strategy is the assessment of housing need. Evidence of a shortage of affordable housing from this assessment is essential in justifying and supporting affordable housing policies in the local plan and when deciding on the level of need in individual settlements. The assessment (which includes the Highland Housing Needs Assessment, the Highland Rural Partnership for Change exercise and detailed analysis of community needs) identified a current need for over 150 new affordable houses in Wester Ross. Particular priority communities that need affordable housing investment are Ullapool, Applecross, Gairloch, Kinlochewe, Kishorn, Lochcarron, Poolewe, Shieldaig and Torridon.

Highland Area Waste Plan (approved by the Scottish Executive, 2003) – The Highland Area Waste Plan sets out the strategy for improving on current waste-management practices across our area. This will involve reducing the amount of waste produced in the first place, as well as increasing the rates of recycling and composting. We will need a number of new facilities to deliver this, so we are looking for the necessary funding to put in place a comprehensive network. In Wester Ross this will mean both upgrading existing, and possibly providing new, transfer stations in Ullapool and Gairloch, and providing recycling centres and recycling points in Ullapool, Gairloch, Lochcarron, Kinlochewe, Torridon and Poolewe.

Highland Access Strategy (adopted by us, 2000) – The main aim of the strategy is to identify future requirements for access which:

- meet the needs of the community and land managers;
- include the requirements of the new access legislation and Scottish Outdoor Access Code; and
- make sure that the landscape of the National Scenic Areas are protected over the long term.

The strategy has identified a number of priority routes through public consultation, and the purpose of the strategy now is to co-ordinate the activities of public agencies in delivering these routes to provide high-quality access to the countryside for everyone. The opportunities and priorities identified may influence the location of proposed new development.

Loch Ewe & Loch Torridon Aquaculture Framework Plans (both adopted by us, 1988) **and Integrated Coastal Zone Management Project** – Aquaculture Framework Plans deal with the possible conflicts between fish-farm development and the environment. They show preferred areas for fish farms and areas which are sensitive. They may affect onshore facilities and the need for onshore development to meet regulations on water quality. They also take account of views to fish farms from onshore. As this could create jobs, we may also need to take account of associated housing needs. We are also currently taking part in a demonstration project on designing and putting into practice an integrated coastal zone plan for the 'Two Brooms' area to guide future development and use.

Wester Ross Local Biodiversity Action Plan (launched 2004) – We have a duty under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 to help to conserve biodiversity (the range of plant and animal life). The Local Biodiversity Action Plan is one way in which we will meet this duty. The Local Biodiversity Action Plan sets out what is important and valued about the natural heritage (in terms of broad habitats and species) and identifies a number of actions and projects that could be carried out to help protect it or improve it. These may have an influence on the location of future development. The Scottish Biodiversity Strategy outlines other relevant duties in respect of biodiversity.

Ross and Cromarty Landscape Character Assessment (1998), **Historic Land Use Assessment** (2003) and **Wester Ross Settlement Landscape Capacity Study** (2002) – The Landscape Character Assessment describes the landscape character of Wester Ross by defining various types. It also assesses the forces for change, with suggestions on how these can best be accommodated within the current landscape character. The Historic Land Use Assessment describes the evidence of past landscapes, from prehistoric times to now, and allows those that are rare or particularly characteristic of Wester Ross to be identified. Both can affect siting and design, and offer guidance to protect the natural and historic landscape character. The Wester Ross Settlement Landscape Character Assessment provides an appraisal of opportunities and constraints for housing for most settlements in Wester Ross in landscape terms.

Highland Gypsy and Traveller Action Plan (2005) – Under the Race Relations Amendment Act, we must meet the needs of Gypsies and travellers. We have drawn up a corporate action plan to set out our aims and proposed actions. In terms of the local plan, this means recognising that housing sites may be appropriate for permanent accommodation for Gypsies and travellers where a need can be shown (we will use the same conditions as for any other housing application).

The following strategy is currently in revised draft form. We did not adopt it in April 2003, so that we could consider this local plan.

Wester Ross National Scenic Area (NSA) Revised Draft Management Strategy (2002) – The Draft NSA strategy sets out a range of aims and objectives for managing the NSA and includes a description of the scenic qualities that give the area its special status. These scenic qualities and the special status given by the NSA have an effect on the nature and location of development in Wester Ross. (The northern part of Wester Ross is covered by the Assynt-Coigach NSA, but there is currently no such strategy for this area).