

THE WEST HIGHLAND AND ISLANDS LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION

WRITTEN STATEMENT BY MILLER DEVELOPMENTS
ON BEHALF OF LOCHEIL ESTATES AND OATRIDGE LTD
(REPRESENTEE NO. 947)

STATEMENT OF FURTHER INFORMATION

**HEARING 2 - THE ALLEGED UNDER-PROVISION OF LAND ALLOCATED
FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY IN FORT
WILLIAM**

Miller Developments Ltd acts on behalf of Locheil Estates and Oatridge Ltd (Representee no. 947) in respect of their representations to the draft West Highlands & Islands Local Plan. Although we do not wish to appear in person at the hearing listed above, the following statement should be read as confirmation of our views on the above issue.

This statement has been prepared by Colin Graham MA(Hons) DipSurv MRTPI, Development Manager at Miller Developments, 2 Lochside View, Edinburgh EH12 9DH. Reference is made in the Statement to one of The Highland Council's core documents, namely:-

THC 2: West Highlands and Islands Local Plan: Deposit Draft: THC:
December 2008

**Hearing 2 – The Alleged Under-Provision Of Land Allocated For The
Development Of Business And Industry In Fort William**

THC 2 allocates the Blar Mhor site for a variety of uses including business. The final scale and configuration of any business uses on the site will be dependent on the outcome of the developer's master-planning process and any infrastructure constraints identified during this process. It is noted that THC2 states that the masterplan must rationalise and improve access to the A830, including the existing industrial estate access.

The master-planning process has only just commenced on the Blar Mhor site, with an initial pre-application meeting with The Highland Council scheduled for 22 December 2009 and full public consultation to start in early 2010.

We note Tim Stott's (Principal Planner with The Highland Council) comments in respect of this issue, as set out in The Highland Council's Statement of Further Information on Hearing 2, and broadly concur with his conclusions. We further note the constraints believed to affect the Blar Mhor site, namely

Physical, Infrastructure and Heritage. Ultimately, these constraints will be dealt with through the master-planning process above but our experience leads us to believe that none of these are sufficient to warrant the site's exclusion from the adopted Local Plan.

It would be premature to pre-judge the outcome of this process but, at this early stage, we anticipate that the area of Blar Mhor lying to the south of the A830 and adjacent to Phase 1 of Blar Mhor Industrial Estate will be the most suitable location for future Business & Industry development. This will strengthen Blar Mhor Industrial Estate as a key employment location and ensure that the neighbouring uses are compatible and complementary. This area of land, which extends to c.9.3ha (23 acres) also benefits from good visibility and access from the A830, both critical to business occupiers.

As such, we would have no objection to the Reporter identifying this particular piece of the Blar Mhor allocation as the preferred location for Business uses within the site.

Conclusion

We support the Highland Council's decision to recognise Blar Mhor as a suitable site for new Business development. Furthermore, we would ask the Reporter to specifically identify that part of the Blar Mhor allocation south of the A830 as the preferred location for new Business development.