



## WEST HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION

### HEARING 5 : PROPOSED EXPANSION SITE MU8 LUNDAVRA

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Statement by David Tough FRICS MRTPI, Ryden LLP on behalf of Malcolm Cameron

My name is David Tough. I am a Partner in Ryden LLP and a Chartered Town Planner and Chartered Surveyor. I represent Malcolm Cameron, the owner of the majority of the land proposed for allocation for future mixed use development at Lundavra, Fort William.

#### Subject 1 : Adopted Lochaber Local Plan and planning status of the land

The proposed allocation of MU8 Lundavra, is a new allocation introduced through the West Highland and Islands Local Plan. The land was not identified for development in the Lochaber Local Plan.

The site lies on the southern edge of Fort William. The existing built up area and settlement boundary encloses the site to the west, north and east. The site at Lundavra lies between the developed strip adjacent to the edge of Loch Linnie and modern housing at Achintore.

The Lochaber Local Plan recognised that agricultural land may require to be used for development on the edges of settlements provided that the agricultural unit is not compromised in terms of viability and development can be integrated into the prevailing settlement pattern (para 3.6.11).

There are no planning permissions granted in respect of the Lundavra site.

#### Subject 2 : Relevant Structure Plan Provisions

There is no site specific reference to the Lundavra site in the Highland Structure Plan.

In terms of strategy to guide future development, the Structure Plan sets out the obligation on the Council to make adequate provision of effective land. This should include locations away from Inverness to deflect development pressure (para 2.2.6) and to steer development to appropriate locations within existing

settlements (para 2.2.5). The focus of the Structure Plan is on existing settlements to provide for the majority of new housing sites with less emphasis on new settlements (para 2.2.7).

The supply of residential land and employment land are to be considered at separate Hearing sessions.

The Highland Structure Plan recognises that affordable housing is a relevant consideration (Policies H4 and H5). The promoters of the site accept they will have to meet the requirements set out in Policy G2 : Design for Sustainability.

The promoters consider there are no policies or provisions in the Highland Structure Plan which would preclude the future development of the Lundavra site.

### Subject 3 : Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

The Council in its statement advises the SEA as identifying potential adverse environmental effects from development of the Lundavra site. Listed as impact on the SSSI are, pluvial flood risk, impact on the watercourse, altered landform and light pollution. These are matters raised by objectors to the allocation of the Lundavra site.

Specifically in regard to the Site of Special Scientific Interest, this lies outwith the development site. The site is principally classified because of the ash woodlands and related species. The Council advises in its statement that the proximity of the Lundavra site and its impact on the SSSI has been discussed with Scottish Natural Heritage. SNH advises that it is satisfied that the proposed boundary of the Lundavra site is appropriate and that the requirements to be met by developers as set out in the local plan allocation will safeguard the interests of the SSSI.

Preparation of a masterplan for the site, which is a requirement of the local plan allocation moving forward, would address all issues, including local residents' legitimate concerns about surface water drainage. The masterplan would include a drainage strategy for the site and the potential for Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) where run-off would be managed on site. Clearly a solution would need to be devised and approved by Highland Council.

Other local concerns can only realistically be addressed at the masterplan / site development level of consideration. However, given the extent of the site, not all of it would be developed or be capable / suitable for development. Mitigation measures would be required by Highland Council and other agencies as part of the detailed planning process. The promoters of Lundavra recognise this and the requirements set out in the Local Plan allocation.

The site promoters' position is that none of these matters raised preclude the allocation of the Lundavra site for future development.

#### Subject 4 : The Development Potential of the Lundavra site

The promoters agree with Highland Council that the Lundavra Site MU8, has potential for 150 houses, a possible primary school and land reserved for employment use.

It is understood that Highland Council is currently assessing the Lundavra site for the location of a new primary school to serve the area. The promoters support this proposal.

#### Subject 5 : What Scope is there to Accommodate Different Uses?

The promoters agree with Highland Council that given the area of the land allocation, there is adequate scope for accommodating all the uses. Highland Council has indicated that the site for the new primary school would be at the north-east of the allocation with access off Lundavra Road. The promoters agree with this in principle subject to a detailed site survey and feasibility by the Council.

A masterplan is a requirement for taking forward the development of this allocation, all as set out in the local plan. The promoters agree with the Council that beyond the broad principles set out in the local plan, there should be maximum flexibility to allow that process to take place. It will be possible to retain the burn through the site as an open watercourse and it could be made a feature. The retention of key landscape features, the creation of green corridors and maximising views without compromising the privacy of existing properties would all have to be achieved as components of the masterplan.

#### Subject 6: Physical, servicing and environmental constraints on development

Highland Council has mentioned 'ownership' as a constraint to development of the Lundavra site MU8. The majority of the site is owned by Malcolm Cameron who also farms circa 150 acres of croft land adjacent to the Lundavra site. He acquired the Lundavra site etc in 1998 from Locheil Estates. Arjo Wiggins also own land within the site as does Donald Cameron, Malcolm Cameron's brother. Arjo Wiggins have already confirmed to Highland Council they support development of the Lundavra site (see P184 of Representations Report September 2008) and a signed statement is attached from Donald Cameron in support of the land allocation. A plan showing their respective ownerships is also attached. These parties together control sufficient of the Lundavra site to ensure development can be delivered.

Technical studies have not yet been carried out in respect of services at the Lundavra site. However, as the Council advises, there are no significant services constraints in respect of sewerage or roads. A full services assessment would not normally be carried out until a developer is in place. Clearly this is unlikely to happen until there is an improvement in the housing market. There has been developer interest expressed in the site but matters have not gone further in the current climate.

The promoters are of the view that the Lundavra site would meet the criteria of 'effective' housing land set out in paragraphs 16 and 17 of SPP3: Planning for Homes, if the site is allocated to include housing development.

#### Subject 7 : Scope for Allocating Specific Parts of the site for Particular Uses?

Beyond the possible location for the new primary school, the accommodation of uses should await a masterplan and accompanying technical studies.

#### Subject 8 : What Adverse Effects would Arise from Development of the site?

The Lundavra site MU8 is appropriate in planning terms for a mixed use development. Whilst local concerns are noted, the promoters of the site agree with Highland Council that subject to a masterplan and full technical studies, the concerns raised by residents in the area can be suitably addressed and mitigated. The promoters accept that slope stability requires to be addressed in an engineering assessment of the site as part of the planning process, however, they consider that the Council's suggestion of securing a financial bond would be unreasonable.

### Conclusion

The promoters of the Lundavra site agree with Highland Council that the site is appropriate as an allocation for expansion of Fort William in the local plan.

DLT – 15 December 2009

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 - Letter from Malcolm Cameron confirming his support for the Lundavra site MU8.
- Appendix 2 - Letter from Donald Cameron confirming his support for the Lundavra site MU8.
- Appendix 3 - Plan showing land interests at the Lundavra site MU8.

Malcolm Cameron  
Strone Farm  
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15/12/09

Mr David Tough  
Head of Planning, Consulting Group  
Ryden LLP  
46 Castle Street  
Edinburgh  
EH2 3BN

Dear Mr Tough,

West Highlands and Islands Local Plan Examination  
Expansion Site MU8 (Lundavra)  
Representation No. 456

I write to you in your capacity as our representative at the Local Plan Examination to be held in Fort William commencing Tuesday 19 January 2010.

As owner of a substantial area of land within the area identified as MU8 in the West Highlands and Islands Local Plan I wish to confirm my support for the inclusion of my land within this proposed mixed use development.

I also wish to confirm that I will work with the other landowners having an interest in the area identified as MU8 in order to achieve this development.

Thanking you

Yours sincerely



# Donald Cameron

Donald Cameron  
Gutenbergstr. 9  
38259 Salzgitter



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Head of Planning, Consulting Group  
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