

The Highland Council

Sutherland Local Plan

Draft Environmental Report

SUPPLEMENT, MAY 2008

**(Accompanying the Pre-Deposit Draft Local
Plan, May 2008)**

***Please first read the explanatory note inside this cover



NOTE TO READER OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT SUPPLEMENT, MAY 2008

*****To be read alongside the Draft Environmental Report, October 2007*****

The Council recently consulted on a draft Sutherland Local Plan and an accompanying draft Environmental Report during Winter 2007-08. However, since their publication the Scottish Government has queried the extent to which the consultation procedures that the Council has been following and has intended to follow would fit with the legal requirements for environmental assessment. The Council has therefore decided to consult further on the Plan and Environmental Report and to consult on this Supplement to the Environmental Report, before it makes any more decisions about the contents of the Plan.

To be clear about what version of the Plan is now available for comment and what stage it is at, the Council has given it a new title: "Pre-Deposit Draft, May 2008". The amended Plan Stages are explained further in this document and in paragraph 2.3 of the Written Statement part of the Pre-Deposit Draft Local Plan.

The content of the Plan only differs from the October 2007 version in references to its title and plan stages, including references to arrangements for consultation.

The content of the Environmental Report document has not been changed. However, this separately bound Supplement to the Environmental Report has also now been made available. It should be read alongside the Draft Environmental Report 2007. The Supplement contains an assessment of the likely effects of options that were considered earlier in the plan process but which were not included in the Draft Plan and Draft Environmental Report. It also addresses some errors and omissions from the original Report and explains how Strategic Environmental Assessment fits with the amended Plan Stages.

There is now opportunity for the public to submit comments on the documents available. Any comments on any part should be sent in writing to:

Director of Planning & Development, The Highland Council, Planning & Development Service, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness IV3 5NX stating the name and address of the person making the comments, the title of the document being commented on and where appropriate the matters objected to and the reasons, to arrive no later than Friday 27 June 2008.

However, anyone who has already submitted representations to the Council as part of the consultation on the Plan and Environmental Report during Winter 2007-08 and who has had an acknowledgement of receipt, should not submit those again. The submissions that were received will be carried forward and considered carefully by the Council after the new deadline.

Doing further consultation at this stage on both the Plan and its Environmental Report (including Supplement) provides opportunity to ensure that the process of Strategic Environmental Assessment is sound and that the work carried out so far on the Local Plans, including input from the public and organisations, is used to maximum effect. This addresses a concern which has been raised by the Scottish Government and which was considered by the Council's Planning, Environment & Development Committee on 19 March 2008.

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1 Introduction

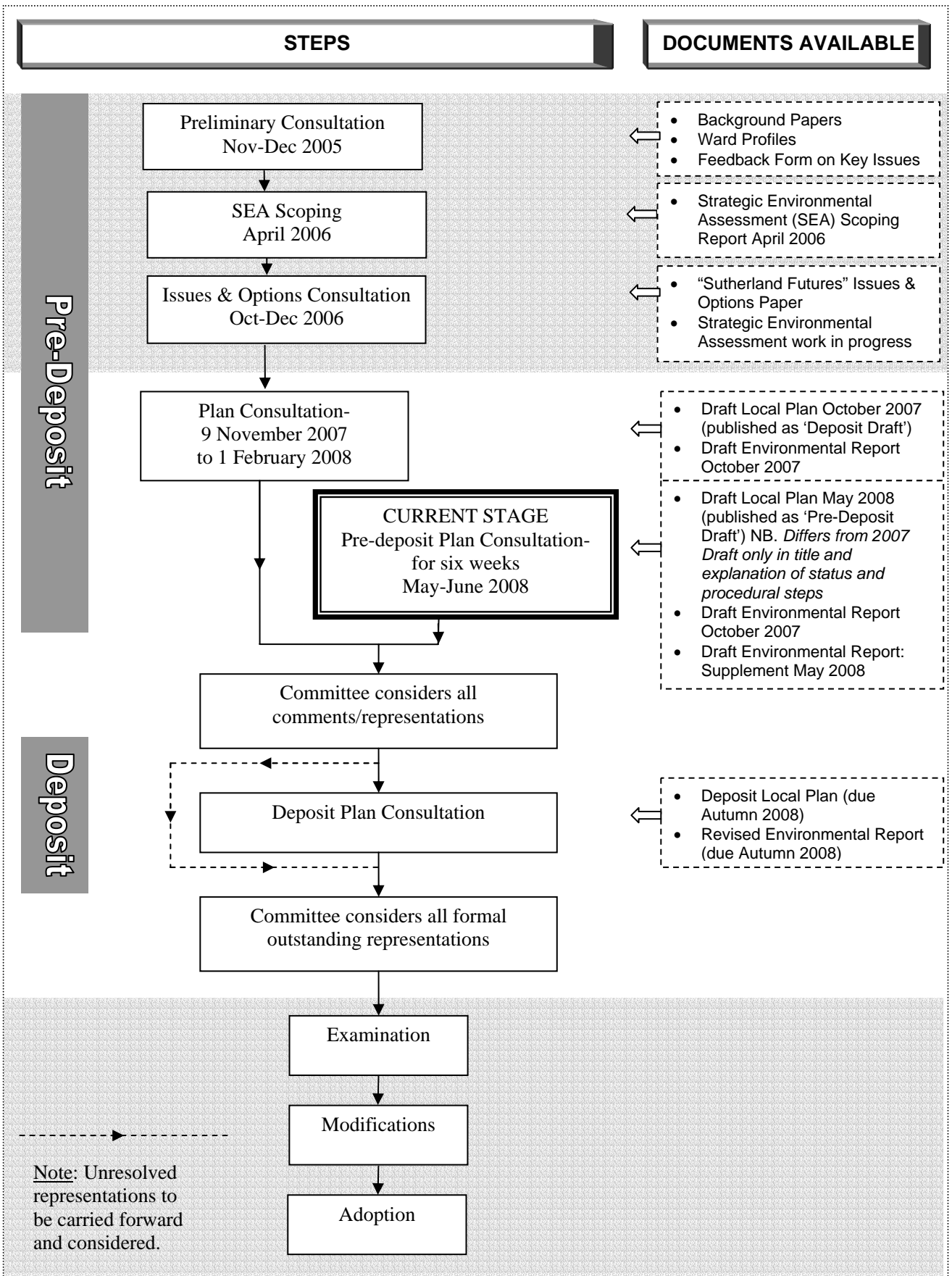
In November 2007 the Highland Council began consultation on its Draft new Local Plan for Sutherland (dated October 2007) and, alongside that, a Draft Environmental Report to accompany it. There was a period of twelve weeks for consultation on those documents and a number of comments/representations have been received on them.

As explained in the note on page 2, the Scottish Government have urged the Council to re-consult on its assessment of the environmental effects of the Sutherland Local Plan. The reason is to offer an earlier and more effective opportunity for comment on these effects and the Council's consideration of them. The Council has therefore decided to publish an augmented Environmental Report and to offer another opportunity for comment before it makes decisions about the contents of a new, more finalised, Deposit Draft Plan.

The only significant changes to the Plan material consulted upon during the period November 2007 to February 2008 are contained within this Supplement to the Environmental Report. This Supplement contains: an environmental assessment of options discounted at an earlier stage of the Plan process; corrections to factual errors and omissions from the original Report and its associated documentation, and amplification of the reasoning behind the Council's option selection to date.

Further information is available from the question and answer information sheet which is available alongside this document and on www.highland.gov.uk

All the consultation undertaken so far, together with this current consultation, will now be treated as being 'pre-deposit consultation'. Once this consultation is closed the Council will consider all of the comments or representations received to the recent or current consultations. After that the Council will publish a further full draft of the Plan incorporating any changes the Council wishes to make. It will be a formal Deposit Draft Local Plan, accompanied by a revised Environmental Report and there will be opportunity at that time for the public to submit representations for consideration. After that a public examination chaired by a person independent of the Council will be held to deal with any unresolved issues. This person will judge whether further changes to the Plan are required prior to its final adoption. The Plan Stages are set out in the diagram on the following page.



2 Scope of this Supplement

In summary, this Supplement to the Draft Environmental Report contains an environmental assessment of options discounted at an earlier stage of the Plan process, corrections to factual errors and omissions from the original Report and its associated documentation and amplification of the reasoning behind the Council's option selection to date.

Whilst the Supplement does address some of the concerns expressed in comments received as part of the consultation on the Draft Environmental Report during Winter 2007-08, it does not attempt to address them all. However, during summer 2008 the Council will give full consideration to all of the comments received and will, if necessary, revise the Environmental Report and/or Draft Local Plan before re-publication. There will therefore be adequate opportunity for Strategic Environmental Assessment, including consultation on the Environmental Report, to influence the contents of the new Sutherland Local Plan.

3 Updates to the Draft Environmental Report 2007

This section of the Supplement provides corrections to certain factual errors and omissions from the original Draft Environmental Report of October 2007. It is arranged under the headings and with reference to the paragraph and page numbers found in that document and should be read in conjunction with it.

1. *Non-Technical Summary*

Para 1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Change last sentence in paragraph to read: This procedure looks at the natural, built and cultural heritage of an area and assesses whether or not these will be negatively or positively affected by development plan proposals.
Para 1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Change last sentence to: This report offers possible mitigation measures should there be potential harm to natural, built and/or cultural heritage.

2. *Summary of the likely Significant Effects of the Deposit Local Plan*

Para 2.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Change last two sentences to: We have compiled a SEA matrix to help us evaluate the impacts of each potential development site considered by the Council. These matrices are an Appendix to this document.
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3. *Introduction and Background*

Para 3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Change last sentence to: The development plan for the Sutherland area requires the production of a SEA and this Draft Environmental Report accompanies the publication of the Pre-Deposit Draft.
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4. *The Purpose of the SEA and Local Plan Context*

Para 4.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Addition to paragraph after first sentence: This Highland-wide document, approved by Scottish Ministers, provides the regional policy framework for local plan objectives and policy content.
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5. *Methodology*

Para 5.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remove first bullet point about screening.• Add bullet point: Publication of a Draft Environmental Report with the Pre-Deposit Draft Local Plan.• Change sixth bullet point with: Preparing the Deposit Draft Local Plan with the revised Environmental Report.
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Para 5.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change to: Section 5 (3) (a) of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 has now established that all statutory development plans require an SEA.
Para 5.5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change “of the Site Options” to: “potential development site”
Para 5.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove: Following on from the screening stage of the SEA where it was decided that an SEA assessment was required

6. Predicted Environmental Baseline and Issues

Table 6.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historic Environment add: 4 Gardens and Designed Landscapes. Change: Listed Buildings to: 322 (A: 19; B: 187; C: 116). Move SAMS to Historic Environment.
Table 6.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change second potential environmental problem to: Negative impact of development on natural, built and cultural heritage features. Change second Implications for Local Plan to: The Local Plan will seek to maintain a high quality natural heritage and taking account of built/cultural heritage sites. Change fourth potential environmental problem to: Negative impact of access on habitat, species and the historic environment.
Para 6.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change Table 5.3 to Table 6.3

7. Local Plan Strategic Alternatives

Para 7.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change Table 7 to Table 6.3
Para 7.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove “will identify” and replace with “identifies”.

8. The Plans General Policies and their Compatibility with the SEA Objectives

Para 8.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change to: Assessment of environmental impacts of Local Plan general policies.
Para 8.6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change to: This matrix has been completed for each potential development site and has provided a means of assessing the sustainability of each Plan proposal.

9. Future Development of the Local Plan and SEA

Para 9.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change to: The Local Plan together with this Draft Environmental Report will be lodged on public deposit. This is the Pre-Deposit Draft of the Plan and will last for six weeks during May-June 2008. The Plan text and press advertisement explain the process for representations.
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Para 9.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After second section of table replace with the following: 		
	Time	Stage	Detail
	May-June 2008	Pre-Deposit Draft accompanied by Draft Environmental Report	Further material and consultation on the environmental assessment of the Plan
	August 2008	Report to Planning, Environment and Development Committee on representations and any pre-Examination changes	
	Autumn 2008	Publication of Deposit Draft Plan accompanied by Statement of Publicity and Consultation, Finalised Environmental Report and Action Programme	
	Winter 2008/9	Public Examination	Public inquiry / written submissions / hearing into any unresolved objections
	Summer 2008/9	Post-Inquiry Modifications	
	Autumn 2009	Adoption of the Local Plan	
Winter 2009/10	Post Adoption SEA Statement	SEA Statement and Monitoring	

Appendix 1 Relevant Documents for Sutherland

Page 50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> European Protected Species (2001 SNH) - Change last column to: "Any instances of protected European species should be highlighted in the Local Plan should they be within or affected by a proposed development site, and proposals should be designed to avoid any impacts, failing which it will be necessary to satisfy licensing requirements".
Page 51	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change last sentence in the last column for the Habitats and Birds Directive to: "The Plan must not designate projects to be constructed in or affecting SACs or SPAs unless it is ascertained that there will not be an adverse effect on the integrity of the site, or else there are no alternative solutions and there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest. Where a priority habitat would be affected, planning consent can only be issued where reasons of overriding public interest relate to human health, public safety, beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or other reasons subject to the opinion of the European Commission".

Page 58	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add: Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 – The Act will provide a mechanism for the delivery of a modernised planning system. It takes forward the commitment in <i>A Partnership for a Better Scotland</i> to improve the planning system to strengthen involvement of communities, speed up decisions, reflect local views better and allow quicker investment decisions – Allows the Scottish Ministers to designate an area as a National Scenic Area by direction, and to vary or revoke the designation. It also enables Ministers to issue guidance to which planning authorities must have regard.
Page 61	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add: The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended) – Requirement for appropriate assessment of land use plans – Requirement for appropriate assessment of policies and proposals.
Page 70	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add: Position Statement: Policy and Supporting Guidance on Provision of Waste Water Drainage in Settlements (2006) (SEPA) – This position statement sets out SEPA’s policy principles on the provision of waste water drainage within and outwith settlements served by a strategic sewerage system. The document also provides supporting guidance for implementation of these policy principles – The policy will affect suitable sewerage arrangements for the Plan’s development allocations.
Page 72	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove NPPG 6 Renewable Energy Developments.
Page 73	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove NPPG 10 Planning and Waste Management.
Page 74	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove: NPPG 11 Sport, Physical Recreation and Open Space.
Page 77	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change SPP 6 Renewable Energy (Consultative Draft 2006) to: Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) 6 Renewable Energy – Targets for the amount of energy created from renewable sources should not be regarded as an ambition in itself. They should be regarded as a minimum. The planning policy supports in principle the full range of renewable technologies. Support for renewable energy developments and the need to protect and enhance Scotland’s natural and historic environment must be regarded as compatible goals. Development plan policies for wind farms should be based on the principle that they should be accommodated only where the technology can operate efficiently and the environmental and cumulative effects can be addressed satisfactorily.
Page 78	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change SPP10 Planning for Waste Management (2007) to: The Scottish Government is currently pursuing a manifesto commitment to a zero waste Scotland. SPP10 encourages a model policy focusing on industrial land for waste management installations. To ensure waste management requirements are met, all development plans must include the relevant policies – The Plan will identify sites suitable for waste disposal and recycling close to waste production and focusing on industrial allocations. The Plan should also encourage the reduction, re-use and recovery of waste through the re-use of buildings and should therefore allocate brownfield sites where appropriate.

4 Strategic options and alternatives considered

This section of the Supplement provides more discussion on the strategic options and alternatives considered during preparation of the Draft Local Plan, than was included in the Draft Environmental Report of October 2007.

Plan Preparation:

The main options concerning plan preparation, covering the 'do nothing' option at the highest level, are:

- PP1. Prepare a Local Plan
- PP2. Not prepare a Local Plan

These options and the likely consequences were discussed in paragraph 7.1 of the Draft Environmental Report of October 2007.

Option PP1, Prepare a Local Plan, was chosen.

Growth Amount:

During the preparation of the "Sutherland Futures" issues and options consultation paper, a number of scenarios for population growth were considered. These were outlined in particular in the 'Key Forecasts' and 'Towards a Sustainable Strategy' sections of Sutherland Futures and also in the Draft Local Plan in the 'Key Forecasts' and 'Strategy' sections. The main scenarios referred to are:

- GA1. Number of people taking up residence in Sutherland reduced by half
- GA2. Projected population using national data and accepted pan-Highland assumptions
- GA3. Vision for a stable working age population

Options for low to medium levels of growth- GA1 and GA2- would generally result in a lower requirement for new development such as housing and businesses than would option GA3. In simple terms this might appear to lead to lower levels of adverse effect on the environment. However, that basic analysis ignores the potential positive effects for the environment that can derive from well planned development, including redevelopment and regeneration. Furthermore, the specific policies and proposals of the Plan that provide for growth will be subject to SEA in their preparation. As indicated in the Draft Local Plan, the higher level of growth required to support option GA3 will bring social and economic benefits to Sutherland if properly planned. This will depend in part upon the strategy for the distribution of growth.

Option GA3, Vision for a stable working age population, was chosen.

Growth Distribution:

The main options for growth distribution, in terms of how the Local Plan might guide the location of development, are:

- GD1. Focussing growth through defining settlement development areas including boundaries for small townships
- GD2. Focussing growth through defining settlement development areas but not including boundaries for small townships
- GD3. Focussing growth without defining settlement development areas
- GD4. Dispersing growth throughout the Plan area

Essentially these options concern the extent to which the Local Plan should identify specific areas in order to provide clarity about development opportunity. Identifying settlement development areas has the advantage that it helps to provide such clarity and focus and in particular to promote sustainable development principles as outlined in the Draft Local Plan 'Strategy'. It is particularly valuable given the choice of Option GA3 for a higher level of growth to be accommodated in Sutherland. This needs to be carefully planned, having regard to likely environmental, social and economic effects and the need to promote delivery of such growth. Settlement development areas can help to consolidate the benefits that may be derived from development in order to strengthen the service centres of communities. Balancing with this can be a policy framework which provides for the possibility of development outwith settlement development areas, of a type and scale which has regard to the principles of sustainable development, to constraints within and outwith the settlement development areas and to opportunities to support fragile communities. For the very small scale development that might be appropriate in dispersed townships, it would be difficult for the Local Plan to pre-empt site selection and addressing proposals through general policies of the Plan, in particular policies 3, 4 and 16 of the Draft Local Plan, is appropriate. The explanation of the methodology used in looking at individual site options, particularly in north and west Sutherland (see Section 5.1 of this Supplement) is relevant here. The identification of settlement development areas helps to positively plan for development in areas where there is likely to be most pressure for it and promotes meaningful consultation on the Draft Local Plan and the addressing of any potential environmental pressures through specific provisions in the Plan or through the general policy framework. Furthermore, the specific policies and proposals of the Plan that provide for growth will be subject to SEA in their preparation.

Option GD2, Focussing growth through defining settlement development areas but not including boundaries for small townships, was chosen.

5 Site options and alternatives considered

5.1 Methodology

This section of the Supplement sets out the strategic environmental assessment of site options and alternatives that were considered earlier in the Plan process but which have not been allocated in the Draft Local Plan. It summarises the findings and explains why the sites have not been proposed for allocation by the Council, setting this in the context of the selection of sites that are proposed for allocation. In some cases there have been concerns raised through SEA which have influenced that decision, although that is not always the case. Examples of these different outcomes is provided, including illustration of how SEA has influenced the contents of the Draft Plan. SEA matrices for the site options not allocated are to be found in Appendix A to this Supplement.

In North West Sutherland and Tongue and Farr the methodology used in developing the Sutherland Futures options, and then the Draft Plan allocations and Settlement Development Areas (SDAs) needs separate explanation. In these areas historically single house and small scale development is a large contributor to meeting housing needs. This is partly because much of the land is in crofting tenure and because of the level of development.

There is a need for some allocations within the larger communities but cumulative, small scale development makes an important contribution. To examine the potential within these settlements and to appropriately define settlement development areas (SDA's), it was therefore sensible to consider them. Many of these sites however did not require allocation but it was worthwhile to get feedback on their suitability and effectiveness.

This has meant that many small sites identified in Sutherland Futures or thereafter have been considered suitable but do not require allocation in the Local Plan. After assessment many of these options only needed to be retained within the SDA or to come forward and be considered against the general policy framework of the Local Plan.

5.2 Note about the maps

The maps included in this section of the document are based on those originally included in the Sutherland Futures consultation document. All the sites that were consulted upon at that time are shown. On the maps and in the tables in this section, those sites carry the reference numbers that they had in Sutherland Futures (clarified where necessary). Of those, the sites that were not subsequently allocated in the Draft Local Plan are highlighted. Additionally the maps highlight sites that were suggested in representations to Sutherland Futures but which were not subsequently allocated in the Draft Local Plan. They are referenced 1R, etc. If any, whilst not being allocated, are nevertheless inside the Settlement Development Area (SDA) in the Draft Local Plan, this is pointed out in the tables of sites not allocated.

In the map key and above, references to “Allocated” or “Not Allocated” refers to Deposit 2007 and Pre-Deposit 2008 versions of the Draft Local Plan. In respect of “Sites consulted upon and allocated”, the actual extent allocated in the Draft Plan may differ from that originally consulted on and shown on these maps.

On the maps included in this section of the document, “Existing settlement development area” was that shown in Sutherland Futures. The more recent Draft Local Plan proposed settlement development area may differ.

It should be noted that the maps do not attempt to show the sites that were not in Sutherland Futures but that are in the Draft Plan. They are already included in the Draft Plan and Draft Environmental Report documentation.

5.3 Position statements for settlements including tables and maps of sites not allocated

The contents of this section are ordered as follows:

Ward 5: East Sutherland and Edderton

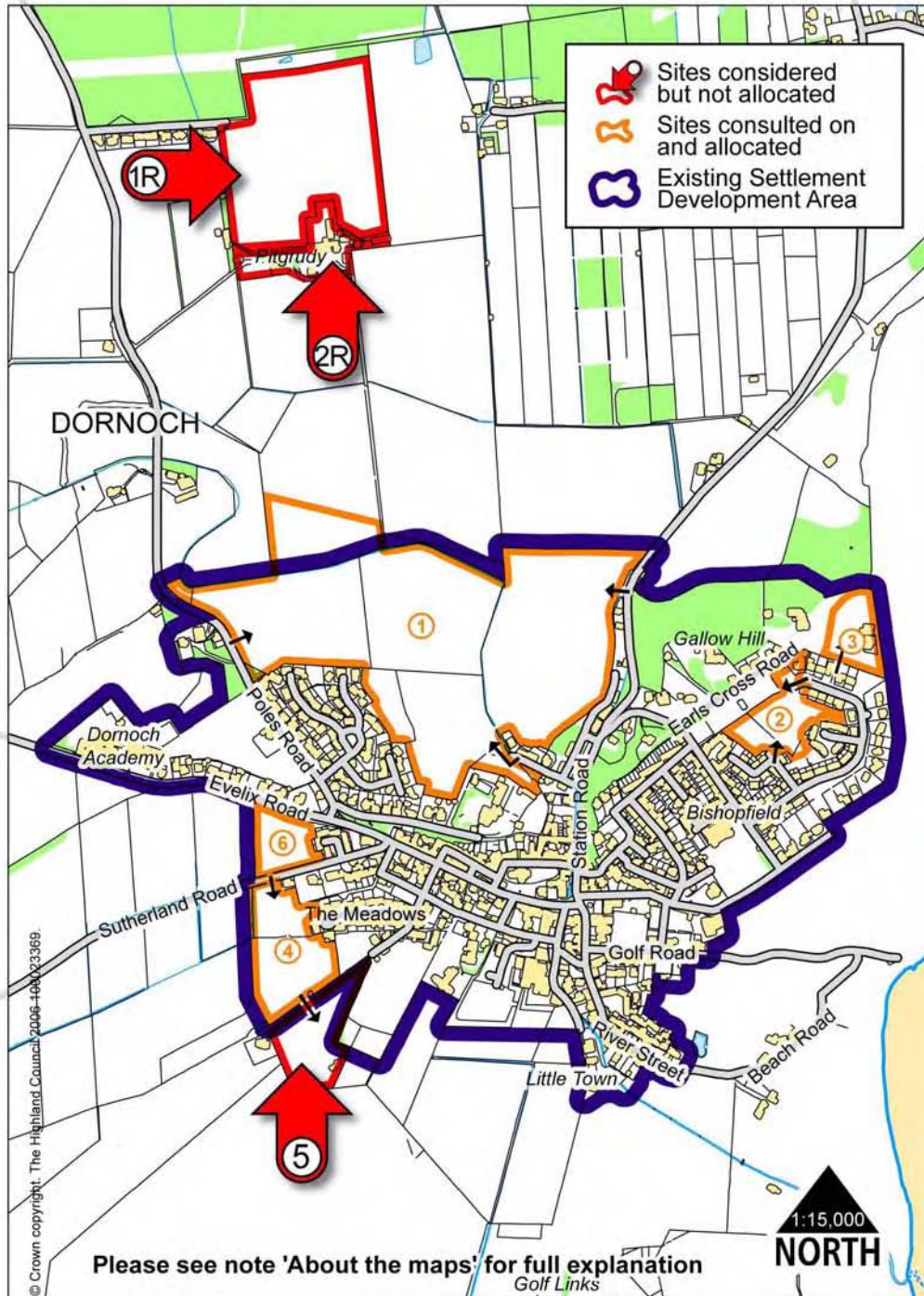
- Dornoch
- Embo
- Golspie
- Brora
- Helmsdale
- Edderton
- Pittentrail

Ward 1: North West and Central Sutherland

- Ardgay
- Bonar Bridge & South Bonar Industrial Estate
- Culrain
- Rosehall
- Invershin
- Lairg
- Assynt*(Lochinver, Point of Stoer, Drumbeg)
- Scourie & Achfary
- Kinlochbervie
- Durness & Laid
- Tongue & Melness
- Bettyhill
- Strathy & Armadale
- Melvich & Portskerra

East Sutherland & Edderton

DORNOCH



Position Statement for Dornoch

Development opportunities within Dornoch, together provide for the potential long term growth of the settlement. Land allocated at Bishopsfield provides opportunities for both private and public housing development across the last phases of this site. At Earl's Cross the allocated site is partly developed and offers opportunity for those seeking a lower density form of development. The allocation Sutherland Road has been the subject of planning approval and initial site works have been undertaken. In addition land at Meadows Park Road is the subject of a planning application that the Council is likely to approve. Dornoch North and Dornoch North Expansion form the basis for the medium to longer term growth of the settlement, the development of these sites require the preparation of a masterplan to guide overall development.

Potential for expansion of business and light industrial use is identified at the extension to the existing business park and further potential exists to the east. The Academy Fields are identified as having potential to accommodate facilities related to wider recreational uses.

Sites considered but not allocated:

Site 5 Meadows Park Road (South)	This site is promoted by the landowner as having significant potential for retirement housing and is situated in a location accessible to the town centre. In terms of overall need for the development this cannot be shown from any quantitative viewpoint given the level of existing allocations. Existing capacity of sites identified within the existing Local Plan is in excess of the higher end of the housing requirement for the settlement. There are several issues which have been identified through the SEA of the site. The site is located south of the single track Meadows Park Road on low lying ground outwith the current extent of the settlement boundary. The area of land is low lying and concerns relate to the high water table and whether surface water drainage can be achieved, these issues have not been addressed through the recent planning application, currently pending. Also the potential impact of surface water drainage to the Dornoch Firth SPA, SAC and RAMSAR sites has not been demonstrated. In the absence of this information there remains uncertainty with the SEA in regard to the potential effects of development of this site
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	and a precautionary approach should be taken at this time.
Site 1R Pitgrudy	<p>Site was proposed for housing development at Pitgrudy, the proposal was for the development of a retirement village and general housing. The site is located around 1 mile outwith the settlement boundary on the Poles Road on a site north of Pitgrudy Farm buildings. In terms of the SEA the site falls well outwith the settlement boundary and is dislocated from the community although reference is made to the provision of a foot/cycle path to connect to Dornoch. Scottish Planning Policy 3 (SPP): Planning for Housing indicates that wherever possible most housing requirements should be met within of adjacent to existing settlements. The area identified falls within the extent of the hinterland around towns as indicated within the Council's approved Structure Plan and as such is subject to policy H3 Housing in the Countryside which holds a presumption against development in these areas. The policy seeks to strengthen the role of settlements, making efficient use of existing infrastructure and services in line with national guidance and sustainable principles. In terms of the need for this scale of allocation, that already identified within the adopted local plan provides already for a level of development beyond the period that this plan review is seeking. There is progress on the delivery of large housing allocations in Dornoch and these are likely to meet the development needs for the plan period and beyond. In terms of the specific requirement for retirement housing it is felt that these could be accommodated in closer proximity to centre of Dornoch within land already identified. Given the conflicts with policy and the adequacy of land allocations within the settlement there is no justification for the inclusion of this site.</p>
Site 2R Pitgrudy	<p>This site was brought forward by the landowner as having potential to redevelop the Pitgrudy farm buildings. General support for this type of development is given in Planning Advice Note 73 (PAN): Rural Diversification and SPP 15: Planning for Rural Development. The Council's approved Structure Plan, indicates general</p>

	support for development of recreational use of the land or provision of tourist accommodation. The suitability of the site for these uses would require assessment against other relevant policy. Given the support in principle for this form of development, proposals can be best dealt with through existing policy.
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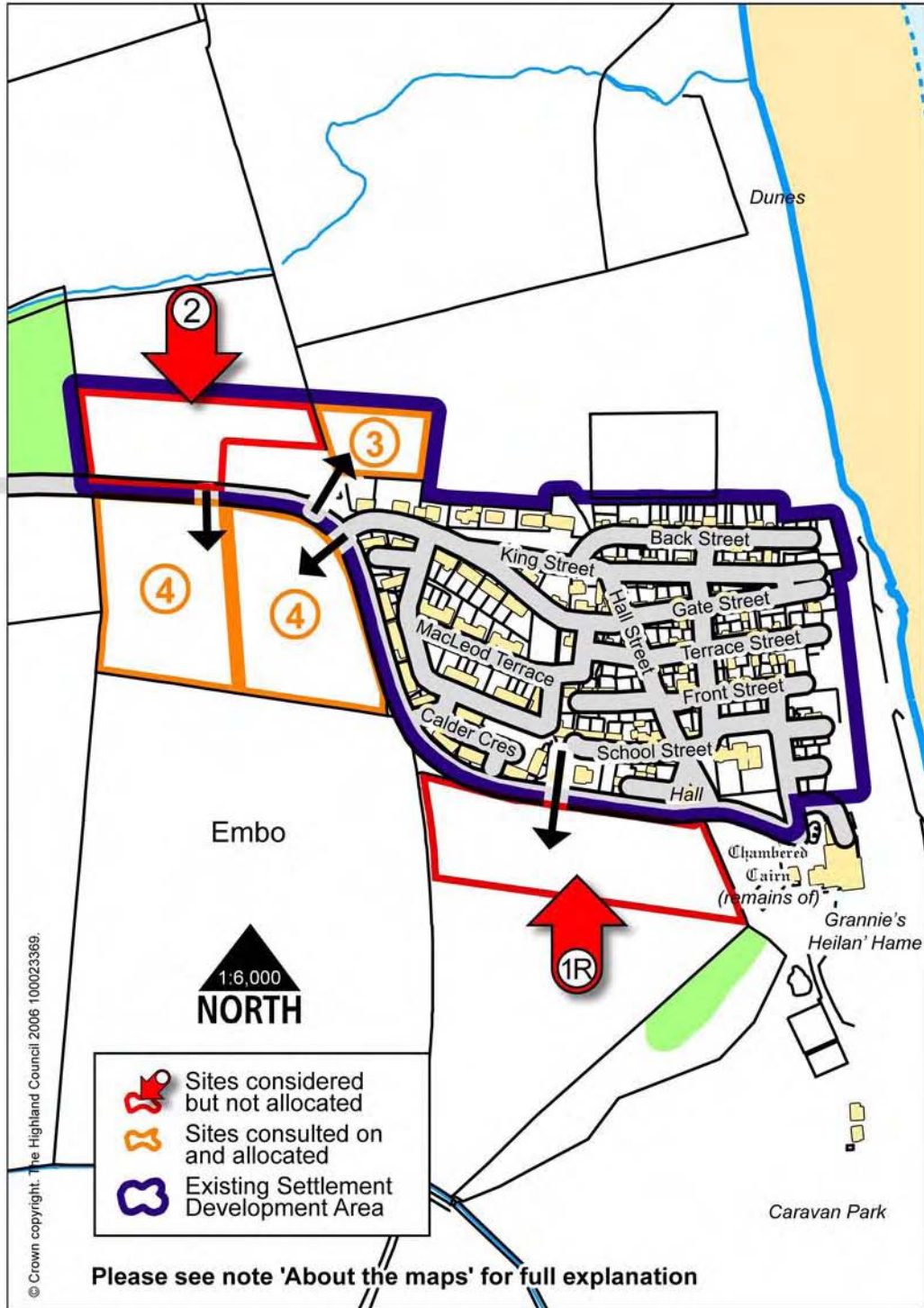
EMBO

Position Statement for Embo

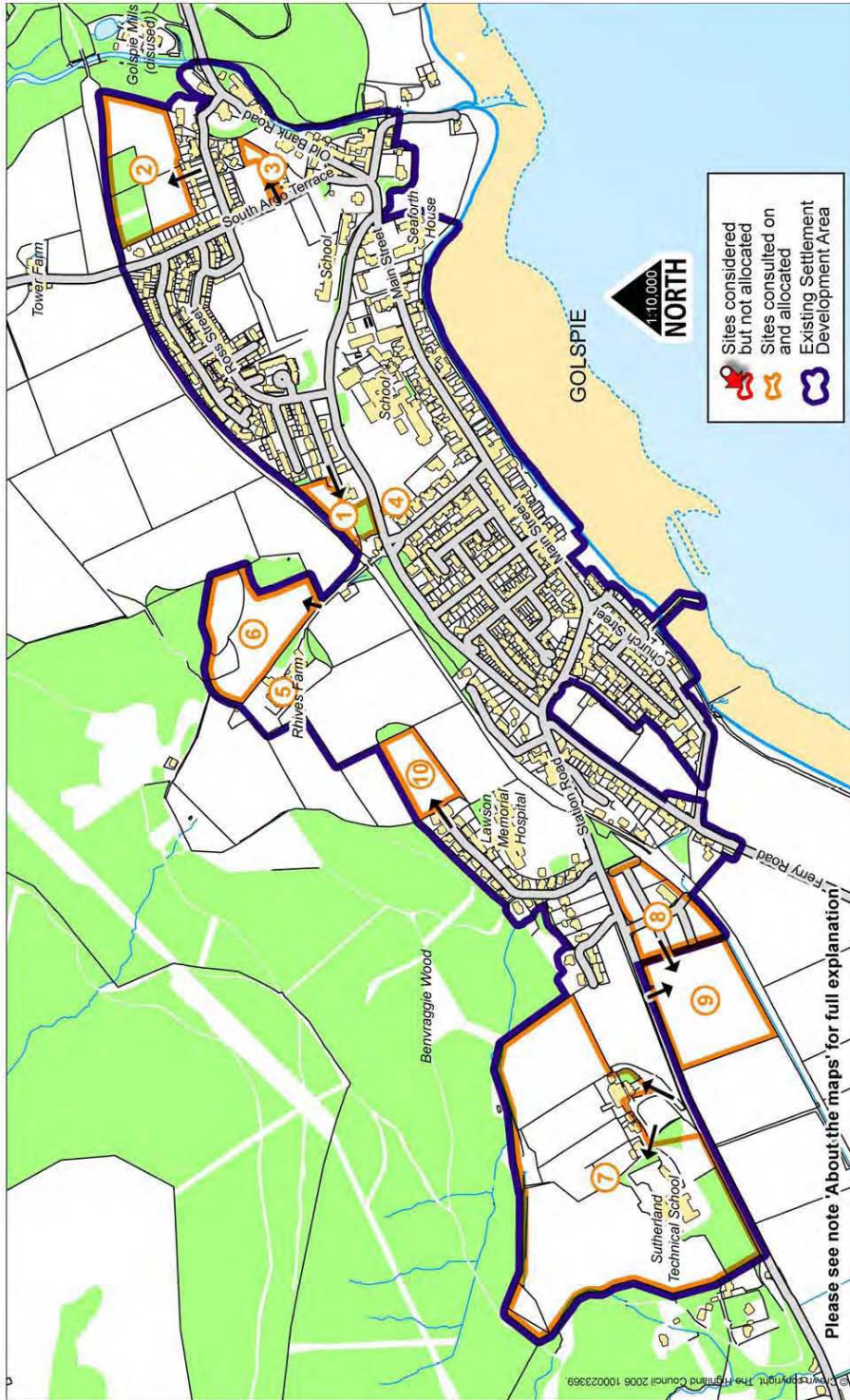
Housing land allocations within Embo take the form of a small site to the North of Station House; this site was previously allocated in the existing Local Plan. Although the access to this site is a constraint to any significant level of development, it offers a viable and effective option for small scale development. A larger site is identified at West Embo which does offer potential for a longer term supply of housing land, this site has the ability to be closely linked to the existing village and also presents the opportunity to address concerns regarding traffic issues relating to the by-pass.

Sites considered but not allocated:

Site 2 North West of Embo	This allocation does have the support of the community, however, the landowner of the allocation north west of Embo has indicated that he does not wish to release the land for development.
Site 1R South of Embo	As with other options to the south and west of the by-pass potential for development in this area requires significant measures to traffic calm by-pass traffic. Given the constraints present to releasing and accessing other site options there is a need to retain an effective housing land allocation. In terms of the SEA the visual impact on the existing village and extending the physical form the options to the west of the village present a better option for development.



GOLSPIE



Position Statement for Golspie

The housing allocation at Woodland Way will provide opportunities for lower density housing that will conclude the previous phases of building at this site. Similarly there is potential for further housing development at the allocation extending from Ben Bhraggie Drive. The Sibell Road allocation will provide a phased mixed tenure housing development with the provision of affordable units in one of the earlier phases. Smaller scale infill development opportunities exist at both the Adjacent Macleod House site and at the brownfield former Mackay House Hostel site. Rhives Farm Steading also provides a small scale redevelopment opportunity which can deliver an affordable element.

The development of the mixed use site at Drummuie offers the potential to provide for the longer term housing needs for the settlement. Current proposals centre around the provision of affordable housing through various delivery methods. In addition there is also the capacity in the site to offer opportunities for business/light industrial employers to locate on the site. The redevelopment of the former Technical School to Council Offices will help in promoting further development. To the south of the A9 Drummuie (south) offers a potential extension to the existing Business Park, to give capacity for small scale light industrial development. This site would give opportunity for SEA mitigation improving the western entrance to the settlement through appropriate landscaping and planting.

The identification of a mixed use allocation at Rhives provides the opportunity to build on the success of the Ben Bhraggie cycle trail through the provision of caravan/camping facilities.

BRORA

Position Statement for Brora

The allocation of appropriate development land within the established settlement boundary has been aimed at supporting the community's wider role within the eastern part of Sutherland. The identification of readily serviceable and deliverable sites came through the SEA well because they are within the settlement boundary and will make use of existing infrastructure and be proximate to services. The allocation of an effective land supply within the village will also help prevent further erosion of the rural setting through ad hoc unplanned development.

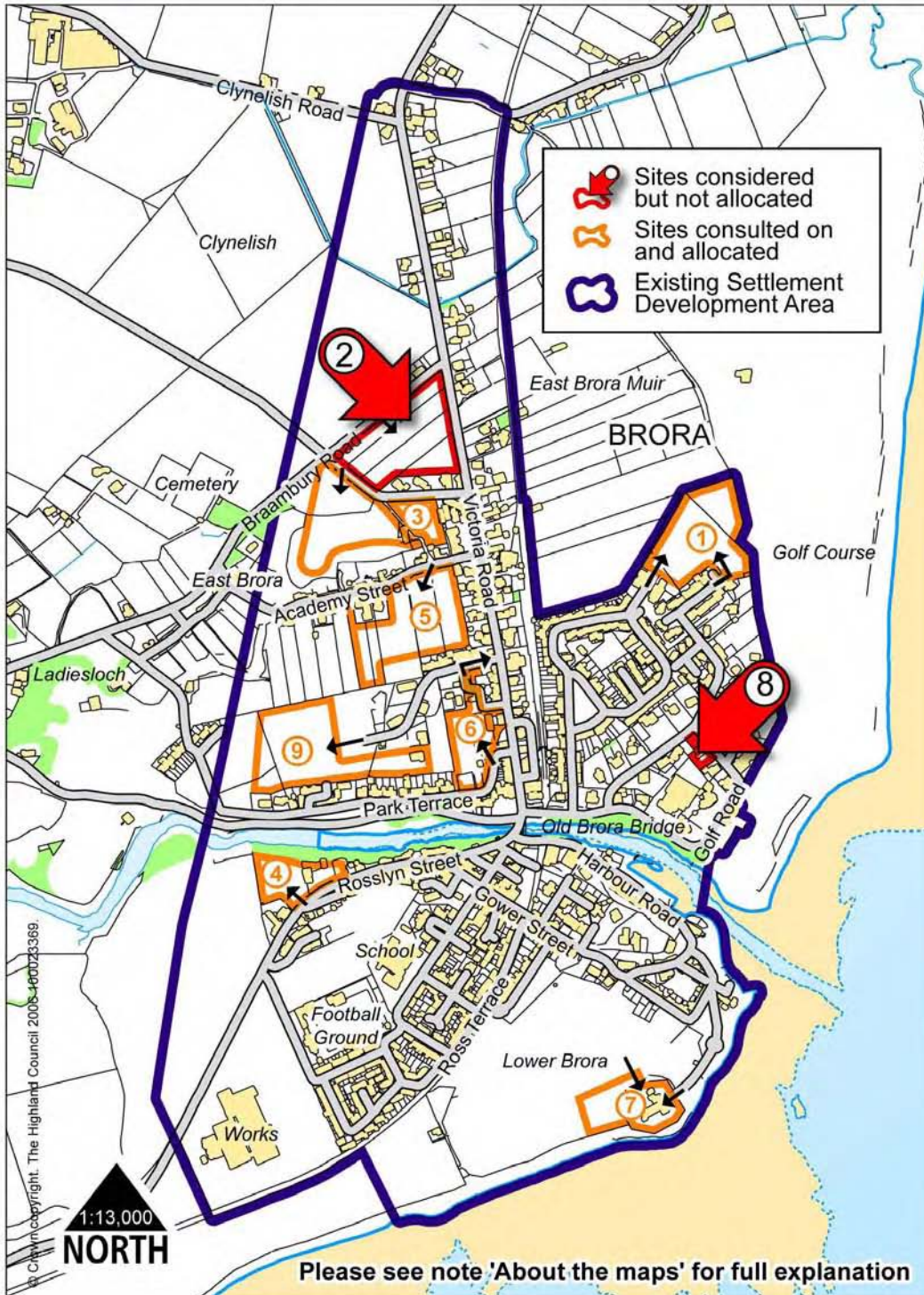
The allocation of land at the Old Woollen Mill offered a brownfield development opportunity that has been pursued through development proposals that have currently progressed to construction. The allocation of land at East Brora Muir provides potential housing land as an extension to the existing scheme.

Allocations at Tordale and West of the Masonic Hall can both provide further opportunities on land readily serviced. However the SEA identified improvements required to access and drainage arrangements. Land South of Academy Street, formed part of a larger composite area of crofting land put forward for consideration for housing development. The area identified provides the most suitable access, subject to improvement, and potential for further extension in the longer term. Rosslyn Street/former Mackays Yard, the western part of the site has been the subject of planning application and initial site works have taken place, the associated Mackays garage site has brownfield redevelopment potential.

The Former Radio Station offers an opportunity for reuse/redevelopment of the site for appropriate uses, given the location of the allocation these would most appropriately relate to visitor/interpretation/recreational uses. Potential exists for further business/industrial development at land Adjoining the Industrial Estate.

Sites considered but not allocated:

Site 2 Braambury Road	This allocation attracted objections were from the local common grazing committee and the Crofters Commission in respect of the inclusion of this in-bye land. A portion of this site previously had the benefit of planning permission for development of 3 houses, but was not decrofted. The Inquiry to the South and East Sutherland found that in terms of land supply there was no requirement for the land and that it should remain in crofting use. At this point in time the current effective supply of housing land is adequate unlikely that the land would be required during the plan period, the site was not allocated in the draft plan.
Site 8 Carrol House	Potential redevelopment of Carrol House offered to meet a need for smaller flatted properties within the settlement. The general policies within the plan would offer sufficient guidance for a proposal of this nature to proceed without the need for a specific allocation. Proposals forthcoming were more of a holiday/second home nature and would go little way to meeting the general housing need for the area.



HELMSDALE

Position Statement for Helmsdale

Housing development within the Helmsdale settlement has been low in recent years, and a need for an effective available housing land supply is evident. Allocations to meet the needs of the settlement have been identified in various central locations. East of the settlement sites allocated relate to land North of Rockview Place. At Simpson Crescent the SEA identifies that the visual impact of housing development will have to be addressed in future proposals. The potential for the redevelopment of St Johns Church offers the opportunity to bring a prominent vacant building back to productive use. The West of the Primary School allocation offers choice at an alternative location within the settlement. Longer Term provision for housing development has been identified at North Helmsdale.

Sites considered but not allocated:

Site 6 Simpson Crescent East	This site has the potential to form an extension to the proposed site to the immediate west. SEA indicates that the site conflicts with the Landscape Capacity Study in terms of the scenic resource of the site, but offers mitigating measures that can be applied in respect of design and layout. Setback of development from the slope to the shore road is also an issue with potential for slippages and will dictate the extent of built form of the site. This area is also lies within close proximity to the waste water treatment works (WWTW). Guidance in terms of separation from such facilities indicates that the potential to build housing in close proximity to WWTW should be assessed individually. On the basis of previous advice and in the absence of evidence to show that odour is not a risk the site has not been allocated.
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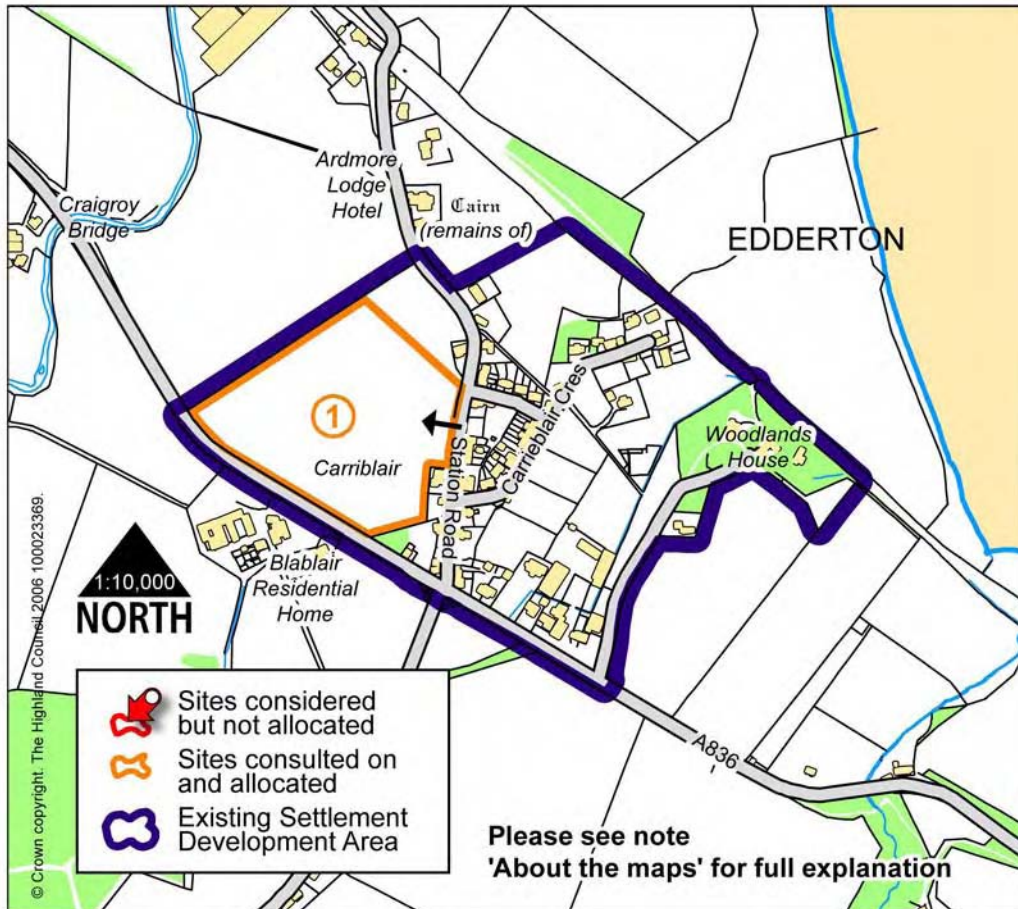


EDDERTON

Position Statement for Edderton

Housing pressures within Edderton are historically low and have in recent years been constrained by lack of capacity in the existing WWTW, a position that is the subject of current review. The main opportunity for housing lies within land to the West of Station Road. The use of this land for housing purposes is already established within the adopted Ross and Cromarty East Local Plan. The SEA identifies the development of this site requires to take account of the Scheduled Ancient Monument and its setting.

Opportunity for the development of small scale business or workplace homes has been identified on land Adjacent Glebe Cottage. Outwith these 2 allocations potential for housing lies in infill opportunities within the settlement boundary.



PITTENTRAIL

Position Statement for Pittentrail

The Mart site will encourage redevelopment of a site in the centre of the village which is currently an eyesore. The site Opposite the Garage is a flat site adjacent to existing development in the village and will be easier to develop than the site east of the playing field. There is no site allocation around MacDonald Place, instead there is a SDA boundary which will allow for further sympathetic infill housing around the existing development.

Sites Rejected:

Site 1R East of playing field	Access is a problem which could have cost implications for any development.
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