



Position in Settlement Hierarchy	Small Village
2007 Estimated Population	161
Housing Completions 2000-2006	2
Primary (Melvich)/ Secondary School Capacity	47% / 55%
Water Capacity	Sufficient capacity
Sewerage Capacity	At or close to capacity

Prospects

The Highland Renewable Energy Strategy and Planning Guidelines identifies land south of Strathy and Portskerra/Melvich as a possible area for national and major wind farm development and an application is currently under consideration at Strathy forest. Melvich and Portskerra sit at the mouth of the River Halladale with local services and amenities shared between the two communities.

The septic tank which serves both Portskerra and Melvich is nearing capacity. An allocation for housing has been identified at Bayview Terrace purposefully set down from the road in order to retain the open aspects and avoid creating a continuous street. When there is no capacity left and Scottish Water has no programmed investment for increasing the sewerage capacity there will still be opportunities for infill development. However this must respect the existing dispersed pattern of development as the use of individual septic tanks will only be acceptable where the proposal is not likely to result in or add to significant environmental or health problems.

There are significant opportunities within the SDA on the lower road. However it is important that these opportunities are taken forward in an appropriate manner. In order to retain the sense of character when viewed from a distance and achieve a consistency when viewed from the street single plot development needs to come forward with a degree of coherence.

The consistency should be achieved by reference to traditional Highland forms, proportions, materials and massing (1, 1½, 1¾ storey and 40° - 45° roof pitch). With larger floor areas its shape should be broken down into at least two distinct elements, akin the 'extended croft house' and perhaps utilise different materials.

The settlement development area has been drawn to reflect the settlement pattern in the village and promote appropriate siting of housing in Portskerra. Also the traditional relationship between the house and its land is maintained to help protect the lands agricultural use.

Development Factors

- Low downward emission design street lights;
- Care should be taken to avoid skylining development.

Site Allocations

Site Ref.	Site Area	Location	Housing Capacity	Developer Requirements
H1	0.4ha	Northeast of Bayview Terrace	4 units	Linear development to fit with the settlement pattern. Off street parking required.

(Housing capacities are indicative only and given on the basis of likely development densities.)

NATURAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE FEATURES

- National Importance (Policy 4.2)
- Local/Regional Importance (Policy 4.1)
- Wider Countryside (Policy 3)