

Directorate for Planning and Environmental Appeals

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Mr Tim Stott
Principal Planner
The Highland Council
Glenurquhart Road
INVERNESS
IV3 5NX



Our ref: LDP-270-1
16 November 2009

Dear Mr Stott

**WEST HIGHLAND AND ISLANDS LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION
INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN HEARING**

Mr David Russell, one of the Reporters appointed by Scottish Ministers to examine the unresolved issues in respect of the above local plan, has decided that a series of hearings is needed to gather further information on certain matters relating to the Fort William area.

The attached annex confirms the matters to be considered at each hearing, along with the names of those who have been asked to take part. The hearings will consist of an informal discussion, led by the Reporter, in which he will explore the specified subjects in order that he can obtain the information he considers necessary to enable him to reach his conclusions and recommendations.

All of the hearings will be held within the Ben Nevis Hotel, North Road, Fort William, PH33 6TG. The hotel has disabled access but please let us know if you have mobility needs or any other special requirements.

You will see from the attached annex and timetable that a total of 8 separate hearings will be held between 19 and 22 January 2010, with the morning and afternoon sessions on each of these days covering a different subject. The first hearing will take place between 10:00 and 13:00 hours on Tuesday 19 January 2010, with the second hearing taking place between 14:00 and 17:00 hours that same day. These start times will apply to both morning and afternoon sessions held for the rest of that week.

It should be noted that no other issues relating to the local plan will be considered at these hearings.

The Reporter expects the council to take part in all of the hearing sessions and to submit a separate written statement for each. These statements, which should not exceed 1500 words, must be submitted to this office and to those taking part in that same hearing session by 7 December 2009. They should give the council's response to the subject matters identified by the Reporter for each hearing.

If the council's statement relies on material contained in any other document, a copy of that document, or preferably of the relevant extract, should accompany that statement by the same deadline. These documents should be clearly referenced and listed on a covering sheet. Copies of these documents should also be sent to those taking part in that same hearing.

When you send your written statements, please also let me know the names of those who will be appearing at each of the hearing sessions on behalf of the council.

Participation in the hearings

Those who have been invited to take part in the hearings have been asked to confirm their participation to this office by 30 November and, if taking part, to submit a written statement to this office, to the other parties taking part in the same hearing session, and to the council by 21 December 2009.

Those who have not been invited to take part, but who previously lodged a representation with the council in relation to the subject matter of each hearing, have been assured that the Reporter has a copy and will be taking it into account. They will be able to attend and observe the hearing, and a copy of the timetable has been sent to them.

Copies of these letters are enclosed for your information along with a list of contact details for the invited participants.

The next steps

Please now acknowledge receipt of this letter confirming that the council will participate in, and provide a statement (with supporting documents and documents list) for each of the hearings by the deadline stated.

The council must also ensure that copies of the relevant statement (and documents) are sent to the others taking part in the hearing sessions by 7 December 2009, and should send confirmation to me that this has been done.

Two weeks before the hearings start, the council should arrange for copies of all written statements and any supporting documents to be available for inspection by members of the public at Fort William Library, Airds Crossing, High Street, Fort William, PH33 6EU. Those taking part have been asked to send the council an extra set for this purpose.

It would also be helpful if electronic copies could be made available for viewing on the council's website.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about these arrangements.

Yours sincerely

Brian Archibald
Development Plan Officer
Enc.

Directorate for Planning and Environmental Appeals

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SAMPLE LETTER SENT TO PARTIES INVITING THEM TO PARTICIPATE IN THE HEARING SESSIONS IN FORT WILLIAM



Our ref: LDP-270-1
16 November 2009

Dear

**THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
WEST HIGHLAND AND ISLANDS LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION
INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN HEARING – (INDIVIDUAL INVITATIONS FOR
HEARING SESSIONS WERE DETAILED IN EACH LETTER)**

I refer to the letter that The Highland Council sent you on the 15 July 2009 advising that the above plan was submitted to Scottish Ministers on 28 May 2009 for examination. You were advised at that time that the Reporters would write to you if they required further information and would let you know how it should be submitted.

Mr David Russell, one of the Reporters appointed by Scottish Ministers to examine the unresolved issues in respect of the above local plan, has decided that a series of hearings is needed to gather further information on certain matters relating to the Fort William area.

The attached annex confirms the matters to be considered at each hearing, along with the names of those who have been asked to take part. The hearings will consist of an informal discussion, led by the Reporter, in which he will explore the specified subjects in order that he can obtain the information he considers necessary to enable him to reach his conclusions and recommendations.

All of the hearings will be held within the Ben Nevis Hotel, North Road, Fort William, PH33 6TG. The hotel has disabled access but please let us know if you have mobility needs or any other special requirements.

You will see from the annex and attached timetable that a total of 8 separate hearings will be held between 19 and 22 January 2010, with the morning and afternoon sessions on each of these days covering a different subject.

The first hearing will take place between 10:00 and 13:00 hours on Tuesday 19 January 2010, with the second hearing taking place between 14:00 and 17:00 hours that same day. These start times will apply to both morning and afternoon sessions held for the rest of that week.

It should be noted that no other issues relating to the local plan will be considered at these hearings.

The Reporter invites you to take part in the hearing session concerning the alleged over-provision of land allocated for housing development in Fort William.

Participation in the hearing

All those participating in the hearing should submit a written statement in advance. This should set out their response to the subjects identified by the Reporter which will be discussed at the hearing. as set out in the annex.

The Highland Council will be taking part in the hearing and is to submit its written statement to this office and to you by 7 December 2009.

Details of the other persons or organisations that have also been invited to take part in the hearing, and are also to submit a written statement, are given on the enclosed list along with their contact address.

If you accept the invitation to take part in the hearing, you should submit a copy of your written statement to this office, to the other parties taking part in the same hearing session, and to the Highland Council, by 21 December 2009. In preparing your statement, you may take account of the contents of the council's statement. Your written statement should not exceed 1,500 words. Your statement should only address the subjects listed by the Reporter, but you are not required to respond to any which are not relevant to your concerns.

Please note that you may ask someone else to speak on your behalf at the hearing session.

If you decide to do this, let us know the name of the person nominated to represent when you send us your written statement.

If your statement relies on material contained in any other document, a copy of that document, or preferably of the relevant extract, should accompany the statement by the same deadline. These documents should be clearly referenced and listed on a covering sheet. Copies of these documents should also be sent to those taking part in that same hearing.

Others who lodged representations with the Highland Council in relation to this matter, but have not been invited to take part in the hearing, will still be able to attend and observe, and a copy of the timetable has been sent to them for information.

The next steps

You must now confirm to us in writing or by e-mail by 30 November 2009, whether or not you intend to take part in the hearing session.

If you decide not to take part in the hearing session but still want to submit a written statement, please tell us by 30 November. Copies of your statement along with any supporting documents and a document list must still be submitted to each of the participating persons or organisations including the Highland Council and this office by the deadline given earlier which is 21 December 2009.

An extra copy should be sent to the council, who will arrange for copies of all written statements and documents to be available for inspection by members of the public at Fort William Library, Airds Crossing, High Street, Fort William, PH33 6EU, 2 weeks before the hearing sessions starts, and they can also be viewed on their website at:-

www.highland.gov.uk/yourenvironment/planning/developmentplans/localplans/WHILPExamination.htm

If you decide not to take up either the invitation to submit a written statement or to participate in the hearing, please be assured that the Reporter has copies of the previous representations you have sent to the Highland Council, and he will take these into account.

Postal Difficulties/Information updates

In the event of postal difficulties, you may wish to e-mail your response to me.

Please note that any changes to the hearing timetable will be notified through the council's website.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions about the above arrangements.

Yours sincerely

Brian Archibald
Development Plan Officer

Enc.

HEARING ISSUES:-

The Plan's Provisions for Fort William

The subject matters to be considered:-

Day 1:- Tuesday (am) - 10:00-13:00

The alleged over-provision of land

Invited participants:- Highland Council; Bidwells for Rio Tinto Alcan (Glen Nevis) and for Mr and Mrs Carver; Brodies for Inverlochy Castle Ltd (Torlundy); West Highland Woodlands (Fassfern); Oatridge Ltd and Locheil Estates (Blar Mohr); Ryden LLP for Malcolm Cameron (Lundavra); Muir Smith Evans for Fort William Waterfront Ltd.

Subjects:-

1. Clarification of the existing "established" land supply for housing in the Fort William settlement development area at the base date for this plan, with list of the sites making up that supply, their potential capacity in housing units, and listing any existing constraints on their development.
2. The total and/or additional requirements for housing land in Fort William which arise from the approved structure plan.
3. The scale of housing development which the local plan seeks to deliver in Fort William within the plan period, and how that relates to the above context, with list of the proposed new sites, their potential capacity in housing units, and any existing constraints on their development.
4. Explanation of how the plan's proposal for Torlundy does, and the alternative proposal for Fassfern might, relate to the above requirement and provision.
5. Does the provision in the local plan equate to an over-supply of housing land, or not?
6. If it does, would a reduction be justified, and on what basis should any modifications be made in order to secure that reduction?
7. List of any new planning permissions granted for 5 or more houses on sites in Fort William since the base date of the local plan, and explanation of any implications which arise for the provision made in the plan.

Day 1:- Tuesday (pm) - 14:00-17:00

The alleged under-provision of land allocated for the development of

Invited participants:- Highland Council; Highlands and Islands Enterprise; Fort William and District Chamber of Commerce; Bidwells for Rio Tinto Alcan; BSW Timber; Oatridge Ltd and Locheil Estates; Ryden LLP for Malcolm Cameron (Lundavra); Muir Smith Evans for Fort William Waterfront Ltd;

Subjects:-

1. Confirmation of the existing “established” supply of land for business and industry in the Fort William settlement development area at the base date for this plan, with list of the sites, their potential development capacity, and any existing constraints on their development.
2. Any requirements relating to business and industry in Fort William which arise from the approved structure plan.
3. The scale of development for business and industry which the local plan seeks to deliver in Fort William within the plan period, and how that relates to the above context, with list of the sites, their development potential, and any existing constraints on their development.
4. Does the provision in the local plan equate to an under-supply of land for business and industrial development, or not?
5. If it does, would an increase be justified, and on what basis should any modifications be made in order to secure it?
6. List of any new planning permissions granted for significant business or industrial development on sites in Fort William since the base date of the local plan, and explanation of any implications which arise for the provision made in the plan.

Day 2:- Wednesday (am) - 10:00-13:00

Expansion site MU1 (Corpach): the

Invited participants:- Highland Council; Highlands and Islands Enterprise; Fort William and District Chamber of Commerce; BSW Timber; Kilmallie Community Company; Mr and Mrs Sutton, Sheila and Vinny Llewellyn, and Ian and Moira Aitchison (being representative of local residents)

Subjects:-

1. What is the site currently allocated for in the adopted Lochaber Local Plan, and has planning permission been granted for any development already?
2. What, if any, provisions of the structure plan are relevant to the consideration of this proposal?
3. Are there any findings of the Environmental Report or Appropriate Assessment which are relevant to the consideration of this proposal?
4. What is the development potential of this site?
5. What scope is there to accommodate different uses?
6. What are the physical, servicing, and environmental constraints on development?
7. Is there scope for allocating specific parts of the site for particular uses, and if so, specifically which parts and which uses?
8. What adverse effects would arise from the development of this site?

Day 2:- Wednesday (pm) - 14:00-17:00

Expansion sites MU5 and MU7
proposed scale, uses, environmental

Invited participants:- Highland Council; Highlands and Islands Enterprise; Brodies for Inverlochy Castle Ltd (Torlundy); Fort William and District Chamber of Commerce; Oatridge Ltd and Locheil Estates; Dr Mary Elliott, Dr Ian Strachan, Mr and Mrs M Morrison, and Mrs C Morrison (being representative of local residents and those concerned about impact on local ecology)

Subjects:-

1. What are the sites currently allocated for in the adopted Lochaber Local Plan, and has planning permission been granted for any development already?
2. What, if any, provisions of the structure plan are relevant to the consideration of these proposals?
3. Are there any findings of the Environmental Report or Appropriate Assessment which are relevant to the consideration of these proposals?
4. What is the development potential of these sites?
5. What scope is there to accommodate different uses?
6. What are the physical, servicing, and environmental constraints on development?
7. Is there scope for allocating specific parts of the sites for particular uses, and if so, specifically which parts and which uses?
8. What adverse effects would arise from the development of these sites?

Day 3:- Thursday (am) - 10:00-13:00
on existing residents

Expansion sites MU8 and MU17

Invited participants:- Highland Council; Highlands and Islands Enterprise; Ryden LLP for Malcolm Cameron (Lundavra); Martin and Anne Halligan, Edward Griffiths, Robert Bruce, Dr Ian Strachan, Alastair Cumming, John Rose, (being representative of local residents and those concerned about impact on local ecology); Scottish Natural Heritage for Site of Special Scientific Interest concern

Subjects:-

1. What are the sites currently allocated for in the adopted Lochaber Local Plan, and has planning permission been granted for any development already?
2. What, if any, provisions of the structure plan are relevant to the consideration of these proposals?
3. Are there any findings of the Environmental Report or Appropriate Assessment which are relevant to the consideration of these proposals?
4. What is the development potential of these sites?
5. What scope is there to accommodate different uses?
6. What are the physical, servicing, and environmental constraints on development?
7. Is there scope for allocating specific parts of the sites for particular uses, and if so, specifically which parts and which uses?
8. What adverse effects would arise from the development of these sites?

Day 3:- Thursday (pm) - 14:00-17:00
sustainability and transport

Expansion site MU9 and business site

Invited participants:- Highland Council; Highlands and Islands Enterprise; Brodies for Inverlochy Castle Ltd (Torlundy); Bidwells for Mr and Mrs Carver; Howie Minerals; Transport Scotland; Inverlochy and Torlundy Community Council; and Torlundy Community Group (representing local residents).

Subjects:-

1. What are the sites currently allocated for in the adopted Lochaber Local Plan, and has planning permission been granted for any development already?
2. What, if any, provisions of the structure plan are relevant to the consideration of these proposals?
3. Are there any findings of the Environmental Report or Appropriate Assessment which are relevant to the consideration of these proposals?
4. Does the Torlundy site have the potential to develop a “new community with a degree of self-containment”?
5. What scope is there to accommodate different uses?
6. How does the Torlundy proposal relate to the proposal for Leanachan Forest?
7. What are the physical, servicing, and environmental constraints on development?
8. Is there scope for allocating specific parts of the sites for particular uses, and if so, specifically which parts and which uses?
9. What adverse effects would arise from the development of these sites?

Day 4:- Friday (am) - 10:00-13:00
environmental impact, and

Business and expansion sites B6, MU6

Invited participants:- Highland Council; Nevis Partnership; Brodies for Inverloch Castle Ltd (Torlundy); Bidwells for Rio Tinto Alcan; Scottish Natural Heritage (re National Scenic Area and special area of conservation); and Fort William Community Council (also representing local residents).

Subjects:-

1. What are the sites currently allocated for in the adopted Lochaber Local Plan, and has planning permission been granted for any development already?
2. What, if any, provisions of the structure plan are relevant to the consideration of these proposals?
3. Are there any findings of the Environmental Report or Appropriate Assessment which are relevant to the consideration of these proposals?
4. What is the development potential of these sites?
5. What scope is there to accommodate different uses on sites MU6 and MU16?
6. What are the physical, servicing, and environmental constraints on development?
7. Is there scope for allocating specific parts of the sites for particular uses, and if so, specifically which parts and which uses?
8. What adverse effects would arise from the development of these sites?

Day 4:- Friday (pm) - 14:00-17:00

Expansion sites MU10 (Waterfront) the

Invited participants:- Highland Council; Highlands and Islands Enterprise; Muir Smith Evans for Fort William Waterfront Ltd; the Scottish Environment Protection Agency; Mr MacDonald and Mr MacKenzie (local residents).

Subjects:-

1. What is the site currently allocated for in the adopted Lochaber Local Plan, and has planning permission been granted for any development already?
2. What, if any, provisions of the structure plan are relevant to the consideration of this proposal?
3. Are there any findings of the Environmental Report or Appropriate Assessment which are relevant to the consideration of this proposal?
4. What is the development potential of this site?
5. What scope is there to accommodate housing and business uses?
6. What are the physical, servicing, and environmental constraints on development?
7. Is there scope for allocating specific parts of the site for particular uses, and if so, specifically which parts and which uses?
8. What adverse effects would arise from the development of this site, or from the proposed extension to provide marine and cruise ship reception facilities?