



## Rio Tinto Alcan Highland Estates

West Highlands & Islands Local Plan Examination Fort William Hearing Sessions

Hearing No1: The alleged over-provision of land allocated for housing development in Fort William

---

December 2009

Rio- Tinto Alcan Highland Estates  
West Highland & Islands Local Plan Examination  
Fort William Hearing No. 1  
December 2009

**Subject 1 – Clarification of existing "established" land supply for housing in the Fort William SDA**

Rio Tinto Alcan Highland Estates (RTAHE) agrees with The Highland Councils (THC) interpretation of the established housing land supply within the Fort William SDA.

**Subject 2 – Structure Plan Housing Requirement**

RTAHE notes the contents of the The Highland Structure Plan 2001 and would wish to draw particular attention to the date this plan was approved in 2001. The Information and research that underpin it are now considerably out of date and take no account of more recent housing land audits or census information.

The Highland Wide Local Development Plan is a more appropriate reference document for analysing future housing requirements in the Fort William area.

**Subject 3 – Additional Housing Land Supply**

The information provided by THC is noted.

**Subject 4 – How do the plans proposals for Torlundy and potentially Fassfern relate to the identified housing land requirement and provision?**

We note that this question is dealt with primarily by THC at paragraph 6.9 of their Statement of Further Information and we further note the contents therein. RTAHE do not think that it is conducive to the spirit of the overall discussion to begin surmising about the relative ability of landowners to fund infrastructure work when it is not possible to draw any reasonably accurate conclusions in this regard.

**Subject 5 – Does the provision in the Local Plan Equate to an Over-Supply of Housing Land, or Not?**

Assuming that the housing land audit is accurate and the methodology of its formulation are sound, (we note that it does not list any of the constraints of the sites that form part of the established supply) then in a purely statistical sense yes.

RTAHE would suggest that the housing land audit does not take sufficient account of the particular local circumstances relating to the delivery of housing in the Fort William area. Further to that RTAHE would support the THC's statement that, in light of the specific local circumstances referred to in THC's Statement of Further Information, it is entirely appropriate in the context of the second largest urban area in The Highlands to support a strategy of conscious, planned over-allocation.

Rio- Tinto Alcan Highland Estates  
West Highland & Islands Local Plan Examination  
Fort William Hearing No. 1  
December 2009

**Subject 6 – If it does, would a reduction be justified, and on what basis should any modifications be made in order to secure that reduction?**

RTAHE support THC's arguments in relation to this subject.

RTAHE had previously objected to the proposed "exclusivity" arrangement referred to at paragraph 6.7 of THC's Statement of Further Information, a version of which had appeared in a previous plan draft (December 2007). It is difficult to see how such an arrangement could work in practice and how it would sit with the statutory 5 year shelf life of the Local Plan.