

ROSS & CROMARTY EAST LOCAL PLAN (As Continued in Force) (April 2012)

PLANA IONADAIL ROS IS CHROMBAIDH AN EAR

Written Statement



ADOPTED PLAN ▼ FEBRUARY 2007

How to Read and Use the Plan

This Local Plan (as continued in force) must be read in conjunction with the Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP). The HwLDP contains the Spatial Strategy, Vision and all general policy against which development proposals will be assessed. Specific policy allocation in respect of Nigg can be found in Section 16 of the HwLDP, with the general policies found in Sections 18 to 23 (inc).

Ross and Cromarty East Local Plan (as continued in force)

The adopted Highland-wide Local Development Plan replaced the Highland Structure Plan (March 2001) (except within the Cairngorms National Park) and updates/supersedes the “general policies” of the existing adopted Local Plans. In order to retain the other elements of the existing adopted Local Plans (including but not limited to; site allocations, settlement development areas not covered by the Highland-wide Local Development Plan and site specific policies) a Parliamentary Order was laid before Scottish Parliament on 16th March 2012 to enable these elements to remain in force to the extent so specified as required by Schedule 1 of The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 As Amended. The Order is called The Town and Country Planning (Continuation in force of Local Plans) (Highland) (Scotland) Order 2012 and came into force on 1st April 2012.

The elements of the adopted Local Plans which remain in force are included within the Retention Schedule as contained in Appendix 7 of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan. These retained elements of local plans will remain retained until the time a new area Local Development Plan is prepared covering that area. At that time the retained elements of the local plan will no longer be part of the Development Plan.

The Retained Elements of the Plan are contained in the following sections of this document, the original Local Plan documents have been redacted to remove or shade out sections of text no longer in force. The continued in force parts of the Plan remain with the HwLDP providing the general policy context for these sections of text and mapping.

Habitats Regulation Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

For the Order to be passed it had to be clear that the retained elements of the adopted local plans have met the requirements of European Community Law with respect to Habitats Regulation Appraisal (HRA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment. The Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) considers all the policies and proposals of the adopted local plans which are intended to be retained in force. The Plan must be read alongside the HRA.

Provisions of Local Plan Map(s) as continued in force

The provisions of the Proposals Map (including any inset contained in or accompanying it and the policies and proposals shown on such inset) and related notations, referencing and explanatory text, only to the extent to which those provisions show, illustrate or explain any provision of the local plan which is continued in force by the Parliamentary Order* and as detailed in the Retention Schedule.

The Retention Schedule (extract) below lists the retained elements to the area Local Plan.
**Retention Schedule (extract) for: Ross and Cromarty East
 Local Plan (Adopted: 8 February 2007)**

Provisions of Ross and Cromarty East Local Plan to continue in force	Limitations and exclusions
1. The provisions of the Written Statement contained in—	
Chapter 5 (general policies)	Only to the extent to which it sets out and applies 'Settlement Policies'
Chapter 6 (landward area)	Other than the provisions of—
	the paragraph under the heading "General";
	paragraphs 1 to 3;
	paragraphs 31 to 33;
	paragraphs 37 to 39;
	paragraph 44;
paragraphs 53 to 72; and	
paragraphs 74 and 75.	
Chapter 7 (Achnasheen)	
Chapter 8 (Alness)	
Chapter 9 (Avoch)	
Chapter 10 (Conon Bridge)	
Chapter 11 (Contin)	
Chapter 12 (Cromarty)	
Chapter 13 (Culbokie)	
Chapter 14 (Dingwall)	
Chapter 16 (Evanton)	
Chapter 17 (Fortrose)	
Chapter 18 (Rosemarkie)	
Chapter 19 (Garve)	
Chapter 20 (Hill of Fearn)	
Chapter 21 (Inver)	
Chapter 22 (Invergordon)	
Chapter 23 (Kildary)	
Chapter 24 (Marybank)	
Chapter 25 (Maryburgh)	
Chapter 26 (Milton (of Kildary))	
Chapter 27 (Muir of Ord)	
Chapter 28 (Munloch)	
Chapter 29 (North Kessock)	
Chapter 30	

Provisions of Ross and Cromarty East Local Plan to continue in force	Limitations and exclusions
(Portmahomack)	
Chapter 31 (Seaboard Villages)	
Chapter 32 (Strathpeffer)	
Chapter 33 (Tain)	
Chapter 34 (Tore)	
Appendix 1	Only to the extent to which it sets out and describes "Settlement Policies".
Appendix 2	
2. The provisions of the Proposals Map (including any inset contained in or accompanying it and the policies and proposals shown on such inset) and related notations, referencing and explanatory text	Only to the extent to which those provisions show, illustrate or explain any provision of the local plan which is continued in force by this Order.

Chapter 4: Strategy - Ro-innleachd

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- **Strategic Themes**
- **Spatial Elements of the Strategy**
 - Development Corridor
 - Rural Development Area
 - Hinterland
 - Heritage/Natural Zone

Chapter 5: General Policies - Poileasaidhean Coitcheann

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- **Background Policies**
- **Settlement Policies**
- **Supporting Policies**

Chapter 6: Landward Area - Sgìre an Fhearainn

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- **General**
- **Housing**, including development potential in the small rural settlements of Achterneed, Alcaig, Arabella, Ardross, Balblair, Barbaraville, Blairninich, Cromarty Mains, Croftnacreich, Davidston, Easter Kinkell, Ferintosh, Gorstan, Jemimaville, Kilcoy, Killen, Milton-Redcastle, Mount High, Newhall, Newton of Kinkell, Nigg, Raddery, Rhicullen/Newmore, Rockfield, Rosehaugh Estate, Scotsburn and Windhill
- **Economic Development**
- **Services & Infrastructure**
- **Environment**

PARTIAL RETENTION

Chapters 7 to 34: MAIN SETTLEMENTS -

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PRÌOMH THUINNEACHAIDHEAN

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8. Alness	45 – 48	See Inset 8
9. Avoch	49 – 51	See Inset 9
10. Conon Bridge	52 – 55	See Inset 10
11. Contin	55/56	A3 Inset Map booklet
12. Cromarty	57 – 60	A3 Inset Map booklet
13. Culbokie	60 – 62	A3 Inset Map booklet
14. Dingwall	62 – 66	See Inset 14
15. Edderton	66/67	A3 Inset Map booklet
16. Evanton	68 – 72	See Inset 16
17. Fortrose	72 – 76	See Inset 17
18. Rosemarkie	76 – 78	See Inset 18
19. Garve	79	A3 Inset Map booklet
20. Hill of Fearn	80/81	A3 Inset Map booklet
21. Inver	82	A3 Inset Map booklet
22. Invergordon	83 – 86	See Inset 22

23. Kildary	86/87	A3 Inset Map booklet
24. Marybank	87/88	A3 Inset Map booklet
25. Maryburgh	88 – 90	See Inset 25
26. Milton (of Kildary)	91/92	A3 Inset Map booklet
27. Muir of Ord	93 – 95	See Inset 27
28. Munloch	95 – 97	A3 Inset Map booklet
29. North Kessock	97 – 99	See Inset 29
30. Portmahomack	99/100	A3 Inset Map booklet
31. Seaboard Villages	101/102	A3 Inset Map booklet
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Chapter 5: General Policies - Poileasaidhean Coitcheann

Deriving from the above considerations, the following policies - intended to guide land use change in principle - are shown on the Proposals and Inset Maps. These are:

Background Policies

- BP1** *The Council will favour development subject to detailed siting, design and servicing factors.*
- BP2** *The Council will permit development unless this would be likely to have a significantly adverse effect on, or be significantly adversely affected by, the features for which the area has been designated. Where it is concluded that any such adverse effects are likely to arise, development will only be permitted where it is considered that these would be outweighed by social or economic benefits.*
- BP3** *The Council will only approve development if there are no significant adverse effects on heritage, amenity, public health and safety interests.*
- BP4** *The Council will not favour development unless there are over-riding environmental or public health and safety grounds or unless there are imperative reasons of over-riding public interest including those of a social or economic nature.*

Settlement Policies

Settlement Boundary

The Council will maintain a strong presumption against sporadic development outwith settlement boundaries in order to protect their landscape setting or avoid adversely affecting their longer-term expansion.

C: Town/Village Centre

The Council will encourage town centre uses appropriate to the settlement's role in the hierarchy.

H: Housing

The Council will safeguard the function and character of established residential areas and will encourage appropriate development.

B: Business

The Council will maintain or promote business/tourism.

I: Industry

The Council will maintain or promote industrial uses.

S: Special Uses

The Council will expect other uses mainly of a community, service or tourist related nature to be maintained or developed where stated.

E: Expansion

The Council will encourage development in accordance with a comprehensive master plan and will presume against piecemeal proposals.

A: Amenity

The Council will safeguard these areas from development not associated with their purpose and function.

N.B. The criteria for designating the Background and Settlement policies are defined in Appendix I.

Chapter 6: Landward Area - Sgìre an Fhearainn

The Landward Area covers the largest geographical part of the Local Plan area; essentially all land outwith the main settlements, which are covered in Chapters 7 to 34.

General

The Council will apply General Policies BP1 to 4 throughout the Landward Area, as shown on the Proposals Map. Under Policies BP2, 3 and 4, a degree of restriction is applied depending upon the nature and severity of the development constraint, be it for servicing, amenity, nature conservation or public safety reasons. A high quality of design for new and extended buildings, in keeping with the character of traditional rural buildings, is expected. More specific guidance for the siting and design of new houses is indicated in the Development Plan Policy Guideline, which accompanies this Local Plan. Site and area specific policies, proposals and development opportunities are shown below.

Housing

1. *The Council will favour rehabilitation and re-use for residential purposes of vacant dwellings and other traditional buildings throughout the countryside, particularly where services are readily available, so long as the building survives to wall head level [G2].*
2. *The Council will favour new housing development in the Rural Development Areas of Achanalt, Grudie, Lochluichart, west of Edderton, Nigg, Seaboard, Portmahomack and Strathconon. Outwith identified groups or settlements in these areas, proposals may be acceptable where they help repopulate communities, strengthen services and reflect the character of development in the locality. Suitably designed proposals will be supported if they*
 - *are consistent with General and Housing Policies in the Structure Plan*
 - *are in accordance with the existing settlement pattern, especially in relation to sufficient separation between houses*
 - *account for drainage constraints or can otherwise be adequately serviced and do not involve undue public expenditure or infrastructure out of keeping with the rural character*
 - *avoid hazards, significant earthworks, prominent siting or conflict with natural and cultural heritage interests.*

The Council will also monitor the numbers of housing completions and their impact on the local environment [H3].

3. *Development may be acceptable within the defined boundaries of the small rural settlements listed as 4 to 30 in the table below. Suitably designed proposals will be supported if they*
 - *are consistent with General and Housing Policies in the Structure Plan*
 - *are consistent with the established settlement/development pattern*
 - *can be drained to the satisfaction of the drainage authority (GSP2) and where other servicing does not involve undue public expenditure or infrastructure out of keeping with the rural character*
 - *avoid hazards, significant earthworks, prominent siting or conflict with natural and cultural heritage interests.*

In line with General Housing Policy H, a strong presumption against development will also be maintained on land immediately outwith the defined settlement boundaries [G2].

Ref.	Location	Capacity	Comments/Constraints
4.	Achterneed	7	Development potential limited by steep slope to the north and prime agricultural land elsewhere. Future opportunities rely on redevelopment and infill sites and should respect the Estate / 'farm town' township cluster character of the village around Achterneed Farm. Redevelopment opportunity for up to three dwellings adjacent to Rowan Croft access road,
5.	Alcaig	20	Imperfectly draining soils. The B9163 road allows good access. Suitable development land exists on backland and along southern edge of village. Identify site for play area. Developers /applicants should contribute on a pro rata basis per each new house to the provision of the play area and road improvements required in relation to the overall development. These should include visibility improvements

			<i>at the T-junction, traffic calming, and, for development on the north side of the village, a turning head on the west side of road.</i>
6.	Arabella	10	<i>No development until such time as the drainage system is brought up to an appropriate standard (programmed for 2004/06). No development within 15m of the STW or removal of important roadside amenity trees.</i>
7.	Ardross	25	<i>Lack of a public drainage system at the focal point for the community around the school and hall where a proliferation of septic tanks will create environmental problems. In the interests of sustaining important community facilities (school, hall etc.), The Council will discuss with Scottish Water and SEPA the prospects for provision of a first time public drainage system to serve areas (a), (b) and (c) below. Specific allocations are made as follows:- (a) 3-4 houses adjacent the hall and south of the Strath Rusdale Road. Single access point to serve all properties, leave access for possible future development. (b) Land to the north of Strath Rusdale Road is allocated for up to 5 houses. (c) At Cuillich (former Castle Inn), 3-5 houses. (d) The former Ardross Mains Steading offers potential for renovation to provide housing within the existing farmworkers cottages and the steading building. There is opportunity for development of business uses within the steading to provide local employment opportunities. Potential exists for limited new build to help cross-subsidise renovation of the steading building. This should be located to the north of the steading building and reflect the character, layout and design of the existing farmworkers buildings. Development shall be subject to the provision of necessary infrastructure. A design brief is required, setting out how the renovation and any new build will respect the form and materials of the original steading buildings and houses. A section 75 agreement will be required to ensure that any proposed renovation is substantially completed before any new houses are occupied.</i>
8.	Balblair	7	<i>Septic tank serving houses at Aird Place is at capacity. Imperfectly draining soils. Limited infill/expansion, notably to west, north-east and east.</i>
9.	Barbaraville	80	<i>Potential further small scale infill housing development plus (a) Land is allocated north of Mull Hall for housing, permission granted for 50 houses at Mull Hall for "retirement" homes, first phase currently under construction. (b) 20.2 ha of land is allocated for low density housing at Barbaraville North. Development proposals for the site shall require to produce an overall layout showing built form, circulation, green space and landscaping. Connect to the existing public sewer. There is also a need to protect important open spaces and amenity areas, particularly at the foreshore and presume against development within 15m of the sewage treatment plant.</i>
10.	Blairninich	14	<i>Subject to satisfactory access, drainage (GSP2) and safeguarding archaeology, mature trees and agricultural land, potential exists for new infill housing in both parts of this settlement. The builders yard and adjacent land represent a significant redevelopment opportunity subject to any necessary decontamination measures. Potential also exists for additional housing opposite the hotel, west of the Care Home and redevelopment of the disused steading south of Old Inn Cottages. Extension of roadside footpath would enhance safety and amenity for residents.</i>
11.	Cromarty Mains	8	<i>Imperfectly draining soils. Permission granted for group of 8 houses south of cottages, subject to connection to the Cromarty treatment works and minor road improvements from village at developer's expense. Development should be of a courtyard or terrace style. Design and siting should avoid prejudicing the setting of the listed farmhouse, associated terrace of cottages and the possible conversion of the traditional farm buildings. Maintain the tree belt to the north east and avoid prejudicing continued agricultural operations.</i>
12.	Croftnacreich	8	<i>Poor sub-soil drainage. Presumption against further development seeking septic tank drainage. Limited capacity for further infill at western end. Houses should be sited and scaled so as to avoid prominence from A9. Safeguard amenity woodland to west.</i>

13.	Davidston	4	<i>Existing septic tank at capacity and underlying soils are imperfectly draining. Good access, but may need localised widening. Subject to satisfactory drainage and protection of open spaces, scope exists to extend building envelope towards the south west. Small play area required.</i>
14.	Easter Kinkell	15	<i>Several key open spaces and amenity woodland at centre of village around school. Land to west is free draining, imperfect elsewhere. Side roads steep and narrow. Traffic speeds high and B9169 has dangerous dipping section to immediate east of village. Developers /applicants should contribute on a pro rata basis per each new house to the provision of traffic management/speed reduction measures and a play area, required in relation to the overall development. Identify site for play area. Key development opportunities lie to south west of village towards Easter Kinkell House. Presumption against further development seeking septic tank drainage. The Council will discuss with Scottish Water and SEPA the prospects for the provision of a first time public drainage system through a future investment programme. Consult with the roads authority on localised flooding information. New development should use grouped accesses.</i>
15.	Ferintosh	4	<i>Amenity woodlands and several quality buildings including listed Church. Suitable for low density infill avoiding significant loss of tree cover, historical and other sensitive features.</i>
16.	Gorstan	2	<i>Limited infill housing opportunities exist, having respect for existing spacing and character and avoiding encroachment onto better in-bye croft land.</i>
17.	Jemimaville	6	<i>Borders Cromarty Firth SPA and Udale Bay NNR. Good access except for backland properties to north served via narrow tracks. Limited infill capacity, but more significant development potential between hall and telephone exchange, subject to all development being directed to existing public sewer and shared access points. House designs should reflect the scale, proportions and materials of the original part of the village.</i>
18.	Kilcoy	10 - 12	<i>Developers /applicants should contribute on a pro rata basis per each new house to the provision of a suitable drainage system and road improvements required in relation to the overall development.</i>
19.	Killen	8	<i>Connection to public sewer with improved treatment is preferred.</i>
20.	Milton-Redcastle	6	<i>Mostly free draining soils and private drainage system with limited capacity (GSP2). Local access deficiency via poor single track coastal road. Protect tree belts/ woodlands.</i>
21.	Mount High	15 - 20	<i>Development within the original part of the settlement limited by accessibility and hydro line. Expansion to the north requires separate single access and a privately developed sewage treatment plant. A minimum of 25% of the houses should be for affordable needs (GSP8). The developer should provide a play amenity area on the south side with connecting foot paths. Maintain and add to existing planting along the boundaries.</i>
22.	Newhall	10 - 15	<i>Underlying soils are imperfectly draining. Septic tank drainage at present and presumption against further septic tanks. Scope for 10-15 houses with consolidation close to main community facilities. Upgrading of adjoining road junction and extensive structural planting essential.</i>
23.	Newton of Kinkell	4	<i>No mains drainage and imperfectly draining soils. Scope exists for one infill plot in dispersed area plus three in the redevelopment of former contractor's yard at Rootfield. Consider whether decontamination of the yard is required (GSP6).</i>
24.	Nigg	7	<i>Scope for small scale housing expansion exists adjacent the small local authority development at Cameron Place, Nigg. The site provides excellent views across the Cromarty Firth. The existing wastewater treatment plant is at capacity and needs to be upgraded to accommodate further development. Proposals must safeguard the play area and kick about pitch area. Any future proposal may require contribution to the upgrading of current play facilities.</i>
25.	Raddery	6	<i>No mains drainage system. Adopted road network is single track and traffic is slowed by a series of bends. Scope for further infill to west of farm and east of school, if not required for further school-related development.</i>

26.	Rhicullen/ Newmore	8	<i>Development opportunities are restricted in advance of a satisfactory new drainage system. As further housing will help sustain the school, the Council will discuss with Scottish Water and SEPA the prospects for providing a first time public drainage system. In the meantime a presumption will be maintained against further development. Future development proposals should be confined to the eastern and western margins of the community and avoid the playing field and safeguarded woodland to the south.</i>
27.	Rockfield	2	<i>The steep coastal slope, tortuous access road and the need to safeguard the open spaces along the seafront limits further development to small scale infill housing.</i>
28.	Rosehaugh Estate	15	<i>In addition to the remaining potential to convert existing buildings, scope exists for approximately 15 new houses. These should either be free-standing within extensive private grounds or closely integrated with existing buildings, but not laid out as a uniform low density development. Detailed siting must respect the immediate settings of listed buildings and avoid impinging on semi-natural woodland, other woodland of landscape or wildlife interest, or notable landscape vistas within the Estate, which are key components of the designated Garden and Designed Landscape. The Council will seek to enter into a Planning Agreement to:</i> <i>(a) restrict subsequent sub-division or further development of individual plots;</i> <i>(b) restrict new construction in accordance with an agreed Master Plan to binding commitments to the appropriately phased rehabilitation and conversion of existing buildings and the future management of the woodlands and other common areas;</i> <i>(c) cover appropriate phasing of necessary infrastructure improvements;</i> <i>(d) retain in perpetuity the undeveloped character of the buffer land between the buildings on the estate and the village of Avoch; and</i> <i>(e) cover opportunities for public access and enjoyment of existing public access and enjoyment of appropriate walks.</i> <i>There is a presumption against further septic tank drainage and a connection to the Avoch public sewers is advised.</i>
29.	Scotsburn	12	<i>The Scotsburn area has seen substantial housing development over the last decade and there are now significant servicing problems especially in relation to waste disposal. The majority of development has been contained to the southern side of the road, where the best views are to be found. Potential for further infill development is subject to satisfactory drainage arrangements (GSP2) and, where feasible, the use of shared access points. The allocation borders the Morangie Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) and the Scotsburn Wood Semi-Natural and Ancient Woodlands; due regard will be taken of these natural heritage considerations.</i>
30.	Windhill	7	<i>Growth is constrained by farmland, a redundant quarry and water courses. Vehicular circulation and access is poor. An amenity safeguard providing separation from A862 will be maintained. Environmental enhancement including undergrounding of overhead wires will be sought in conjunction with future development proposals. Developers will be required to carry out monitoring of archaeological remains. Opportunities for additional houses are as follows : -</i> <i>(a) Former Sawmill: Up to 3 houses, observing a 10m. setback from north-west and south-east site boundaries and the Black Burn. Developers will contribute to improvement of Windhill A862 south junction and access road.</i> <i>(b) Black Burn: 2 houses. Developer contribution to access road / south junction improvement.</i> <i>(c) Infill Site: 1 house. Developer contribution to improve north junction access with A862.</i> <i>(d) Former Steading: 1 house, redevelopment potential to create one house. Developer contribution to improve north junction of A862.</i> <i>(e) Old Sandpit: subject to satisfactory assessment and amelioration of contamination and ground conditions. Developer contribution to north junction access with A862.</i>

31. *In the Heritage/ Natural Zone, suitably designed new houses may be acceptable if they*
- are consistent with General and Housing Policies in the Structure Plan*
 - are broadly located within the existing limits of the settlement*

- can be adequately serviced and do not involve undue public expenditure or infrastructure out of keeping with the rural character
- avoid hazards, significant earthworks, prominent siting or conflict with natural and cultural heritage interests.

32. In the open countryside of the Hinterland area the Council will presume against housing development that creates new ad hoc clusters of housing or adds to existing small tightly-knit groups of housing comprising 3 or more dwellings sited less than 50 metres apart. In exceptional cases and subject to adequate drainage (GSP2), there may be opportunities to consolidate or round off certain existing groups with 1 or 2 suitably designed new houses. These groups are identified on the Proposals Map and listed in Appendix III. Development proposals should indicate the relationship of the new buildings to the group as a whole, arrangements for planting to screen or enhance the group's amenity and appearance, and measures to remedy infrastructure problems [H3].

33. The Council will presume against housing development elsewhere in the countryside, i.e. in the Hinterland around the towns of Muir of Ord, Dingwall, Alness, Invergordon and Tain, the Black Isle and other areas defined under General Background Policies BP3 and 4, as indicated on the Proposals Map [H3]. The policy also applies to the small settlements of Clashnamuiach (by Fearn), Craigdarroch, Dunmore, Jamestown, Kilmuir, Knockfarrel, Swordale, Tarbat House and Urray.

Economic Development

Large Business and Industrial Sites

34. At Highland Deephaven land is allocated for a mix of business and industrial uses [B/I] in accordance with the original master plan. Main areas of development include: -

Ref.	Area (Ha)	Location	Uses/requirements
(a)	7	from Newton Road to the north	business industry; maintain screen planting; access from HC industrial estate
(b)	27	adjoining the A9	business and general industry
(c)	28	south of the above	bulk external storage
(d)	21	south west flank	large scale general industries requiring marine and rail access
(e)	23	west of Allt Grad	single major industrial user requiring marine access.

Other opportunities exist for smaller stand alone uses on residual areas of the site. Development of part of the site has taken place accommodating the pipe spooling facility. The overall developable areas have been reduced through the development of the A9(T) and also by the presence of the Cromarty Firth Special Protection Area (SPA). Connection to a public sewer is a pre-requisite for further development. Developers may be expected to provide a new drainage system to adoptable standards (GSP2). The Council supports the development of related rail and sea freight facilities, subject to adequate environmental safeguards [TC1]. The recent Review of Ports and Sites in the Inner Moray Firth study suggests that future potential at Highland Deephaven lies in the existing pipe spooling operation whilst diversifying into general cargo handling and clustering of timber activities. Development of the industrial site may be combined with its role as a transport hub. Planning permission has been granted, subject to Section 75 legal agreement, for a rail siding and link to the Highland Deephaven site. Extension of the existing jetty has been approved subject to conditions, including measures to minimise adverse impacts on the Cromarty Firth Special Protection Area.

35. At HIE Inverness and East Highland's Alness Point Business Park, 9.5 ha. are identified for business, general industry and storage and distribution [B1]. Land between the sewage works and the A9 is safeguarded from development in the interests of amenity (policy BP4 applies). Connection to the public sewer is a pre-requisite of further development (GSP2).

36. At Delny, 100ha. of land is allocated for a large single user enterprise [B1]. Proposals exist for the site to form the core of a large scale forest production site. A prospective developer must include with a planning application an overall Master Plan incorporating details of access, layout, design, servicing and landscaping. The Council will require a high quality development with suitable environmental safeguards,

including the provision of a planted buffer zone to the A9. The Council will presume against any proposals that would prejudice its longer term potential. Development proposals will require the submission of a full Environmental Impact Assessment to ensure that any impacts on the Cromarty Firth are suitably controlled and accounting, inter alia, for

- the importance of the natural and cultural heritage*
- public safety*
- traffic assessment including a TIA and transportation of materials to and from the site*
- minimising potential pollution*
- disposal of effluent and waste, including the via existing public sewer (GSP2)*
- atmospheric emissions*
- impact on surface / ground water*
- impact of noise and vibration*
- impact of lighting*
- minimising the landscape impact, especially views from the Black Isle and the A9.*

The Council will also expect any buildings to be set back a minimum 150 metres from the A9 and the intervening land to be suitably landscaped in the interests of amenity. The recent Review of Ports and Sites in the Inner Moray Firth study suggests that future potential at Delny lies in development for pulp mill usage or other timber related activities.

37. The Council will support the diversification of the Barmac Yard at Nigg into other appropriate industrial uses, if not required for continued oil related development [B4]. The recent Review of Ports and Sites in the Inner Moray Firth study suggests that future potential opportunities for the Nigg Yard include oil related activities such as Inspection, Repair and Maintenance (IRM), decommissioning and multi functional fabrication i.e. wind turbine/mast production. Opportunities for the oil terminal include diversifying oil and gas interests to include bio-fuels and liquid waste. The development of these uses should seek integration with the Nigg Fabrication Yard. Developers will be required to produce a strategy for development /redevelopment of the site in an integrated manner, including an indication of how contamination and drainage issues will be addressed (GSP2 & 6).

38. At Nigg Point, the Council will safeguard approximately 312ha. of land extending from Pitcalzean Mains Farm to Nigg Beach for major petrochemical development [B1&5]. The Council will presume against proposals that would prejudice its long term potential. Developers should prepare a master plan covering all proposed uses and activities, phasing of development and resultant service provision. In addition, development proposals will require the submission of a full Environmental Impact Assessment, accounting, inter alia, for

- the importance of the natural and cultural heritage*
- public safety*
- traffic assessment including transportation of materials to and from the site*
- minimising potential pollution*
- disposal of effluent and waste*
- impact on the existing access channels to the Firth*
- impact on local fishing interests*
- atmospheric emissions*
- impact on surface / ground water*
- impact of noise and vibration*
- impact of lighting*
- minimising the landscape impact, especially views from the Black Isle*
- natural hazards, especially proximity to the Highland Fault Line.*

The site should take access from the B9175 road, together with a secondary access in the interests of site safety. The Council will safeguard the trees at Pitcalzean, covered by a Tree Preservation Order.

39. The Council will consider proposals for the commercial development of the Nigg Ferry Hotel on their merits. Arrangements to facilitate access and parking to the Nigg beach area will also be encouraged. A presumption will be maintained against further development of housing and other uses considered incompatible with the major industrial site at Nigg.

40. At Fendom, east of Tain, approximately 11 ha. of the former airfield is identified as a large-scale business and industrial development site [B3]. The Council will presume against any proposals that would prejudice its longer term potential. Development proposals will require a full Environmental Impact Assessment accounting, inter alia, for

- *the impact on the adjacent Morrich More SSSI, SPA and cSAC*
- *the means of effluent disposal - this should seek to connect to the Tain STW*
- *the risk of contamination and any remedial measures*
- *atmospheric emissions*
- *proposed means of access, including a TIA and measures to improve the local road network*
- *minimising the impact on the local landscape*
- *impact on surface / ground water*

An overall Master Plan will be required as part of a planning application showing the means of access, layout, servicing and landscaping. Development should be phased in a manner which facilitates the development of a public sewer system. A full contamination survey and remediation strategy will be required in association with a development proposal. Any proposals will require to take account of future uses of the Morrich More pipeline assembly yard. It should be noted that there is a requirement for the corridor linking the pipeline assembly yard to the sea to be restored within 12 months of the yard ceasing to be used and at that point planning permission will lapse.

Other sites

41. *At Fearn Airfield, 43 ha. of land is allocated for business and general industrial uses, subject to servicing [B3]. The Council will expect well-designed buildings and appropriate landscape works, together with footpath / cycle path connections to the Seaboard villages. Foul drainage should be connected to the Balintore sewage works, which may require upgrading (GSP2). The Council will also seek to safeguard the character and historical interest of the airfield. Sensitive re-use of the existing buildings for business and tourist uses that do not significantly affect the character and appearance of the airfield will be encouraged. The Council will give consideration to the preparation of a Character Appraisal to allow the Council to consider the need for a Conservation Area designation. The opportunity exists to promote a major interpretation / conservation project in the longer term with support from the local community and public agencies. The main airstrip is safeguarded from built development. An overall Master Plan will be required as part of a planning application showing the means of access, layout, servicing and landscaping. Development should be phased in a manner which facilitates the development of a public sewer system. A full contamination survey and remediation strategy will be required in association with a development proposal.*

42. *Land at the small industrial estate north of Hilton of Cadboll is identified for business / general industrial uses, subject to servicing, including a connection to a public sewer (GSP2) [B7].*

43. *The former engineering works at Balmuchy are allocated for business/general industrial or office use. Alternative uses may be considered subject to remediation of the site.*

44. *Land to the west of the Nigg Ferry Road is allocated for business / general industrial or office uses, ancillary to existing developments at Nigg or future petrochemical proposals [B3&5]. Mains drainage and wastewater treatment will be required for further development of the site.*

45. *Land to the rear of the former garage at Ardross would be suitable for business / industrial uses where they would not affect the amenity of the school and adjacent housing land [B7].*

46. *At Fettes by Kilcoy, subject to servicing, particularly the ability to overcome problems associated with achieving foul drainage in the area (GSP2), potential exists to convert the steading to small workshops/light industrial use [B7].*

47. *At Tarvie Filling Station, potential exists for small scale business or tourism related development compatible with the rural setting, subject to servicing [B7].*

48. *The former 'Prisoner of War' camp adjacent to the A835(T) has scope for light industrial, business or tourism use, subject to achieving satisfactory access and provision of roadside screen planting [B7].*

49. *Rhives Steading offers potential for the development of a tourism based development relating to the activities of the estate. The development will require the assessment of impact on traffic from the proposal and subsequent improvements to provide adequate access arrangements from the A9 Trunk road. Provision of wastewater treatment must comply with Policy GSP2.*

Services & Infrastructure

Community Facilities

50. *At Ardross, the Council will protect land to the south of the new hall for provision of a playing field [SR1].*

Transport

51. *The potential to attract certain uses to the Nigg yard and nearby industrial land would be enhanced by the provision of a rail link from the Far North rail line (TC1). Such a major infrastructure project may require to be the subject of an appropriate environmental assessment, accounting for the Cromarty Firth Special Protection Area.*

52. *The rail yard at Fearn is safeguarded for potential freight use [TC1].*

53. *There is currently no funding identified for Trunk road improvements within the Area. Nevertheless, the Council recommends that the Scottish Executive should give the highest priority to providing crawler lanes on the A9(T) between the Cromarty Bridge and Tore [TC4].*

54. *Work has commenced on the upgrading of the A832 road from Achnasheen towards Kinlochewe and is expected to be completed by 2006. The Council is also seeking to improve the Avoch to Fortrose section of the road from 2004 to 2006 [TC6]. Great care will be required in the design and construction of the improvements in relation to the impact upon the adjacent woodland and nature conservation interests of the Firth, as well as addressing local needs in respect of walking and cycling.*

Road Safety, Cycling and Paths

55. *In the communities of Ardross and Barbaraville, the Council will examine the potential for further traffic calming measures and seek to promote the roads within the areas as part of wider footpath / cycling routes as resources permit [TC3&10].*

56. *At Rhicullen/ Newmore, north of Invergordon, the Council will examine the scope for speed reduction / traffic calming measures on the approaches to the village as resources permit [TC3].*

57. *The Council will safeguard and promote public access to the countryside throughout the Local Plan Area. From 2004 the Council will have a duty to provide local core path networks within its area. The Council will undertake this in accordance with the Highlands and Islands Access Strategy, Land Reform Legislation and available resources. This will see the Council lead an agency partnership in taking forward prioritised countryside path and cycle networks around communities where need and opportunity are identified [SR6&7]. Investigations are currently being concentrated in and around the communities of Alness, Evanton, Invergordon, Ardross, Tain, Edderton, Garve, Achnasheen, Muir of Ord and Canon Bridge. The Council has allocated £170,000 in its budget for 2005/6 / as a contribution towards providing foot/cycle path network between Evanton and Alness.*

Water Supplies

58. *Scottish Water's priorities for upgrading water supplies lie at Glen Aldie, by Tain and across the Black Isle, from Leanig to Killen. The ability of the springs to continue supplying Cromarty and Rosemarkie will also be kept under review.*

Waste Water Treatment

59. *Scottish Water's priorities for the provision of improved waste water treatment facilities are at Alness /Invergordon, Edderton, Evanton, Fortrose/Rosemarkie and North Kessock. In most cases the sites are located in the Landward Area.*

73. *In the event of the Tain bombing range becoming surplus to MoD requirements the Council will seek alternative uses compatible with wildlife interests in the area.*

74. *At the former airfields at Fendom and Fearn, in addition to the areas identified with potential for business and industrial development (see 43 & 44 above), the removal of dereliction and contamination from the remainder of the area is desirable. Land owners and/or prospective developers should consider with the Council the scope for environmental improvements, including the potential for redevelopment of existing buildings for residential and other uses, good design principles, infrastructure requirements and an overall landscaping/planting framework. A master plan or development brief should be prepared and agreed to guide the future development and other use of land in the area.*

75. *The Council will consult the Health and Safety Executive and where appropriate, SEPA, about risks to proposed development on land lying within the indicative consultation distance of the following installations, complexes and pipelines as described below [U2]: -*

- *storage of LPG at the Nigg Yard, 175 metres*
- *crude oil at the Nigg Oil Terminal, 250 m.*
- *unstabillised crude oil in pipeline to Nigg Oil Terminal, 100 m.*
- *flammable liquids at:*
 - *the Glenmorangie Distillery, Tain, to be set, 250 m.*
 - *the Balblair Distillery, Edderton, to be set, 250 m.*
 - *the Invergordon Grain Distillery, Invergordon, to be set, 500 m.*
 - *the Dalmore Distillery, Alness, to be set, 250m.*
- *storage of LPG at Highland Deephaven Estate, Evanton, 300 m.*
- *ammonium nitrate at Auchintoul, Invergordon, 600 m.*
- *natural gas pipeline from Craigton, North Kessock to Conon Bridge, 124 m.*

7. Achnasheen

Background

Achnasheen (pop. 45) is located on the east - west transport routes spanning Ross-Shire, amidst an expansive landscape characterised by renowned glacial and post-glacial features of significant heritage status. The population level has remained generally static and with employment founded in traditional rural activities of sporting estates, sheep farming and forestry there is little prospect for significant growth. Improvement of the strategic road network to the west coast has brought Dingwall within 40 minutes travel time. This together with increased public desire to enjoy the Highland wilderness enhances the potential to attract new development. Scope exists to broaden the range of visitor facilities and could include improved interpretation and overnight accommodation.

The village has a primary school, sub post office, petrol filling station and craft shop/café. The former railway station building now functions as a community hall. A programme of enhancement measures carried out about the village centre are now complete and potential exists to expand this initiative to other parts of the village. The future vitality of Achnasheen will depend on retaining existing population, employment and service levels by encouraging a broader employment base and identifying opportunities for housing.

Development Factors

Existing service networks have capacity to accommodate foreseeable expansion and provision of visitor accommodation would strengthen Achnasheen's commercial base. Development should avoid affecting open views to the south, low lying land towards the river and ribbon development along the A832.

Policies, Proposals and Opportunities

C: Village Centre

1. *There is a need to safeguard village centre's function and character and direct compatible social / economic development to the area designated*

H: Housing

2. *Limited opportunity exists for infill housing within the existing village boundary.*

B: Business

3. *An area of land adjacent to the station yard is suitable for small business units, possibly including a rail freight facility.*

4. *Land east of the filling station has potential for the provision of a hostel / bunkhouse.*

S: Special Uses

5. *There is a presumption against further development within 25 metres of the existing septic tank at Bignold Place (BP4).*

E: Expansion.

6. *Future housing needs shall be accommodated on land between the primary school and main body of the village. An overall master plan or layout is required to guide development, which should incorporate structural planting and design consistent with the natural setting.*

A: Amenity

7. *The Council will protect important open spaces, amenity areas and cultural heritage features around the village, including the ' B ' Listed Ledgowan Bridge and also the stone bridge over the 'Allt Achadh na Sine'.*

Action

8. *Scope exists to further enhance the village setting as follows: -*
 - *improve poor roadside character by encouraging natural stone walls as replacement for mix of post/wire, wooden fencing*
 - *remove unnecessary wirescape.*

8. Alness

Background

Alness (pop. 5186) is the largest settlement in Ross and Cromarty. The town is situated on the banks of the Averon River, the original settlement developing on the western bank. The town developed on a traditional grid pattern. This changed with the major expansion that took place in the 1970s. The arrival of the aluminium smelter at Invergordon and the growth of the oil related development at Nigg saw the development of modern housing estates.

The town is a key employment centre for Easter Ross. This is expected to continue over the next decade. Substantial areas of land to the south of the railway are dedicated to business and industrial development. Strong efforts by HIE Inverness and East Highland to encourage new businesses into the area, particularly technology based, have been successful. This is typified by the new developments at Alness Point. There may also be opportunities to capture further public service jobs with moves towards decentralisation at national and local level. Current land allocations should be sufficient to meet demand over the Plan period. Caplich quarry is an important resource for the local economy, providing jobs as well as construction material. Ongoing restoration will see the ground become available for other uses in the future.

Another success is the community led Alness in Bloom Initiative. This has given the town a much higher profile and raised the confidence of the community. The town centre is now vibrant and there is a demand for retail space. Modern supermarkets at Dalmore appear to have retained significant spend in the community. Certain services are still lacking. Scottish Water are still reviewing arrangements for suitable treatment of sewage. The community is keen to see permanent ambulance and fire services within the town, together with surgery facilities for the west end.

Revised figures in light of the 2001 Census show a reduction in projected household growth rates. These indicate a need for between 420 houses (based on past completion trends) and 630 houses (using stock proportion figures). Retaining larger allocations gives greater choice and flexibility in meeting projected demand. There is also a need for more specialist housing, closer to the town centre, although opportunities are restricted.

Development Factors

Expansion of the town is constrained by several physical factors, including the railway and the A9 to the south and the quarry and forestry to the north. The extensive agricultural land forms a green wedge between the town and the A9. The most suitable opportunities appear to be to on the eastern and western margins around Milnafua and Ballachraggan. The adjacent Primary School, better access to the A9 and poorer quality land suggest that the former is best positioned. Wastewater treatment is through a crude outfall to the firth. Although this will not prevent further development, there is a pressing need to ensure that a new system is provided due to Urban Waste Water Directive requirements. Development and infrastructure, which will impact on archaeological sites will need to be recorded/protected. Sites as identified within the Sites and Monuments Record provide the most current source of information.

Policies, Proposals and Opportunities

C: Town Centre

1. *Within the defined commercial core area the Council will*
 - *give the highest priority to improving the viability of the shopping centre*

- encourage the addition, renovation, modernisation or replacement of floorspace needed to accommodate changing shopping pattern;
- encourage office development , particularly through the re-use of vacant upper floors
- presume against further ground floor office and other non-retail uses in the main shopping area of High Street, where they would interrupt continuous retail frontages
- promote supplementary design guidance for shop front design and signage with priority implementation to be encouraged in High Street and all Listed commercial buildings.

2. The Council will encourage further commercial development, together with improved visitor facilities and residential development within the town centre, subject to appropriate parking, and the amenity of adjacent properties. Opportunities for development include 0.5ha. to the rear of High Street for retail or flatted residential development.

3. Proposals for retail development should satisfy the sequential approach. That is, in the absence of town centre sites, consideration should be given to edge of centre sites, and, in the absence of either town centre or edge of centre sites consideration should be given to out of centre sites which are easily accessible to a choice of means of transport and located within the defined settlement boundary. (Scottish Planning Policy 8: Town Centres and Retailing refers) [R1, 2, 4 - 7, G2 & 3]

H: Housing

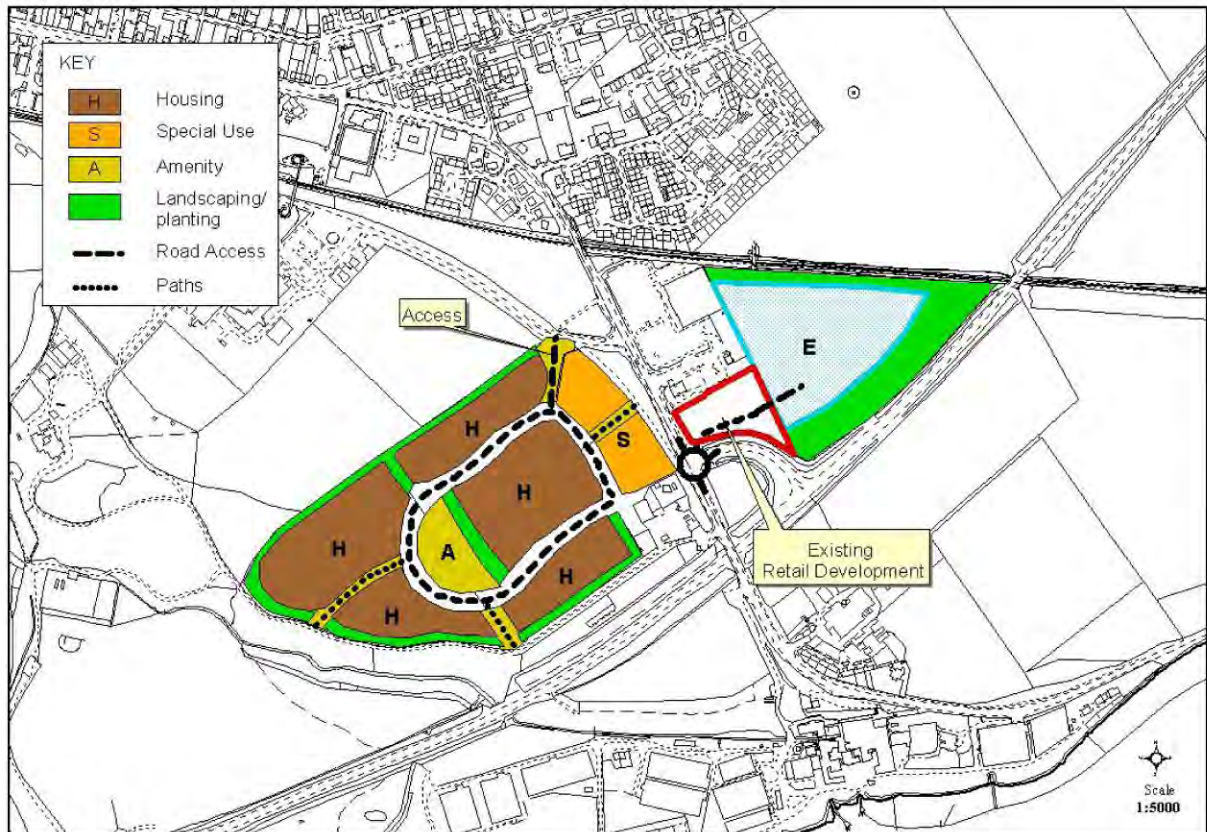
The following sites are allocated for housing: -

Ref.	Area (ha.)	Location	Capacity	Requirements
4.	1.6	Braeface Park	24	Implementation of existing permission
5.	0.7	north of the Distillery houses	10	design sympathetic to existing
6.	1.2	Obsdale West	18	access from Lindleybank, consult with the Health & Safety Executive over development lying within 400 metres of the boundary of Caplich Quarry
7.	2.7	Milnafua	35	open space provision or contribution to existing
8.	2.5	Caplich House	38	road link to Crosshills, together with a 10m depth tree screen on the northern boundary
9.	3.2	Obsdale East	50	provision of a new link road, consult with the Health & Safety Executive over development lying within 400 metres of the boundary of Caplich Quarry
10.	2.0	Cadboll Wood	24	existing trees should be safeguarded
11.	5.3	Obsdale Road	75	archaeological investigation, tree screen to the south, 250m separation from A9 retained
12.	0.3	Darroch Brae	5	development of single plots
13.	0.7	Novar Road	10 - 15	infill development, sheltered housing
14.	4.2	Dalmore West	45	existing planning permission, provision of access from Dalmore East, screen planting.
15.	7.0	Dalmore East	70	access off school road, landscaping and screen planting, phasing, integrated footpath network, provision of area for community use.
16.	4.3	Coulhill Forest	30	low density housing, significant tree planting, integration of recreational paths, provision of roundabout at Coulhill Road."
17.	0.6	Coulhill	10	affordable housing
18.	3.2	Blackmuir	25	consultation with local community, affordable housing, recreational space, access from old A9, screen planting to south of access road
19.	0.7	East of Obsdale Park	6	single access from Obsdale Road, planting

20.	6.8	Milnafua Farm South	80-100	to southern and western boundary overall Milnafua Farm masterplan indicating built form, landscaping and phasing. Upgrading of Moss-side Road.
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21. At Achmagarron there is potential for further infill housing development subject to adequate access, design and planting.

DALMORE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



B: Business

The following sites are identified for business uses: -

Ref.	Area (Ha)	Location	Comments/Requirements
22.	7.7	West of Teaninich wood	boundary planting
23.	3.4	South of Teaninich Wood	business or hi-tech industry subject to design brief specifying areas for substantial screen planting on the site boundaries to protect the approach to Alness, the setting of Teaninich House as a listed building.
24.	2.6	Teaninich South	protect /setback from amenity trees
25.	2.0	The Paddock	protect /setback from boundary trees
26.	3.3	South of Dal nan Rocas	possible site for tourism uses, screen planting on south-west boundary

I: Industry

27. At Alness Industrial Estate 5.5 ha of land is identified for industrial uses.

28. The waste management site at River Drive, Teaninich is safeguarded for this purpose.

29. *The Council will continue to monitor the workings at Caplich Quarry and seek to ensure an after use beneficial to the local community, particularly recreational uses.*

S: Special Uses

30. *The Council will safeguard land for the purposes of linking Caplich Road to Obsdale Road.*

31. *The Council will seek to maintain the existing retail use at the Coulhill Locality Centre.*

E: Expansion

The following sites are identified for the longer term housing development requirements of the town: -

Ref.	Area (ha.)	Location	Capacity	Requirements
32.	9	Whitehills	120 - 140	Housing - Master Plan
33.	15	Crosshills	200 - 225	Housing - Master Plan; landscaped buffer with Caplich Quarry;
34.	5.8	Milnafua Farm North	80 - 100	overall Milnafua Farm masterplan, upgrading of Moss-side Road

Built form, circulation, green space and landscaping require to be integrated with each other as part of an overall concept. Where appropriate, developers will be responsible for completing the public road, water distribution and sewerage systems to the limits of their respective boundaries in the interests of the proper servicing of the area. Play space / open space should meet the standards set out in the Development Plan Policy Guideline. The Council will encourage substantial early structural tree planting to help integrate developments into the landscape.

35. *4.2ha of land at Invergordon Road East is identified for retail use, access to be provided through retail site to west. Early structural planting is required to the northern and south-eastern boundary*

A: Amenity

36. *The Council will protect important open spaces and amenity areas, particularly*

- *the playing field / play areas and open spaces throughout the town*
- *on land along the riverside and areas involving the Alness Path Project*
- *amenity tree areas*
- *farmland adjacent to the A9, where there is potential for low key activities in relation to farm diversification.*

37. *The Council will consult the Health and Safety Executive and where appropriate, SEPA about risks to proposed development on land lying within 250 metres of the Dalmore Distillery.*

9. Avoch

Background

Avoch (pop. 900) is a substantial village located on the south eastern shore of the Black Isle. Contained between the steep slopes of Knockmuir and Gallow Hill, it developed in the 18th Century from the three separate settlements of Seatown, Kirktown and Miltown. During the early 19th Century boom in the fishing industry, the harbour was developed and planned expansion of the village took place in a grid iron pattern to the east. Much of the vernacular architecture remains intact and forms part of a Conservation Area, designated in 1980. Fishing is still important and the harbour remains a focal point, although silting limits use to smaller vessels and pleasure craft.

In the next 5 to 10 years, Avoch is expected to consolidate its main role as a commuting base for Inverness. Additional housing development will help to sustain and possibly expand the wide range of community and commercial facilities. The primary school requires upgrading and additional teaching space. The lack of a doctor/surgery, chemist, police station and harbour café are also key concerns of local residents. At the small industrial estate south of Ormonde Terrace, land remains available for small business development.

The upgrading of School Brae has allowed more significant expansion of housing on the south-facing slopes of Knockmuir. The availability of plots offering attractive views across the village and the Moray Firth has seen the average house building rate rise to more than 7 dwellings per annum over the last 5 years. The development rate is expected to slow down as constraints limit the ability to secure a longer term land supply and more land is opened up in Fortrose and Munlochy. As such, around 65 more houses will be required in the period mid 2003 to 2011 and a further 45 by 2017. These figures include an element of flexibility for choice of location and 25% for affordable/low cost home ownership. Careful phasing is required to avoid overloading existing road and drainage networks.

Development Factors

In the absence of gap or redevelopment opportunities within the older part of the village, there is pressure to expand beyond the current boundaries. Major considerations in this regard are the prime farmland to the south, prominent exposed ground north at Knockmuir, together with the fine policies and amenity woodlands of Rosehaugh Estate to the west. A number of overhead electricity lines also need to be diverted or placed underground.

Further to the provision of treatment facilities and outfall to the south of the village in 1994, work has recently been carried out to accommodate sewage from Munlochy and increase the capacity for further development in Avoch. Developers may be required to provide additional off site foul sewers through the village and flood prevention measures relative to surface water.

The capacity of the primary school to accommodate pupils from additional housing development within its catchment area needs to be kept under review. The prospect of up to 350 houses being built in the Avoch, Fortrose and Rosemarkie areas in the next 15 years could result in the need to accommodate up to 70 more pupils. The provision of a new primary school at Fortrose and upgrading of existing facilities at Avoch requires serious consideration. This would avoid cramming significantly more pupils on to the Avoch site in the medium to longer term, whether by adding temporary classrooms or permanently extending the existing school. A new school at Fortrose would also reduce school traffic at Avoch and travel distances for pupils residing in the Fortrose and Rosemarkie areas.

On land below Avoch House, improvements to the existing access road should minimise disturbance to the fine avenue of trees, safeguarded by Tree Preservation Order. Much of the ground to the north east at Knockmuir, above Braehead, is potentially very intrusive and development on the skyline when viewed from the west should be avoided. The steep slope and elevation also dictate the need for careful layout, grouping and design of houses. Significant advance structure planting will be required to integrate it into the landscape. The steep narrow tree lined Knockmuir Brae restricts access to the south west corner for the most part and should minimise the loss of existing mature tree cover, intrusion upon the footpath along the former railway line and the church car park. Expansion to the west at Muiralehouse would be less visually intrusive, but the impact on the operation of the intensive dairy unit and to the extent that further encroachment threatens its viability, is a key consideration. Avoch's significant landscape and land use constraints suggest that longer term development potential beyond the land allocated in this Plan may not exist and opportunities may be restricted to refurbishment and sensitive redevelopment of the historic core of the village.

Policies, Proposals and Opportunities

C: Village Centre

1. *The Council will favour proposals that consolidate the commercial/retail function of the High Street/Bridge Street frontage, including the re-use of vacant and under-used premises. Consideration will also be given to wider environmental improvement of the village centre, including traffic calming features and shop front design guidance.*

H: Housing

The following areas are allocated for short to medium term development: -

Ref.	Area (ha.)	Location	Capacity	Requirements
2.	0.6	West of Rosehaugh Crescent	8	Subject to a connection to the public sewer, play area
3.	3.5	Knockmuir View	3*	Under construction - *number remaining to be completed at end of Dec. 2005.
4.	0.01	Former filling station,	3	Planning consent granted with conditions.
5.	0.02	Station Hotel car park	6	Planning consent granted with conditions.
6.	2.2	Memorial Field	30	Consider the need for a school crossing. Site higher density housing on lower ground towards the frontage. Siting and design of buildings should seek to link existing houses to the west with central village area. See 10.
7.	4.1	Rosehaugh East Drive	20	Electricity lines, widen access with minimal tree loss. Suitable access to adoption standards, affordable housing provision, contribution to play area and remote path connections. Set back buildings from lower lying area towards the burn. See 10.
8.	0.7	South West of Ormonde Terrace	8 - 10	Widen public road to point of access. Plant trees along western boundary. See 10.

Medium to Longer Term Development/ Expansion (E)

9. *At Knockmuir East, 2.2 ha. is allocated for medium to longer term housing development of 25 to 30 houses. Development should not commence within 5 years of the adoption of this Local Plan. In advance of the submission of formal applications, developers are required to prepare a Design Statement, agree an overall master plan or layout and, with the aid of sketch elevations and photographs/ montages of house types, illustrate how the proposed development is expected to look when viewed from various locations around the village. The detailed layout and design of the development, particularly where visible above the Braehead, should strongly respect and reflect the existing street pattern, traditional spacing and house designs of historic parts of Avoch. Most of the development should be served off a traffic calmed new access on the approach to Braehead from the south west corner, near the church. Developers are also required to*

- *minimise or avoid under-building*
- *avoid impact upon the existing woodland along the former railway line, south of the land, which the Council will seek to protect by means of a Tree Preservation Order (see 19)*
- *undertake significant structure planting on north side at least 3 years before commencement of development, through a farm woodland or equivalent scheme and to restrict future development of that area through a Section 75 Agreement*
- *undertake hydrological assessments, to determine the adequacy of any surface water drainage systems*
- *enter into legal Agreements with the Council and landowners, as appropriate, to secure necessary access roads, remote footpaths, open space/recreation facilities, affordable housing and contributions to off site road and public transport improvements (see 10),*

- *construct access roads to adoption standards up to the boundary of each ownership or phase of development to avoid creating ransom strips.*

10. The Council will also seek contributions towards traffic management/ calming measures identified under the Safer Routes to School initiative and public transport improvements from the developers of sites 6. to 9. inclusive.

I: Industry

11. Small scale development opportunities remain on the industrial estate south of Ormonde Terrace.

S: Special Uses

12. The Council will keep under review the need for more primary school accommodation to cater for additional pupils within the catchment area. The Council has reserved land at Fortrose to allow a new primary serving pupils in the Fortrose and Rosemarkie area to be built by 2010 (see Section 17, para. 11). More significant improvements should also be considered at Avoch.

13. The Council would welcome enhancement proposals for some of the storage buildings and adjoining land to the east of the Primary School.

14. The Council will encourage the more intensive use of the harbour and associated land for marine related purposes. Any buildings should be of a scale and character in keeping with the Conservation Area. The Council will also consider the scope for environmental improvements, including the provision of picnic and visitor information facilities.

15. The sewage treatment works was recently upgraded to accommodate effluent from Munloch and allow further expansion of Avoch. All development lying within the settlement boundary should be connected to the public drainage system.

16. Surface Water Drainage systems from future development should be designed to avoid increasing the risk of the Avoch Burn flooding (GSP3).

17. The Council will seek to give a high priority to securing funding for upgrading of the A832 road between Avoch and Fortrose.

A: Amenity

18. The Council will consider further improvements to and extension of the remote footpath and open space network, particularly in the vicinity of Mackenzie Place.

19. The Council will seek to safeguard the policy woodlands around the village and encourage their maintenance and additional planting in relation to areas of adjoining new development. Where necessary the Council will promote Tree Preservation Orders and priority will be given to the woodland adjacent to the former railway line along the southern boundary of the Knockmuir East housing site (see 9)

20. The Council would welcome suggestions from the community about the restoration or re-use of the derelict tennis courts.

21. Avoch Fishertown was designated as a Conservation Area in 1980. The Council proposes to place an Article 4 Direction over the whole area. Separate statutory advertisement and consultation will be required. Development within the Conservation Area should have regard to the Design Guidance in Appendix II.

10. Conon Bridge

Background

Conon Bridge (pop. 1550) is one of the larger settlements in the Local Plan area. Along with the neighbouring community of Maryburgh, it enjoys excellent location advantages with quick access via the Trunk road network to all principal settlements in the Highlands and beyond. This, together with the appeal of its rural setting has attracted a large number of new residents to Conon Bridge during the past 15 years. More than 100 houses have been built during the past ten years including 70 at Braes of Conon. This growth trend is expected to continue with an estimated requirement for 260 houses by 2017.

The projected level of residential development would generate demand for a wider range of local facilities. The village already supports a primary school, local shops, pub, hotel, filling station, hairdresser and a plant nursery. Key requirements are a new hall, shops and further outdoor recreation space. The Council is in the process of reviewing provision of primary school education in both Conon Bridge and Maryburgh. In addition to provision remaining on site, consideration will be has been given to site options for a combined single school.

Providing for locally based businesses and small workshop enterprises would also create a more economically diverse and sustainable community, rather than merely function as a dormitory for commuters. A bespoke fish processing plant, established during the 1980s has now closed. However, there have been difficulties attracting alternative business/industrial uses and it is becoming more of an eyesore. The property has attracted a strong interest for housing development. The property has attracted a strong interest for housing development, but the nature of the risk of flooding from the River Conon needs to be clarified and any necessary action agreed, as appropriate, before the site can be formally allocated.

Development Factors

Physically contained to north and east by the River Conon and A9 (T) road respectively, these physical barriers dictate the only future direction for Conon Bridge to expand is the south east where sufficient land is available to absorb expected demand.

As Conon Bridge expands it will become more important to manage traffic movement through the village and retain a rural character scale through measures that will address open space and planting provision, development density and design considerations and traffic calming at the A862 village entrances. There is also scope to reduce the proportion of commuting to and from the village by private car through the development of a commuter rail halt to serve Conon Bridge and Maryburgh.

Sections of public footpath exist along the river margins and through the Schoolhouse Belt plantation and offer potential to form the basis of a village wide network, possibly linking into longer distance footpath / cycle route networks and including the walk to Garrie Island.

Policies, Proposals and Opportunities

H: Housing

The following areas are allocated for housing development: -

<i>Ref.</i>	<i>Area (ha.)</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Capacity</i>	<i>Requirements</i>
<i>1.</i>	<i>0.6</i>	<i>Teanahaun</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>Facilitate vehicular / pedestrian link between Bridge View and Wyvis Crescent, to be the subject of detailed consultation with residents. Safeguards for water and drainage infrastructure and an amenity setback of 10 metres from properties on MacLeod Drive.</i>
<i>2.</i>	<i>0.4</i>	<i>Garrie View</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>Access improvements</i>
<i>3.</i>	<i>0.65</i>	<i>Burnside Lane</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>Access</i>
<i>4.</i>	<i>2.5</i>	<i>Schoolhouse Belt</i>	<i>15 - 25</i>	<i>Lower density woodland setting. Restricted to south western area.</i>
<i>5.</i>	<i>0.3</i>	<i>Brahan View</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>Permission granted for mixed apartment / houses</i>

Confirmation of the development potential of brownfield sites 6 and 7 for housing is withheld pending a detailed study of the condition and suitability of the existing River Conon flood defences. This study needs to clarify the likelihood of flooding and the need for any further flood prevention measures, as appropriate. If further housing potential is clarified, the following allocations can be made: -

6. *0.54, Riverbank Road/ Nursery, 20 – 24. Surface water disposal under SuDS requirements and connect to a public sewer. Suitable for higher density, special needs and affordable housing. Contribute to traffic management, safer routes to school and new village hall.*

7. *2.5 ha., Former fish processing factory site, 70 – 90. High quality housing development of a higher density normally associated with a town or village centre location. Surface water disposal under SuDS requirements and connect to a public sewer. Follow procedures under the contaminated land regime. Provide Safer Routes to School measures and contributions towards a new village hall or possibly a community wing at a new school. Have regard to compatibility with adjacent Conon Islands SAC and neighbouring activities.*

S: Special Uses

8. *As part of the formal review of primary school accommodation in Conon Bridge and Maryburgh, the Council will consult the two communities on the proposal for a combined school. The following potential site options are under consideration: -*

- (a) The existing Maryburgh Primary School site and adjacent land.*
- (b) Land at Braes of Conon, south of the existing Conon Bridge Primary School.*
- (c) Land west of Windsor Place.*
- (d) The existing Conon Bridge Primary School site.*

The Conon Bridge sites also have potential for alternative uses, mostly housing (see 11& 13). If appropriate and in the event that the existing school site becomes surplus to Education needs in the future, there is a need to consider alternative uses compatible with its surroundings, e.g. housing, community, open space.

9. *In the village centre open land to the south west of High Street has recently been considered for a mix of uses consistent with its location. However, the confirmation of the development potential of the land is withheld until a detailed study of the condition and suitability of the existing River Conon flood defences is concluded. This study needs to clarify the likelihood of flooding and the need for any further flood prevention measures, as appropriate. If further development potential is clarified, a brief or master plan should be prepared in consultation with the community and should examine:*

- relocation of the playing field and play area to the southern end;*
- the need to form flood embankments around the relocated playing field to provide for a flood storage area;*
- the need to identify sites for a village hall, public toilets and shop together with additional parking;*
- the potential for housing at the northern end; and*
- improved access to and traffic calming on High Street.*

10. *The potential to open up a commuter rail halt at the former station is under investigation on behalf of the Highland Rail Partnership.*

E: Expansion

11. *At Braes of Conon, 13.5 ha. is allocated for expansion of the settlement with a capacity for 140 to 190 houses, open space and community uses. A master plan or development brief will be required to guide development based on the Framework Plan. Developers are required to incorporate a new roundabout at the School Road and Leanaig Road junction, as well as open space, a footpath network, tree planting and natural boundary treatment of stone walls, hedging or other natural materials as appropriate. Approximately 1 ha. of land with frontage onto School Road should be reserved for community related uses. These might include a new hall, shop unit(s) or other facilities. The site will be divided into five phases and developed from west to east as follows: -*

- (1) Frontage onto School Road with an access road to backlands. Pedestrian access to existing Braes of Conon development.*
- (2) Road / roundabout frontage includes provision for neighbourhood shops or businesses, surgery or local hall.*

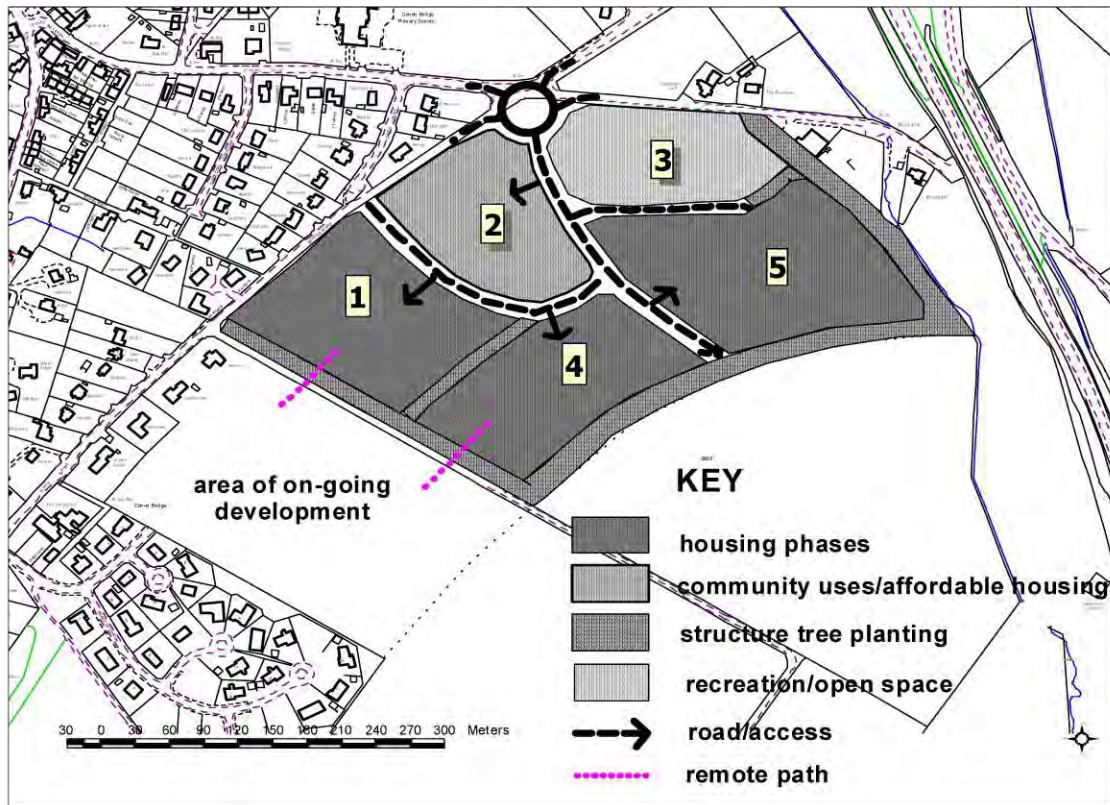
- (3) 1 ha. for amenity / recreation open space, possibly including football pitch, kick pitch and children's play area.
- (4) Suit a mix of single house and higher density social housing. Pedestrian link to the early Braes of Conon development.
- (5) Suit a mix of private and social housing.

Developers are also expected to provide the following: -

- A distributor road, including bus lay-by and pedestrian / cycleway will provide access to all development blocks.
- A landscaped / treed shelter belt around the site perimeter creating a parkland environment with footpaths and cycleway. Loose knit planting will provide separation and definition of development blocks and facilitate access.
- A remote cycle way / footpath network.
- Affordable housing in accordance with the Council's policies [H5] (GSP8, DPPG2).
- Sustainable community development - contribute towards public transport provision.

Developers should also demonstrate how they propose to protect the archaeological interest during development. Part of the land, mainly comprising of area 2 on the Framework Plan below is one of 4 sites under consideration as a site for a new primary school (see 8).

BRAES OF CONON: DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK



12. At Riverford Farm 6 ha. of land is allocated for expansion of the settlement with a capacity for 40 to 45 houses on 4.5 ha., together with open space and community uses business uses on 1.5 ha. at the southern end of the site. Alternatively the 1.5 ha area for business uses could also be developed for housing if after a period of 5 years from adoption of the Local Plan and active marketing of the site for business purposes or investment by economic development agencies such development does not proceed. The area for business uses should be separated from the housing land by a suitable landscaped buffer/open space. A master plan or development brief will be required to guide development. Access should be taken off A862 and development set back from the main road. Developers will be required to:

- contribute to the provision of a community hall or wing elsewhere in the village;
- traffic calming/management and Safer Routes to School measures on Station Road;
- discuss the affordable housing requirement with the Council.

13. To the west of Windsor Place, 2 ha, of Council land is allocated for 30 to 40 houses, including a proportion of affordable/low cost needs. Access should be taken from Riverbank Road and developers will be expected to contribute to 'Safer Routes to School' and community facilities. Alternatively, the area may offer potential as a site for a combined primary school serving Conon Bridge and Maryburgh (see 8).

A: Amenity

14. Land at School Road, containing an important selection of specimen / exotic trees, will be safeguarded as a parkland and amenity feature for public use.

11. Contin

Background

Contin (pop. 280) is a gateway settlement to the north west highlands on the junction of the A835 (T) and A834 linking Dingwall and Ullapool. Significant post war expansion resulted from the Hydro Electric energy programme, creating a northward expansion to Tor View. The population level has remained virtually static, despite the building of 18 houses in the past decade.

The village has a shop, vehicle repair garage, filling station, campsite and two hotels - the Coul House Hotel is an A Listed building. Improved service facilities in neighbouring communities has reduced business potential within the village, which is now orientated towards tourism and countryside activities. As a result of rationalisation the primary school closed in 2000 and children now attend Strathpeffer. Subject to Scottish Executive approval, Highland Council propose to pass the former school buildings and grounds to the Community Council for use as a village hall, with potential to accommodate other activities, possibly including craft workshops and other recreation facilities. Roadside buildings and open spaces alongside the A835 would benefit by environmental improvement to achieve physical enhancement. The existing village hall is now beyond its useful life and offers potential for redevelopment.

Development Factors

The village is flanked to the north east by prime agricultural land and important stands of ancient woodland. The main designation of a Tree Preservation Order at Tor View limits the potential for further development to small scale infill housing that does not adversely affect the woodland quality. Few opportunities exist for inclusion of further development between the A835 and River Blackwater due to possible flood risk and difficult ground conditions. The River margins provide a high quality natural habitat and a number of riverside walks. However, these physical constraints preclude the likelihood of achieving a Trunk road by-pass of the village. Development opportunities exist on the elevated slopes on the east side of the A835, subject to achieving satisfactory access.

Policies, Proposals and Opportunities

H: Housing

The following areas are allocated for housing development: -

<i>Ref.</i>	<i>Area (ha.)</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Capacity</i>	<i>Requirements</i>
1.	1.9	Smithy Croft	15	<i>Detailed layout to identify open space and landscape arrangements, and tree safeguard areas. There may be potential to achieve further long term expansion southwards subject to inclusion of an access onto the A834 via Contin Mains Farm.</i>
2.	0.3	Tor View	4	<i>Suit social / sheltered housing.</i>
3.	0.8	Village Hall	2	<i>Permission exists for two houses. Retain footpath and trees along north boundary.</i>