

**THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL**

**ROSS & CROMARTY EAST LOCAL PLAN INQUIRY**

**STATEMENT OF OBSERVATIONS by the  
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING and DEVELOPMENT**

**ISSUE 27: Edderton – B2 Business - objection in relation to change to house site**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Highland Council (THC) has undertaken to hold a Public Local Inquiry to consider objections lodged by Alister Sutherland [CD30/56] in respect of a single house site in allocated business land.
- 1.2 It is understood that Alister Sutherland [CD30/56] wishes to appear at the Inquiry.
- 1.3 THC will call Brian MacKenzie, Planning and Development Service as planning witness.
- 1.4 THC wishes to submit the following productions: -
  - [CD1] The Highland Structure Plan: Approved Plan: THC: March 2001
  - [CD3] Mid Ross Local Plan: Adopted Plan: HRC: October 1990
  - [CD6] Development Plan Policy Guidelines: THC: October 2003
  - [CD8] Ross & Cromarty East Local Plan: Consultative Draft: THC May 2002
  - [CD9] Ross & Cromarty East Local Plan: Deposit Draft: The Highland Council: October 2003
  - [CD10] Ross & Cromarty East Local Plan: Statement of Publicity, Consultation and representations: THC October 2003
  - [CD11] Ross & Cromarty East Local Plan: Proposed Modifications to the Deposit Draft (Prior to Public Local Inquiry): THC February 2005
  - [CD14] SPP2: Economic Development: Scottish Executive: November 2002
  - [CD17] SPP15: Rural Development: Scottish Executive: February 2005
  - [CD25] Ross & Cromarty Area Planning Committee Item: Representations on the Consultative Draft Local Plan: The Highland Council: 15 September 2003
  - [CD26] Planning Development Europe & Tourism Committee Item: Representations on the Consultative Draft Local Plan: The Highland Council: 1 October 2003
  - [CD27] Ross & Cromarty Area Planning Committee Item: Objections and Representations on the Deposit Draft Local Plan: The Highland Council: 25 January 2005
  - [CD30] Letters of objection and representation to the Deposit Draft Local Plan
  - [CD31] Objections to the Proposed Changes to the Deposit Draft Local Plan

## **2. Background**

### **National Planning Guidance/Advice**

- 2.1 Scottish Planning Policy 2: Economic Development [CD14] sets out the Scottish Executives planning policies on economic development. The following paragraphs are relevant: -

**11** states that planning can contribute to economic development by “*providing a range of development opportunities – to ensure that there is range and choice of sites for new employment opportunities throughout Scotland*”

**28** states that “*In rural areas development plans should recognise and encourage the potential of small towns to provide employment for the wider local community..... they should provide for small scale manufacturing and tourist related developments*”

### **Highland Structure Plan**

- 2.1 The Highland Structure Plan, paragraph 1.7.1 refers to the emergence from the sustainability objectives and the strategic themes the development of a number of general policies demonstrating the expectations of The Council with regard to any proposal for development. They cover a range of issues relating to sustainable development and are considered vital to the implementation of the Plan's strategic themes. More specifically, Policy G2 Design for sustainability indicates that “*Proposed developments will be assessed on the extent to which they: “contribute to the economic and social development of the community...;”*”
- 2.2 Business and Industry chapter, para 2.6.3 states that “*To comply with the Structure Plan sustainability principles and other Structure Plan objectives, the provision of land for business and industry should ensure a distribution of resources focussed on settlements and consistent with the proposed settlement strategy*”.

### **Adopted Local Plan**

- 2.3 The Easter Ross Local Plan [CD4] was adopted in July 1992. It allocated land to the rear of the caravan complex as suitable for business industry, para 6.14 (IN).

### **Consultative Draft Plan**

- 2.4 The Consultative Draft [CD8] of the Ross and Cromarty East Local Plan, was published in May 2002. It re-affirmed the allocation of 0.3 ha of development land adjacent to the caravan sales outlet for business use(B2). Development Factors for the village indicated that the capacity of the existing septic tank was close to capacity.
- 2.5 The representations and the changes made by THC in response are detailed in [CD10]. In relation to development capacity SEPA [CD10/157] made

representation in respect of the constraint of the capacity of the public septic tank which had now reached capacity. No objection was received in terms of the allocation of business land.

### **Deposit Draft Local Plan**

- 2.6 The Deposit Draft [CD9] of the Local Plan was published in October 2003. There was no change in respect of the business allocation adjacent to the caravan sales outlet.
- 2.8 Objection was received from WW Wilkie on behalf of Alister Sutherland [CD30/56] and THC's response and reasoning is set out in [CD24]. The objector sought change to the allocation in respect of the siting of a single house on part of the business allocation.

### **Deposit Draft with Modifications (Proposed Changes)**

- 2.9 Proposed Changes to the Deposit Draft [CD11] were approved in January 2005. No changes were offered in respect of the exiting allocation.
- 2.10 No further objections were lodged, Alister Sutherland [CD30/56] maintained his objection to the Deposit Draft Plan.

## **3. The Council's Observations**

### **The Objections**

3.1 **Alister Sutherland [CD30/56]**

*Having taken advice from Mr. David Polson - Planning Officer - Dornoch - regarding making a planning application to build a dwelling house adjacent to Alister Sutherland's fabrication yard in Edderton, I was surprised to find that this area is being looked at for use as Industrial/ Tourism designated land. The proposed house would be built on land belonging to Alister Sutherland for his son who would be living there full time. He works for his father in the small fabrication family firm and has done so since leaving school and would one day hope to take over the running of the company. A house next to the yard would be a considerable plus keeping a security presence in the area and would also be convenient for deliveries of steel etc. at out of work hours. The house closest to the proposed development would be within approximately 40m. The nature of housing within the surrounding area is sporadic, typical of a Highland village. Another house sited at this spot, sympathetically designed, would fit in very easily. There would still be room for a small industrial development. With industrial units being actively promoted with lots of CASE and RACE financial input in nearby units at Ardgay, Bonar Bridge, Lairg, Tain, Dornoch" Golspie and Brora it is difficult to see a large industrial developer for this area forthcoming.*

*The proposed local plan highlights the low demand for house building in this area. Local knowledge of the lack of facility of sewerage disposal has been the major*

*reason for this and with a proposed upgrading (along demand in this area generally) it is expected this will lead to a substantial increase in demand for new housing. I am advised that to provide an opportunity for my client to apply for his proposed house within policy guide lines they would have to be changed before formal adoption.*

*I therefore object to the Local Plan for Edderton as proposed.*

### **The Council's Response**

#### **3.2 Alister Sutherland [CD30/56]**

The area of land involved currently stands allocated for business use. It offers potential for the development of one or two small business units, which could provide local employment opportunities. The allocation is the only existing offering development potential for business within Edderton.

- 3.3 Infill opportunities exist elsewhere in the village for housing development, with the inclusion of Expansion land at E4 west of Station Road offering a supply for the medium to longer term. Development opportunities within the village are currently constrained by the absence of capacity in the public septic tank until its upgrading before the end of 2005. Although development is constrained by the capacity of the existing waste water treatment works, development could progress through an interim drainage arrangement or contribution towards upgrading of the public system by Scottish Water.

- 3.4 The land(B2) is currently utilised to an extent for the storage of material related to the adjacent fabrication unit. This raises the question of contamination of the site due to this particular storage use.

- 3.5 Given the existing opportunities for infill development within the village and also the large allocation of Expansion land there would seem ample opportunity for acquiring a residence within the village in relatively close proximity to be able to address any requirements in relation to attending the business.

- 3.6 It would seem inappropriate to include land more suited to a business use to that of housing when the allocation represents the only site within the Plan identified for the provision of new opportunities for business development in compliance with SPP2 [CD14](see para 2.1 above)

### **4. Conclusion**

- 4.1 **Accordingly, The Council would ask that the Reporter recommends no change to the content of the Deposit Draft, in respect of these matters.**