

The Highland Council

North Planning Applications Committee

Minute of the meeting of the North Planning Applications Committee held in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness on Tuesday, 8 October 2019 at 10.30 am.

Committee Members Present:

Mr R Bremner (by video conference from Wick), Mrs I Campbell, Mr M Finlayson, Mr C Fraser, Mr J Gordon, Mr D MacKay, Mrs A MacLean (excluding item 6.4), Mr C MacLeod (excluding item 6.4), Mr D MacLeod, Mrs M Paterson, Mr A Rhind, Mr K Rosie (excluding item 6.4) and Ms M Smith.

Officials in attendance:

Mr D Jones, Acting Head of Development Management - Highland
Ms J Bridge, Senior Engineer (Development Management)
Mr S Hindson, Principal Planner
Mrs E McArthur, Principal Planner
Mrs R Hindson, Planner
Mrs K Lyons, Principal Solicitor – Planning and Clerk
Mrs A MacArthur, Administrative Assistant

Business

Ms Maxine Smith in the Chair

The Chair confirmed that the meeting would be filmed and broadcast over the Internet on the Highland Council website and would be archived and available for viewing for 12 months.

1. Apologies Leisgeulan

Apologies for absence were received from Ms K Currie.

2. Declarations of Interest Foillseachaidhean Com-pàirt

Item 6.4: Mrs A MacLean (non-financial).

3. Confirmation of Minutes Dearbhadh a' Gheàrr-chunntais

There had been submitted for confirmation as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 10 September 2019 which was **APPROVED**.

4. Major Development Update Iarrtasan Mòra

There had been circulated Report No PLN/076/19 by the Acting Head of Development Management - Highland providing an update on progress of all cases within the "Major" development category currently with the Planning and Development Service for determination.

In response to a question the Acting Head of Development Management – Highland replied that the application for 72 residential units at the former fish factory site in Conon Bridge was progressing.

The Committee **NOTED** the current position with these applications.

5. Major Developments – Pre-application consultations Leasachaidhean Mòra – Co-chomhairle Ro-iarrtais

5.1 Description: Major development of a vertical launch space port comprising assembly building with ancillary structures, launch operations and control centre, access roads and car parking, antenna farms, commodity farms, launch pad complex, launch towers, safety and security fencing and associated infrastructure. (19/04008/PAN) (PLN/077/19)

Ward: 1

Applicant: Highlands and Islands Enterprise

Site Address: Land 2600 m SW of Dunbuie, Talmine, Tongue.

The Committee **NOTED** the submission of the PAN and requested that the boundaries of the various nature conservation designations be shown on the application plans when submitted and that full account of these designations be taken in the application and supporting information.

5.2 Description: Proposed development of up to 11 wind turbines, with surrounding infrastructure including a battery storage compound, associated crane pads, access tracks, a substation, control room and temporary construction compound. (19/04209/PAN) (PLN/078/19)

Ward: 6

Applicant: Energiekontor UK Ltd

Site Address: Land approximately 4 km NE of Ardross and approximately 8 km NW of Alness.

The Committee **NOTED** the submission of the PAN and highlighted no material planning considerations they wished brought to the applicant's attention other than those identified in the report.

6. Planning Applications to be Determined Iarrtasan Dealbhaidh rin Dearbhadh

6.1 Applicant: Mr Kenneth Gollan (18/04760/FUL) (PLN/079/19)

Location: The Plockton Inn, Innes Street, Plockton, IV52 8TW (Ward 5).

Nature of Development: Demolition of outbuilding and erection of extension to restaurant, erection of two service/accommodation buildings (12 guest rooms) and formation of parking area.

Recommendation: Grant.

There had been circulated Report No PLN/079/19 by the Acting Head of Development Management - Highland recommending that the Committee grant the application subject to the conditions detailed in the report.

The Committee **AGREED** to **GRANT** the application subject to the conditions referred to in the report.

6.2 Applicant: Mr David Maclean (19/00869/PIP) (PLN/080/19)

Location: 12 Sconser, Isle of Skye (Ward 10).

Nature of Development: Erection of house.

Recommendation: Refuse.

There had been circulated Report No PLN/080/19 by the Acting Head of Development Management - Highland recommending that the Committee refuse the application for the reasons detailed in the report.

In response to questions, the following was confirmed:

- Planning officers had met with the applicant on site, had written to him and had made him aware that the site was very small with no amenity space, parking or drainage area and that these details should be identified in his application;
- the preferred alternative house site had also been pointed out to the applicant;
- this development would have no frontage onto the road and would form a 2nd tier of development at the back of the existing development which was inconsistent with other housing in the area; and
- the site was very exposed and would be highly visible from the road.

Ms M Smith, moved that the application be refused only for reason 2 in the report. There was no objection to reason 1 in the report as the principle of development at this location was considered acceptable.

The Committee thereafter **AGREED** to **REFUSE** the application but only on the basis of reason for refusal number 2 contained in the report. Members considered the principle of the proposed development at this location to be acceptable and did not agree with the case officer's assessment that the development would be unsympathetic to or incompatible with the existing pattern of development and did not agree that it would be visually prominent from the single track loop road or the main A87 trunk road.

6.3 Applicant: Mr David Miller (19/02453/FUL) (PLN/081/19)

Location: Land 60 m NE of Longberry House, Oldwick, Wick (Ward 3).

Nature of Development: Erection of house.

Recommendation: Refuse.

There had been circulated Report No PLN/081/19 by the Acting Head of Development Management - Highland recommending that the Committee refuse the application for the reasons detailed in the report.

In response to questions, the following was confirmed:

- the owner of this area of land also owned the preferred area for the site, the applicant was not the owner of the land;
- the planning officer had discussed the house site with the applicant and after stating that the planning officer would prefer to see the development next to the road, the applicant had said that the other sites were not available at this time;
- the key drivers for the evolution of housing were based on transport links, field boundaries were an important component but not the defining factor; and
- no pre-application advice had been sought by the applicant.

Mr R Bremner **moved** that the application be deferred in order that the case officer could have further discussions with the applicant in terms of the location of the site. There being no seconder the motion fell.

Ms M Smith, **moved** that the application be refused and the applicant be encouraged to discuss, with the case officer, whether alternative sites for the development could be supported.

The Committee **AGREED** to **REFUSE** the application for the reasons contained in the report. Members encouraged the applicant to discuss, with the case officer, whether alternative sites for the development could be supported

Ms A MacLean had declared a non-financial interest as a close family member had objected to the application and left the Chamber for the duration of this item.

6.4 Applicant: The Highland Council (19/02571/FUL) (PLN/082/19)

Location: Former Maryburgh Primary School, Hood Street, Maryburgh, IV7 8EB (Ward 8).

Nature of Development: Erection of 12 flats, 1 bungalow and three terraced units.

Recommendation: Grant.

There had been circulated Report No PLN/082/19 by the Acting Head of Development Management - Highland recommending that the Committee grant the application subject to the conditions detailed in the report.

In response to questions, the following was confirmed:

- the school had closed in 2012 and the car park had been for the school teachers and staff, the car park was now being used by local people;
- the car park is owned by the Council and, if the development was approved and built out, cars would revert to parking on Hood Street;
- the development had been amended as original representations had stated that the development was too close to the old school and would limit the old school's potential development;
- although the development had increased from 14 to 16 residences, two of the attached houses had been modified and replaced with a block of four flats which was not a significant increase in the scale of development;
- although approximately 1100 square metres, 6.27%, of the existing green space would be lost, a level and more usable grassed area with equipment agreed with the community, would be provided by the developer;
- ample parking was available within the site for the proposed development; and
- there had been 341 applications for housing accommodation in Maryburgh over the last year, 80% of applications included a valid need to reside in Maryburgh, there had only been 2 relets within this time, leaving 271 housing applications for Maryburgh unresolved and this development would go some way toward meeting this demand.

During discussion, comments included the following:

- this was a good development for much needed affordable housing;
- the green space was very precious especially following the loss of the school;
- if the number of houses was to be reduced the development was unlikely to be viable and there was a limited time that the Scottish Government housing grant would be available; and
- there had been no affordable housing in Maryburgh in recent years.

Mrs M Paterson, seconded by Mr J Gordon, **moved** that the application be deferred to explore a reduced scale of development that avoided encroachment on the open space.

Ms M Smith, seconded by Mrs I Campbell, **moved** that the application be approved for the reasons stated in the report.

On a vote being taken, the motion received 2 votes and the amendment received 8 votes, the **AMENDMENT** was therefore **CARRIED**, the votes having been cast as follows:-

Motion

Mr J Gordon
Mrs M Paterson

Amendment

Mr R Bremner
Mrs I Campbell
Mr M Finlayson
Mr C Fraser
Mr D MacKay
Mr D MacLeod
Mr A Rhind
Ms M Smith

The Committee **AGREED** to **GRANT** the application subject to the upfront payment of developer contributions towards education and community facilities and subject to the conditions contained in the report.

7. Decision of Appeals to the Scottish Government Planning and Environmental Appeals Division Co-dhùnadh mu Iarrrtas do Bhuidheann-stiùiridh Riaghaltas na h-Alba airson Lùth agus Atharrachadh Aimsir

7.1 Applicant: Margaret Robertson (18/03994/PIP) (PPA-270-2213)

Location: 7 Kylerhea, Isle of Skye, IV42 8NH (Ward 10)

Nature of Development: Erection of a dwelling house.

The Committee **NOTED** the decision of the Reporter to dismiss the appeal and refuse planning permission in principle for the reasons stated in the decision letter.

The meeting closed at 1.25 pm.