Agenda Item	**3.3**
Report No	**HLC/123/26**

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: **THE HIGHLAND LICENSING COMMITTEE**

Date: **24 November 2026**

Report title: **Application for the grant of a short term let licence – 1 Hostel Brae, Kinlochleven, PH50 4RT (Ward 21 – Fort William and Ardnamurchan)**

Report by: **The Principal Solicitor – Regulatory Services**

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

1.1 This report relates to an application for the grant of a short term let licence.

2. Recommendation

2.1 Members are asked to determine the application in accordance with the Council's hearings procedure.

3. Background

3.1 In terms of The Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (Licensing of Short-term Lets) Order 2022, a licence is required for residential accommodation for use as a short term let.

3.2 Short term let means the use of residential accommodation provided by a host in the course of business to a guest, where all of the following criteria are met:

- The guest does not use the accommodation as their only or principal home
- The short term let is entered into for commercial consideration
- The guest is not:
  1. An immediate family member of the host
  2. Sharing the accommodation with the host for the principal purpose of advancing the guest's education as part of an arrangement made or approved by a school, college, or further or higher educational institution, or
  3. an owner or part-owner of the accommodation
- the accommodation is not provided for the principal purpose of facilitating the provision of work or services by the guest to the host or to another member of the host's household
- the accommodation is not excluded accommodation, and
- the short-term let does not constitute an excluded tenancy

4. Application

4.1 On 9 June 2026 an application for the grant of a short term let licence was received from Mr Shamsher Khalsa on behalf of Leven Letting and Management Ltd (Company number 16922027) and having their registered office at 3rd Floor Suite, 207 Regent Street, London, W1B 3HH.

4.2 The property to which the application relates is 1 Hostel Brae, Kinlochleven, PH50 4RT (the "Premises"). A site plan was provided by the applicant as part of the application process and is attached as an appendix to this report (**Appendix 1).** The Premises are those edged in red on the location plan on page 1 of Appendix 1.

4.3 The application for the short term let licence has been made on the basis that the said Leven Letting and Management Ltd will be the host/operator of the Premises. The application was made after 1 October 2023 and, as such, the host/operator cannot operate the premises as a short term let until they have obtained a licence.

4.4 West Highland Holdings Limited (Company number 16864673) and having their registered office at 103 Station Road, Ashington, Northumberland, NE63 8RS is named on the application as the owner of the Premises.

4.5 The person named on the application as being responsible for the day-to-day management of the Premises is the said Mr Shamsher Khalsa.

4.6 The type of letting which has been applied for is ‘secondary letting’, which means the host/operator is letting a property where they do not normally live.

4.7 The Premises is described as a detached dwellinghouse which can accommodate a maximum capacity of eight guests. Floor plans of the Premises were provided by the applicant as part of the application process, and these can be found on page 1 of Appendix 1.

5. Process

5.1 The application was circulated to the following Agencies/Services for consultation:

- Police Scotland;
- Scottish Fire & Rescue Service;
- Highland Council Environmental Health Service; and
- Highland Council Building Standards.

5.2 Police Scotland, the Highland Council’s Environmental Health Service and the Highland Council Building Standards Team have all confirmed that they have no objections to the application.

5.3 The Scottish Fire & Rescue Service have been consulted on the application, and at the time of writing, a response is awaited. If available, a verbal update can be provided to the Committee by the Principal Solicitor – Regulatory Services.

6. Certificate of Compliance

6.1 The applicant has provided a certificate of compliance confirming that a public notice of application for their short term let licence was displayed at or near the Premises for a period of 21 days from 15 June 2026.

7. Public objections/representations

7.1 It is open to any member of the public to submit an objection or representation in relation to an application for the grant of a short term let licence.

During the notice of display period, the following timeous objection was received and is attached as an Appendix to this report:

- Objection received by email on 13 July 2026 from Mr Gary Bray **(Appendix 2).**

8. Determining issues

8.1 Paragraph 5(3) of Schedule 1 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 states that a licensing authority shall refuse an application to grant or renew a licence where:

a) The applicant or, where the applicant is not a natural person, any director of it or partner in it or any other person responsible for its management, is either:

i. for the time being disqualified under section 7(6) of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982, or;

ii. is not a fit and proper person to be the holder of the licence.

b) The activity to which it relates would be managed by or carried on for the benefit of a person, other than the applicant, who would be refused the grant or renewal of such licence if he made the application himself;

c) where the licence applied for relates to an activity consisting of or including the use of premises or a vehicle or vessel, those premises are not or, as the case may be, that vehicle or vessel is not suitable or convenient for the conduct of the activity having regard to—
   (i) the location, character or condition of the premises or the character or condition of the vehicle or vessel;
   (ii) the nature and extent of the proposed activity;
   (iii) the kind of persons likely to be in the premises, vehicle or vessel;
   (iv) the possibility of undue public nuisance; or
   (iv) public order or public safety; or

d) there is other good reason for refusing the application.

If required, the Principal Solicitor – Regulatory Services will offer particular advice on the criteria relating to this particular application.

8.2 A copy of this report has been sent to the applicant and objector who, in the terms of paragraph 4(2) of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982, have both been invited to attend and will be provided with an opportunity to be heard by the Committee.

8.3 Both parties have also been advised of the procedure which will be followed at the meeting which may also be viewed via the following link:

Highland Licensing Committee Procedure for Hearings Applicants for License/License Holders

9. Observations on objection

9.1 In the email of objection found at Appendix 2, points have been made which should not be taken into account by the Committee when determining this licence application, as they are outwith the scope of the grounds that a licensing authority can consider in terms of the refusal of an application to grant or renew a licence, as detailed at point 8.1 of this Report.

9.2 If required, the Principal Solicitor – Regulatory Services will offer further advice or clarification on these points.

10. Policies

10.1 The following policy is relevant to this application:

- Short-term let licensing policy statement (which includes the mandatory and additional licence conditions attached to all Short Term Let Licences):-

A copy of this policy can accessed here or a hard copy can be supplied where requested.

11. Implications

11.1 Not applicable.

Date: 4 November 2026

Author: Ashley Fowler

Reference: FS845355117

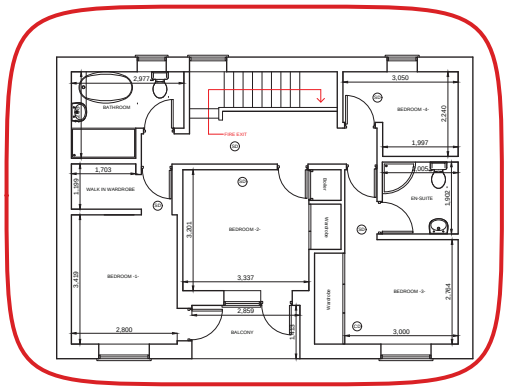
Background Papers:

- Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982
- The Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (Licensing of Short-term Lets) Order 2022

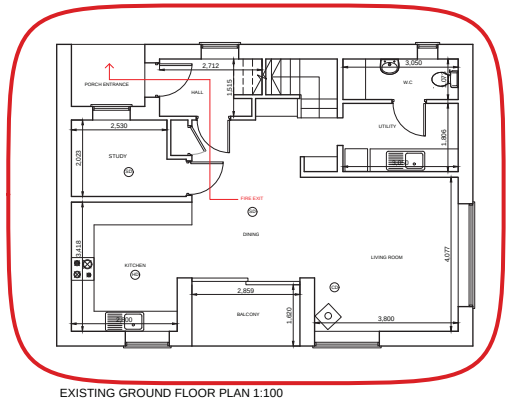
Appendices:

Appendix 1: Site plan detailing the extent of the Premises and floor plans for the Premises;
Appendix 2: Objection received by email on 13 July 2026 from Mr Gary Bray.

APPENDIX 1



EXISTING FIRST FLOOR PLAN 1:100



EXISTING GROUND FLOOR PLAN 1:100

SCALE BAR IN METERS 1:100 @A2

0m 1m 2m 3m 4m 5m

Maximum occupancy of 8 guests.



LOCATION PLAN 1:500

10 0 10 20 30 40 50

SCALE BAR IN METERS 1:500 @A2

Client	West Highlands Holdings Ltd
Project	1 Svarga, Hostel Brae, Kinlochleven PH50 4RT
Title	Existing Floor Plans & Location Plan

Scale/Drawn	Date	Drawing No	Rev
1:100 @ A2	May 2026	PL01	

Produced on 19 May 2026 from the Ordnance Survey National Geographic Database and incorporating surveyed revision available at this date.
This map shows the area bounded by 218717 761719,218859 761719,218859 761861,218717 761861,218717 761719
Crown copyright and database rights 2026 OS 100054135. Supplied by copla ltd trading as UKPlanningMaps.com a licensed Ordnance Survey partner (OS 100054135).
Data licence expires 19 May 2027. Unique plan reference: v2g//1421118/1902864

Appendix 2

From:	Gary Bray
To:	STL Licensing
Cc:	Gary Bray
Subject:	STL Objection (130182622) 1 Hostel Brae, Kinlochleven PH50 4 RT
Date:	13 July 2026 10:48:04
Attachments:	IMG_1006.jpeg IMG_1007.jpeg

CAUTION: This email was sent from outside of the organisation. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Sir/Madam,

As per the published STL requirements for objections, please find attached the objection for STL application - 1 Hostel Brae, Kinlochleven PH50 4RT (130182622).

Kind regards

Gary Bray

Gary B. Bray

[redacted]

The Highland Council
Charles Kennedy Building
Achintore Road
Fort William
PH33 7RQ

12 July 2026

Subject: Objection to STL Licence Application (130182622) – Cumulative Impact on Housing in Kinlochleven

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to formally object to the Short-Term Let (STL) licence application for the property at:

1, Hostel Brae, Kinlochleven PH50 4RT.

[redacted]

My objection is based on the cumulative impact of the applicant purchasing six or seven residential houses within Kinlochleven with the intent to converting them into short-term holiday accommodation. This scale of acquisition represents a significant and immediate reduction in the village's available housing stock for permanent residents.

Kinlochleven already experiences significant housing pressure due to its small size, limited available stock, and high demand from both local workers and families wishing to remain in the area. When multiple residential properties are purchased by a single business / owner and removed from the long-term market, the effect is immediate and severe. It reduces opportunities for first-time buyers, forces younger residents to move away, and increases reliance on an already stretched rental sector. Highland Council has repeatedly acknowledged that rural communities face acute housing shortages, and the removal of multiple homes for short-term commercial use directly worsens this problem.

Kinlochleven's long-term sustainability depends on maintaining a stable resident population. Schools, local shops, medical services, and community organisations all rely on permanent residents to function. When housing is diverted into short-term holiday use, villages experience depopulation, seasonal occupancy, and reduced community cohesion. Granting another STL licence in a situation where six or seven homes have already been converted risks accelerating this trend. Highland Council's STL policy requires consideration of public interest and community impact, and the cumulative loss of residential homes in Kinlochleven clearly threatens the long-term viability of the village.

The scale of this owner's activity — purchasing six or seven houses within the village and converting all of them into Airbnbs — is not incidental or occasional use. It is a commercial business (Leven Letting and Management Ltd / 3rd Floor Suite, 207 Regent Street, London W1B 3HH) operating within what is meant to be a residential village. Highland Council's STL licensing framework allows refusal where the nature of the use is inappropriate for the area or where it undermines residential amenity. Turning a significant portion of the village's housing stock into short-term holiday units shifts the balance from community living to commercial tourism, which is not in line with the intended purpose of residential neighbourhoods.

Highland Council has publicly discussed the pressures caused by high concentrations of short-term lets, particularly in rural and tourism-heavy areas. While Kinlochleven is not currently designated as a Short-Term Let Control Area, the Council's policy framework still requires assessing whether granting a licence would contribute to an excessive concentration of STLs or negatively affect housing availability. The purchase and conversion of six or seven homes by one owner clearly represents such a concentration. This situation aligns with the very concerns that led other Highland communities to consider control areas, and it demonstrates why further STL expansion in Kinlochleven should be carefully limited.

For these reasons, I believe granting this STL licence would not be in the public interest and would further restrict opportunities for local resident to access the housing ladder. I respectfully request that Highland Council consider the cumulative impact on housing supply and refuse this licence application.

Yours sincerely,

Gary Bray