Agenda Item	**3.6**
Report No	**HLC/126/26**

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: **THE HIGHLAND LICENSING COMMITTEE**

Date: **24 November 2026**

Report title: **Application for the grant of a short term let licence – 23 Douglas Row, Inverness, IV1 1RE (Ward 14 – Inverness Central)**

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 16 June 2026 an application for the grant of a short term let licence was received from Mr Simon Cook on behalf of Great Glen Property Solutions Ltd (SC634005) and having their registered office at Ashfield Cottage, High Street, Conon Bridge, IV7 8HA.

4.2 The property to which the application relates is 23 Douglas Row, Inverness, IV1 1RE (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 indicated within the area circled in red on the 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 Great Glen Property Solutions Ltd will be the hosts/operators of the Premises. The application was made after 1 October 2023 and, as such, the hosts/operators cannot operate the premises as a short term let until they have obtained a licence.

4.4 Mr Jennings Beazley Wilson 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 Simon Cook.

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 terraced house which can accommodate a maximum capacity of four guests. Floor plans of the Premises were provided by the applicant as part of the application process, and these can be found on pages 2 and 3 of Appendix 1.

5. Process

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

- Police Scotland;
- 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 Service have all confirmed that they have no objections to the application.

5.3 The Scottish Fire & Rescue Service was not further consulted on the application as the fire safety checklist, which was completed by the applicant, pertaining to the application was deemed satisfactory.

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 18 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 or renewal of a short term let licence.

During the notice of display period, the following timeous objections were received and are attached as Appendices to this report:

- Objection received by letter on 30 June 2026 from Ms Christine Martin **(Appendix 2).**
- Objection received by email on 1 July 2026 from Ms Jessica Russell (**Appendix 3**)
- Objection received by email on 4 July 2026 from Ms Bridie Russell and Mr Donald Ross (**Appendix 4**)
- Objection received by email on 8 July 2026 from Ms Frances Campbell (**Appendix 5**)
- Objection received by email on 13 July 2026 Ms Alison MacGillivray (**Appendix 6**)

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 objectors who, in the terms of paragraph 4(2) of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982, have all been invited to attend and will be provided with an opportunity to be heard by the Committee.

8.3 All 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 objections/representations

9.1 In the emails and letters of objection found at Appendices 2 to 6 inclusive, 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: Sophie Shearer

Reference: FS: 848231081

Background Papers:

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

Appendices:

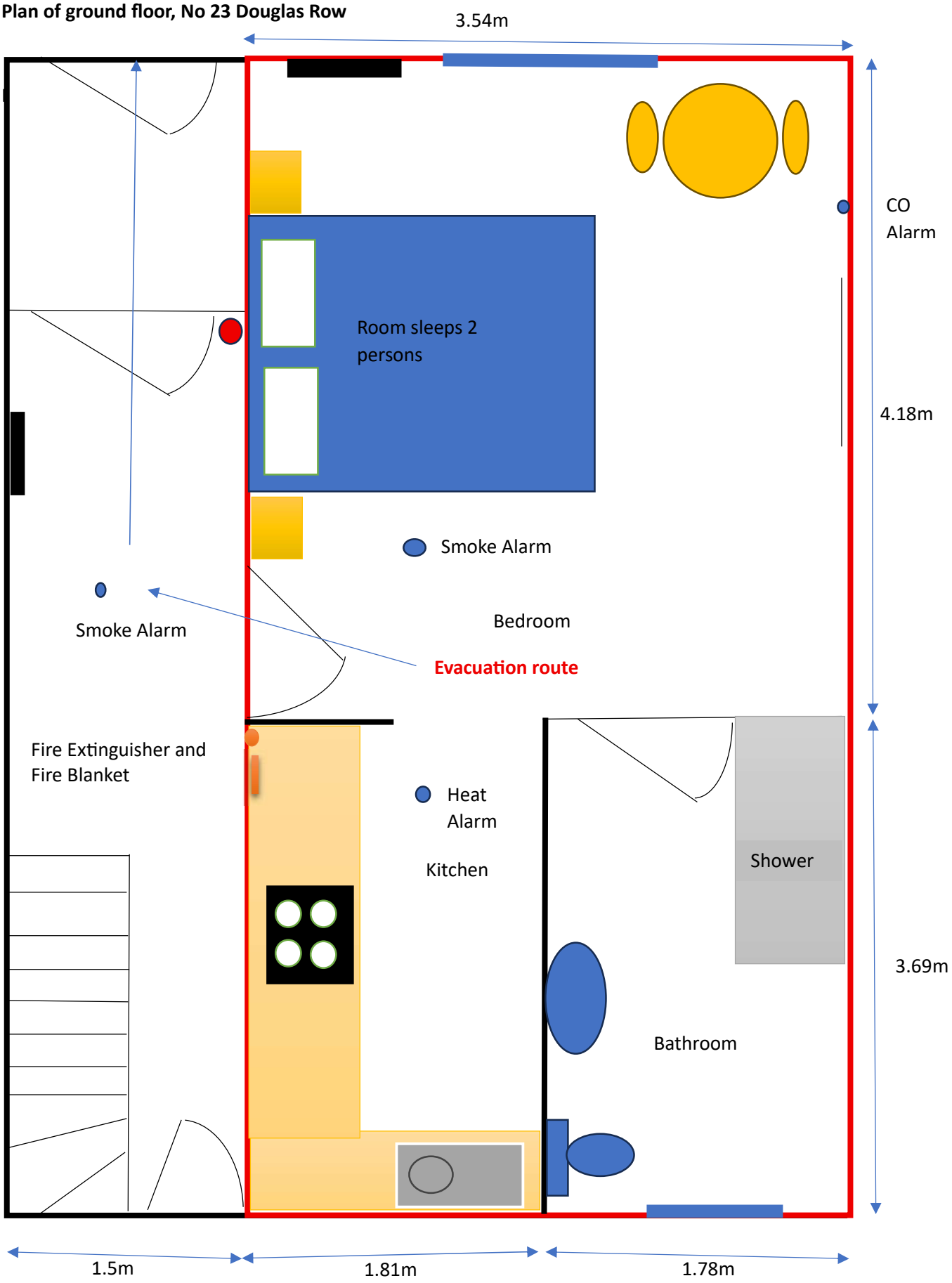
Appendix 1: Site plan detailing the extent of the Premises and floor plans for the Premises;
Appendix 2: Objection received by letter on 30 June 2026 from Ms Christine Martin;
Appendix 3: Objection received by email on 1 July 2026 from Ms Jessica Russell;
Appendix 4: Objection received by email on 4 July 2026 from Ms Bridie Russell and Mr Donald Ross;
Appendix 5: Objection received by email on 8 July 2026 from Ms Frances Campbell;
Appendix 6: Objection received by email on 13 July 2026 Ms Alison MacGillivray.

Site Plan for 23 Douglas Row, IV1 1RE

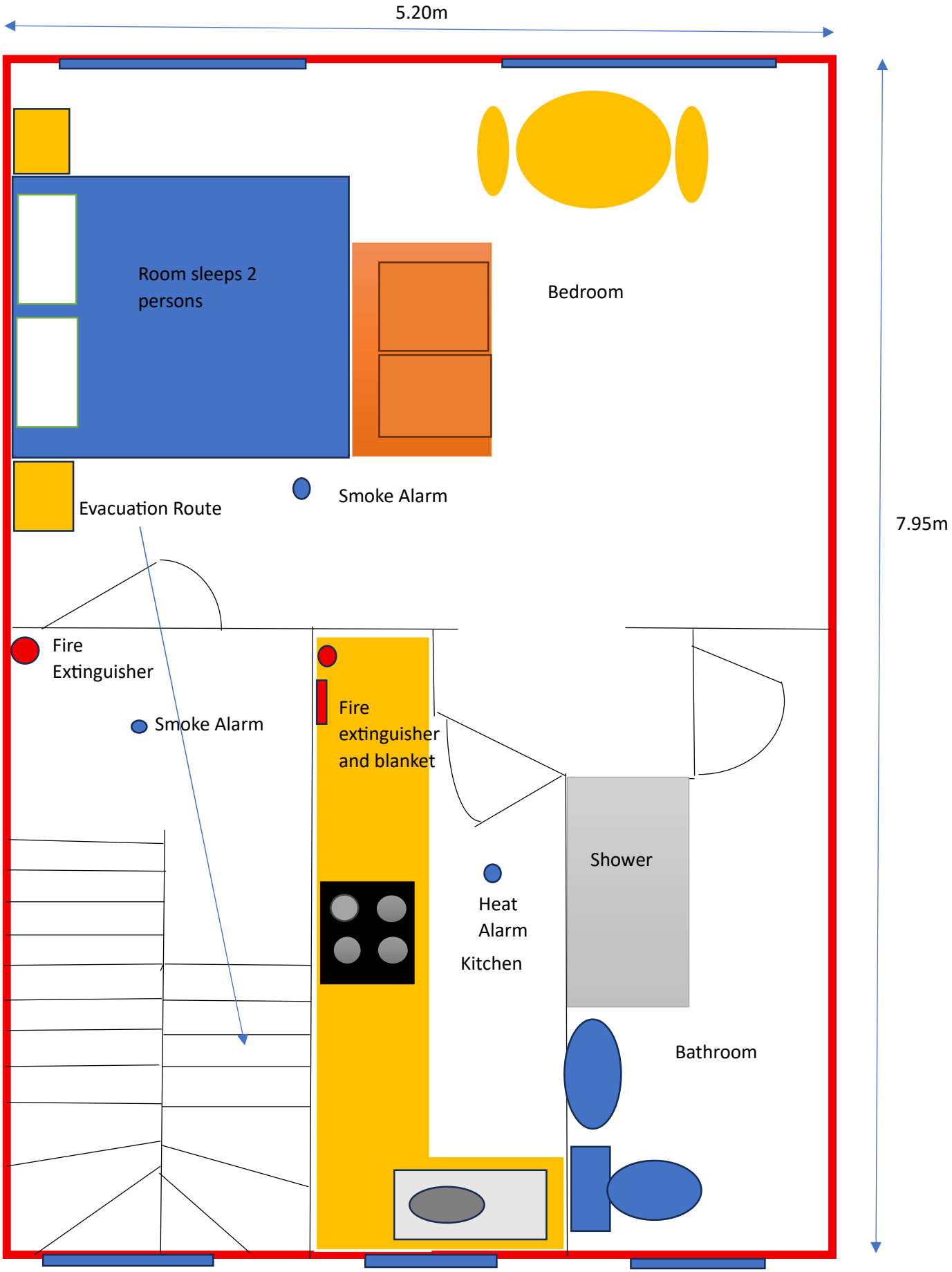


Number 23 is located in the middle of the red circle. There are 2 units occupying the ground and 1st floors.

Plan of ground floor, No 23 Douglas Row



Plan of 1st Floor 23 Douglas Row



Appendix 2

The Highland Council

Charles Kennedy Buildings

Achintore Road

Fort William

PH33 7RQ



(Attention: Simon Cook)

Public Notice for Short Term Lets Licences – 23 Douglas, Row, Inverness

Dear Sir

With reference to the above, I wish to register an Objection. This objection is based on the following –

1) Douglas Row has been a residential area of Inverness for almost three hundred years. It is contained within a Conservation Area and comprises Listed Buildings. It should not be commercialised and the sense of community must be retained and maintained.

2) I believe the owner of No.23 Douglas Row already holds an STL licence for No.24, a neigbouring property.

3) Concern already exists regarding properties 14 and 15 Douglas Row. Planning Department's records shows applications for Planning Consent, in the first instance, dated 2009 with a proposal to convert two townhouses into five individual flats, ergo multiple occupation.

4) This was amended in 2015 to form two town houses Interestingly, plans show the possibility of a kitchen on each of two floors with the largest room on each floor being identified as a Home Office, thus creating the likely introduction of four flats. The second floor on both buildings currently allows for five bedrooms and two bathrooms, but this area appears to have been boarded up.

5) Please inform for what period of time does a Notification of Initiation of Development last? As regards this instance eight years have now elapsed.

Does Planning Department exercise any kind of control over listed buildings in a conservation area obviously suffering dilapidation with only unskilled, intermittent work being carried out?

6) A parking problem already exists in Douglas Row. The double yellow road lines are now increasingly being ignored, especially overnight. This in itself indicates pressure on the 'residents only' parking permitted areas where full-time residents should be given priority. The possibility of more visitor's vehicles parking in Douglas Row will render parking for owners difficult to impossible

Yours faithfully

[redacted]

Christine Martin

[redacted]

7) When these Consents lapsed in 2018, a Notification of Development was raised with associated PDSA. This document contains neither address nor name of agent.

Sophie Shearer (Legal (Licensing))

From: Jessica Russell [redacted]
Sent: 01 July 2026 12:27
To: STL Licensing
Subject: Letter of Objection to Short Term Let #23 Douglas Row

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: Objection, Sophie

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.

Letter of Objection to Short Term Let

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to voice my objection to granting permission for a short term let license to the property located at 23 Douglas Row.

My primary concern as a full time resident at [redacted] is that Douglas Row, which is in a conservation area of listed residential properties, runs the risk of losing a sense of community. There are already several properties being used as short term lets and the properties being renovated into multiple flats at #14 and #15 Douglas Row may also become short term lets. While I don't object to a long term let, it is the daily/weekly turnover of short term lets that are disruptive and put the street at risk of losing those qualities valued in a peaceful residential community.

My second ongoing concern is related to the lack of available parking. Parking on Douglas Row is already challenging for residents. While I know that people like to argue that visitors to the area will utilise public transport, the reality is that most do not. Alternate parking needs to be provided at the back of the property (if accessible) or on Friar's Lane.

I hope that these concerns will be considered.

Sincerely,

Jessica Russell

Appendix 4

Sophie Shearer (Legal (Licensing))

From: Bridie Russell [redacted]
Sent: 04 July 2026 14:45
To: STL Licensing
Subject: STL licence application objection: 23 Douglas Row, Inverness IV1 1RE

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: Waiting Legal Licensing Response, Sophie, Objection

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Dear Sir or Madam,

Objection to STL licence application for 23 Douglas Row, Inverness IV1 1RE

We are objecting to the above application for the following reasons:

Douglas Row is in Ward 14 (Central) which is one of the wards in Inverness currently being considered as a STL control area. We are in support of this proposal: STLs are eating the heart out of many of our communities.

Douglas Row is an iconic little row of listed buildings in one of three designated Conservation areas in Inverness (Riverside). We feel this should be reason enough to restrict the introduction of STLs here. However, in addition, residents have had to observe stringent planning regulations when renovating their homes. We feel it would be ironic and sad to see the keysafe trend appearing on increasing numbers of doors here (as seen, for example, on Stephen's Brae, Greig Street etc), when efforts have been made by most residents to ensure the character of Douglas Row has been safeguarded as far as possible.

The residents of Douglas Row are keen to maintain a sense of community. We, and other residents have concerns that granting the above STL licence will set a precedent whereby it will be easier for future applicants to get a STL licence and so the number of STL properties will grow, thus destroying the community feel of the street.

There are 22 buildings in Douglas Row. (Although the street is numbered 1 to 24, there isn't a No1 nor a No7.)
Of these 22 buildings:
No17 - is a STL.
No 22 - both flats historically have been STLs
No 23 - STL licence being applied for
No 24 - has one STL unit (and is owned by the person who owns No 23)
Abutting that property (No 24) there is another STL in the only residential property on Friars Lane.

Additionally, the next (and possibly only?) residential property just beyond that end of Douglas Row, is 5 Bank Street, for which a STL licence has also just been applied. There are also a few properties on Douglas Row currently being renovated or not being lived in and it is not known what future plans

there are for these properties.

Furthermore, but of equal importance, Inverness has been flagged up for its dire shortage of longer-term rental properties. We would like to see more longer term rental properties available for people coming to work here.

Finally, parking has historically been an issue for residents of Douglas Row. Far more parking permits have been issued for Zone IVA than there are spaces. We fear that an increase in the number of STLs in the street would only add to this problem.

We should be grateful if our comments were given your consideration when making a decision about this application.

A signed hard copy has also been sent to HC, Charles Kennedy Building, Achintore Road, Fort William PH33 7RQ.

Yours sincerely,

Bridie Russell and Donald Ross
[redacted]

Sophie Shearer (Legal (Licensing))

From: Frances Campbell [redacted]
Sent: 08 July 2026 11:37
To: STL Licensing
Subject: Short Term let application - 23 Douglas Row, Inverness IV11RE

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: Sophie, Objection

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27 June, 2026

Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey
Highland Council
Charles Kennedy Building
Achintore Road
Fort William
PH33 7RQ

Attention of:
Short Term Let planning officers,

This letter is in response to the PUBLIC NOTICE OF PLANNING APPLICATION FOR SHORT TERM LETS LICENCE
The Civic Government Government (Scotland) Act 1982 (Licensing of Short Term Lets) Order 2022

Application type: New application
Simon Cook of Ashfield, High Street, Conon Bridge, Dingwall IV78HA
has applied to The Highland Council for a short term lets licence for the below property
Address of the property to be licensed: 23 Douglas Row, Inverness IV11RE
Licence type applied for: Secondary letting
The day-to-day managers are:Simon Cook.

Representation

This STL application has raised, among several, the following concerns.

Douglas Row is a residential, tree-lined, narrow road with speed control bumps, single lane restricted one-way access only (for cars), for cyclists, with a pedestrian pavement alongside the River Ness, Inverness.

The person understood to be the property owner of Numbers 24 and 23 Douglas Row already has an STL short term let application on No. 24. He is not full-time resident locally.

It is also understood that Douglas Row, within Central, Ward 14 is therefore one of the four Inverness wards under consideration as an STL Control Area.

There is already plentiful provision of hotel, guesthouse and B&B accommodation in this and neighbouring wards.

Number 23 until quite recently was a family home. It has now also being subdivided into several apartments by the owner of No. 24. (No 22 is already two self-catering units with another non-resident owner.)

There is already much demand for the few Parking Permit spaces available to existing residents, who maintain homes and contribute to the locality.

The increasing number of STL short-term lets along this historic row of 'post medieval' and other listed buildings, in a local conservation area, may not enhance aspects of safe, friendly, neighbourly community life and amenities.

Several other Inverness City residential areas have recently raised concerns about STL's preventing people from renting local flats as single or family homes near primary and secondary schools, work etc..

Signed,

L. F. Campbell
[redacted]

This document is confidential and intended solely for the use of the individuals(s) to whom it is addressed. If you are not the intended recipient, please inform the sender immediately and be advised that any unauthorised use of this document may be illegal.

Appendix 6

Sophie Shearer (Legal (Licensing))

From: Alison Macgillivray [redacted]
Sent: 13 July 2026 23:53
To: STL Licensing; Planning Conservation; [redacted]
Subject: 23 Douglas Row Inverness nverness

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: Objection, Sophie

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.

Further to a notice displayed on the above address since 18/06/26 I would like to take this opportunity to object to this application for short term lets.

My two main objections is the parking issues and secondly the integrity, and protecting the community that currently exists in the street.

There are very few parking spaces on Douglas Row. The council, I believe has recently issues parking permits to people that have no connection to Douglas Row. This has had a knock on effect for everyone.

If the owner of 23 has split up his properties, is he going to request further permits? This again has further implications of where to park for everyone else.

A further question that should be asked, properties which have been split into separate units, are the owners paying separate council tax for each unit?

This owner of No 23 has another property next door in number 24. This was turned into two separate units by the previous owner. A hairdressers downstairs and a flat upstairs that was let out. Was planning checked at that time? to allow this? This has now been retained as two units which have been turned into short term lets buy the current owner. Again was planning checked?

No 23 was always been a family home, this can be verified by the particulars when it was sold recently. From the street, I can see that the current owner has maintained original features which is great. But from my observations from outside, I belief that load bearing walls have been removed and therefore I ask if planning and listed building consent has been granted ? I have concerns that this house has been split up into flats?

Although not directly concerning this application, Number 14/15 Douglas Row, had planning permission granted in 2015 for two town houses, one in 14 and one in 15. With three back doors in the two properties, will this turn into possibly more flats? I have great concerns regarding future parking? Where do you draw the line? I think that the council should look at the bigger picture and the future implications of all these properties been changed into separate units for letting.

I have lived on Douglas Row for over 60 years and seen many changes. But it worries and saddens me

that all these beautiful properties are been split up and the long term integrity and the sense of community could be lost for ever.

My late mum always said she was the custodian of our home for a short time in it's long history and it should be restored and looked after for future generations. The council should also live by that same example and preserve a small area of the old town and it's charm, by keeping these properties intact as family homes.

I would also take this opportunity to point out that people from all over the world take photos of this street for it's charm and beauty. All these push button locks on the doors for houses that are let are an absolute eye sore and not in keeping with a Georgian conservation area.

Yours sincerely
Alison MacGillivray
[redacted]