

Issue 33	Highland Area – Aberfeldy	
Development plan reference:	Aberfeldy, page 98-99 E10 / H36 – Borlick, Aberfeldy, page 100-102	Reporter:
Body or person(s) submitting a representation raising the issue (including reference number):		
The Lomond Group (0191) Aberfeldy Community Council (0399) John Lumsden (0524)		Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) (0546) A&J Stephen Limited (0622)
Provision of the development plan to which the issue relates:	Development sites in Aberfeldy	
Planning authority's summary of the representation(s):		
<p><u>E10 & H36: Borlick</u></p> <p>RSPB (0546/01/019): Whilst the site specific developer requirement to enhance biodiversity is welcomed, it is too vague. Woodland enhancement would help to increase habitat and habitat network links for birds, helping the Council fulfill its statutory duty to further the conservation of biodiversity and contribute towards achieving the Plan's vision and objectives as set out in section 3.3. Specific wording change is suggested.</p> <p>A&J Stephen Limited (0622/01/001): Object to the sixth site specific developer requirement which requires 'Access from the A827 with secondary link into Old Crieff Road along Borlick Farm access track'. A more suitable secondary access through an alternative route may be possible and this option should be reflected in the LDP in order to assist in the assessment of all possible access options for the site and explore all detailed opportunities for vehicular and cycle / pedestrian connectivity beyond the site.</p> <p><u>Area of Employment Safeguarding (Core)</u></p> <p>The Lomond Group (0191/01/001): Object to the inclusion of the former Fisher's Laundry on Home Street, Aberfeldy within the 'Core Employment Safeguarding' allocation.</p> <p>In early 2016 the site became surplus to the operation requirements of Fishers Laundry. The site was the subject of a full marketing exercise which confirmed that there is no commercial demand for the continued use of the site solely for business / industrial purposes. The site was purchased by the The Lomond Group in August 2017 who are progressing proposals for a limited number of new build residential units and a total of five light commercial / business units. These new units will generate the same level of jobs on the site as was the case during the final years that the site was operated by its previous owners.</p> <p>The inclusion of the site within an area safeguarded as a "Core" employment area places an unduly and unreasonable restriction upon the ability of the site to be redeveloped for potentially non-employment related purposes. The allocation of the site should be</p>		

amended so that it would instead fall under Policy 7B: Mixed Use Sites.

Aberfeldy Community Council (0399/01/001): Support proposals for mixed residential and industrial units use for the former Fishers Laundry site and support reducing the area of this site designated as 'employment safeguarding' to enable the proposed development to be considered. Allowing a portion of the site adjacent to Home Street to be redeveloped as housing would improve the townscape in this area and not materially damage the possibilities for future employment.

New site

John Lumsden (0524/01/001): Site H100 (Amulree Road) should be included in the Plan for future property development.

Modifications sought by those submitting representations:

E10 & H36: Borlick

RSPB (0546/01/019): To sites E10 and H36, add the following after 'Enhancement of biodiversity' bullet point: 'including woodland enhancement to include an increase in berry bearing native trees and shrubs'.

A&J Stephen Limited (0622/01/001): The sixth site specific developer requirement for site H36 should be amended to read: 'Access from A827 with secondary link into Old Crieff Road along Borlick Farm access track or other suitable secondary route'.

Area of Employment Safeguarding (Core)

The Lomond Group (0191/01/001): The site of the former Fisher's Laundry should be allocated so that Policy 7B: Mixed Use Areas applies rather than part A of the Policy.

Aberfeldy Community Council (0399/01/001): Reduce the extent of the area designated 'Employment Safeguarding' on the former Fisher's Laundry on Home Street.

New site

John Lumsden (0524/01/001): Site H100 (Amulree Road) should be included in the Plan.

Summary of responses (including reasons) by planning authority:

E10 & H36: Borlick

RSPB (0546/01/019): The site specific developer requirements relating to biodiversity for these sites have been carried forward from the adopted Plan. 'Enhancement of biodiversity' is a standard requirement which has been included for many sites in the LDP. A more specific requirement is given in the Plan where a need for a particular form of enhancement has been identified through detailed study or research. No evidence has been submitted that such a specific need has been identified for sites E10 and H36.

No modification is proposed to the Plan. However if the Reporter is minded to accept the modification the Council would be comfortable with making this change as it would not have any implications for any other aspect of the plan.

A&J Stephen Limited (0622/01/001): The site specific developer requirement relating to the secondary access has been carried forward from the adopted Plan and this was not raised as an issue during the Examination of that Plan. No information has been provided in the representation that demonstrates that a secondary access along the Borlick Farm access is no longer the most suitable option, and no proposals have formally been put forward for an alternative secondary access.

No modification is proposed to the Plan. However if the Reporter is minded to accept the modification the Council would wish that a requirement for multiple access to the site is retained for both vehicles and pedestrians.

Area of Employment Safeguarding (Core)

The Lomond Group (0191/01/001); Aberfeldy Community Council (0399/01/001): In a change from the adopted LDP, the proposals maps in the Proposed LDP now distinguishes between 'core' and 'general' business and industrial areas. Core areas should be retained for Class 4, 5 and 6. The purpose of differentiating between core and general areas was to enable the Council to protect the most important areas for Class 4, 5 and 6 uses, and conversely to identify those areas where there may be potential for a wider mix of uses.

The site of the former Fishers Laundry site MU369 (MD023) is within the Aberfeldy Business Park. Aberfeldy is one of the largest settlements in the Highland area and plays an important role in the economy of this area. The consolidation and expansion of employment land within the eastern edge of Aberfeldy is important to provide opportunities for sustainable economic growth within an accessible location. The Business Park is therefore identified in the LDP as an Employment Safeguarding (Core) Area and the allocated site at E10 is identified as Area of Proposed Employment (Core). Until such time as the employment site E10 is delivered the Business Park is the only area in Aberfeldy which is specifically identified in the LDP as an area which is to be safeguarded for employment uses under Policy 7A.

The removal of a sizeable part of the Business Park from the Employment Safeguarding (Core) designation will impact on local availability of serviced land and buildings for business, industry or storage and distribution uses in Aberfeldy. It is acknowledged, however, that a marketing exercise has been undertaken and that this concluded that at that time there was '...no commercial demand for the continued use / operation of this site for solely business / industrial purposes' (Representation 0191/01/001). Whilst the delivery of employment land is important the Council recognises that the viability of redeveloping this site wholly for employment uses is marginal at best as, in addition to the demolition and development costs, the former use suggests a high likelihood of contamination on site. There would therefore be merit in considering a mixed use site if limited residential units could cross subsidise the delivery of small business units.

The support from the Community Council for allowing the site to be redeveloped for a mix of residential and commercial / business uses is acknowledged. Changing the designation of this site to mixed use under Policy 7B may enhance the viability of the site, subject to safeguards to ensure the delivery of business units prior to the occupation of the first house.

No modification is proposed to the Plan. However if the Reporter is minded to accept the

modification the Council would wish that the following specific developer requirements are included: ‘

- Class 4 units compatible with neighbouring residential uses will be delivered in advance of the occupation of the first residential unit.
- Residential uses to comprise no more than 50% of the site
- A contamination study and remediation if required
- Flood risk assessment
- Suitable vehicular access and road layout through the site
- Noise attenuations measures may be required

Note that although the site is 0.85ha it would be inappropriate to indicate a capacity range as the number of potential units is unknown at this stage and is likely to be heavily influenced by the detailed design.

New site

John Lumsden (0524/01/001): Site H100 (MD022) was included as a potential option in the Main Issues Report (MIR) (CD046, pages 57-58). At that time there were two sites allocated for housing in Aberfeldy but there was some uncertainty as to whether one of these – H37 South of Kenmore Road – was going to come forward. Site H100 was put forward as a possible alternative to H37. Since the MIR was published adopted Plan site H37 (CD014, pages 158-160) has received planning consent and work has started on site. Whilst site H100 is considered to potentially offer the best option for the future longer term expansion of the town, it is very unlikely that the market in this area would be able to deliver more houses within the Plan period if a third site were to be allocated. It would be more likely to result in the same number of houses being built, just distributed over three sites instead of two and may undermine market confidence, affecting the viability of one or both of the existing / allocated sites.

No modification is proposed to the Plan.

Reporter's conclusions:

Reporter's recommendations: