

[REDACTED]

From: Tim Stott
Sent: 26 October 2011 08:58
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan Submission

Kellie - already acknowledged but please log this in all the usual paper and electronic places (you only need the PDF map not the other attachments)
Peter/Simon - please log these shapefiles as safeguard Call for Sites ideas

thanks - Tim

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'the opinions expressed herein are given without prejudice to any decision or action of The Highland Council'

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-----Original Message-----

From: Mike Atkinson [REDACTED]
Sent: 15 October 2011 08:37
To: Tim Stott; imfldp
Subject: FW: Cherished Natural Spaces - Muir Of Ord - Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan

Tim,

Further to your recent meeting with us in Muir of Ord - the following is a submission on behalf of Muir Of Ord Environment Group for the provision of "Cherished Natural Spaces" in the Muir Of Ord Area - to be considered for inclusion in the forthcoming Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan.

The areas identified as A-F on the enclosed map are natural spaces used by the community for exercise, general natural interest, dog walking and playing and we consider deserve recognition in the local planning process as such should be protected from being built upon. Through discussions locally we have identified areas considered to be of particular importance locally for the enjoyment of the natural environment by the people of the village in and adjacent to the Muir Of Ord Settlement Area.

Sites:

- A = Ord Loch (GR252495,850482)
- B = Great North Road Lochans and surrounding Wetland and Woodland (GR252649,850688)
- C = Loch Gun Toin (GR253231,850219) and Loch a Chleibh (School Lochan) (GR253017,850191) and surrounding Wetland/Woodland.
- D = Lily Loch and surrounding Wetland/Woodland (GR253587,849727)
- E = Stream Draining Loch Gun Toin to Lily Loch (GR253437,849930)
- F = Logie Burn/Distillery Beech Woodland (GR251880,850981)

The reasons why these sites fulfill the Objectives for the Strategic Environmental Assessment category for "Biodiversity, flora and fauna" are addressed below:

1. Maintain and enhance designated wildlife sites, biodiversity, valuable habitats and protected species, avoiding irreversible losses.
2. Maintain, enhance and create green networks for wildlife and people.
3. Provide opportunities for people to come into contact with and appreciate nature/natural environments

14/11/2011

4. Protect and enhance human health

Objective 1 is supported by the Environment Group's aim to apply for Local Nature Reserve status where possible for those areas identified. In doing this - a Local Management Plan would be prepared to cover the coming 5 years - identifying actions to be taken to maintain and enhance the designated sites. Within this plan, the aims of Objectives 2 and 3 are also included - enabling access to some areas and the provision of wildlife corridors connecting the sites identified where possible.

The Lily Loch and School Lochan are both adjacent to existing Amenity Land with footpath access - Ord Lochan and the Great North Road Lochs, and Loch Gun Toin are all accessible from adjacent car parks or public roads. Such accessibility offers opportunities to support Objective 4 - to enhance human health by providing areas to exercise and relax in attractive natural surroundings. Some areas borders existing amenity land with path networks connecting into the sites described. The Management Plan will address the continuing development and management of these networks.

Justification

The proximity of areas with such a wide biodiversity in close proximity to the developed extent of Muir Of Ord is a situation to be preserved. Residents can exploit opportunities to better understand the natural environment and to support the enjoyment of these areas both as a natural resource - and as extensions to existing amenity land.

Studies of these areas have identified their special characteristics - some of which are described below. Extensive reference is made in the following to a report by Henry McGhie (10/11/1999) "Information on the Muir Of Ord Ponds" (Copy Available from Muir Of Ord Environmental Group and a scan attached to this submission).

Key Elements of Fauna

Insects

Green Hairstreak and Elephant Hawkmoth, various butterflies are all known from the ponds. Also common Aeshna, Common Sympetrum and several Damselfly species are known to breed in the Muir Ponds. Rhinoceros Beetle also occurs in rotten tree stumps.

Amphibians

Frogs, toads and newts are known to breed in most of the ponds. Probably best known locally is the instance of the strictly protected Great Crested Newt (Annexes II and IV of the Habitats directive) - Found in the School Pond and adjacent to Loch Gun Toin but all the wetland areas identified are considered suitable.

Reptiles

Common Lizard and Slowworm

Mammals

Water Shrew, Water Vole and Otter, Fox, Mink and Roe Deer have all been identified in the various areas.

Birds

Annex A to the McGhie report identifies the prevalence of a wide range of birds in the various pond areas numbering up to 58 species- the majority of which breed in the identified locations

Flora

A and B - Ord Loch and Great North Road Lochans and surrounding Wetland and Woodland contain seasonal meadows dominated by sedges - also Oak, Sycamore and Swedish Whitebeam - with a dense margin of Bird Cherry around the eastern edge of Ord Lochan. Roe deer graze in this area and Guelder Rose (locally scarce) is also found behind the Car Park.

C = Loch Gun Toin and Loch a Chleibh (School Lochan) and surrounding Wetland/Woodland. A study in August 2003 by Margaret Barron identified 73 species of vegetation in the Lily Loch area alone. The full listing is available from Muir Of Ord Environment Group. School Lochan contains Guelder Rose (locally scarce) around the margin.

Loch Gun Toin also has a well developed aquatic woodland and a well developed marginal woodland of Alder

and Sallow - merging into Birch and Oak and a well developed Native Scots Pine wood in the centre. This pinewood also contains Heather ground cover and scattered Juniper.

D = Lily Loch and surrounding Wetland/Woodland. An unusually well developed aquatic herb community - and the only site in Muir of Ord for White Water Lily. Margaret Barron (see above) identified 115 species of vegetation in the Lily Loch area alone. The newly refreshed boardwalk and pathways through the area give easy access to this valuable resource - only minutes from the centre of the village. An adjacent unnamed lochan (GR 253311,849744) to the East of the Lily Loch provides an additional natural resource requiring protection should the adjacent Black Isle Show parking field housing development be progressed.

E = Stream Draining Loch Gun Toin to Lily Loch. Included to ensure provision of wildlife communication corridors between these C and D.

F = Logie Burn/Distillery Beech Woodland

A particularly attractive area of Beech Woodland (locally unusual) containing a path connecting the Distillery area with the countryside to the North of Muir Of Ord.

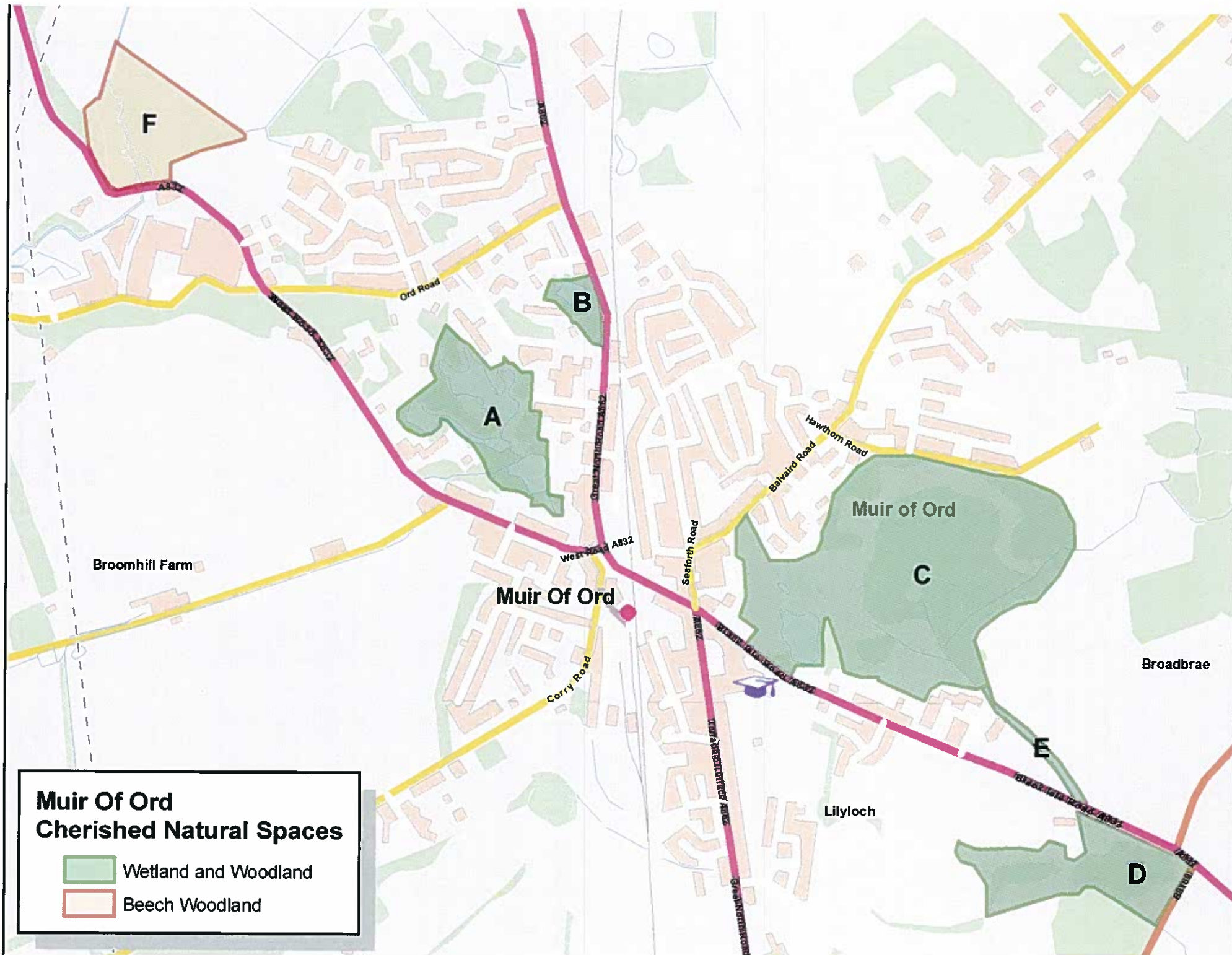
To support the request I have attached a shapfile containing the spatial data delineating the approximate site boundaries.

Rgds



Mike Atkinson (Treasurer)

Muir Of Ord Environmental Group

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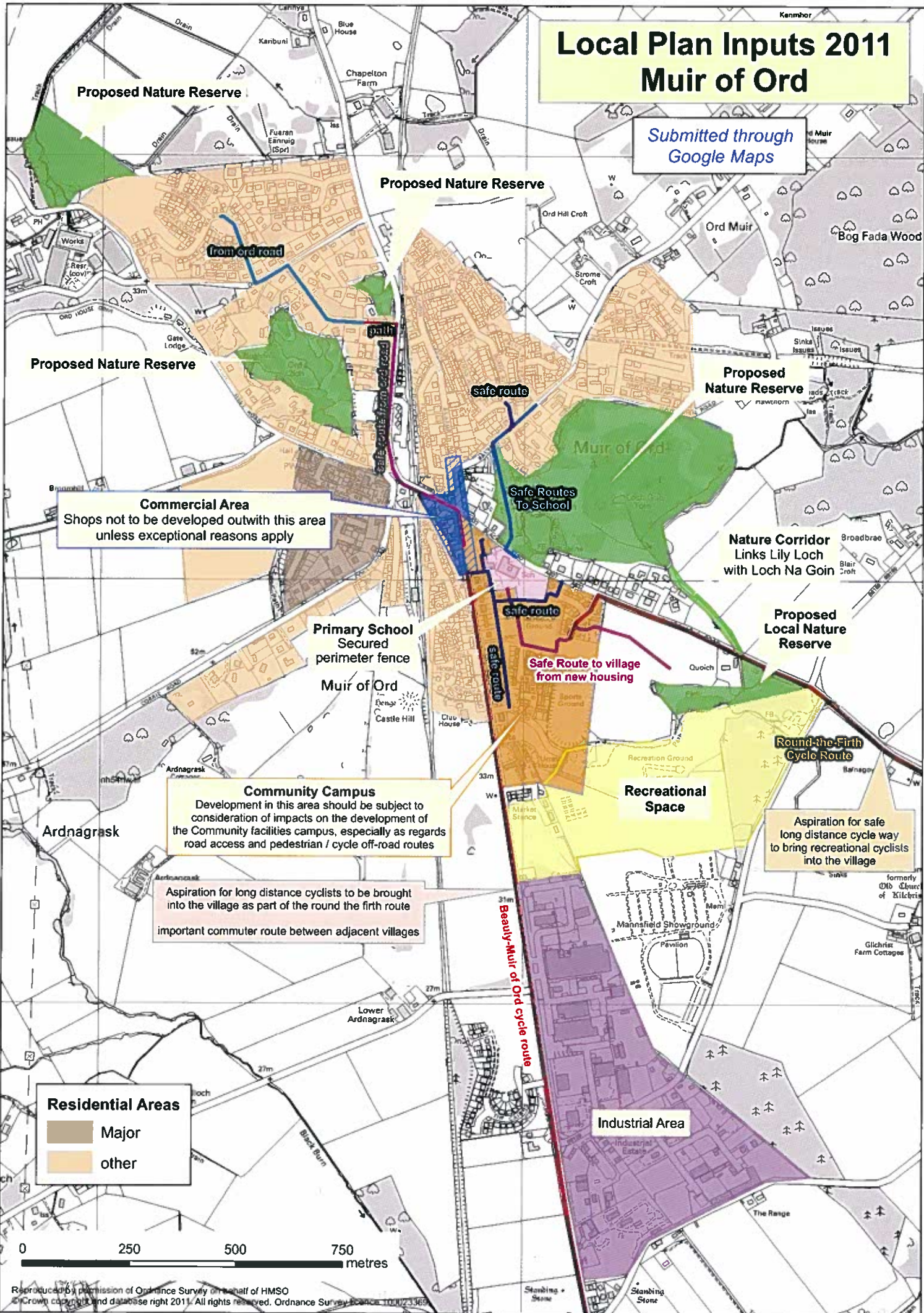


Muir Of Ord Cherished Natural Spaces

-  Wetland and Woodland
-  Beech Woodland

Local Plan Inputs 2011 Muir of Ord

Submitted through
Google Maps



Proposed Nature Reserve

Proposed Nature Reserve

Proposed Nature Reserve

Proposed Nature Reserve

Commercial Area

Shops not to be developed outwith this area unless exceptional reasons apply

Primary School
Secured perimeter fence

Muir of Ord

Community Campus

Development in this area should be subject to consideration of impacts on the development of the Community facilities campus, especially as regards road access and pedestrian / cycle off-road routes

Aspiration for long distance cyclists to be brought into the village as part of the round the firth route
important commuter route between adjacent villages

Recreational Space

Nature Corridor
Links Lily Loch with Loch Na Goin

Proposed Local Nature Reserve

Round-the-Firth
Cycle Route

Aspiration for safe long distance cycle way to bring recreational cyclists into the village

Industrial Area

Residential Areas

- Major
- other

