

## Economic Development

For example: Do you think that there is an adequate provision of land for business/industrial units in the area?  
Should land be identified for new economic development activities, including tourist facilities?

### General

- We have more than enough industrial units funded by the state, no need to build more. Improve the tourist facilities we have before spending more on new ventures. Local businesses should be customer friendly.
- Yes
- First question – yes, there is provision which has still to be used.
- Economic development is necessary, but has not been handled well in the past eg selling of mill to a private individual. Perhaps the area around the radio station should be used for industrial development ( sea and rail link) area around railway (old yard etc) could be used for this.
- Land should be identified for business as in order to keep young people in this area they need employment. This goes hand in hand with the housing need. If people can't get a job then they can't afford to buy a house.
- Yes, in answer to the first question – but there has been little uptake.
- Need for business/industrial units AT AFFORDABLE RATES. Current provision is too expensive and so sits empty!
- Business park is adequate and needs promoting.
- It is difficult to see there being any demand for business/industrial development without a much improved transport infra structure.
- Until there is an affordable, regular public transport system, business will be reluctant to move to the area.
- Yes, plenty. These should be restricted to 'developed' areas and not intrude into the beauty of remote Sutherland. Identify 'new' sites at 3 main centres of population as demand arises.
- There are currently many empty businesses / industrial units in the area, so until these are occupied, I can't see need for all that many more.
- Business units are available in our area and have been and have been empty for years but the Council will not rent them to young people to set up much needed businesses.
- Any development that would bring jobs and money into the area is a good thing.
- The availability of land is not very high on the list of reasons that business does not relocate in the area. Land provision should follow demand.
- We seem to have more industrial units available than users! E.g. Golspie/Dornoch/Alness.
- I feel there is adequate land for business; it's just a case of utilising what is already available better.
- There are already areas for business which have not been taken up in Brora and Golspie because of too high charges and rates. These need to be reduced so business has a chance to get going first.
- Industrial Units previously provided have not been utilized? Due to excessive rents?
- No – if these sites were developed and new industry encouraged to the area, locals again should get priority to the jobs and there should not be people brought in to do them at cheap rates.
- What business/industry?
- There seem to be adequate opportunities / or business development in our area (e.g. Brora and Golspie Business Parks).
- Brown field sites should be identified wherever possible.
- There is adequate provision for Industrial Units. Both sites at Brora/Golspie industrial estates have empty/spare land available. Manufacturing in Sutherland is a non-starter getting goods and services back to the mainstream through where people live (i.e. further south) is too costly.
- Too long a delay in developing south Bonar industrial site. Small serviced industrial sites are desperately needed. There has been no economic development in our area for 30 years!
- Absolutely. Jobs are needed as much as houses to attract young people into the area. Perhaps each village should have land set aside for new economic development (and support to attract business).

- Is there a demand?
- Yes – and its not always taken up.
- Syne Lodge should be acquired from the present owners and turned into a residential research unit for a Highland University, for the study of wetlands and freshwater biology. In the vacations it could cater for tourists – with field trips to archaeological sites etc
- A 400 metre grass airstrip could be laid at Inchnadamph, adding vitality to that community. Energy efficiency/Officers/Renewable Energy Consultants based in the North West.
- Definitely not – far too much emphasis is based on human existence. Nowhere near enough help and care given to birds and animals.
- No, again negotiate with present landowners. Rent out sites. Promote renewable energy – maybe solar/ wind units for residential homes, hardware could be produced locally to reduce heating bills for all.
- An area on Loch Eriboll should be identified for a local harbour.
- Stop dependence on tourism. Increase windfarm development.
- Yes, especially with the Assynt Foundation taking off.
- I think that the Dornoch Firth ward should be promoted for food production and tourism in contrast to the industrial areas of Easter Ross/ Inverness, with limited light industry. Its strength lies in its scenic beauty (Firth and mountains, lowland and upland, farming and forestry) in particular windfarms.
- With ever increasing fuel costs, touring caravan parks (which are a significant source of funds for local businesses) are likely to be increasingly unviable to be developed afresh. Any existing sites will be under similar pressure and may need a sympathetic approach from the Council regarding planning approval from improvements and funding in the form of grant aid.
- Biggest aid to economic development would be improved communications – main roads too narrow (witness continual tyre tracks at the edges) and broadband availability still restricted.
- There is enough land so there should be more put to use.
- There are plenty of dilapidated sites e.g. Bonar Bridge, Sutherland Transport and Lairg as well for economical development. Pharmacy for Bonar Bridge.
- Await with interest development of active business in recently installed schemes e.g. Brora Mill site, Golspie Business Park.
- I imagine tourist numbers will drop if the predicted number of wind turbines are constructed and erected. It could be argued that people/companies may be attracted to the far north to escape the congested south, but we are very remote and some quality market research would be necessary before this type of development is undertaken.
- Sufficient business units in area.
- I think there is an adequate provision of land for economic development.
- There is currently sufficient provision but this might change if the population grows. There should be a balance between housing and economic development. It is important that people living in the area have access to quality local job and are not forced to commute long distance.
- The region is dependant on tourism – therefore only important facilities for tourists must be welcome.
- Economic development should be the main focus to support the aspirations of existing residents. The Plan should focus on the activities necessary to deliver this economic development. Once this is establish then the skills/training for the area can be defined, followed by the support for private investment to create the jobs and then and only then the housing and social needs for those people. Without new private sector jobs the Council, by focusing on housing, will initiate the economic decline of the area by creating more estates of unemployed people. We all know the effect on communities of such housing areas, just look at Brora or Alness and the high levels of crime they enjoy. A few months ago our local Councillor was promoting the development of 250 'affordable family' houses in Dornoch. No consideration was given to where these 1,000 plus people would work! In the 'real' world people move to where they can get employment and develop their careers, not because there is housing. Housing follows employment.
- There are very few job opportunities in the NW for obvious reasons; there are few people to offer

employment and few people to create a market for those who do. But to retain and grow the population it is necessary to bite on this particular bullet. From the statistics provided, it would appear that tourism employs more than the regional average and yet overall, both capital investment and revenue investment in tourism in the NW is very meagre. Again, there are wide areas available for creative agricultural opportunities, especially for organic cattle breeding, deer farming and similar. And of course, home working should be encouraged; there are already a small number of NW inhabitants who run successful businesses via the internet but the numbers could and should increase if facilities are available to give a high quality standard of life in the area.

### **Rail link**

- You will be aware of the support for a rail bridge over the Dornoch Firth to cut down the railway journey time from Wick & Thurso to Inverness. New businesses and tourists are not encouraged by the 4-4.5 hours it presently takes to travel the line.

In 1999 Highland Council, in its Structure Plan for Sutherland (as modified) supported the retention of a rail corridor between Cuthill Links and Littleferry in order to safeguard the proposal for a new railway line between Tain and Golspie which crosses the Dornoch Firth and the mouth of Loch Fleet which would shorten the Wick/Thurso/Inverness route mileage and considerably speed up journey times.

As the support for this railway line has increased tremendously in the past few years for reasons of better communications for the economic development of East Sutherland and Caithness as well as reducing pollution in times of rapidly increasing oil costs and improving the environment – global warming etc – which is very important in the Highlands, I should be grateful if you and the Council will ensure that the rail corridor referred to above remains safeguarded when the new Sutherland Local Plan is finalised. This is more important as the latest study by Corus Rail Infrastructure Consultancy also supports a new line as stated as do strong representations currently being made to both the Scottish Parliament and the Executive.

- I would respectfully ask that, in the course of compilation of this plan, there is afforded a safeguarding of the necessary ‘land corridor’ which would allow the construction of a rail link between Tain and Golspie, passing over the Dornoch Firth and through the Dornoch urban area. As you will be aware from the programme of rail restorations now being undertaken by the Scottish Executive, the cost of those is significantly increased where land use developments have been allowed to intrude or obstruct the line of rail restoration – or a new route – which would be the case for a rail line through the Sutherland area.

From our previous discussions, during the course of the 1999 South and East Local Plan, I am aware that you were, fortunately, able to demonstrate an ‘alternative alignment’ for such a rail link which by-passed the Embo village expansion. However, without such a firm ‘statutory’ safeguarding of such a ‘rail corridor’ future development could well prejudice (particularly in financial terms) the chance of securing the desired rail route through Dornoch – beneficial also to the other communities of East Sutherland and Caithness / Orkney.

You will be aware of the increased interest / support for such a Tain – Dornoch – Golspie rail line since we last spoke in 1999. And you may well also be aware that the Association of Caithness Community Councils has formally Petitioned the Scottish Parliament (through their Public Petitions Committee procedure) for some progress on this issue.

- Since we hope to have the railway-line extended to Dornoch and across the Dornoch Firth by a bridge, could you ensure that a rail corridor is safeguarded.
- Preserve a rail corridor through the Dornoch area to allow the proposed Tain/Dornoch/Golspie rail link (with station at Dornoch). This would significantly improve the rail service to E Sutherland and Caithness and permit a commuter service to Inverness serving the main population centres in Sutherland.

### **Ardgay/Bonar Bridge**

- Industry required with internationally required products in mind. The problem seems to be that

units can be rented in order to secure financial aid. For small businesses which may or may not succeed – my point being that there is no need for same commitment or dedication as there is if you owned the property. So, I would say, for serious investors there is adequate land and industrial units already. Local people look on in horror at waste of public money which is generally viewed as a new way to ‘work the system’ until a better system comes along. Support would be better given for expansion of established businesses put in a tight spot due to outside interference, eg Dornoch Bridge and retail parks. Too many service industries, not enough genuine attempts to improve area.

- Land between north and east of Ardgay / Bonar Bridge.
- Land south of Bonar Bridge at Sutherland transport could be made more use of.
- There are already obsolete industrial units in Bonar Bridge.
- There are limited office facilities in the Bonar Bridge area especially, and any future developments for business/industrial units would be welcome.
- I think more land should be made available for business/industrial units – but not at the expense of crofting land.
- Yes, there is adequate land for business/industrial purposes. I.E. Sutherland transport area, which could be developed into an asset rather than an eyesore.
- I feel that the old transport area between Ardgay and Bonar Bridge could be developed to become an asset rather than an eyesore to the area. I also feel Ardgay has a great deal of history to offer – for example the old rec house.
- There would appear to be adequate provision of land for business/ industrial units in the area.
- Some of the industrial units already in existence are difficult to let so it would be unwise to build more
- At the moment there appears to be adequate land for industrial use as units already in existence seem not to have been let for some time.
- New/improved industrial estate required at South Bonar if flooding problems can be overcome.
- There are enough business/industrial sites in Ardgay – mostly needing attention, unused. Apparently Highland Council have no money to improve this situation at present?
- I think the provision meets demand at present as we have numerous empty units.
- Holiday accommodation is a form of economic development, and in our case that with the greatest potential.
- Only if research indicates that there is a real demand . Main asset is fishing which should come under local community control instead of being plundered by Easter Ross interests.
- Clean up South Bonar Ind. Estate and make available for industrial use.
- Adequate provision currently exists for business industrial units, but should new business activities arise (eg fishery museum) serious consideration should be given to sites outwith the local plan, relevant to the new business.
- Yes. There is enough land for business / industrial use but it would be advantageous to have a dedicated field for local events eg. Highland Games, sports events, and sports facilities i.e. swimming pool.

### **Bettyhill**

- At this moment in time there is nothing for the above in this area.
- Employment opportunities for young people are non-existent. The need for land for industry is secondary to encouraging /developing employment opportunities.
- There is adequate available industrial units available within a reasonable distance to travel.
- Sponsor local apprenticeships. Encourage local people to bring Council ideas which you could facilitate. The development of these ideas – e.g. promote ‘Heather Lamb’ produce from area/ decentralise local government delivery of services.
- More than adequate provision exists for business/industrial units in the area i.e. many unused.
- Industrial units have been tried before and were a failure, perhaps the rental was too high. However I would hope that there is a need for such things.

## Brora

- Pro-active help in getting businesses started here, including arts and crafts.
- There is enough business/industrial – but thought should be given to a recreational building area.
- Adequate units provided some remain empty.
- Too much being wasted on development sites that are never used.
- I believe there is sufficient provision for business/industrial units here.
- New Brora Mill (now defunct) offers unlimited opportunity for units with facilities already ‘in-house’. e.g. massive building which could be split inside to provide units. Ample car parking. As the ‘eyesore’ has been created let’s use it. For all purposes – M.O.T. Centre, coal yard, garage, tourist centre, restaurant etc. Now owned by a director of C.A.S.E.
- There appears to be very limited scope for business to develop in this area. Maybe after tax breaks to encourage new business.
- Instead of the housing proposed for the x radio station – That and the Gleneagles Golf Course area should be developed as a self catering and leisure area with modern facilities and the harbour extended for leisure craft. Brora Station Square should be developed as a ‘restaurant and retail court’ with parking.
- I think there is more than adequate provision for industrial units – the Brora Mill is a blot on the landscape and was never used to its full potential.
- Yes, until the Brora Mill and present ‘industrial’ sites are used why do we need any more expensive industrial estates.
- You should use Fascally Playing Fields for development, either business/industrial. It is clearly no use for any sport. Football / Rugby has always been bogged down due to flooding. Bad management when being developed.
- As far as I know the industrial park in Stafford Terrace is not fully occupied.
- I feel there is a need for provision of land for small units, workshops for local residents’ use. I would not want the increase in pollution and the eyesore that provision of land for industrial units would bring. In my ward there is a need for new economic development activities including tourist facilities and I would be happy with a moderate development in my ward.
- Instead of the planned housing development on the x radio station site I believe that the whole of that area including the “Geneagles” golf course / crafting land should be developed into a quality self catering chalet type area including leisure facilities ie pitch and putt golf, fishing jetty, small marina with restaurant and perhaps other facilities such as tennis, indoor riding etc. Brora Station square should be developed into an eating / food court area ie we have a good restaurant in the Quiet Piggy but need a Chinese restaurant in the x London House (not just a carry out) and perhaps a coffee shop / delicatessen in the x station ticket building. Wind farms are fine and should be encouraged as long as they are at least 2 mile from the A9 and are not overshadowing any recognised popular beauty spots. The idea of a steam railway enterprise based at Brora with trips to Thurso and back could help stimulate another strand of tourism. The continued development of Timespan is useful and to be encouraged.
- There seems to be adequate sites, although it is a pity that CASE has overpriced the rent on the industrial units.
- Yes. Again there are brown field site which could be utilised e.g. Old Radio Station/ former Hunters Mill/ Old School and Railway Station. Brora should be looked at as an opportunity for tourist, leisure and recreation venues and not industrial units.
- Could vacant premises be utilised?
- Young local people are not staying on in the area through lack of work i.e. plumbers, brick layers etc. With Highland Region’s apparent desire to close down Sutherland there is a great lack of professional people in the locality. There is a frightening drop in the school roll.
- Yes – utilise the football park below the Heritage Centre.
- More than adequate provision – how many business sites can we name with no or hardly any business on them. Common sense tells us that this will never be a strong area for MFG business.
- There is little point in earmarking potential business/ industrial sites without identifying future

users for them.

- There is enough provision for businesses and industrial use.
- Any economic development, including tourist facilities should be market driven.
- We have a developed area on the outskirts of Golspie Business park which has had no new developments since opened a few years ago
- There is adequate provision of land for commercial use.
- Insufficient development in Brora. New Hunters Mill should be developed.
- Yes and yes, including cottage industries such as crafts shops and market gardens.
- Existing industrial units should be utilised before new ones are set up. Whenever possible incentives should be provided to encourage local and new business ventures.
- Adequate land for business / industrial land use. Industrial site underused.
- Brora industrial estate filling up could do with more land.

## **Dornoch**

- There seems to be plenty everywhere already.
- Yes
- New business park should be used to group all businesses of the kind now dispersed in the Meadows areas – buildings, joiners, garages; also central garage should be located there. This will clean up the Square.
- I think there is sufficient land for industrial development as the existing phase 1 development in the meadows is lying almost empty!
- As far as Dornoch is concerned there is ample provision for business/industrial units.
- More business / office space needed. More small (even tiny) units needed on industrial estate for small businesses.
- Dornoch, having two ‘industrial’ parks with room in one for growth is certainly adequate.
- Can we fill the areas Dornoch has already. Land should be available for sustainable projects.
- I have never heard of anyone wanting a business unit. There seems plenty for businesses that exist.
- I think that the Dornoch Firth ward should be promoted for food production and tourism in contrast to the industrial areas of Easter Ross/ Inverness, with limited light industry. Its strength lies in its scenic beauty (Firth and mountains, lowland and upland, farming and forestry) in particular windfarms.
- There is adequate provision of land for business/industrial units already – no more needed.
- Embo Harbour to be repaired and facilities provided for sea fishing from boats moored in the harbour. Dornoch airstrip to be developed. Country pursuits and in particular fly fishing to be encouraged.
- More land should be made available for business and industrial units. The land should be used for new economic development activities including tourist facilities.
- Business / Industrial – there is adequate provision
- If the land was developed for business that would create job opportunities for residents.
- Space in Dornoch not yet taken up. Room for further development behind the ‘meadows.’
- Present industrial sites not being taken up. Therefore no need for more at this time. However land for new tourist facilities should perhaps be identified.
- There are already too many empty stores and they should be used first.
- I’m unaware of any need industrially. However I do think the harbour facilities could be improved at Little Ferry, for boat owners.
- There is already land that has been set aside for small businesses, only one section of this area has been taken up. What is the planning department’s views on the utilization for the old gas works adjacent to the slaughter house. This building has not been used for many years. Another eyesore is the former MiKi building in Castle Street, this also should be developed as a small business.
- There are already plenty of sites in existing industrial/business parks in the area lying empty waiting for customers.
- There are industrial site with unit that could be expanded. Identifying land nowadays involves

politics, and large profits for some individuals. However, the question of more need for these things should be looked at.

- I consider business/ industrial units are adequately provided for in the area.
- No more industrial sites are needed.
- There is no new development in this area.
- Since existing units aren't fully taken up it doesn't seem sensible to have more speculative build as long as serviced sites are available.
- Adequate provision of land for business/industrial units. I would nor say any further land should be identified for economic development activities except for a leisure centre and swimming pool.
- A small percentage available but distant from housing so that it does not interfere with the quality of life.
- There is insufficient land for further business / industrial units. The use of existing brown field sites should be viewed and used for this purpose to avoid, as above , turning the area into urban sprawl.
- This is vital if Dornoch is to remain a lively community. At the moment, tourism is strangling any other economic development. Much of the wealth is "earned" here from tourists never touches Sutherland. We must retain more of our young people and attract working people to the area, so more jobs must be found. Small clean businesses should be encouraged to relocate here and benefit from clean air, broadband access and a well-educated local workforce.
- Adequate facilities at present in Dornoch Ward.
- Land should be identified.
- Yes – further identification of land should be that only, ie identification.
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#### **Durness**

- There probably is enough land available, but crofting legislation can get in the way when commercially available sites are being considered.
- The Durness Development Group is investigating this question.
- Locals (non-crofters) can't get land in Durness as there are some older crofters with up to 8 crofts each and most aren't used.
- Adequate provision! There is practically none. Sites should be available. Existing tourist facilities must be expanded. Single track roads must become obsolete – they are an anachronism.
- There is an adequate provision.

#### **Edderton**

- The Dornoch Firth Catchment Basin shall be the green lung of the Moray Firth area and therefore the development which will be encouraged will be light industry, food and drink manufacture, tourism and services. Heavy and large scale industry will not be permitted nor will any potential development, such as fish farming or further wind farms, which might cause damage to the environment. The area to the west of Manse Road, where there is already a repair yard and a workshop, should all be zoned for light industry. There is also need for sympathetic understanding and assistance for light industrial projects on farms and crofts throughout the parish.
- Any further business/ industrial units to be sited adjacent to existing facilities. Avoid urbanisation of countryside.

#### **Golspie**

- There is already a business park in Golspie with room for 4-6 units. There is only 1 site occupied on this brand new development which is only a handful of years old. I do not think Golspie needs any more developments for business/industrial until present site is full.
- There is certainly ample existing provision for business/industrial land in Golspie. Why was a new business park developed at considerable expense when there were empty industrial units in central Golspie? A substantial building, the old school hostel, has remained empty for many years, a

- permanent eyesore, could also be developed at minimum expense.
- Certainly not! Look at the unused Golspie Business Park!
- There is plenty of space in the newly created Industrial Park in Golspie, the problem seems to be attracting businesses to the area.
- Plenty land for business/industrial units – Enterprise Park is empty.
- No, there are too many sites at present that remain empty.
- There is enough already available. The industrial site in Golspie is sitting almost unused.
- Golspie would benefit greatly from any opportunity to increase the potential economical development of the area.
- More than adequate provision for ‘traditional’ private sector enterprise. Focus should be on providing land/buildings for social enterprise, for which there are significant growth opportunities.
- No – but with the lack of housing in the area there is very little hope of regenerating the area – other than with elderly people retiring from the south and giving a proportionately greater need for medical and care home services.
- Adequate provision at new business park.
- Too much! The existing space for units and facilities is unoccupied.
- At present adequate with new business park available.
- The only possible further land and / or business use that I could think of (in Golspie) is the lower Rhives fields, north of the railway and adjacent to it.
- I think this is about right at present. There should be a balance between development and conservation.
- Business/ industrial units provided are adequate.
- Need to encourage enterprise company to build suitable units.
- Yes to both latter questions, as there is not adequate provision of land as many businesses do not fit into appropriate usage for units available in Golspie business park and industrial estate in village.
- In Golspie industrial units seem more than adequately provided for. Industrial area at West End would be more usefully used for housing, a more attractive approach to the village, and would ease the shortage of building sites in the area.
- There is already a business park newly constructed adequate for local needs. The new factory on the business park has not considered the reflective materials. The same care should be taken by D.C. with regard to design and materials.
- No more land is needed for business units. The present business park in Golspie is grossly underused and much energy is wasted lighting it.
- Existing industrial units are under utilised.
- More than enough land and units given to the business/industrial sector.
- The present industrial estate has, I believe ,sites vacant for future development, and at this present time no further sites should be developed.
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### **Helmsdale**

- Ample – sites not fully occupied at present.
- Should be more industrial sites for local employment and chances for people wanting to start business. Would be good for local community.
- Business expansion can only be good for the whole area including the tourist industry. Here in the Highlands there is a desperate requirement for general services such as plumbers/electricians/heating engineers/ etc.etc. Encouragement should be applied to attracting tradesmen to the area.
- No – brown land areas should be utilised to encourage new businesses as well as establishing some of the old ways.
- There is no business/industrial units in Helmsdale.
- Helmsdale now a shortage of land for industrial development.



## **Kinlochbervie**

- Do not build units for the sake of it but allow as much industrial development as we can.
- Present industrial units at Loch Clash are used – one is an art gallery, the other two are fisheries. I think some empty, there seems to be no prospect of big industry to replace the fishing which made Kinlochbervie prosperous. What about story in today's P&J that Assynt are going to develop bog maybe for pharmacy and cosmetics? Possible here?
- The area to the side of Loch Clash harbour is crying out for development. At least two attractively built and designed units for rent (as a café and shop for example) would be likely to attract interest from local or incoming people with initiative. The whole of the Loch Clash area is a disgrace at present and its co-ordinated improvement would do wonders for tourism.
- Economic development limited. Housing is the key issue.
- Yes – Kinlochbervie needs small business units.
- We have 6 units. Four are used by one company, another lies dormant but rented and one has changed into a gallery. (Surely change of use?) This leaves none for anyone else.
- The fact that one business has the tenancy of four out of six small industrial units in Kinlochbervie needs to be re-addressed due to the number of people who use the Sandwood Bay car park. Signage to direct them to other facilities in the area would help local business because at present they drive in and out again, contributing little to the local economy.
- Make harbour land at Kinlochbervie and Lochinver available for marina. Encourage business opportunities for renewable energies to alleviate fuel poverty at a local level.
- The KLB area has 6 local authority owned and rented industrial units all of which appear occupied. There are no industrial units available in the locality. We are aware of additional demand for possible one unit in the future. KLBCDP is involved in developing part of KLB Harbour into a marina for local and visiting yachts. The concept plans are in place for a three phased development with Phase (1) being the installation of a single pontoon, (2) an additional pontoon (finger), and (3) an associated building with showers / toilets etc., depending on the use and success of the project. The project is being supported by the Highland Council who will apply for EFF funding in 2006. as part of regenerating the disused pier area at Loch Clash Harbour, KLBCDP is exploring a proposal to construct a backpackers hostel – café /dinner and visitors shop / bookshop to serve the many walkers coming onto the area with the extension of the West highland Way from Ft. William to Cape Wrath. Because of the distance from Inverness distribution and the lack of fresh vegetables in the area, there is a loosely organised group of local growers interested in increasing production of fresh vegetables / produce for KLB shops, hotels and residents.

## **Laid**

- This is always going to be a problem in these parts and the accent should always be put on tourist facilities which contribute much today and will contribute more and more in the future as people seek to enjoy the kind of beauty and peace we have up here, from a pure business/industrial units point of view, this is small business country which is moreover very isolated. Any planning effort should be directed towards the sort of small business which can prosper up here and use modern communications, broadband etc, to offset the isolation factor. For example, my neighbours run a translating business and this is exactly the sort of business which can prosper and should be encouraged by ensuring that communication facilities are as up to date as possible.

## **Lairg**

- The units at Lairg are underused so not a lot of land needs to be looked at for this purpose.
- The only area for development to help Lairg in many ways is to apply pressure to redevelop the Hotel.
- More jobs for local youngsters, as at the moment there are no jobs for the young.
- Definitely, would be good for employment in area. Business and industrial units/offices should be away from homes (noise pollution) and should be hidden from view.

- In Lairg former Sutherland Arms Hotel now derelict. Apparently bought over by foreign investors. Site area if not developed would be prime for small business investment and development in village centre. Certainly on route for tourist buses and passing trade.
- There is plenty of room for further development at the Ferry Croft site and certainly the facilities could be upgraded.
- The site at Ferrycroft (Tourist Information Centre) is inaccessible for busses and difficult to find by anyone else. This superb centre should be repositioned into the centre of the village, near the Lochside.
- This is driven by demand i.e. if a business requires land they find it. So there is adequate provision at present.
- Yes but what would you do with them? Since I came to Lairg 40 years ago, so many places have shut or gone – Lairg Laundry, The Weavers, The Butchers, Bakers, Hotel, Blacksmiths, Sutherland Transport Garage, shops and buses – a whole fleet of them. It's a leisure centre, swimming pool, games, roller bowling – something like that required suiting tourists and local people – a nice tearoom and restaurant.
- Yes, projects are good, add interest and development to area.
- Brown field sites should be identified wherever possible.
- No to first part of question. Yes to second part, but not necessarily 'tourist' facilities. Our future depends on 'productive' industry not 'service' industry.
- Before business/industrial units be made available it should be ascertained that they would be fully utilised as there is no point in erecting units to be left empty.
- No industries.
- Business/industrial units seem to be adequate. Lack of entrepreneurs; ;local labour willing to work/adapt; and costly fuel/transport militate against economic development as much, or more than, provision of land and facilities.
- Land outside village on the road to Lairg could be acquired for completely new industrial estate.
- When (and if) there is a demand for these facilities they should be provided, but there is not much evidence of need at the moment.
- Sufficient business/industrial units in the area of Lairg, but none in Rogart.
- Increased No
- Yes, No encouragement given to industrial development – SEPA etc – anyway.
- There are already too many so called industrial units in Sutherland lying empty – encourage sensible development not pie in the sky hairbrained schemes. Encourage youngsters to stay by offering proper careers, not modern apprenticeships which seem to be useless.
- I think that here, land is not the issue. The issue is the nature of the economic level and the quality of tourist attractions. Facilities that currently exist e.g. ferrycroft are underutilised. Support is needed for the entrepreneurial business activities that have community backing.
- Four industrial units were built many years ago have never been occupied for Industrial use. No further provision required.

### **Lochinver**

- Glac Mhor industrial units were not used and are now up for sale – suggests no great demand for this facility. Bespoke premises get built for specific demands.
- No, the provision of land is totally inadequate. Some 'common grazing' areas are useless thanks to some greedy and selfish clerks who are allowed to monopolise huge areas of land for their own benefit. A local hairdresser has to run her business from her own home.
- There are some industrial buildings at Clashmore which are empty.
- Yes – at the moment serious lack of employment possibilities.
- In Lochinver there seems to be enough. Its when Glencaring Lodge and associated buildings will add to tourism facilities in the future. Long term, if you sell off Glac-Mhor, you may need to find alternative land. Maybe needs are changing – for example we could do with a Hostel in Lochinver and

cheap offices for business start-ups.

- Current small industrial units underused at Lochinver.
- I suspect the site near Lochinver is underused. Is this the case? Perhaps the provision of broadband would encourage other development. I would add that I am not an expert in this area.
- Make harbour land at Kinlochbervie and Lochinver available for marina. Encourage business opportunities for renewable energies to alleviate fuel poverty at a local level.
- Yes, there is adequate provision of land for business/industrial units – the current take-up is less than 100%. However, unused buildings (eg the bakery in Lochinver) should be freed up for commercial use. No new land needs to be specifically identified for new economic development facilities etc, but better use needs to be made of existing buildings etc.
- Potential wind generation should be permitted on the ridge above Glencanisp Lodge. Potential for eco-tourism related activities should be allowed at Cnocnaneach and at Glencanisp.
- A little land could be allocated for new industrial zones in the urban centres - or in some cases close to the mini-settlements, where infrastructure could be shared. There is no point in launching development on a significant scale where population is still so low and young educated people still inclined to flee the area. If the first tentative initiatives generate new residence and population growth, with improved services coming in their wake, more ambitious development can follow.

### **Melvich**

- It s a village we live in and we think that businesses should not be allowed to have their units/yards within the village, village life should be kept and the tranquillity should not be disrupted by heavy plant, extra traffic etc.
- Land should be designated for such purposes to enable regeneration.
- New business opportunities should be identified and exploited (e.g. Dounreay decommissioning.)
- Tourists and industry don't want to come here – it's too cold and windy.
- Industrial unit site already in Melvich but not developed to its potential.
- The industrial units in Melvich are white elephants. One is now used by coastguards and the other by Ed. (Education or Economic Development?) Dept. The then regional director of development (Mr MacIntosh) chose to ignore local advice which proved to be correct.

### **North coast communities**

- Here in Armadale an industrial site was bought by HIE but there were no businesses interested. Therefore- no need for further for foreseeable few years in Armadale.

### **Rogart**

- A little – yes. Too much and we lose a way of life!
- Businesses are short lived – stick to tourism.
- 3 \* Some land in or around villages should be identified for future development.
- Sufficient business/industrial units in the area of Lairg, but none in Rogart.
- Business does not need land, it needs the business people. Rogart is ideal for home marketing, broadband, good services and environment. This should be advertised and pursued.

### **Rosehall**

- We now have 4 couples all aged below 40 commuting to Inverness. A commuter rail service plus an upgrade to double lane of A839-837 to Ullapool & Lairg would make a major change to existing businesses plus bring youth.
- The area round Rosehall is unsuitable for business/industrial development

### **Strathy**

- Any industrial development should not destroy the natural beauty of the place. Any windfarm development should be very critically assessed and not be built within 8-10 miles from the coastline.

**Scourie**

- Not appropriate. Necessary facilities available. (Note there is no mention of aquaculture which is important in the Scourie area.)
- There is no provision of land for business/industrial units in the area. The planning authorities and landowners should be as flexible as possible if someone is willing to invest in the area and bring jobs.
- No, I'm not aware of any. It would be good if local young people (and older) could find well paid jobs locally. Is there room , eg 'windy corner', to build some small industrial units as required.

**Stoer**

- Very difficult to get land for business development especially near population centres. Highland Council rents prohibitively high!
- Economic growth is important in my area, land should be identified with thought on the environmental impact of these projects, and the design should be in keeping of that area.
- I don't think it is the land that is the problem. It is the lack of support and help on the west coast from CASE. Much more help is needed. People may be skilled and have a good idea but may lack marketing or financial record keeping (and are never going to be good at it) need a stronger presence and longer term support to get a business going.

**Tongue**

- No, clearly not to the first question.
- Assistance to social enterprises - much local development is being driven by the communities, not the agencies anymore. So, the agencies to support this and provide administrative support to provide assets where required, not where agencies think they are needed.
- Most of the areas previously made into Industrial units haven't been taken up and have been made into other branches by Council use.
- Industrial units should only be built up if there is a localised need, not to sit empty.
- Yes, Tongue is being strangled by landowners with their own agendas.
- Previous industrial units have been too expensive for fledgling businesses and retail outlets were not allowed. Unless there are changes, further provision would not achieve any gains.

**West coast communities**

- Yes. As Council units still unoccupied.
- I think most development activities should be high on Highland Council's agenda with the proviso that the natural landscape is protected.