

THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
CAITHNESS, SUTHERLAND AND EASTER ROSS PLANNING
APPLICATIONS AND REVIEW COMMITTEE
20 January 2009

Agenda Item	4.1
Report No	03/09

CARE HOME FOR THE ELDERLY, NORTH WEST OF
CRAIGHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL, TAIN.
(08/00407/OUTSU)

ACCESS ROAD WITH BUS TURNING AND DROP OFF AREA,
EXTENSION OF CAR PARK FOR CRAIGHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL AND
IMPROVED PITCH WITH BALL STOP FENCE AND LIGHTING
AT CRAIGHILL TERRACE, TAIN
(08/00408/FULSU)

Report by Head of Planning and Building Standards

SUMMARY

This report presents two applications for development at Craighill Primary School, Tain on land in Council ownership. The plans include a care home and an access road. These applications revise earlier proposals for a health centre and access road already granted planning permission. The applicant for both developments is the Highland Council.

The outline care home application has received four objections. The detailed application for the new road from Craighill Terrace, etc. has received 6 objections. Objections to both applications have focused upon the loss of open amenity and impact on the primary school especially the safety of school pupils accessing the school.

There are no objections from statutory consultees. It is recommended that planning permission be **granted** for both applications.

Prior to granting planning permission these applications will need to be **notified** to Scottish Ministers on account of the financial interests (land ownership) of the Council, the consequential loss of existing open space / playing fields and to respond to objectors.

Ward: 8 Tain and Easter Ross

1.0 PROPOSALS

1.1 This report considers two applications for development at Craighill Primary School, Craighill Terrace Tain. A residual area of land (0.94ha) not covered by either application is earmarked by the Council for a new health centre in Tain on a revised site / layout to that previously approved in June 2008. Detailed plans for the new health centre remain to be drawn up and formally submitted for consideration as a new planning application.

- 1.2 The first application is for a new care home for the elderly on 0.7ha of land to the north west of Craighill Primary School and is in outline. No detailed indicative site plan is presented with the application only the site boundary, the proposed means of access via a new road (see below) and a notional building site on the north eastern side of the proposed plot. This application will be referred to as the Care Home application.
- 1.3 The second application is for a new access road from Craighill Terrace, Tain with a bus turning and drop off area. This road will serve the Care Home and other anticipated developments within this area. It also promotes an extension of the car park for Craighill primary school and the creation of a dedicated “soccer sevens style” pitch to the north side of the new access road with a ball stop fence and lighting. Landscape plans were subsequently submitted providing greater detailing of the proposed boundary treatments. These subsequent plans also amended the layout especially to incorporate a section of remote footpath and more direct access paths into the school. See attached layout plan. This application will be referred to as the “Access Road” application.
- 1.4 These two applications fall within land owned by the Highland Council bounded on the higher southern side by the A9 Trunk Road and from the east by Craighill Terrace. It comprises largely open amenity area, incorporating play facilities south, west and north of the Craighill Primary School. The field boundary on the north western boundary is formed by a field ditch that connects into the existing drainage network at Manse Gardens, managed by Scottish Water.

2.0 PLANNING HISTORY

- 2.1 **07/00787/FULRC** medical centre with pharmacy – **granted** June 2008.
07/00796/FULRC roundabout, access road car park and playing facilities – **granted** June 2008.
07/00797/OUTRC adjacent site to northwest housing (in outline) for 170 houses - **granted** June 2008.

3.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- 3.1 The applications were advertised under Section 34 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 on 31 October 2008 allowing 14 days for comments.
- 3.2 The Council received 4 objections to the Care Home application and 6 objections to the Access Road application. Annex A provides the details of objectors.
- 3.3 Objections have focused on the following matters: -

Care Home application

- Loss of open amenity area.
- Development is not wanted.
- Alternative sites exist for this project.
- Compromise the safety of school children in the area.
- Care Home adjacent a recreational pitch may give rise to complaints.

- Projects may jeopardise plans for the new health centre.

Access Road application

- Loss of open amenity area.
- New development will change the residential character of the area.
- Access to property adjacent this new junction will be difficult.
- The development will restrict available on-street parking on Craighill Terrace.
- Development using this new access road will bring increased traffic flows endangering the safety of school pupils.
- Current congestion on Craighill Terrace will be exacerbated.
- The road and school grounds should be visually separated through screening.
- It is not clear who will use the drop off area – buses or cars?
- The extended school car park will increase danger to children.
- Construction works could temporarily remove a valued area for recreation.

3.4 All letters of representation are available for inspection in the Planning and Development Service at Headquarters, Glenurquhart Road Inverness and will be available at the committee meeting.

4.0 CONSULTATIONS

4.1 Tain Community Council has no objections.

4.2 Archaeology Unit has no objection subject to any grant of consent being conditional to allow for archaeological investigation prior to development commencing.

4.3 TEC Services (Roads) no objection to either application. The access road and accesses to new car park (adjacent to school) will require to be constructed under a Road Construction Consent (RCC) agreement. Traffic calming, incorporating a puffin crossing would be required on Craighill Terrace, and this would form part of the RCC. With regard to the Care Home application a contribution towards enhanced public transport provision in the area will be required in line with all new developments in Tain. The contribution would be calculated on final floorspace / bed spaces similar to the calculations for car parking provision. The details on drainage issues for both the access road and new car parks are limited. Further information should be requirement of any planning approval.

4.4 Trunk Roads Network Management Division has no objections.

4.5 Scottish Water has no objections.

4.6 Scottish Environment Protection Agency has advised in previous consultations of the need for specific conditions on any approvals.

- A condition is required for a SUDS scheme, including two levels of treatment for the car parking areas, to be agreed with the Council in consultation with SEPA.
- SEPA wishes to ensure that the development does not result in watercourse modifications. SEPA would consider a buffer of 1m from the top of each bank reasonable.

- 4.7 Sport Scotland has no objection subject to conditions to ensure that the new pitch is constructed to a suitable standard and is constructed as early as possible in the phasing of the development. Implications of the developments on amenity and informal recreation should be addressed through requires set out in SPP 11.
- 4.8 NHS Highland has no objections. The revised health centre site is under negotiation. There are benefits in the Care Home being close to the Health Centre.

5.0 POLICY

- 5.1 The following development plan policies are relevant to the assessment of the proposals: -

Highland Council Structure Plan (March 2001)

- 5.2 Policy G1 Conformity with Strategy
 Policy G2 Designed for Sustainability
 Policy S1 Services and Facilities.
 Policy S3 Health and Social Work Services.
 Policy SR2 Sports Facilities and Open Space Provision.

Ross and Cromarty East Local Plan (Feb 2007)

- 5.3 Strategic Themes 1 – 7.
 Background Policy BP 3 Recreation area / playing field / open space
 Tain – Background – Health Centre expansion / medical practice
 Policy 14 Housing Tain Parks
 Policy 15 Housing Rear of Craighill Primary

National Planning Policy

- 5.4 The proposals also require to be assessed against the following relevant Scottish Planning Policies (SPP); NPPG, and Planning Advice Notes (PAN).

SPP 1	The Planning System
SPP 3	Planning for Housing
SPP 11	Open Space and Physical Activity
SPP 17	Planning for Transport (National max parking standards)
PAN 65	Planning and Open Space
PAN 75	Planning for Transport
PAN 76	New Residential Street
PAN 77	Designing Safer Places
PAN 78	Inclusive Design
PAN 82	Local Authority Interest

6.0 PLANNING APPRAISAL

Determining Issues

- 6.1 Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 6.2 The determining issues are whether:
- The proposal accords with the development plan?
 - If they do accord, are there compelling material considerations for not approving them?
 - If they do not accord, are there any compelling material considerations for approving them?

Assessment

- 6.3 To address the determining issues, the Committee must consider the Development Plan and material considerations which might arise from the under-noted issues:-
- a) Policy - Development Plan & Supplementary Planning Guidance
 - b) Services (transport infrastructure, local accessibility, drainage services)
 - c) Layout and design
 - d) Amenity
 - e) Other Material Considerations

Policy – Development Plan & Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 6.4 Both applications fall within an area highlighted in the adopted Local Plan under “Background Policy 3 / Amenity” which the Council will safeguard from development not related to their amenity value. The general amenity provided by this open space area is not one that has been designed for any specific purpose. However as a maintained, open, grassed playing-field it has value to local residents and is used by the pupils of Craighill Primary School.
- 6.5 The two current applications follow upon a recent determination of three applications granted planning permission for similar proposals in this area including a medical centre, a roundabout, access road, parking area and playing facilities and housing development (in outline application) the latter on land further to the north west. There was seen to be clear support for such projects within the Structure Plan (S1, S3 and SR2) and East Ross Local Plan (H1, H5 and H7). The Scottish Government and Sport-Scotland did not object to these initial applications despite the amenity allocation within the adopted East Ross Local Plan. The Council was content that within the terms of SPP 11 sufficient land would remain available within the community currently dedicated to playing field use, open space and general amenity.
- 6.6 The current applications are not significantly different to the earlier granted planning permissions which have established the precedent for development adjacent to

Craighill Primary School. A key consideration in the determination of the earlier applications was the fact that a significant area of land would remain available as playing fields / amenity space both around Craighill Primary School and adjacent future housing developments to the north and west. In addition improvements were to be made to the reduced playing fields to enhance the quality of the facilities available to the community.

- 6.7 The current two applications remain consistent with the above community ambitions, although there is currently no revised application for the medical centre. A residual area of ground would remain undeveloped for that purpose, albeit on a different configuration to that as approved within the earlier (detailed) application. On balance the collective intent of these applications are seen to comply with the Council's Development Plan.

Services

- 6.8 There are no objections to the two applications from TEC Services, Scottish Water and SEPA although each agency has set out their requirements for development in this area. These can be addressed through planning conditions.

Layout and Design Issues

- 6.9 A key difference with the earlier applications in this location is the removal of the proposed roundabout within Craighill Terrace, now replaced by the new configuration of an offset T junction. Members' earlier concerns over the need to separate out the health centre bus stop and school bus stop has been addressed in the new design. Increased school parking has also been provided using suggestions from the School Board also discussed at the April 2008 committee hearing when addressing the earlier applications.
- 6.10 The design of the proposed access road is more sympathetic with the street layout in Tain when compared with the earlier approved access road, which had incorporated a roundabout. That said the proposed drop off zone may be less attractive for pupil drop off / pick up except by school buses who can be required to use the provided facilities. The provision of early footpath access into the school set apart from the improved car park should help retain reasonable safety standards for all parties accessing facilities within this area. Traffic calming as part of the "Safer Routes to School" initiative will be required to be provided by the developer on Craighill Terrace. This will include a "puffin crossing" on Craighill Terrace. Although the specific details of these measures remain to be finalised, this can form part of the Road Construction Consent process.

Amenity

- 6.11 The Access Road application is supported by a detailed landscape plan which addresses conditions set out in the earlier approved applications. This includes the provision of natural stone walls at new junctions and improved landscape works around the school grounds with provision for appropriate footpath provisions for pedestrians especially school children accessing the school. Collectively these measures should enhance the quality of the local amenity, which will still retain a substantial area of open ground dedicated for recreational uses by the school and

local community.

- 6.12 The use of these grounds both by school pupils and for ball games do require new additional fencing to be provided including fencing 1.2m high and around the new pitch 5m high. The latter in particular could be perceived as detrimental in amenity terms, but is essential to minimise risk to adjacent users around the new pitch.

Other Material Considerations

- 6.13 Within the representations received a number of issues were raised not addressed within the preceding paragraphs. These are considered in turn.
- 6.14 Representations questioned of the need for the Care Home facility. The Council currently operates a facility at Duthac House, Tain, which is no longer deemed fit for purpose. Whilst a range of sites could accommodate this proposal in Tain, the fact that the present site is in the applicant's ownership and there is a very real possibility of a new medical centre co-locating at Craighill Terrace, provide good reasons in support of the selected site. The site is of good quality in amenity terms and could afford future users with a most attractive facility / environment.
- 6.15 Concerns were raised about the co-location of the Care Home with the new pitch with suggestions that this could give rise to conflict and complaints. The plans do present reasonable separation between the potential Care Home Site and the enhance recreation ground, which has its own safety provisions. Many would argue that the positioning of these two facilities is advantageous. Recreational users will add value to viewers from Care Home Users, whilst the latter will provide additional security to users of the recreational ground minimising anti-social behaviour.
- 6.16 Perhaps the most critical additional issue raised was the doubt cast over the safety of school children brought about by these developments, particularly the anticipated dangers of increased traffic / traffic movements. TEC Services are of the view that the proposals are acceptable, but require some additional "Safer Routes to School" investment in the form of a new puffin crossing on Craighill Terrace.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 There is a limited body of opinion against the proposals as presented in these two applications and earlier applications for development in this area. Such individuals value the current land use and activities on Council owned land at Craighill Terrace and wish to retain the open amenity of the area consisted with the policies of the recent East Ross Local Plan. The provisions of the Development Plan are of considerable importance and must be given primacy when determining these applications.
- 7.2 That said the Council's Development Plan policies, as set out in both its Structure Plan and Local Plan, are supportive of new community infrastructure within local communities. There will be real benefits to the community in social and economic terms to have the level of investment being offered to this local community through these applications, which is largely consistent with earlier and very recent planning approvals in this location. Sufficient land will remains for a new health centre to be

developed in this locality which could also provide a significant boost to the services available in Tain and to the benefit of the wider East Ross area.

- 7.3 Both the Care Home and Access Road applications fall within an area covered by “Background Policy” “BP3” for amenity purposes, where the Council will “safeguard areas from development not related to their amenity value.” The general amenity provided by this open space area is not one that has been designed although it has value to many local residents. The development proposals will introduce change to this largely undeveloped area however this need not necessarily impact adversely on the local amenity. Through adherence to good design, careful landscaping and boundary wall treatments for example, new development can in itself bring about changes that are of good quality, add interest and value, be respectful of the current amenity and abut existing neighbourhoods in an attractive, safe and responsible manner.
- 7.4 There are no adverse comments on either application from statutory consultees. Sport Scotland is not objecting to the reduction of the amenity / playing grounds and the Council has been content, through its determination of earlier applications in this locality, that the loss of open space does not conflict with National Policy SPP 11, as the community of Tain and this neighbourhood would still be left with a good level of amenity and recreational space / facilities for the needs of existing and future residents.
- 7.5 Taking all these matters into consideration, including representations, there are no reasons why both these applications cannot be supported.

Procedures

- 8.1 In view of the Council’s financial interests, through land ownership, with these two applications and on account of the perceived loss of public open space / playing field there is an need to notify any decision to grant planning consent to the Scottish Government.
- 8.2 With regard to the provisions set out in Circular 5/2007, prior to notifying the Scottish Government of its decision, the Council is required to write to all objectors advising them of the Committee’s decision and allow additional comments to be submitted. Thereafter, the Council having taken account of any further comments, if the Council remains minded to grant planning permission, its is required to continue with its notification to Scottish Government.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Council

1. Grant outline planning permission for a Care Home north west of Craighill Primary School with conditions as set out in Annex A.
2. Grant planning permission an access road, parking area and improved playing facilities at Craighill Primary School with conditions as set out in Annex B.
3. Delegate authority to the Committee Chairman in consultation with the three local members to determine the case for final notification to Scottish Government following consideration of any further comments received from objectors.

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Designation: Head of Planning and Building Standards

Author: Ken McCorquodale / Principal Planner - (01463 702256)

Background Papers: Files 08/00407/OUTSU and 08/00408/FULSU

Grant outline planning permission for a new care home for the elderly, north west of Craighill Primary School, Tain subject to the following conditions: -

1. Before development commences approval from the Council must be obtained for: -
 - A detailed layout of the site as a whole, incorporating as appropriate joint provision for a health centre to be established on land to the south.
 - Plans illustrating the siting, design and external appearance of all buildings / services including specific measures of design and siting of infrastructure for sustainability.
 - the design and appearance of boundary enclosures
 - the means of access to and within the site by pedestrians, cyclists, public transport and motor vehicles,
 - proposals for landscaping and maintenance thereof, and
 - site levels existing and proposed,
 - the proposals for surface water drainage and maintenance thereof.

Collectively these are termed “reserved matters”.

Reason: The application was in outline only and no such details have been submitted.

2. An application for approval of reserved matters shall be made to the Planning Authority within 3 years from this date of this permission.

Reason: Statutory requirement.

3. The development hereby permitted shall commence within 5 years from the date of this permission or within 2 years from the date of approval by the Planning Authority of the last of the reserved matters to be approved.

Reason: Statutory requirement.

4. Prior to the commencement of any development, a programme of archaeological work for the preservation and recording of any archaeological features affected by the proposed development, including a timetable for investigation, all in accordance with the attached specification (not attached with committee report), shall be submitted to and require the approval in writing of the Planning Authority. All arrangements thereby approved shall be implemented by the applicant / developer at his expense in accordance with the approved timetable for investigation.

Reason: To ensure the protection and / or recording of the historical and archaeological interest that may be found on the site.

5. Prior to the opening of the Care Home a comprehensive Travel Plan that sets out proposals for reducing the dependency on the private car by staff and customers and how these travel patterns can be influenced shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council. The Travel Plan will require to be implemented for a minimum of 5 years from the opening of this facility and will include:

- Details for the management of the Travel Plan identifying the persons responsible for implementation.
- Details of proposed initiatives, targets, monitoring proposals and reporting procedures.
- Details of proposed measures to improve and enhance public transport facilities and services including details of subsidies.
- Details of travel information to be provided for this facility to be made available to staff, residents and visitors of the care home.
- cycle parking facilities, with weather protection.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of SPP17 Planning for Transport to reduce dependency upon the private car and encourage greater use of public transport in particular.

6. A buffer of 1 m from the top of the bank of the existing watercourse to the north of the site be retained free of development or interference during construction.

Reason: - To safeguard the existing watercourse and habitat contained therein.

7. Proposals for reserved matters shall include a natural stone wall boundary, 0.75m high, along the full length of the north east frontage of the site.

Reason: - To continue the programme of establishing natural stone wall boundaries to development areas at Craighill, consistent with earlier planning decisions on this site.

Grant planning permission for an access road, parking area and improved playing facilities at Craighill Primary School subject to the following conditions: -

1. The development hereby permitted shall be commenced within 5 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: Statutory requirement.

2. For the avoidance of doubt the approved layout shall be as presented with drawing reference SWFD0002 – LL1. Furthermore that all remote public footpaths shall be constructed 2.4m in width and footpaths adjacent car parks must be set to ensure vehicle overhang does not prevent use of the full width of the footpath.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to comply with Council standards.

3. Prior to the commencement of development, a programme of archaeological work for the preservation and recording of any archaeological features affected by the proposed development, including a timetable for investigation, all in accordance with the attached specification, shall be submitted to and require the approval in writing of the Planning Authority. All arrangements thereby approved shall be implemented by the applicant/developer at his expense in accordance with the approved timetable for investigation.

Reason: To ensure the protection and/or recording of the historical and archaeological interest that may be found on the site.

4. For the avoidance of doubt there shall be no modification (e.g. re-alignment, rerouting, culverting) to the existing watercourse to the north- west of the site, with the exception of that required as part of the watercourse crossings, or proposals for habitat enhancement.” A buffer of 1 m from the top of each bank be retained free of development or interference during construction.

Reason: - To safeguard the existing watercourse and habitat contained therein.

5. Prior to the commencement of development the construction details, including details of soil(s) to be used for the improved playing fields require to be submitted for approval of the Council. Thereafter the playing fields to be constructed as approved and made available for use within an agreed timescale following commencement of the construction.

Reason: - To secure early completion of the replacement pitches / playing fields of an appropriate quality.

6. Prior to the commencement of development details of all Sustainable Urban Drainage works will be submit for approval by the Council in consultation with SEPA. Proposals for SUDs shall ensure two levels of treatment for surface water from the proposed car park, bus turning area. All surface water drainage needs to be designed for a 1 in 30

year storm and the 1 in 200 year storm will need to be assessed to check that its consequences are acceptable.

Reason: - To manage surface water responsibly and minimise the risk of pollution.

7. The approved landscaping scheme shall be fully implemented at the earliest appropriate opportunity and certainly within the first planting season following the commencement of development, and thereafter shall be maintained in perpetuity by the applicants and / or their successors to the standard indicated in the approved management scheme. Maintenance shall include the replacement of plant stock which fails to survive, for whatever reason, as often as is required to ensure the establishment of the approved landscaping scheme.

Reason: In order that a high standard of landscaping is achieved, appropriate to the site.

8. The construction working hours within the site shall be Monday – Friday between 0700 hours and 1800 hours and on Saturday 0800 hours and 1300 hours, with no work being carried out on Sunday or public holidays. Any work requiring to be carried out outwith these times shall only commence with the prior written approval of the Planning Authority.

Reason: To minimise potential disturbance to neighbouring residents.

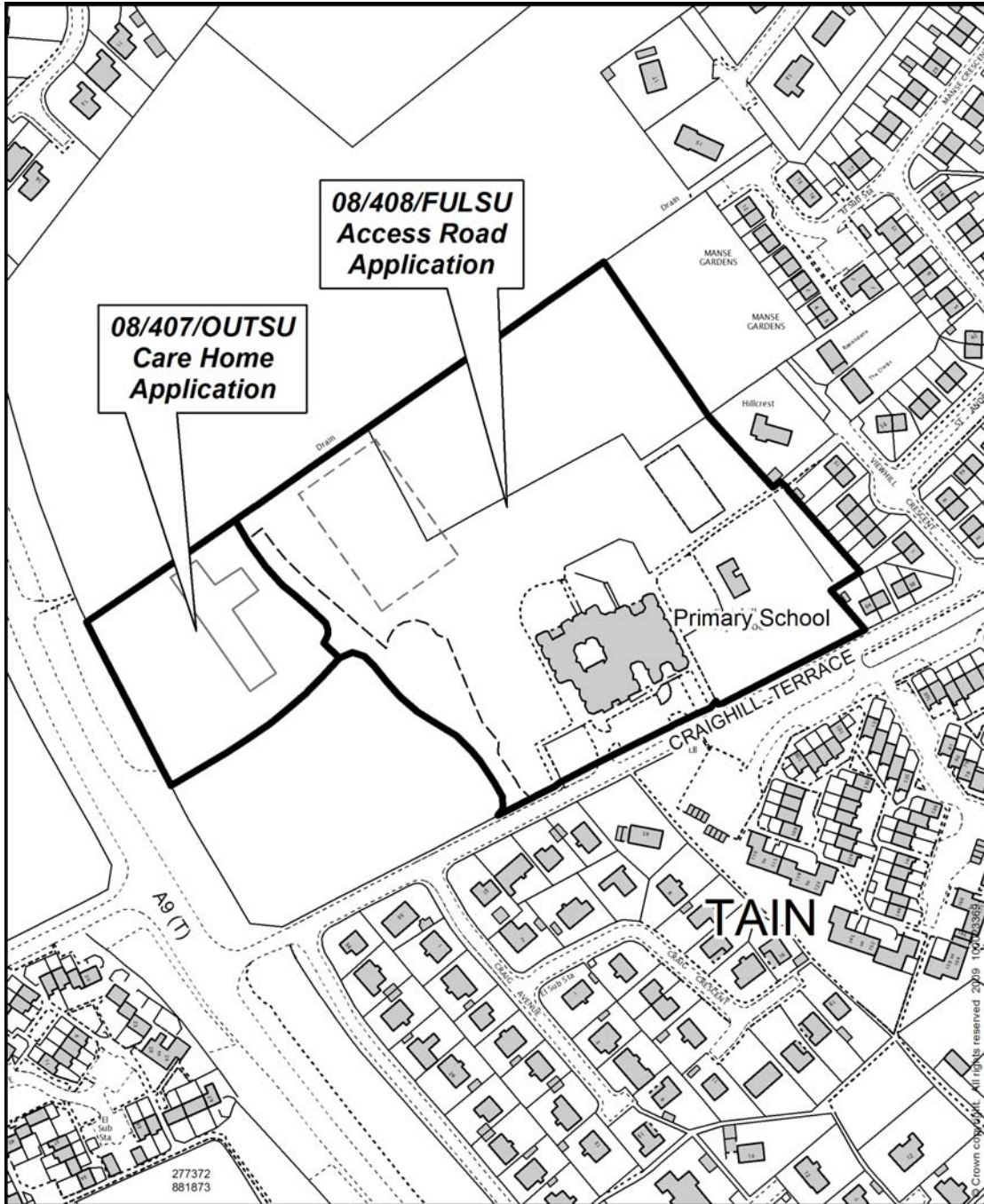
9. Prior to the commencement of development a construction method statement shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Council in consultation with such other parties as the Authority considers appropriate. The method statement shall include (but is not restricted to) the following matters:


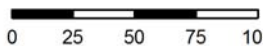

- A detailed construction programme and timetable, including restoration of any construction site compound.
- An assessment of construction traffic generation and management in so far as public roads are affected, including provisions to keep all public roads free of mud / silt.
- Measures to deal with groundwater issues that may arise during construction.
- Pollution prevention measures including contingency plans.
- A statement covering maintenance and management of the site.
- The applicant shall take all necessary measures to avoid nuisance to neighbouring residents caused by dust which arises from operations carried out in connection with this planning consent. The applicant should follow best practice and best management techniques in this regard, including a commitment to carrying out any remedial actions that may be requested by the Council.

Reason: To safeguard local amenity and road safety interests.

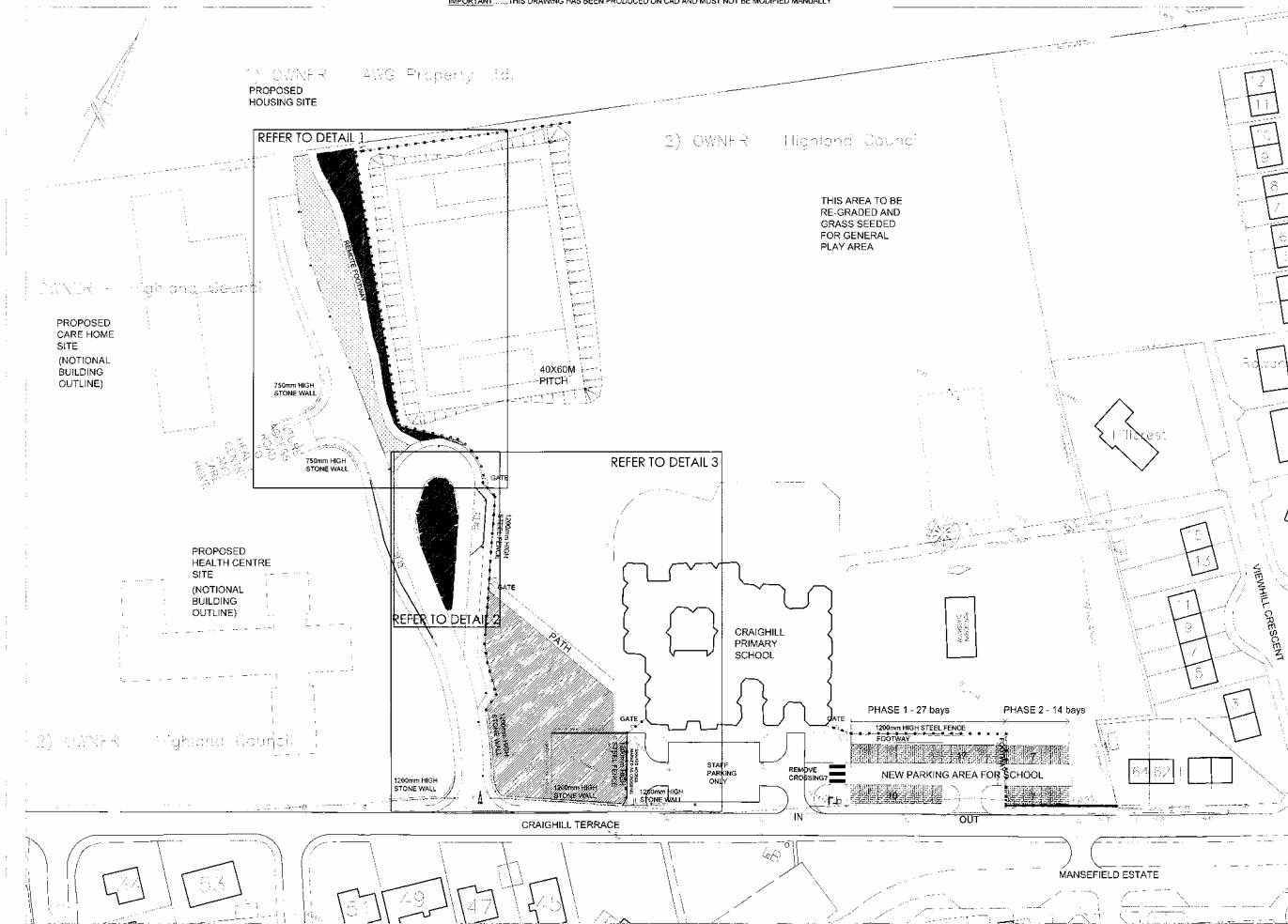
INFORMATIVES

1. Road Construction Consent (RCC) will be required for all adoptable works. Standards for the RCC submission are identified in Highland Council Road Guidelines Document, for further information contact Principal Engineer, THC TECS Golspie Office. Proposals must include appropriate traffic calming measures, which are to include a new puffin crossing on Craighill Terrace.



 <p>The Highland Council Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd</p>	<p>PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICE</p> <p>Stuart Black Director of Planning & Development</p>	<p>08/00407/OUTSU Care Home Application and</p>
		<p>08/00408/FULSU Access Road Application Craighill Terrace, TAIN</p>
<p>1 centimetre equals 25 metres</p>  <p>0 25 50 75 100 metres</p>		<p>1:2,500</p> 

IMPORTANT: THIS DRAWING HAS BEEN PRODUCED ON CAD AND MUST NOT BE MODIFIED MANUALLY



THE HIGHLAND COUNCIL
 MIDTOWNAL PLAN
 APPLICATION REFERENCE
 SWF00002/1/1/1/1
 RECEIVED 7/7/11

The Highland Council
 Community Services
 SERVING The Highland Community

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Proposed Road Alterations
 Craighill, Tain

Landscaping Application
 Planning Application

Scale: 1:500
 Date: 1/09
 Author: SWF00002
 Check: L11

TAIN CRAIGHILL PROPOSED ROAD ALTERATIONS ASSOCIATED LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS 1:500 PLAN