

**AGENDA ITEM 7
REPORT NO. LA/17/17**

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: Lochaber Area

Date: 22 August 2017

Report Title: Planning Guidance for Mallaig Harbour Expansion

Report By: Report by Director of Development and Infrastructure

1. Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This paper outlines the context for, and content of, detailed planning guidance produced by the Mallaig Harbour Authority (MHA) for the master planned expansion of Mallaig Harbour. It recommends that the Committee adopt the masterplan as interim Supplementary Guidance, making the guidance a material consideration in planning decision making.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to:

- i. note the thorough plan formulation and consultation processes used by MHA to produce the guidance;
- ii. note the advanced stage of the West Highland and Islands Proposed Local Development Plan and the masterplan's compatibility with its provisions; and
- iii. approve the Mallaig Harbour Masterplan as Interim Supplementary Guidance pending its final adoption following the adoption of the West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan.

3. Context and Background

- 3.1 Once adopted, the West Highland and Islands Proposed Local Development Plan (referred to as the Proposed Plan in this report) will be the principal, local, land use policy document in determining planning applications and other development and investment decisions in the West Highland area.
- 3.2 The content of the Council's new style local development plans is intended to be more proportionate to the scale, pace and location of expected (and desired) development. The Proposed Plan now concentrates on managing the bigger development pressures in the larger settlements with further detail to be provided in site specific development briefs or masterplans associated with large site allocations.
- 3.3 For Mallaig, the key development priority is the expansion of the harbour which is allocated for mixed use development (community, business/tourism and industry uses). Paragraph 4.72 of the Proposed Plan, the associated Mallaig Placemaking Priorities and site allocation MA04 Harbour provide the guiding principles of the masterplan and sets out the Council's intention for this document to be adopted as Supplementary Guidance.
- 3.4 The 18 January 2017 Lochaber Area Committee approved the Proposed Plan which represents the 'settled view' of the Council on local planning policy matters and is a material consideration in planning decision making. Consultation on the Plan ran from 5 May to 21 July 2017, and no representations or objections were received in relation to the expansion of Mallaig Harbour. The Mallaig Harbour Authority (MHA) has also carried out consultation on a draft version of the masterplan, details of which are set out in section 4 below.
- 3.5 For Members' clarification, as per the other recent Committee approvals for the Isle of Rum Community Land Use Plan and the Nevis Forest and Mountain Resort Masterplan, if the Mallaig Harbour Masterplan is approved by Committee as Interim Supplementary Guidance it becomes a material planning consideration in planning decision making alongside the content of the Proposed Plan. In the future, following the adoption of the West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan, the Mallaig Harbour Masterplan, if and when adopted, would also become a part of the statutory development plan, having equal legal "weight" as the Local Development Plan itself.

4. Mallaig Harbour Masterplan

- 4.1 The detailed Mallaig Harbour Masterplan and supporting documentation is available to view and download via the Council's website (see link at the end of this paper).
- 4.2 In preparing the masterplan, MHA undertook extensive consultation with over 60 stakeholders, 24 harbour users and the public between August and October 2016. The community consultation events included drop-in sessions and an open meeting which were important in finalising the masterplan. 47 individuals attended the drop-in sessions over a two day period and 16 people attended the consultation meeting. A number of positive and constructive comments on the draft masterplan were received and no significant objections were raised. The main amendments resulting from the feedback received comprised the re-alignment of the proposed ferry berth and the inclusion of a concrete slipway for ramp vessels.
- 4.3 Further details of the consultation and its results are provided within the Masterplan for Mallaig Harbour: Stakeholder Consultation Report, January 2017 which is available via

the Council's website (see link at the end of this paper). The consultation undertaken has been reviewed against the Council's Participation Statement and is considered to have complied with the requirements for engagement, complemented by the consultation on the West Highland and Islands Proposed Local Development Plan.

4.4 The Masterplan has evolved largely through the efforts of the MHA, a Trust Port, with a board committed to supporting activities that will benefit the local community, both socially and economically. The vision for Mallaig Harbour is to safeguard and enhance the harbour as a thriving and diverse hub of marine activity for the benefit of harbour users, residents and visitors. Through analysis of the harbour's environmental and social context, undertaking stakeholder engagement and market analysis, the masterplan's priorities are:

- fishing fleet service / facility and ice plant improvements;
- increased harbour capacity for new sectors;
- marine tourism and leisure passenger infrastructure improvements;
- ferry, cruise liner and aquaculture marine/landside infrastructure improvements for navigational safety and accommodating larger and deeper draft vessels;
- expand marina to grow marine tourism and sailing market; and
- marketing to explore potential for renewable energy / oil and gas opportunities.

4.5 In land uses terms, the masterplan-led expansion of the harbour comprises a marine and landside area of approximately 23.9ha and makes provision for regeneration of the existing harbour estate, including the following works:

Phases 1&2 (Yrs 1-5)

- pontoon berth for passenger only ferries, modernised fuel points and fuel berth for yachts;
- West Highland College and Marine Business Support Centre;
- new fish handling facility, workshop, shore power and relocated fish box storage; and
- additional parking.

Phases 3&4 (Yrs 6-11)

- new deep water berth and quay with rock armour protection;
- RoRo ferry berthing and support infrastructure;
- salmon harvest station relocation;
- boatyard relocation and redevelopment of existing site;
- 150 berth marina;
- freight vessel berths, storage facilities and other quayside development;
- ice plant relocation; and
- additional parking.

Phase 5 (Yrs 12-20)

- leisure slipway and extended shore side promenade link.

4.6 The masterplan states that, if successfully implemented, this would generate up to 125 additional jobs per annum within the first seven years, in addition to safeguarding some 200 existing jobs.

5. Implications

- 5.1 Resource: Resources to complete the statutory processes are allowed for within the service budget.
- 5.2 Legal: The guidance could be challenged through the associated local development plan process but due process has been followed and therefore the Council will have a defensible position in the event of any challenge.
- 5.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural): The masterplan will help promote the retention and creation of a number of jobs, particularly in fisheries and aquaculture. It is therefore considered to have an overall positive impact on rural communities.
- 5.4 Climate Change / Carbon Clever: The parent Proposed Plan and the associated Mallaig Harbour allocation has been informed by undertaking a draft Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) record and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), informed through consultation with Scottish Natural Heritage and other consultation authorities. Suitable mitigation text has been incorporated into the wording of the Developer Requirements for site allocation MA04 with further environmental requirements set out within the masterplan itself. This requires the undertaking of an Environmental Impact Assessment to inform and accompany any forthcoming planning application(s) where the proposed works are considered to have a potential likely significant effect on the Inner Hebrides and the Minches Special Area of Conservation, including the qualifying harbour porpoise interests and the supporting marine environment. Sufficient information must also be provided to enable the Council to undertake a further HRA for such planning application(s).
- 5.5 Risk: There are no known significant risks associated with the masterplan.
- 5.6 Gaelic: Gaelic headings and subheadings will be added if and when the masterplan becomes statutory adopted Supplementary Guidance.

Designation: Director of Development and Infrastructure

Date: 11 August 2017

Author: Peter Wheelan, Planner, Development Plans

Background Papers:

1. Masterplan for Mallaig Harbour: January 2017
2. The Masterplan for Mallaig Harbour: Stakeholder Consultation Report, January 2017

The above documents are available via:

http://www.highland.gov.uk/downloads/download/1461/mallaig_harbour_masterplan