

Agenda Item	<b>5.1</b>
Report No	<b>PLN/051/22</b>

## HIGHLAND COUNCIL

**Committee:** North Planning Applications Committee

**Date:** 10 August 2022

**Report Title:** 22/02800/PAN: Communities for Coul Ltd.  
Land 1700M NW Of Embo Community Centre, School Street, Embo

**Report By:** Area Planning Manager – North

### **Purpose/Executive Summary**

**Description:** Development of a new 18 hole golf course including associated infrastructure, new access road, drainage and the change of use of the existing farm buildings to form the clubhouse, pro shop and maintenance shed

**Ward:** 04 - East Sutherland and Edderton

### **Recommendation**

Members are asked to note the submission of the PAN and highlight any material issues they wish to be brought to the attention of the applicant before the submission of an application for planning permission.

## **1.0 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 This report informs the Planning Applications Committee of the submission of the attached Proposal of Application Notice (PAN).
- 1.2 The submission of the PAN accords with the provisions of the Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 and was made valid on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2022. The PAN is a statutory requirement for planning applications for major or national developments and must be lodged at least 12 weeks prior to the submission of a planning application. Members are asked to note this may form the basis of a subsequent planning application.
- 1.3 The submitted information attached includes:
- Proposal of Application Notice (Application Form)
  - Location Plan
  - Addendum to Proposal of Application Notice
- 1.4 The applicant proposes to hold a combination of a face to face public event and an online event as detailed below:
- Event 1: 27<sup>th</sup> July from 3pm to 7pm at the Embo Community Centre
  - Event 2: 30<sup>th</sup> August, web chat virtual meeting.
- 1.6 The consultation will be publicised and advertised in accordance with the appropriate statutory requirements with adverts to be placed within the Northern Times at least seven working days before each of the two consultation events. Members of the following community councils will also be specifically invited to each event – Dornoch Area, Brora, Tain and Golspie.
- 1.7 Any forthcoming application will be accompanied by a Pre-Application Consultation (PAC) report explaining the consultation undertaken, feedback received, and any resultant amendments made to the planning application.

## **2.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

- 2.1 The PAN provides notice of the applicant's intention to submit a planning application classified as a major development. The proposed development comprises the formation of a new 18-hole golf course with associated infrastructure including new access road and drainage. The proposal would also entail the change of use of existing farm buildings to form a clubhouse, pro-shop and maintenance shed.
- 2.2 At this stage, only the overall site boundary is identified. Members will recall a previous proposal for a golf course at Coul Links was discussed at the North Planning Applications Committee in June 2018; this was subsequently subject to a Public Local Inquiry and refused by Scottish Ministers in March 2020.
- 2.4 The applicant has sought pre-application advice through the Council's Pre-Application Advice Service for Major Developments, with pre-application advice having been issued in early July 2022.

### **3.0 SITE DESCRIPTION**

- 3.1 The site lies directly to the north of the village of Embo near Dornoch in Sutherland and comprises a total of 264 hectares. The central portion of the site, immediately west and south of the old railway line comprises improved pasture currently used for sheep grazing. The land in the southwestern portion of the site comprises rough pasture with patches of scrub, dune heath and woodland.
- 3.2 The land between the coast and the route of the old railway line largely comprises a stable dune system with some areas of trees, scrub, bracken and felled woodland. This portion of the site is designated as being of international importance as part of the Dornoch Firth and Loch Fleet RAMSAR and of European importance as part of the Dornoch Firth and Loch Fleet Special Protection Area, and of national importance as part of the Loch Fleet Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The SSSI is notified for its intertidal marine habitats (eelgrass beds and sandflats), its coastlands (saltmarsh and sand dunes), its native pinewood, its vascular plant assemblage, and its birds (breeding bird assemblage and non-breeding elder).
- 3.3 The area surrounding the site is rural in character and is predominantly characterised by agricultural land use. Sheep and cattle grazing, livestock raising, and forestry plantation are the principal agricultural practices in the area. The lands to the immediate south of the site comprise the village of Embo, which has a population of around 300 and comprises residential properties as well as some commercial properties including a small store as well as the Grannies Heilan Hame caravan park.
- 3.2 The site is partially with an area identified as being at risk of coastal flooding (1 in 200-year event) on SEPA's Flood Risk Map.

### **4.0 DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

The following policies are relevant to the assessment of the proposal:

#### **4.1 Highland Wide Local Development Plan (2012)**

- 28 - Sustainable Design
- 29 - Design Quality and Place-making
- 30 - Physical Constrains
- 31 - Developer Contributions
- 36 - Development in the Wider Countryside
- 55 - Peat and Soils
- 57 - Natural, Built and Cultural Heritage
- 58 - Protected Species
- 59 - Other Important Species
- 60 - Other Important Habitats
- 61 - Landscape
- 63 - Water Environment
- 64 - Flood Risk
- 66 - Surface Water Drainage
- 67 - Renewable Energy Developments
- 69 - Electricity Transmission Infrastructure
- 72 - Pollution

73 - Air Quality  
74 - Green Networks  
77 - Public Access

#### 4.2 **Caithness and Sutherland Local Plan (CASPlan ) (Adopted 2018)**

Embo is identified as Growing Settlement therefore Policy 3 is applicable. The Caithness and Sutherland Local Development Plan also sets out an overarching vision up until the year 2035. This ties in with the Highland Community Planning Partnership Single Outcome Agreement. The vision includes, for example, a network of successful, sustainable and socially inclusive communities where people want to live, which provide the most convenient access to key services, training and employment and are the primary locations for inward investment.

#### 4.3 **Highland Council Supplementary Guidance**

- Developer Contributions (Nov 2018)
- Flood Risk and Drainage Impact Assessment (Jan 2013)
- Green Networks (Jan 2013)
- Highland's Statutorily Protected Species (Mar 2013)
- Highland Renewable Energy Strategy and Planning Guidelines (May 2006)
- Physical Constraints (Mar 2013)
- Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Developments (May 2013)
- Sustainable Design Guide (Jan 2013)
- Special Landscape Area Citations (Jun 2011)

#### 4.4 **Scottish Government Policy and Guidance**

- Scottish Planning Policy (June 2014)
- National Planning Framework 3, NPF3 (June 2014)
- Draft National Planning Framework 4 (Nov 2021)
- PAN 1/2021 – Planning and Noise (Mar 2011)
- Circular 1/2017: Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (May 2017)
- PAN 60 – Planning for Natural Heritage (Jan 2008)
- PAN43 – Golf Course and Associated Development

### 5.0 **POTENTIAL MATERIAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

- a) Development Plan
- b) National Policy
- c) Planning History
- d) Siting, Design and Layout
- e) Amenity Impact
- f) Landscape and Visual Impact (including cumulative impacts)
- g) Construction Impact
- h) Roads, Transport and Access (including outdoor access and recreation)
- i) Socio-Economic Impacts
- j) Coastal Erosion
- k) Noise

- l) Natural Heritage (including ornithology)
- m) Water, Flood Risk and Drainage
- n) Built and Cultural Heritage
- o) Any Other Material Considerations (including any raised within representations)

## **6.0 CONCLUSION**

- 6.1 The report presents the information submitted to date as part of the PAN. The policy considerations against which any future planning application will be considered have been summarised as well as the potential material planning considerations and key issues based on the information available to date. The list is not exhaustive and further matters may arise as and when a planning application is received and in the light of public representations and consultation responses.

## **7.0 IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Not applicable.

## **8.0 RECOMMENDATION**

- 8.1 It is recommended the Committee notes the submission of the PAN and advises of any material issues it wishes to be brought to the applicant's attention.

Designation: Area Planning Manager – North

Author(s): Gillian Pearson

Background Papers: Documents referred to in report and in case file.

Relevant Plans: Plan 1 – Proposal of Application Notice

Plan 2 – Location Plan

The Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended by the Planning Etc. (Scotland) Act 2006 Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2008

**The Council will respond within 21 days of receiving the Notice. It will advise whether the proposed Pre-application Consultation is satisfactory or if additional notification and consultation above the statutory minimum is required. Please note that a planning application for this proposed development cannot be submitted less than 12 weeks from the date the Proposal of Application Notice is received by the Council and without the statutory consultation requirements having been undertaken. The planning application must be accompanied by a Pre-application consultation report.**

Applicant Communities for Coul Ltd Address. per agent	Agent Ness Planning Address Westfield, Cantray, Croy IV2 5PW
Phone 07827716786 E-mail info@nessplanning.co.uk	Phone 07827716786 E-mail info@nessplanning.co.uk

### Address or Location of Proposed Development

Please state the postal address of the prospective development site. If there is no postal address, please describe its location. Please outline the site in red on a base plan to a recognised metric scale and attach it to this completed Notice

**Land at Coul Links, Embo, Sutherland**

### Description of Development

Please include detail where appropriate – eg the number of residential units; the gross floorspace in m of any buildings not for residential use; the capacity of any electricity generation or waste management facility; and the length of any infrastructure project. Please attach any additional supporting information.

**Development of a new 18 hole golf course including associated infrastructure, new access road, drainage and the change of use of the existing farm buildings to form the clubhouse, pro shop and maintenance shed**

### Pre-application Screening Notice

Has a Screening Opinion been issued on the need for a Proposal of Application notice by the Highland Council in respect of the proposed development?

If yes, please provide a copy of this Opinion.

Yes Scoping Opinion 22/01330/SCOP

Community Consultation [See checklist of Statutory minimum consultation attached]

State which other parties have received a copy of this Proposal of Application Notice.

Community Council/s	Date Notice Served
Dornoch Community Council Tain Community Council Golspie Community Council Brora Community Council	19 June 2022
Names/details of any other parties	Date Notice Served
Please see attached addendum.	19 June 2022

Please give details of proposed consultation

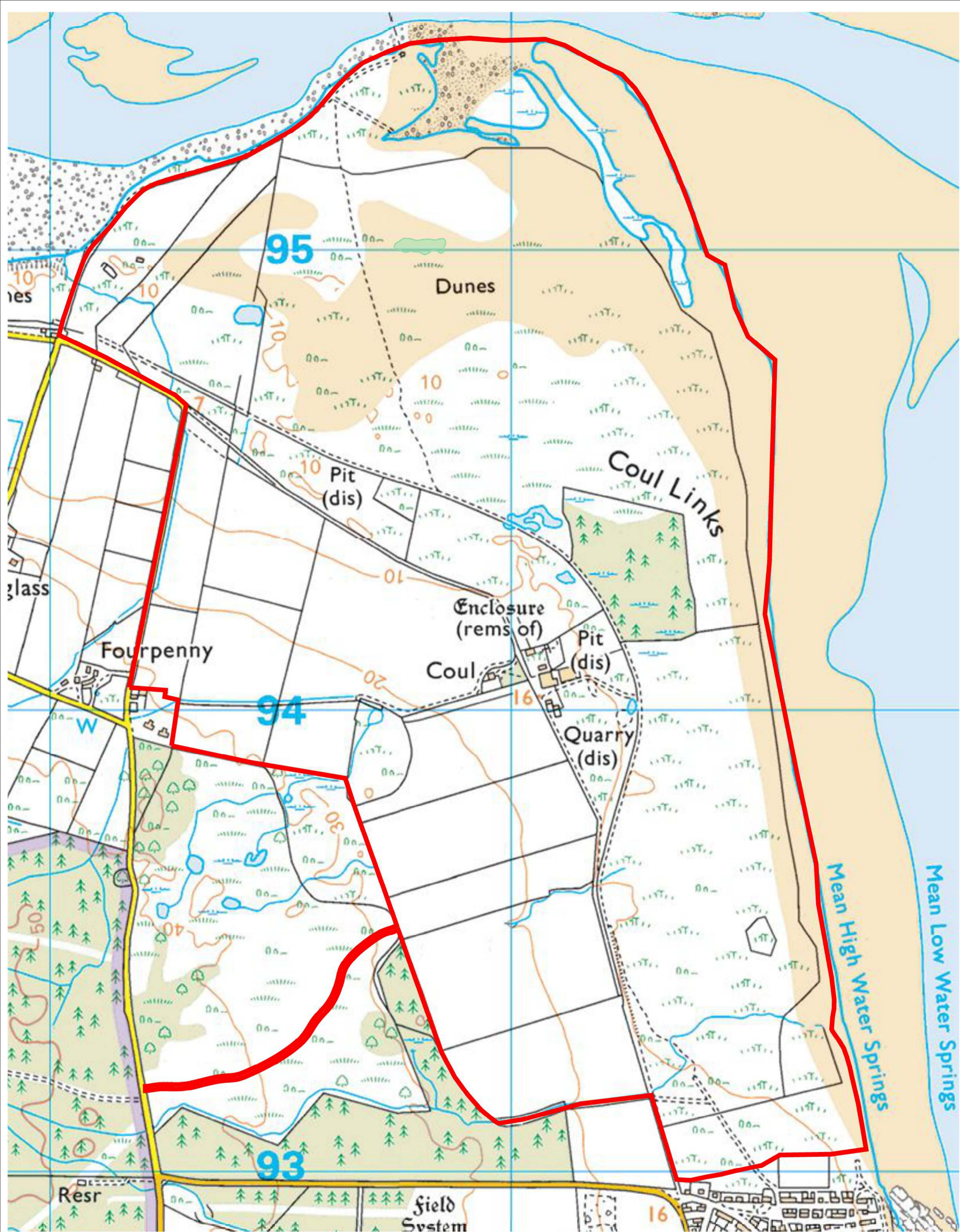
Proposed public event	Venue	Date and time
Drop-in Session	Embo Community Centre	27 July 2022 3pm-7pm
Live Web Chat	<a href="http://www.communities4coul.scot">www.communities4coul.scot</a>	30 August 2022 5pm-7pm
Newspaper Advert	Northern Scot	15 July 2022

Details of any other consultation methods

Bespoke website – [www.communities4coul.scot](http://www.communities4coul.scot)

Additional public notices to be displayed in the local area including appropriate local retail outlets and community notice boards

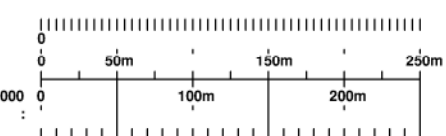
Signed .....Ness Planning..... Date...19 June 2022.....



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SITE BOUNDARY PLAN 1:5000

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M.R.H Design



Client Committees For Coul Ltd		Project Coul Links Golf Course Development		Drawing title Coul Links Golf Course Nature Scotland Boundary		Drawn by MHR		Checked by MHR		Date 11.03.2022		Scale 1:5000 @ A2	
Drawing Status		Revision History		Title		Project Number		2022-11		Drawing Number		22-11 -MRH-005	
<b>NESS planning</b> PLANNING CONSULTANT				PLANNING ISSUE				Project Number 2022-11 Drawing Number 22-11 -MRH-005					
<b>MRH design</b> ARCHITECTURAL TECHNOLOGY				The Studio 9 Heights of Woodside Wesshill Inverness IV2 5TH		Tel/Fax: 01463 794410 Mobile: 07760 195141 Email: info@mrhdesign.co.uk Web: www.mrhdesign.co.uk		This drawing, design and information is subject to copyright of the MRH design and must not be reproduced in any way without written permission of the company. It is the contractor's responsibility to ascertain the reader of all services prior to the commencement of work. Nothing in this drawing is to be construed as a contract or a warranty of any kind. All drawings are the property of the contractor and shall remain the property of the contractor. All drawings are the property of the contractor and shall remain the property of the contractor. All drawings are the property of the contractor and shall remain the property of the contractor.					
All selling out must be checked on site prior to commencement. Any discrepancy must be reported to client.													