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ePlanning Centre
Highland Council
Glenurquhart Road
Inverness
IV3 5NX

Dear Sirs,

Planning Application Ref: 18/01049/FUL

I hereby wish to express my objection to the above Change of Land Use and Planning Applications for the following material Planning reasons.

The site in question is clearly outwith the designated boundary for development, of any designation, as defined within the current Highland Council Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan. This matter of fact is clearly accepted by the applicant. For this material reason alone, the applications must be rejected forthwith.

Furthermore, this particular site and indeed the immediate vicinity does not feature for planned future development as detailed within the Inverness East Development Plan.

No material reason has been presented, within the application, to Highland Council that should permit any deviation from the current Local Development Plan. At present the Local Development Plan has identified sufficient sites elsewhere in Inverness for Housing development to take place. This is clearly the case, citing sites at Ness Castle, Slackbuie, Stratton Farm, Milton of Leys, Parks Farm, Great Glen Heights and Balvonie Braes amongst the plethora of other housing developments shown in the Local Development Plan. All of these sites will see major housing developments in the coming years which will provide substantial numbers of affordable housing.

The current Primary and Secondary school catchment areas, for which the proposed development falls within, do not have the safe teaching and operational capacities to cope with the additional children stemming from this proposed development. It is widely known that both Cradlehall Primary School and Culloden Academy have school rolls at their maximum capacities. Indeed in the coming years especially, Culloden Academy will experience further direct pressure as a result of the new housing district at Tornagrain. Even with the anticipated expansion or renewal of this Secondary school, as per noted within the Local Development Plan, significant pressure will remain.

Road safety continues to be of an increasing and significant concern. More and more vehicles are using the B9006 as their main gateway into Inverness. At peak travel times especially, traffic can be found backed up to the junction at Tower Road and beyond causing substantial disruption to existing road infrastructure.

With substantial road infrastructure works taking place now and those planned in the near future at the A96 this will only exacerbate the ever increasing traffic volumes placed on the B9006 gateway to Inverness for the medium to long term. The Tower Road junction continues to be a notorious accident blackspot for vehicles and cycle users alike. While accident statistics suggest this junction presents a low to medium risk to road users such statistics do not record the high number of near misses that local residents experience on a daily basis.

A little over a year ago (May 2017) the BBC reported on research carried out by Sustrans Scotland that identified this particular junction at the B9006/Tower Road was a significant danger to cyclists. It is worth highlighting that there is also therefore a clear danger to all road users and not just to cyclists.

I would also object to this proposed development for reasons of inadequate and insufficient cognisance of the existing drainage infrastructure. The application and statutory consultees have not taken into account the detrimental impact nor the safeguarding of the established surrounding properties that such a development is likely to have. I would question whether the road side ditch into which the SUDS basin will discharge is of an adequate size and capacity to contain peak overflow waters. This road side ditch was originally formed to alleviate flooding originating from the site in question discharging onto the B9006. Over time the Highland Council has had to carry out drainage improvement works to stop field water run-off and road surface water spilling into existing residential gardens. Indeed, several local residents have and continue to experience flooding within their boundaries as a direct result of such field water run-off and road surface water given the topography of the area.

Finally, I would object to this development on grounds of potential over development. An affordable development of this particular size would more than satisfy any Section 75 Planning Condition for Private sale house building. There is real and realistic concern that this initial development will be followed by a further application for a substantial private housing scheme which will only exacerbate all of the above material Planning objections which I have raised.

I trust that the aforementioned material Planning matters raised in my objection will be given due consideration.

Yours faithfully,

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