



NPF4 CALL FOR IDEAS - HELMSDALE

This overview provides a summary of ideas and mapping generated at the event held at **The Helmsdale Community Centre** on 11 March 2020 where a total of 5 people attended the workshop and drop-in sessions.



MAJOR THEMES IN RELATION TO THE SIX DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

What development will we need to address climate change?

- Get real and commit to address issues
- Overcome complexity
- Refit housing stock
- Support local community energy initiatives

How can planning best support our quality of life, health and wellbeing in the future?

- Encourage rural repopulation
- Need infrastructure to support rural communities and visitors / tourist economy
- Onshore turbines impacting on communities

What does planning need to do to enable an economy that benefits everyone?

- Make it easier for locals to get jobs (procurement of contracts)
- Environmental sustainability attracts people
- Decentralise – listen to local voices

How can planning improve, protect and strengthen our places?

- Importance of local and natural environment
- Use assets better
- support local energy systems
- Connectivity and services

What infrastructure do we need to plan and build to realise our long term aspirations?

- No points noted

'ONE BIG THING'

- Concern at onshore windfarms
- Support small scale local energy systems
- Improve transport links
- Join up thinking

The following pages provide a record of the ideas and maps that were produced.
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'CLIMATE CHANGE' - What development will we need to address climate change?			
WOULD LIKE TO SEE...	BECAUSE...	WHO CAN BEST MAKE THIS HAPPEN...	THEME/S
Real commitment to address issues - no more industrial scale wind farms (only benefit landowners and benefits to communities are paltry/difficult.	Otherwise we'll be doomed		Get real and commit to address issues
Realism - Highlands are different - diesel and wood burners critical and there is no viable alternative at present unless you are wealthy	Highland should be able to market our unrivalled natural environment before indiscriminate on shore wind destroys our 'wildness'		
One stop shop for climate advice	Too many organisations currently so difficult to know who you need to speak to		Overcome complexity
Proper refit of old, poor housing stock to meet heating targets.			Refit housing stock
Promote small scale community run energy and heating systems.			Support local community energy initiatives

'PEOPLE' - How can planning best support our quality of life, health and wellbeing in the future?			
WOULD LIKE TO SEE...	BECAUSE...	WHO CAN BEST MAKE THIS HAPPEN...	THEME/S
A priority for remote and rural areas to encourage repopulation	Delivering connectivity has resulted in families leaving Sutherland and therefore school closures	John Swinney MSP and Highland Council	Encourage rural repopulation
Population decline in Caithness or Northern Scotland must be reversed.	The current Government have very little sense of urgency or responsibility Examples - no visit Scotland. No conservation in Caithness		
Increased employment	Attract people to live in the area		
No point in promoting rural repopulation without improving infrastructure (have you seen A9 north of Inverness lately?), housing, employment, schools etc	Otherwise people won't come or wont stay		Need infrastructure to support rural communities and visitors / tourist economy
Stop closure of public toilets by the Highland Council - madness given increased tourism			
Research into on shore windfarms effect on planning blight, deterring new houses and tourism			Onshore turbines impacting on communities



'WORK' - What does planning need to do to enable an economy that benefits everyone?			
WOULD LIKE TO SEE...	BECAUSE...	WHO CAN BEST MAKE THIS HAPPEN...	THEME/S
Far less red tape for contractors/SME's for work/projects of public initiatives/government	Too many contracts are won by large city urban contractors with large office staff winning even small contracts	Highland Council, FSB, Scottish Government	Make it easier for locals to get jobs (procurement of contracts)
Increased environmentally sustainable housing to attract workers	Lack of social housing in area		Environmental sustainability attracts people
Planning needs to listen to local objectors for onshore wind. At present they are perceived to be irrelevant, unlike the English system. It needs to be decentralised.	I believe in local democracy. Current system is Orwellian and highly biased towards large developers with funds. One notable exception - council links		Decentralise – listen to local voices

'PLACE' - How can planning improve, protect and strengthen the special character of our places?			
WOULD LIKE TO SEE...	BECAUSE...	WHO CAN BEST MAKE THIS HAPPEN...	THEME/S
Increased protection of peat lands across the area and not just individual projects	increased carbon savings		Importance of local and natural environment
Stop large scale wind farms destroying our natural and tourism environment	an industrial landscape will turn tourists away		
Attention to detail - funding local initiatives. One size does not fit all. Example - Caithness topography unique - preserve the big sky landscapes	it will assist the far north reverse chronic population decline		
Natural resources of North West Highlands paid for	we suffer blight of low numbers subsidising central belt		
More access to croft land, currently areas of land locked up by sheep or not in use. Crofting commission doesn't fulfil its obligations	the land could be utilised by others for food production or alternative environmentally sustainable farming.		Use assets better
support local small scale energy systems			support local energy systems
Improved A9 north of Inverness			Connectivity and services
Modest improvements to A9 rail and air travel irrelevant to be honest.			



NHS Highland -maternity provision a national scandal and PR new disaster. 10 babies born in Caithness in 2019.			
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'DELIVERY' - What infrastructure do we need to plan and build to realise our long term aspirations?			
WOULD LIKE TO SEE...	BECAUSE...	WHO CAN BEST MAKE THIS HAPPEN...	THEME/S
No points noted			

'ONE BIG THING'			
WOULD LIKE TO SEE...	BECAUSE...	WHO CAN BEST MAKE THIS HAPPEN...	THEME/S
Pausing on shore wind in North highland - out of control, profoundly undemocratic	as above - damaging out most valuable asset, namely our unique environment		Concern at onshore windfarms
No more large scale on shore windfarms.			
No more industrialised windfarms in Highlands.	Residents feel that central belt taking our resources and not paying for them		
Proper support for small scale sustainable energy systems, owned and managed by local communities	Oh, and please improve the A9 north of Inverness!		Support small scale local energy systems
Improved transport links. Improved A9 route.			Improve transport links
More joined up thinking and more flexibility when dealing and planning			Join up thinking

