

***Representation Responses East Tarbert***

APPLICATION REFERENCE NO: 24/00263/PPP

TYPE OF APPLICATION: Planning Permission in Principle

LOCATION OF DEVELOPMENT: Housing Development, East Tarbert

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT: Erect 14 single bedroom properties for provision of key worker accommodation and create associated access and parking

AGENT: Harris Development Ltd

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The representations by several members of the community are repeated and therefore they have been collated and responded to.

1. Light pollution- lights from properties, lights from vehicles & external lights

As part of the full planning application, once the design has been completed, we would affect the following principles, where suitable.

Location and positioning of the existing properties within the area that may be affected by the creation of additional homes, will be carefully considered when the full design phase of the project is underway. This will include in depth consultation with the existing homeowners that may be affected by potential light pollution. The additional measures will include:

- **Shielding and Directional Lighting:** Use fixtures with proper shielding to direct light downward and prevent it from spreading horizontally or upward. This reduces light spillage and glare.
- **Timers and Sensors:** Install timers or motion sensors for outdoor lighting. This ensures that lights are only active when needed, minimizing unnecessary illumination during late hours.
- **Low-Intensity Lighting:** Opt for low-intensity lighting where possible. Use warm white LEDs with lower lumens to provide adequate visibility without excessive brightness.
- **Location and Placement:** Strategically position lighting fixtures away from sensitive areas (such as bedrooms or wildlife habitats). Avoid placing lights near windows or facing neighbouring properties.
- **Use of Timed Dimmers:** Implement dimmers that gradually reduce light intensity during nighttime hours. This gradual transition is less disruptive to human circadian rhythms and reduces overall light pollution.

2. Road/ This area already has a problem with speed as it is a 60mph until sunny hill and also, traffic volume as it is a main road connecting to Scalpay. To have an extra 14 or more cars coming from one access on to the main road would impact safety on road users and pedestrians. Concerns regarding pedestrians and road users. Increase of traffic & potential vibration during the construction phase.

- The vehicles for the proposed housing would be via the commercial units at Iomairt an Obain, utilising the current one-way system. There is currently good visibility both entering and egressing the commercial units on to Cnoc na Greine.
- The national speed limit passes the Urgha recycling unit where there are slow moving vehicles accessing and egressing e.g skip vehicles, snow ploughs / gritters, camper vans, a recently opened camper van site and residential properties. In view of this, it would be beneficial for the speed limits in this area to be reviewed and lowered. This however would be the roads department that would require to review this. Guidance from the roads department would be followed with regards to all decisions regarding the roads.
- The installation of a pavement would benefit the local community, seasonal visitors and not specifically linked to the building of this accommodation / housing. The recently completed Urgha Aire camper van site will have increased the number of pedestrians to the area which would benefit from additional lighting and a pavement.
- A number of concerns have been made in relation to parking. The Outer Hebrides Design Guide will be followed in regard to parking, which is a requirement for all properties constructed within the Outer Hebrides, ensuring that there is sufficient parking for all vehicles that result from the new properties with an envisaged minimum of 21 spaces.
- During the construction phase site traffic will be strictly controlled. The appointed Principal Contractor will be required to develop and submit a Construction Traffic Management Plan which will outline how they will manage and mitigate traffic impacts. HDL have a policy that wherever it is possible, local contractors are used for their projects. Local contractors are familiar with the roads and have the knowledge that roads are often used for pedestrians due to the lack of pavements. The Pre-construction information passed to the contractor will include restrictions on times of site traffic accessing and egressing, forbidding movement during peak times including school arrival and leaving times, and any other considered times that the community deem to be a safety risk. Temporary parking for contractors will be formed on the sites, as part of the site set up. Regular health and safety audits will be carried out during the construction phase by both HDL and the appointed

contractor, site traffic monitoring will form part of the audits, which will be reported back to and discussed with the community liaison groups where concerns are raised. Health, safety and the environment is of paramount importance to HDL, and on-site procedures and controls will be both developed and enforced.

- Any potential vibration from construction activities will be controlled and monitored. If deemed to be required, a pre-construction survey will document the condition of surrounding structures, and all existing cracks noted in order to determine whether any new cracks appear during construction. Vibration levels can be monitored during construction with a seismograph to determine if the vibration levels exceeded the building damage threshold.
- We value the input of the community and are committed to ongoing dialogue. We will establish a community liaison group to address any concerns promptly and transparently.

3. Loss of Privacy

- The detailed design for the development has not yet been submitted, however when the full design is in progress, all nearby residents will be given an opportunity, through a community liaison group, yet to be formed, to address any concerns promptly and transparently. The final design should not cause a loss of privacy to any properties in the vicinity of the proposed site, as they will be strategically positioned to minimise the impact on the existing homes.

4. Road Surface Damage

- Road surfaces are compromised due to several factors, including moisture and groundwater permeating the paved surface. This water penetrates the asphalt, seeping into the underlying rock, gravel, and soil, where it can freeze and cause further damage.
- Traffic and water further contribute to the formation of cracks in the road.
- However, these roads are currently utilised for the existing community and the numerous visitors throughout the year. Degradation of roads caused by 14 cars would have a minimal effect. However, to prevent further depopulation of the islands, it is crucial to increase housing and fill existing vacancies with new community members, which inevitably will affect many factors within the community including financial benefits to the local economy.
- The Construction Traffic Management Plan developed and implemented by the Principal Contractor will include mitigations to minimise any damage to the road surfaces during the construction phase.
- The council undertake inspections of road surfacing and are committed to resurfacing roads required, in line with Roads (Scotland) Act 1984 legislation.

5. Noise and disturbance- day and night

As part of the full planning application, once the design has been completed, we would affect the following principles.

- Location and positioning of the existing properties within the area that may be affected by the creation of additional homes, will be carefully considered when the full design phase of the project is underway. This will include in depth consultation with the existing homeowners that may be affected by any potential noise pollution.
- It is unlikely that all residents of the new housing would arrive and leave at the same time. In the event of 14 extra residents this is possibly equal to 5 new standard residential properties, as each property is likely to have just one resident.
- Soundproofing measures, such as double-glazed windows and insulated walls, are part of the design to mitigate noise.
- Our commitment includes regular monitoring and prompt resolution of any noise-related complaints. The properties are planned to be let as tied accommodation and therefore to maintain eligibility to live in the housing they must remain employed with the company that lets the properties. Initially it is planned to utilise Tighean Innse Gall (TIG) to manage the properties and to manage the leasing process including management of the selection criteria set jointly by the North Harris Trust and Harris Development Ltd. Tenant behaviour and any visitors they may have, will be, as is expected of all members of the community.
- We will provide clear guidelines to all employers /occupants regarding their responsibilities including expectations related to noise and anti-social behaviour and this will be detailed within the leases. As with any rented property, there will be caveats within the lease to detail both behavioural and care of the property with consequences of removal if it is not adhered to.
- We value the input of the community and are committed to ongoing dialogue. We will establish a community liaison group to address any concerns promptly and transparently.

6. Refuse- concerns regarding the general increase, smells and vermin

As with any household, refuse is generated and disposed of in a responsible way and collected by the Council. I am unsure why the workers, who would be members of the community would be expected to behave in any other way. We do however acknowledge the communities concerns and the following points are raised to mitigate their concerns.

- The refuse will be collected by the CNeS as any other household who pay Council Tax.
- As part of the design process, we will be investigating the most effective bin storage, which will consider the following: the number and type of properties that are in the 'finished design'; fire risk; prevention of over filling, including monitoring and allowance for modification if required; ease of recycling participation; ensuring of easy servicing; hygiene and easy cleaning.

- The bins will not be taken to Cnoc na Greine Road for collection purposes and therefore not adding to the numbers of the current residents.
- Tenant behaviour will be, as is expected, by all members of the community. This would therefore be managed in the same way, as by any other household within the community, who did not maintain acceptable levels of hygiene that may cause environmental issues
- A Property Management Company will be appointed, and the management of the properties will include ensuring that the bins will be inspected and are cleaned when required.
- We will provide clear guidelines to all employers /occupants regarding their responsibilities including expectations related to cleanliness, waste disposal, and property care and this will be detailed within the leases. As with any rented property, there will be caveats within the lease to detail both behavioural and care of the property with consequences of removal if it is not adhered to.
- The type of bins to be provided will be sufficient, this will be monitored. As part of the design process, we will be investigating the most effective bin storage, which will consider the following: the number and type of properties that are in the 'finished design'; fire risk; prevention of over filling, including monitoring and allowance for modification if required; ease of recycling participation; ensuring of easy servicing and cleaning to ensure high levels of hygiene.
- We value the input of the community and are committed to ongoing dialogue. We will establish a community liaison group to address any concerns promptly and transparently.

7. Pollution from vehicles

- One of the important considerations for the location of the worker accommodation is easily accessible, limiting the requirement for workers to require vehicles to access their work locations and increase pollution.
- It is anticipated that the additional pollution caused by potentially 14 additional vehicles will have a minimum impact on levels of pollution. The government plans for the withdrawal of manufacturing of fossil fuel polluting vehicles, combined with the location which will encourage residents to walk to their workplaces will minimise the effect of pollution. Electric vehicle charge points will be provided at the housing to enable hybrid and electric vehicles to be used with ease. The employers will also actively encourage car sharing where it is not practical to walk to their employment with educational material provided.
- At full planning stage an independent environmental impact assessment will be conducted, and we will follow all recommended actions to mitigate air pollution. This may include planting trees and shrubs around the site, which will act as natural air filters

- All construction activities comply with local air quality standards during the build.
- Harris Development Limited is exploring a new project for car/journey sharing within the Harris Community to support Net Zero goals. This project is in its early stages, but the concept involves developing an app or social media group to help travellers find others on the same route. This is planned to be operational before the worker accommodation is completed
- We value the input of the community and are committed to ongoing dialogue. We will establish a community liaison group to address any concerns promptly and transparently.

8. Limited accountability held by the occupants towards ongoing cleanliness and maintenance of the property

It is in our opinion prejudice to assume that any group of people fit into a 'type cast'. There will be a mix of workers using the accommodation and it is intended to fully integrate the employers and their employees, that the accommodation is let to. However, the following points are raised.

- A Property Management Company will be appointed and as part of their remit regular internal and external property inspections will be made
- We will provide clear guidelines to all employers /occupants regarding their responsibilities including expectations related to cleanliness, waste disposal, and property care and this will be detailed within the terms of their leases. As with any rented property, there will be caveats within the lease to detail both behavioural and care of the property with consequences of penalties and if necessary, removal if the terms are not adhered to.
- It is planned that the housing will be tied. Which means that the consequence of losing their accommodation would also mean losing their job and vice versa. Whilst this is not an avenue that we would seek to enforce if a new member of the community was to act in a manner that was undesirable this would remain an option.
- We will foster communication among occupants, emphasising the collective interest in maintaining a pleasant living environment for all members of the Tarbert community.
- We value the input of the community and are committed to ongoing dialogue. We will establish a community liaison group to address any concerns promptly and transparently

- Prior to submitting the full planning application all stipulated environmental surveys will be conducted and where required wildlife surveys, peat management plans and bio-diversity offsets will be conducted and adhered to.

11. Combined Proposal is a Major Development

If all sites were combined this would not meet the criteria of a Major Development for housing which is stated as:

‘Construction of buildings, structures or erections for use as residential accommodation.

(a) the development comprises 50 or more dwellings; or

(b) the area of the site is or exceeds 2 hectares’

Therefore the number of dwellings proposed (if all planning had been applied for) would be 42 and the total area would not meet the 2 hectares to meet the threshold of a major development. This had been reviewed to ensure that it did not fall within the threshold prior to the consultation with the council. Currently planning in principle has been submitted for dwellings totalling 28.

12. Challenges to the island

Challenges to the Island is referred to within no 10 Representation. It is well documented that one of the major challenges of the Outer Hebrides is depopulation, which a major contributing factor is, lack of housing.

13. Consultation with the community

A community consultation drop-in session was held on Wednesday 15th March 2023 having been advertised in the local *De the Dol?* Community newsletter. This was attended by members of the community, local businesses as well as the clerk of the Tarbert Common Grazings Committee. Everyone who attended was shown a brief presentation of the project and left positive feedback both verbally as well as documenting their comments. Articles have also appeared in both the *De that Dol* and the *Stornoway Gazette* and on Social Media in when the funding was granted from the Scottish Land Fund for the purchase of land for this project in December 2023.

Engagement with Residents:

We remain dedicated to balancing economic growth, changing the force of depopulation of Harris and its aging demographic, workforce needs with community well-being.

- a. We value the input of the community and are committed to ongoing dialogue. We will establish a community liaison group to address any concerns promptly and transparently.
- b. We invite community members to participate in ongoing discussions about the accommodation.
- c. Their feedback will help us fine-tune our approach and address concerns effectively.

We are committed to working closely with residents to ensure their daily lives are not adversely affected and therefore we are committed to maintaining an open dialogue with the community throughout the planning process. We invite residents to participate in upcoming consultation sessions where we can discuss alternative solutions and address any concerns in detail as we progress to the structured design and full planning application stage.