

42158 Househill Road Safety Assessment for HFBC, Househill

Road Safety Assessment, A939 through Househill

Revision	Date	Author	Approved
0	24 th February 2024	KS	-

(Most recent revisions are highlight in italics)

Road Safety Assessment

Highland Fencing and Barrier Contractors Ltd
Househill
Nairn
IV12 5RY

Client Details

Highland Fencing and Barrier Contractors Ltd
79A High Street
Nairn
IV12 4BW

(the 'Applicant')

Safety Study Background

This Road Safety Assessment has been commissioned by Highland Fencing and Barrier Contractors Ltd ("HFBC"). HFBC are a specialist fencing, groundworks, and vehicle restraint contractor based in Nairn. HFBC employ approximately 20 people through a team comprising office and admin (4) and operations (16). Operational staff vary with the support of agency personnel from time to time.

HFBC operate over 2 sites - a yard on Harbour Street, Nairn, and office on Nairn High Street. The yard is used to store materials, plant, and equipment. The yard is not large enough to accommodate all of the company vehicles, including vans/ 4x4 pick ups, 32t lorry, tractor, tracked Post Master, 2x excavators, and various trailers and attachments.

HFBC have been actively seeking land to allow the growth of their business within Nairn, including plots within Balmakeith which were subsequently withdrawn from sale at the 11th hour. It is a matter of fact that there is limited to no available land within Nairn to allow sustainable growth of any business which relies on yard space. The Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan 2015 includes land allocations for additional commercial land at NA11, exclusively for the expansion of the sawmill, and at NA12, south of Balmakeith for non-food retail. Looking to the future, the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan 2 includes 1 commercial land allocation, NA07, which is exclusively allocated to the expansion of the sawmill. The Reporter's Examination, published 19th January 2024, identifies that site NA05 Nairn East, a mixed use development, should be omitted from the IMFLDP2, whilst site the remaining two mixed uses sites NA04 Sandown, is a Common Good asset and subject to a community led development brief recommendation and NA06 Land East of the Retail Park, whilst marked as a mixed use site, is preferred for attractive housing forming the east gateway to Nairn. The further IMFLDP2 includes little to no feasible land use for commercial and light industrial use.

To allow the business to continue to effectively function, HFBC have temporarily secured the use of the area of ground comprising 0.43Ha to the south of The Cottage, Househill. This private field is

w: spink.design
t: 07488 939009

The Cottage
Househill
Nairn, IV12 5RY

part of the domestic site of The Cottage, Househill. This arrangement, subject to planning reference 24/00553/FUL, will support the growth and sustainability of HFBC in Nairn for the future.

Landscape Overview

Field, The Cottage, Househill

The Field is an area of circa 0.43Ha, accessed from the A939 and from the garden grounds of The Cottage. The existing A939 access is in a difficult location behind Househill and Nairn's locally known 'big wall' of the historic Househill Walled Garden. HFBC propose to change the purpose of this domestic field (comprising a component part of the residential development, The Cottage, Househill) to Class 4 Light Industry/ Class 5 - General Industry, with a revised access to the south of the field.

Nearby Businesses

Immediately adjacent, separated by the A939, lies the Househill Business Park, which includes various commercial, light industry, and agricultural activity, such as Househill Farm, Househill Farm Café and Farm Shop, Salon 82, Loch Ness Furniture and Househill Floors, and Nethererton Tractors.

Immediately to the South in the neighbouring field, a battery farm was granted planning permission in February 2023, reference 22/03638/FUL.

Accessing this 876m stretch of the A939, characterised by the National Speed Limit signage to the south boundary of Nairn and the Househill Farm and Househill Business Centre to the south, are a mix of 39 homes and businesses.

Safe Roads

A939

In November 2021, Nairn River Community Council presented the findings of their A939 traffic study. This shows that the A939, measured at the traffic calming measures adjacent to the Nairn grave yard, experienced more than 3,000 vehicle movements for 6 days of the week, falling to 2,182 on Sunday 14th May 2021. This survey found 1 vehicle travelling at 85mph on the approach to the traffic calming measures. May 2021 was the beginning of phased COVID lockdown restrictions being lifted. It can be reasonably assumed that traffic movements now are considerably higher than the immediate post-lockdown movements of May 2021.

Heading south from Nairn, National Speed Limit (60mph) applies from the northern end of Granny Barbour's Road where it joins the A939, before being marked as 30mph for the initial bend at Househill, and again at the blind bend at the locally known 'big wall', or the historic Househill Walled Garden. Each of the referred bends are advertised as 30mph only in one direction - the Househill bend heading south from Nairn, and the 'big wall' bend heading north towards Nairn.

The unlit pedestrian footpath extending from the north end of Granny Barbour's Road terminates at Torvean on the A939. Thereafter, pedestrians are required to navigate 176m or thereby along the A939, to the Househill Business Centre car park. This stretch of road is 6,720mm wide from dyke to wall. There are indications of white lines, approximately 500mm off the dyke and 600mm off the wall,

w: spink.design

t: 07488 939009

The Cottage
Househill
Nairn, IV12 5RY

Registered in Scotland SC638497

reducing the carriageway by around 1,100mm to 5,620mm. Incidentally, rural road minimums for occasional passing of large/ heavy vehicles at low speeds is 5,500mm and for occasional use by buses or heavy goods vehicles up to 6.0m. (Appendix A – HS2 Rural Road Design Criteria, A6.3)

This section of the A939 forms a key route into Nairn, and is regularly used by large/ heavy vehicles who are travelling between the rural Nairnshire and the A96, travelling between Grantown-on-Spey and Nairn, such as Macpherson Transport, as well as servicing the Househill Business Centre, including Netherton Tractors, the working farm, and deliveries to the busy café and furniture and flooring shop.

This mixed pedestrian and vehicular route is the only pedestrian route from Nairn to the Househill Business Centre. It also forms the junction with the National Cycle Route 1 as it emerges from rural and riverside paths to join the A939 and on to the A96. This route does not achieve the requirements of National Planning Framework 4, Policy 13. b) i and vi, and Policy 14 b). This crossing conflicts with Highway Code rule H2 due to the poorly configured existing crossing.

Accessing the A939

The A939 is directly accessed, between the National Speed Limit signage at the North End of Granny Barbour’s Road, and the Househill Business Centre, 876m of road length or thereby, by:

Homes	Househill Meadows	12
	Househill Gate	7 homes
	Househill Drive	7
	Individual Homes	6
Businesses		6 (at least)
Others		Farmer’s Show Field
	Total Units	39

Crossing the A939

The only current A939 crossing to Nairn south and Househill is provided for at the existing traffic calming crossing, which was the focus of the Nairn River Community Council traffic survey in 2021.

Of the 39 units accessing the A939 between the Nairn town boundary, characterised by the National Speed Limit signage at the north junction of Granny Barbour’s Road, 31 of those units access the A939 as it travels through Househill from the non-footpath, or north and west, side of the A939, with no crossing. Safe use of the route to the crossing means crossing the A939 to the unlit footpath, to re-cross at the traffic calming studied by Nairn River Community Council.

Comparative Roads

Comparing the A939 to other routes in and out of Nairn and around Nairn:

A96	the A96 is progressively limited by reducing speed limits, including 40mph buffer zones at the East and West boundaries, reducing incoming vehicle speeds from beyond the first accesses to Nairn and adjoining areas
-----	---

w: spink.design

t: 07488 939009

The Cottage
Househill
Nairn, IV12 5RY

Registered in Scotland SC638497

Cawdor Road	Enjoys a 30mph speed restriction which extends significantly beyond the Firhall development and along the length of the unlit footpath on the West side of the road beyond the access to the former Broadley Garden Centre
Balblair Road	Is protected by a 20mph zone which extends significantly beyond the sawmill, which is clearly designed to protect sawmill operatives and deliveries as well as road users as the sawmill operations straddle the road
Moss-side Road	Is limited to 30mph until well out of the primary Nairn development to the Nairn signposted boundary
Lochloy Road	Forms part of the Highland Council 20mph Programme speed restricted routes, with a 40mph limit extending to and through Kingsteps, with National Speed Limit signs displayed on exiting Kingsteps to the East
B9101 to Cawdor	The B9101 to Cawdor is limited to 50mph for its full length, excluding Brackla, where the speed limit is reduced to 30mph

The A939 approaching Nairn from Grantown-on-Spey passes the Nairn Recycling Centre at National Speed Limits (60mph), passes through the cross-roads formed by B9101 (where the B9101 is a 50mph section of road) and unclassified road to Auldearn (National Speed Limit) crossing the A939, and continues through increasing residential development to Househill Business Centre, through Househill and 176m of unprotected pedestrian route and on to Nairn at National Speed Limits.

Safe Solutions - Active Travel

Comprehensive Solution

This road safety proposal creates a comprehensive solution to create an active travel corridor from Househill, the Granny Barbour's development, and Boath Park through the riverside and on to Millbank Primary School, Rosebank Primary School, Nairn Academy and the town centre without pedestrian requirement to travel along the congested and poor air quality A96 corridor.

Element 1: Speed Limit All as characterised by HFBC's planning application 24/00553/FUL, to extend the Nairn South speed limit of 30mph along the length of the pedestrian route, terminating 40m south of the Househill Farm and Househill Business Centre access

Element 2: Safe Crossing Revise the existing traffic calming measures to create a pedestrian priority right of way, with clear and adequate traffic signalling. The current crossing includes 'Give Way', but no priority is given to any user, whether pedestrian or road user heading north or south. Refer to drawing 42158-P-SD-008.

w: spink.design
t: 07488 939009

The Cottage
Househill
Nairn, IV12 5RY

Registered in Scotland SC638497



Existing pedestrian and National Cycle Route 1 crossing, looking South



Existing pedestrian and National Cycle Route 1 crossing, looking North

Whilst the crossing forms part of National Cycle Route 1, the cost and impact of a Toucan crossing is considered, and, with the prevailing 30mph speed limit and existing road traffic calming measures, this Safety Study recommends a Zebra crossing with adequate road markings, flashing amber beacons and pedestrian guardrail either side of the crossing

Petition

This Road Safety Assessment is supported by SP+NK's petition: 'Speed Restrictions and Improved Pedestrian Crossing for Nairn South and Househill', launched on 27th February 2024 and open for signature for a period of 21 days, ending on 18th March 2024, which shall be submitted to The Highland Council within 14 days of the date of closing.

w: spink.design
t: 07488 939009

The Cottage
Househill
Nairn, IV12 5RY

Registered in Scotland SC638497

Further References

Further references include:

National Planning Framework 4, Part 1	Spatial Principles Local living Compact urban growth Rebalanced development Rural revitalisation
National Planning Framework 4, Annex D	3. Connected: Supporting well connected networks that make moving around easy and reduce car dependency Pedestrian experience including safe crossing, pedestrian priority, reduced vehicular speed and noise 5. Sustainable: Supporting the efficient use of resources that will allow people to live, play, work and stay in their area, ensuring climate resilience and integrating nature positive biodiversity solutions Active local economy including opportunity for local jobs and training, work spaces 6. Adaptable: Supporting commitment to investing in the long term value of buildings, streets and spaces by allowing for flexibility so that they can meet the changing needs and accommodate different uses over time
National Planning Framework 4	Policy 13 and 14
Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan (2015)	Fails to identify any opportunity for light industrial or commercial growth in Nairn excluding NA11 and NA12, focused on retail and the sawmill
Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan 2	Fails to identify any opportunity for light industrial or commercial growth in Nairn excluding NA07, focused on the sawmill
Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan 2	Placemaking Priorities 27

w: spink.design
t: 07488 939009

The Cottage
Househill
Nairn, IV12 5RY

Registered in Scotland SC638497

- Strengthen Nairn's role as the strategic market, service and social centre of Nairnshire
- Consolidate the expansion of Nairn with growth focused on areas which are well connected to the town and facilities and can deliver improved active travel links

Report to the Highland Council on the Proposed Inner Moray Firth Proposed Local Development Plan 2 Examination

Reporter's Recommendations:

Modify the local development plan by:

1. Adding the following bullet point under the heading 'Placemaking Priorities 27' on page 277:

"Strengthen the local economy and increase local employment opportunities through the protection of established industrial and business sites and support for suitable new sites to enable further growth."

Proposed Masterplan by Grigorhill Business Group

Generally and as submitted for consideration by the Reporter examining the Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan 2.

Highway Code

Rule H2

SP+NK Petition

Figure 2. Section of Road for Speed Reduction



w: spink.design
t: 07488 939009

The Cottage
Househill
Nairn, IV12 5RY

Registered in Scotland SC638497

References and Acknowledgements

This document includes data provided by:

1. For all distances, Google Maps.
2. For all map extracts, Google Maps.
3. Highland Council website for the 20mph Programme.
4. For all road traffic statistics, Nairn River Community Council
5. Appendix A - HS2 Rural Road Design Criteria
6. SP+NK drawing 42158-P-SD-005, Extended Speed Restriction Zone with Zebra Crossing
7. SP+NK drawing 42158-P-SD-004, Supporting Photos