

Proposed Development of Existing Site

North Kessock Caravan Site

Design Statement

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1.0 Introduction

This application refers to an existing site on lands owned by The Highland Council at the North Kessock layby and adjoining area on the northbound A9 dualled trunk road, approx. 1km north of the Kessock Bridge.

The site comprises a long established layby/pull in for cars and commercial vehicles: a commercial / bakery unit: a secondary smaller building originally used as part of the Moray Firth Dolphin Watch project: public toilets: a former parking/picnic area to the north western portion of the site and an undeveloped grass picnic area to the south eastern portion.

The site has been subject to previous assessment for viability in development of overnight parking facilities and redevelopment as a caravan/campervan site (Highland Campers feasibility study dated 08/04/18 ref CV Feasibility) and a feasibility study assessing conversion/upgrade in more detail (HRI|Munro Architecture development report June 2019); both reports inform this submission.

It has also been subject to a pre-application consultation (ref 17/04131/PREAPP) dated 26/10/17 which broadly supported development for overnight caravan/campervans.

This application is submitted with a North Kessock Service Facility - Traffic Report.

Accordingly, this application comprises a developed and evolved scheme on the basis of previous feasibilities and pre-application advice.

2.0 Site Analysis

As noted under section 1 above, the overall site is long established for traffic layby/recreational and service provision. The picnic areas to the north west portion are a mixture of hard and soft landscaping with roadway and hardstanding areas, although in a somewhat deteriorated state. There are mixtures of fine mature trees (not TPO) and the whole site has been subject of a tree survey.

The centre portion of the site comprises a commercial vehicle and car layby/parking area with a former cafeteria now repurposed as a bakery and food shop leased to Harry Gow Ltd., with adjoining public toilet. A small timber building to the southern boundary overlooking the Beaulie Firth was originally used for public information and viewing related to the Moray Firth dolphins but is now out of use. The south east portion is grassland with well established tree/shrubbery belt to the north portion screening the A9 trunk road. The site overall is formed from the original construction of the A9 dual carriageway and slopes steeply at the southern boundary to North Kessock. Traffic noise is partially screened by mature tree planting to the northern boundary.



3.0 Design Proposals

The proposal is to upgrade, improve and service the north western and south eastern portions of the site to provide overnight or longer visitor facilities to touring caravans and campervans. The existing picnic areas to the north west portion are upgraded, re-formed and adjusted or modified as necessary to provide 16 pitches with electric hook-ups. The south eastern portion is proposed as similarly redeveloped for 16 pitches, similarly serviced with hook-ups.

The existing public toilets will be renovated, upgraded and extended to provide modern and high quality facilities with showers. The “dolphin watch” building is proposed as similarly upgraded and repurposed for a site maintenance store, possible vending facilities for visiting caravan/campervans and overall site control and management.

Soft landscaping proposals include for existing mature tree protection, supplemental tree planting and selective removal, all in accordance with the tree and planting strategy appended.

The proposal will include for extension and internal remodelling of the existing service / WC block is as indicated: mass, roofing and finishing proposed as similar to existing with the whole externally repainted and existing finishes upgrading.

Addition of new store building for ranger service to replace existing provision.

As well as the extension to the existing merge line and associated works to allow for egress from site onto the northbound carriageway – all to Transport Scotland Acceptable Standards.

Traffic Management

A Traffic report has been prepared and discussions initiated with Transport Scotland (**appendix D**) in establishing whether adjustments to the tapered exit land may be required by the Authority: it is expected that further discussions will follow statutory consultation response post application. A traffic consultant is appointed to liaise with Transport Scotland on these issues.

4.0 Finishes/Materials

Largely as noted above: pitches to the new south east portion of the site will comprise access roadway and individual pitch hard standing and blinded gravel surfacing/timber edging with additional localised tree and shrub planting to improve the visual and acoustic screening between the site and A9 dual carriageway: together with selective pruning/removal of the overgrown southern portion of the site at the head of the embankment to North Kessock to improve the fine views over the firth below.

