

THE PLANNING BACKGROUND

The previous Local Plan identified the Pinewood housing site as the focus for residential development in Mosstodloch between 1993-98. The identification of housing land was restricted in line with the principal objective of limiting the further expansion of the settlement. In the past 5 years, approximately 18 houses have been built in the Pinewood housing area and 16 house plots are still available within site R1.

A modest level of industrial/commercial activity has seen the industrial estate at Garmouth Road become fully occupied. Baxters of Speyside, the largest employer in the area, own the field at the east of the village and therefore have a supply of ground for future expansion requirements.

The 1993-98 Local Plan contained an objective to replant the amenity woodland strip at Pinewood which had previously been the subject of illegal felling. The Council also sought to enter into a management agreement for the control of Balnacoul Wood to the south of the A96. Due to local authority reorganisation, neither of these works has been undertaken to date.

A major planning consideration for Mosstodloch is the Scottish Executive proposal for a bypass (together with Fochabers) to the south of the village.

CHARACTER OF THE VILLAGE

The character of Mosstodloch is significantly influenced by development occurring since the 1960's and also by dissection by the A96 trunk road. Its character therefore is largely modern and this is reflected in the large private estate development of Mossmill Park, Pinewood Road and the Local Authority housing at Birnie Place. Traffic pressure through the village will be alleviated if Scottish Office bypass proposals go ahead.

The only links with the original village are to be found along the A96 frontage where single storey croft houses line the roadside. The beech hedging which has suffered from the excessive traffic volumes on the trunk road, is a strong feature, as is the Balnacoul Wood to the south. An area to the north of the village is characterised by the large sawmill and industrial site.

Baxters of Speyside and the private housing area of Inchberry are located at the east end of the village, separated by the A96.

To the west of the village the former woodland strips were a particular feature, and integral to the character of Mosstodloch, acting as a windbreak, an amenity area and a visual screen to the busy A96.

OBJECTIVES

- (i) To plan for a southern by-pass road as proposed by the trunk road authority.
- (ii) To provide an adequate supply of housing land in Mosstodloch to meet demand during the next 5 year period.
- (iii) To protect the environment of the village and, in particular, secure the replanting of woodlands enclosing the Pinewood area of Mosstodloch.
- (iv) To curtail new development south of the trunk road unless a by-pass is constructed.

POLICIES AND PROPOSALS

In addition to the site specific requirements identified below and in development briefs, all developments must meet the terms of the Implementation policies (L/IMP1-8) in Chapter 8 (relating to siting, layout and design, character impact, landscaping, drainage, environmental and traffic impact). Subject to the scale of the development having a measurable impact on local community facilities, amenities or infrastructure, funding policies L/F1 Developer Contributions and L/F2 'Commutated Payments' in Chapter 7 may also apply.

BUSINESS ACTIVITIES

The Local Plan policies for business development are contained in Chapter 1 'Economic Development'.

Industrial Estates (L/ED2, L/ED3)

11 Garmouth Road Industrial Estate

The estate is now full occupied. Lhanbryde will be offered as the nearest location for new sites. This site can, however, suffer from surface water drainage problems which is the responsibility of both the Council and the North of Scotland Water Authority. (see L/ENV26)

Established Business Areas (L/ED4)

12 Sawmill

A long established and important employer in the village. A recent application for an extension to Riddoch's sawmill to include a sorting and packing area will help to lessen the industrial/residential conflict at the southern end of the site by relocating noisy operations away from the existing housing area whilst retaining a buffer/storage area on the southern boundary with Glebe Road. This site can, however, suffer from surface water drainage problems which is the responsibility of both the Council and the North of Scotland Water Authority. (see L/ENV26)

13 Baxters

Is a major employer in the area and a significant tourist attraction. Recent measures to expand the scale of their operations include the extension of factory buildings, canteen and staff facilities, offices and retail sales areas. The settlement plan aims to retain an area of separation between the boundary of this industrial site and housing areas.

ENVIRONMENT

The policies for the maintenance and enhancement of the environment are found in Chapter 2 (Environment).

The principal policies for the local environment are L/ENV10 'Settlement Boundaries' and L/ENV18 'Public Amenity and Open Spaces' in Chapter 2, and L/IMP1 'Development in Built Up Areas' in Chapter 8.

Under the terms of policy L/ENV18 (Public Amenity and Open Spaces) a number of spaces have been identified which contribute to the environment and amenity of the town. The purpose of policy L/ENV18 is to protect the integrity of these spaces from inappropriate development and to ensure that their contribution to the amenity of the built up area is not compromised.

ENV1 Mosstodloch Woodland Strip

This is an area of land was formerly a woodland strip. It will be retained and enhanced to create for the village an informal recreational open space, an enhanced landscape setting for the north west edge of Mosstodloch, a buffer between farming practices and residential areas, and shelter from the elements and traffic noise. It is intended that the land will be landscaped with substantial tree planting and the Council will explore its establishment and maintenance on a community or partnership basis. The Council will resist all proposals for building in this area. (see policy L/ENV3).

ENV2 School Grounds, Village Hall and Playing Fields

Retained for public use.

ENV3 Trees and Verges at the East End

The small conifer woodland and road verges at the east end of the village on the A96, are in Council ownership. These areas are to be retained as open spaces and as a woodland screen from the A96 trunk road. Any by-pass proposal must ensure that the entrance to the village and/or Baxters is landscaped to high standard.

ENV4 Balnacoul Wood

The Council propose a management agreement for the control of this area of woodland to the south of the A96, possibly as a partnership initiative with interested parties. (See L/ENV3). This woodland is an integral part of the character of the village, functioning as a windbreak protecting the houses on Balnacoul Road and the A96 itself from the prevailing south-westerly winds.

HOUSING

The main governing local plan policy for new housing developments is L/H3 in Chapter 3 (Servicing and Layout of new Housing Developments). Policy L/H7 in Chapter 3 (Affordable Housing provision) may also apply depending on the size and location of the development.

R1 Pinewood

The site is fully serviced and has a remaining capacity of 16 houses.

R2 Stynie Road

Situated immediately north of Mossmill Park, this site could accommodate a development of approximately 20 houses, taking access of Stynie Road. The site is separated from the industrial area by the playing fields to the west. A landscaped strip to a depth of 15 m would be required on the northern boundary of the site in order to create a natural buffer on the edge of the settlement. Stynie Road should be widened to 5.5 metres with a 1.8 metre footway on the east side of the road linking up with the existing footways on Stynie Road. Public footpaths linking the site to the neighbouring built up area are required as part of this development.

R3 Gap Sites, south of A96

Development of gap sites within the settlement boundary will be permitted provided that they do not compromise the character of the village. However, sites which take direct access from the A96 on its southern boundary, will not be considered until a by-pass has been constructed.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The governing local plan policy for community facilities is L/CF1 in Chapter 5.

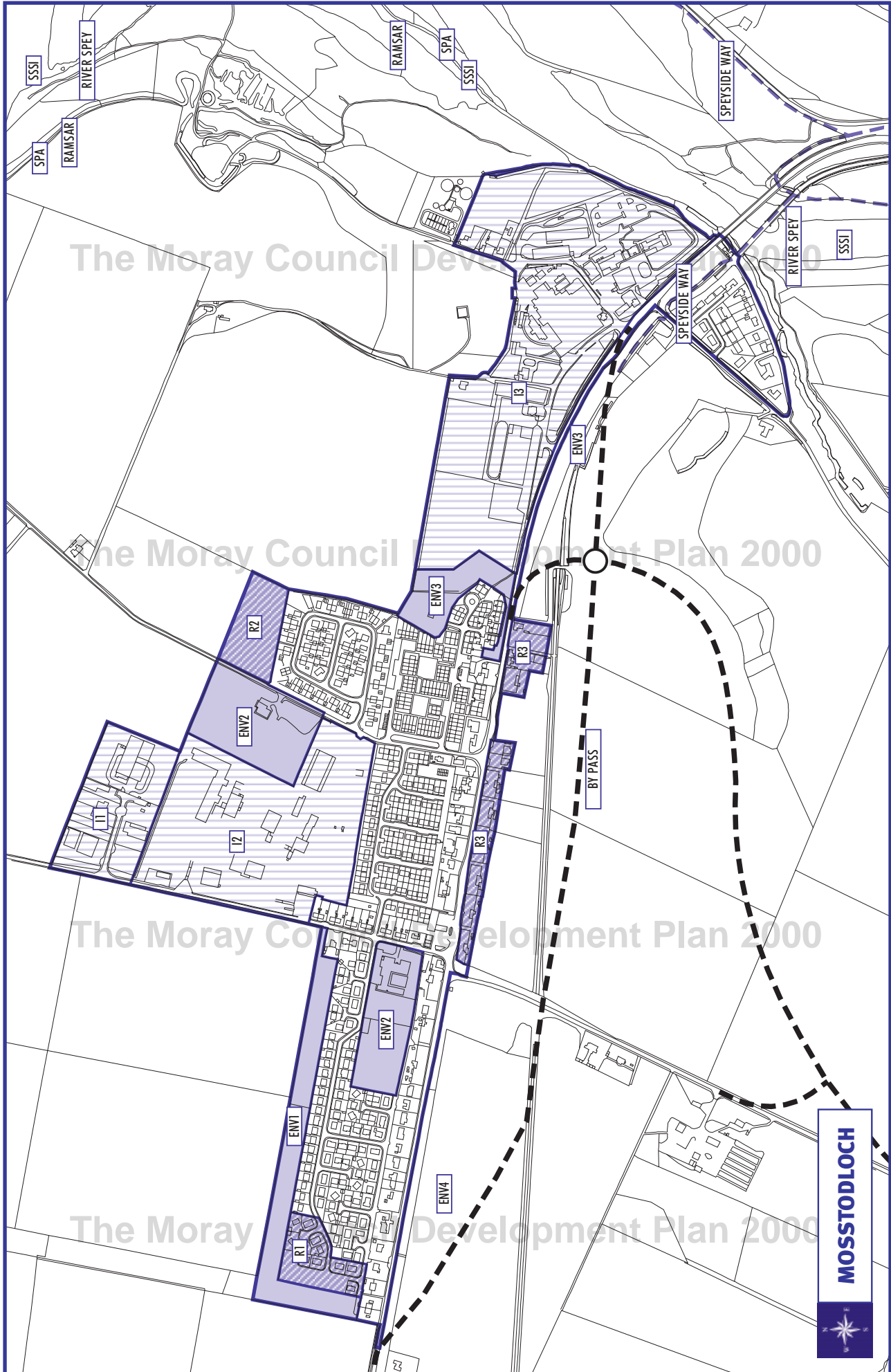
Indoor leisure facilities within Mosstodloch are primarily provided through the local community in the form of a village hall. The potential increase in demand for this facility associated with the identified development sites may require improvements to the accessibility and range of activities on offer, which will be subject to consultation with the local community.

A96 BY-PASS

The settlement boundary to the south of Mosstodloch follows the line of the proposed by-pass, identified by the Scottish Office in February 1997. (See Policy L/T1, Chapter 4).

WASTE WATER TREATMENT

Mosstodloch's sewage is pumped to the treatment works in Fochabers which is presently restricted, and as such any significant development in addition to the designated housing sites may have to be curtailed. This may restrict the release of site R2.



MOSSTODLOCH