

## CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

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### **DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED:**

Installation of 2 free standing solar arrays of 24kw at Croftcarnoch Farmhouse, Kingussie, Highland, PH21 1LU

**REFERENCE:** 2018/0048/DET

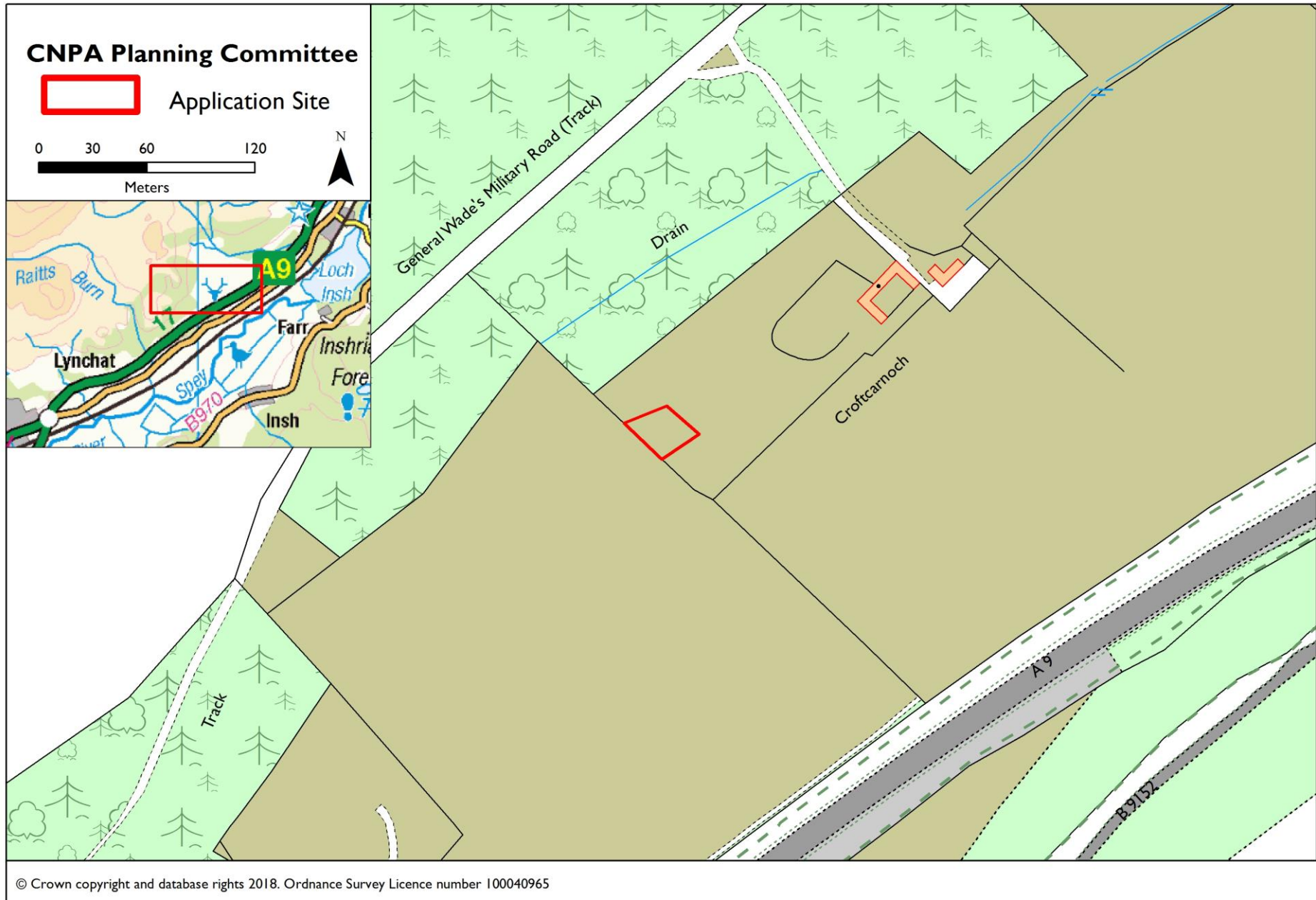
**APPLICANT:** Mr Allan MacPherson-Fletcher

**DATE CALLED-IN:** 26 January 2018

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approve subject to Conditions

**CASE OFFICER:** Colin Bradley, Graduate Planner

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## **SITE DESCRIPTION, PROPOSAL AND HISTORY**

### **Site Description**

1. The site is located to the south-west of the existing Croftcarnoch farmhouse, south of the Highland Wildlife Park. It is an area of open ground within the garden grounds of the house. The approximate area for the siting of the proposed solar arrays is approximately 0.1 hectares
2. The nearest residential properties with a view of the proposed development are more than 2km from the site, on the south side of the Strath around Insh.

### **Proposal**

3. The drawings and documents associated with this application are listed below and are available on the Cairngorms National Park Authority website unless noted otherwise:

<http://www.eplanningcnpa.co.uk/onlineapplications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=P3DHMWSI0BY00>

<b>Title</b>	<b>Drawing Number</b>	<b>Date on Plan*</b>	<b>Date Received</b>
Location Plan		23/11/2017	05/02/18
Designations			05/02/18
Section Plan	1	08/08/2013	05/02/18
Site Layout Plan	00890/2	28/02/18	05/03/18
Landscape Plan			28/03/18

\*Where no specific day of month has been provided on the plan, the system defaults to the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month.

4. This Application seeks permission for the installation of two free standing solar arrays with an output of 24kw, intended to provide an electricity source to power and complement a ground source heating system for the associated house.
5. The arrays are intended to be arranged in two separate rows of 22m, set 9m apart with 2 no. earth bunds used to soften the landscape impact of the proposed development.

### **History**

6. The recent planning history of this site includes:
  - a) Approval by Highland Council of an application for conversion of a steading into two houses and change of use of agricultural land to form garden area, application reference number 08/00174/FULBS.

- b) Approval by CNPA of an application for a new house and refurbished steading for storage/garage ancillary to the house, application reference number 2013/0025/DET.
- c) Approval by Highland Council of an amended proposal for a new house and refurbished steading for storage/garage ancillary to the house, application reference number 15/04313/FUL.

## **DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONTEXT**

### **Policies**

<b>National Policy</b>	Scottish Planning Policy 2014	
<b>Strategic Policy</b>	Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2017 - 2022	
<b>Local Plan Policy</b>	Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan (2015) Those policies relevant to the assessment of this application are marked with a cross	
POLICY 1	NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT	
POLICY 2	SUPPORTING ECONOMIC GROWTH	
POLICY 3	SUSTAINABLE DESIGN	X
POLICY 4	NATURAL HERITAGE	X
POLICY 5	LANDSCAPE	X
POLICY 6	THE SITING AND DESIGN OF DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT	
POLICY 7	RENEWABLE ENERGY	X
POLICY 8	SPORT AND RECREATION	
POLICY 9	CULTURAL HERITAGE	
POLICY 10	RESOURCES	
POLICY 11	DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS	

7. All new development proposals require to be assessed in relation to policies contained in the adopted Local Development Plan. The full wording of policies can be found at:

<http://cairngorms.co.uk/uploads/documents/Park%20Authority/Planning/LDPI5.pdf>

### **Planning Guidance**

8. Supplementary guidance also forms part of the Local Development Plan and provides more details about how to comply with the policies. Guidance that is relevant to this application is marked with a cross.

Policy 1	New Housing Development Non-Statutory Guidance	
Policy 2	Supporting Economic Growth Non-Statutory Guidance	
Policy 3	Sustainable Design Non-Statutory Guidance	X
Policy 4	Natural Heritage Supplementary Guidance	X
Policy 5	Landscape Non-Statutory Guidance	X

Policy 7	Renewable Energy Supplementary Guidance	X
Policy 8	Sport and Recreation Non-Statutory Guidance	
Policy 9	Cultural Heritage Non-Statutory Guidance	
Policy 10	Resources Non-Statutory Guidance	
Policy 11	Developer Contributions Supplementary Guidance	

## **CONSULTATIONS**

9. A summary of the main issues raised by consultees now follows:
10. **CNPA Ecology** recommend a native grassland mix of ‘Scotia Seeds; Highland Grass Mix’ should be used to reseed the area around the solar panels.
11. **CNPA Landscape** have requested that an updated Landscape plan be submitted to demonstrate the effect that the proposed solar panels would have with the approved landscape drawings. They recommend that the photovoltaic arrays and associated bunds and are set herb-rich grassland and amongst native tree planting.

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

12. There have been no representations on this proposal.

## **APPRAISAL**

### **Principle**

13. The proposed development seeks to offset the energy requirements of the associated dwelling house by generating electricity on site. Policy 7: Renewable Energy, of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2015 supports renewable energy proposals where they complement the sustainability of a development. The proposal complies with Policy 7: Renewable Energy, of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2015

### **Landscape, Environmental Impacts, Design and Layout**

14. Policy 5: Landscape of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2015 seeks to ensure that all development proposals conserve or enhance the landscape character and the special qualities of the Cairngorms National Park. In this case, the proposed development is within the garden ground of a property, will be partly screened by landform and can be further screened by some tree planting. Although it will result in a change of character on the site, it will not be visible to the users of the A9 corridor or the nearby Highland Wildlife Park. The proposal has been designed to mitigate the impact of the development within the landscape through the inclusion of earth bunds. It is considered that with an appropriate landscaping scheme, the proposal complies with Policy 5: Landscape of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2015.

15. Policy 4: Natural Heritage, of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2015 seeks to ensure that there are no adverse impacts on protected sites, species or biodiversity. The proposal is on garden ground that had semi-improved grassland in the past and a previously approved landscape scheme for species rich grassland and some tree planting. The use of an appropriate grass seed mix and any additional tree or hedgerow planting will mitigate the change caused by the proposed development. The proposal is considered to comply with Policy 4: Natural Heritage of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2015.
16. Policy 3: Sustainable Design of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2015, requires that developments use materials and landscaping that complement the setting of the development and protect the amenity of neighbours including minimising the disturbance cause by access to the site. The development is considered to be designed to fit within the site and that appropriate landscaping will minimise any visual impacts. The proposal will not affect the amenity of neighbours and will improve the overall sustainability of the associated property. The proposal is considered to comply with Policy 3: Sustainable Design of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2015.

## CONCLUSION

17. This proposal seeks to provide renewable energy to an existing dwelling house. The site is not immediately visible from neighbouring areas or properties and with appropriate landscaping, will not have a significant impact on landscape character. Accordingly, the proposal is considered to comply with the relevant planning policies of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2015.

## RECOMMENDATION

**That Members of the Committee support a recommendation to GRANT FULL PLANNING PERMISSION for the installation of 2 free standing solar arrays of 24kw at Croftcarnoch Farmhouse, Kingussie, Highland, PH21 1LU subject to the following conditions:**

\*Those conditions listed below in bold text are suspensive conditions, which require to be discharged prior to implementation of the development.

- I. **No construction of solar voltaic cell arrays shall commence until a revised landscape scheme for the application site has been submitted to and approved in writing by the CNPA acting as planning authority. The planting shall be implemented in accordance with the approved scheme in the first planting season following completion of the development and maintained thereafter in accordance with the approved details.**

Reason: to ensure appropriate landscape and biodiversity mitigation in accordance with Policy 4: National Heritage and Policy 5: Landscape of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan.

2. Should the Photovoltaic (PV) cells hereby approved not supply electricity for a continuous period of 6 months, they shall be deemed to have ceased to be required and, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Planning Authority, shall be removed from the site, along with all associated development, fixtures and fittings.

Reason: To ensure that any development which has ceased to serve its intended purpose is removed from the site, in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policy 5: Landscape of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan.

### **Informatives**

1. The development hereby approved must commence within 3 years of the date of this decision notice. If development has not commenced within this period then this planning permission will lapse.
2. The person undertaking the development is required to give the Planning Authority prior written notification of the date on which it is intended to commence the development. Attached to this decision notice is a Notice of Initiation of Development for completion and submission. Submission of this information assists the Cairngorms National Park Authority Monitoring and Enforcement Officer in monitoring active work within the area to ensure compliance with the approved details and to identify and correct any potential problems, as they arise, rather than later when it may be more difficult and more costly to rectify. Failure to give notice would constitute a breach of planning control which may result in enforcement action being taken.
3. Following completion of the development, a notification of the completion shall, as soon as practicable, be given to the Planning Authority. Attached to this decision notice is a Notice of Completion of Development for completion and submission. Submission of this form will assist the Cairngorms National Park Authority Monitoring and Enforcement Officer in making a final inspection and checking compliance with the approved drawings and conditions. If the development hereby approved is to be carried out in phases, then a notice of completion should be submitted at the completion of each phase.
4. In respect of condition 1, the landscape scheme should include specification of 'Scotia Seeds Highland Grass Mix' for herb rich grassland planting in covering the area of the solar arrays and the proposed bunds and should incorporate a native species hedgerow along the southwestern boundary of the garden ground of Croftcarnoch Farmhouse.

The map on the first page of this report has been produced to aid in the statutory process of dealing with planning applications. The map is to help identify the site and its surroundings and to aid Planning Officers, Committee Members and the Public in the determination of the proposal. Maps shown in the Planning Committee Report can only be used for the purposes of the Planning Committee. Any other use risks infringing Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Maps

**CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY**  
**Planning Committee Agenda Item 6**

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