
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Title: REPORT ON CALLED-IN PLANNING APPLICATION

Prepared by: MARY GRIER, PLANNING OFFICER (DEVELOPMENT CONTROL)

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED: OUTLINE PLANNING PERMISSION FOR A NEW DWELLING HOUSE AND GARAGE FOR ESSENTIAL AGRICULTURAL WORKER AT GALTON, ORDIE, ABOYNE.

REFERENCE: 06/068/CP

APPLICANT: G MCCONNACH AND SON, C/O MATTHEW W. MERCHANT, SILVERBANK, NORTH DEESIDE ROAD, BANCHORY, AB31 5TR.

DATE CALLED-IN: 10TH MARCH 2006

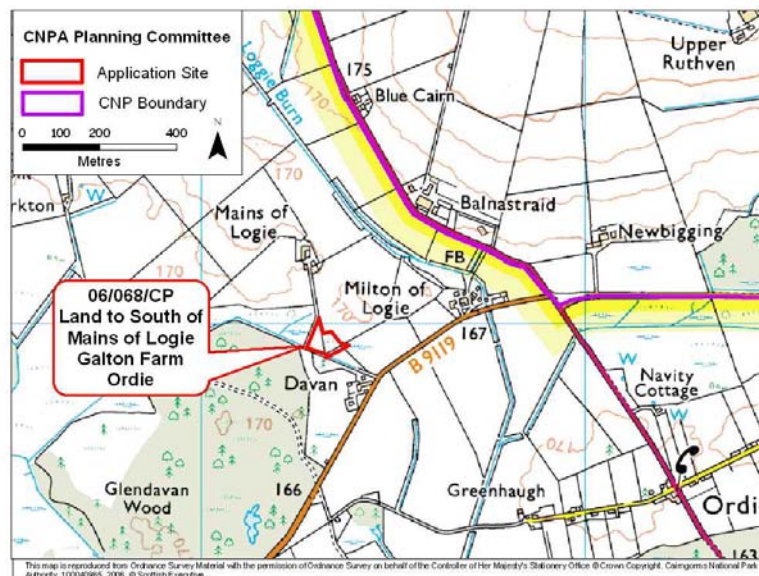


Fig. 1 - Location Plan

SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL

1. Outline permission is sought for the erection of a new dwelling house and garage at Galton, Ordie, Aboyne on the easternmost fringes of the Cairngorms National Park. The description of the proposed development in the application form refers to it being 'for essential agricultural worker.' The proposed site extends to 0.038 hectares, consisting of agricultural land. The area is accessed via a single carriage farm track off the B9119 (Tarland - Ballater road). The proposed site is located approximately 154 metres to the west of the public road, with Glendavan Wood located a short distance to the south and Loch Davan beyond that, while the A97 (Dinnet – Strathdon / Huntly) road is located approximately 480 metres to the north east.
2. A previous application was submitted on the same site in 2005 (CNPA planning ref. no. 05/420/CP refers), where outline permission was sought for the erection of a dwelling house and garage. The applicants in that instance were the daughter and son in law of the landowner of the holding at Galton. Planning permission for the development was refused by the CNPA's Planning Committee at their meeting of January 27th 2006 on the basis that it was contrary to the planning policy on new housing in the countryside, as detailed in the Finalised Aberdeenshire Local Plan 2002. In particular the reason for refusal made reference to the proposed new house not being justified as a place of residence for a full time worker in an enterprise appropriate to the countryside.¹
3. The subject land is relatively level, consisting of rough grassland, with some native tree species and low level vegetation forming the site boundaries. The farm track providing access to the site traverses past the southern and western boundaries. The track continues in a northerly direction for a further 140 metres past the proposed site to a residential property created from a steading conversion, known as The Mains of Logie. A map identifying the extent of the landholding at Galton has been submitted with this application, and the property at the Mains of Logie as well as a redundant cottage² in the centre of the Galton landholding have been excluded, and it is understood that

¹ The reason for refusal of planning permission on 05/420/CP stated that "The proposal is contrary to Policy Hou\4 (New Housing in the Countryside) of the Finalised Aberdeenshire Local Plan 2002. The proposal represents a new house in the countryside, which has not been justified as a place of residence for a full time worker in an enterprise appropriate to the countryside, and is not within the immediate vicinity of the worker's place of permanent employment. The proposed development would therefore contravene existing policies on new development in the countryside and would encourage and set a precedent for the sporadic siting of other residential developments in similar rural locations, all to the detriment of the character of the countryside and the amenity of this part of the National Park area, and furthermore it is not considered to make a positive contribution to the sustainable socio-economic development of the National Park."

² The redundant cottage in the centre of the Galton landholding was identified as being part of the landholding in documentation submitted to the CNPA in the course of the assessment of the previous application on the site. The details submitted in respect of this current application state that the ownership of the redundant cottage was transferred for inheritance reasons and "is therefore not available for use."

neither property is in the ownership of the current applicants. The landholding also includes a currently uninhabited farmhouse close to the Galton farmyard area and its associated agricultural structures.

4. The proposed site is part of a farmed landholding totalling approximately 153.9 hectares, which is currently farmed on a full time basis by Mr. Alastair McConnach of G. McConnach and Son, and his son Philip. The landholding is spread over two farming units, one of which is a tenanted farm of 60.5 hectares at Drumneachie, Birse, Aboyne, and the remaining unit of 93.4 hectares, which is owner operated and located at Gellan, Logie Coldstone (hereafter referred to as Galton) and incorporates the proposed site. The two units are approximately 10 miles apart. An SAC report has been submitted detailing the agricultural practices undertaken (report attached).³ The activities undertaken at Galton include arable cropping consisting of spring barley and maincrop seed potatoes, silage making and grazing for beef cattle. The report also states that winter housing for cattle is primarily at Galton, where 90 cows and 130 young stock are kept.



Fig. 2 : proposed site adjacent to existing laneway (western boundary).



Fig.3: proposed site as viewed from the western approach (southern boundary)

5. G. McConnach and Son are detailed as the applicants and it is understood that this is a company name, as opposed to reference to individual applicants. Mr. McConnach and his son i.e. those to whom the company name refers, reside at Drumneachie, Birse, Aboyne, in a property which is located on the other portion of the landholding which they farm. There are currently no farm employees in residence at Galton and a case has been advanced in this current application that the proposed new dwelling house “is needed for accommodation for an additional worker essential to the running of the farming operations at Galton and Drumneachie.” In the initial stages of this application it was stated in supporting documentation that the existing uninhabited house at Galton “will be used some (unspecified) time in the future when either Mr. & Mrs. McConnach or their son Philip move out of the house at Drumneachie and therefore must be kept specifically for this purpose.” In response to queries raised by a CNPA planning officer in the course of assessing the application further information was recently

³ The SAC report submitted in conjunction with this current application is the same report submitted in support of the previously refused planning application on the site (CNPA ref. no. 05/420/CP).

submitted indicating that due to advancing years Mr. McConnach Snr. now intends his input to the farming operations to decrease and he plans to retire at the end of this year to reside at the existing dwelling house at Galton.⁴ In conjunction with the stated retirement plans of the landowner, the information most recently put forward proposes that the new dwelling house on the Galton landholding will be utilised by a full time worker intended to be employed in the farming enterprise. The initial case merely referred to an 'essential agricultural worker' and did not clarify if was in a full time or part time capacity.



Fig. 4 : Existing farmhouse at Galton

6. The Galton landholding does not at present have a residential presence. This is a point which is highlighted in the SAC report where it is recommended in order to comply with current codes of practice and in the interests of animal welfare that daily supervision of livestock be undertaken and it is suggested that "it is advisable that farm staff reside on the farm." The SAC report estimates that the joint operation of the two farming units necessitates annual labour hours of approximately 4,765, with an assumption that one worker contributes 2,200 labour hours per annum. Two full time workers on the overall landholding (who are at present the tenant / owner, Mr. McConnach and his son) therefore generate labour hours of approximately 4,398 per annum.
7. Although outline permission only is sought in this application, indicative drawings have been submitted in respect of the proposed site layout, front elevation and floor plans of the proposed dwelling house. The dwelling, although described as a one and a half storey property is essentially a two storey structure, with an external finish consisting of extensive areas of glazing on the south, east and west elevations, combined with a mixture of boarded and render walls, under a slate roof, on which it is also proposed to introduce solar panels. The dwelling is proposed to be located within a relatively central position within the subject site, with the proposed garage located to the north east of the structure. Foul drainage is to be disposed of via a new septic tank / treatment plant to a soakaway, and a new water supply is

⁴ Described in the course of the previous application as being a redundant farmhouse and discounted as an accommodation possibility on the basis that it was "located approximately twenty feet from the existing cattle court and is considered too close even by agricultural standards to house an agricultural employee."

to be taken from the public source. The indicative site layout and design proposal are identical to the previous unsuccessful planning application on the subject site.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONTEXT

8. Section 3.18 of the **North East Scotland Together, Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Structure Plan 2001 – 2016 (NEST)** directs new development towards towns and villages and to meet market demand in existing settlements in preference to isolated development in the open countryside.
9. Policy 12 of **NEST**, entitled House Building in the Countryside Beyond the Green Belt states that there will be a presumption against house building in such areas except
 - (a) rehabilitation or extension of an existing house; or
 - (b) replacement on the same site of the largely intact house; or
 - (c) a new house which is essential to the efficient operation of an enterprise, which is itself appropriate to the countryside.

Policy 12 also includes the caveat that “all such development must be of the highest quality particularly in terms of siting, scale, design and materials.

10. Policy 19 of **NEST** refers to Wildlife, Landscape and Land Resources and outside of designated sites it is the general policy that “all new development should take into consideration the character of the landscape in terms of scale, siting, form and design. Design concerns are further expressed in Policy 20 relating to the Built Heritage and Archaeology, with section 4.12 highlighting the fact that national trends towards standard forms of construction can threaten the distinctive character of the North East and emphasising that good design has an important contribution to make towards achieving sustainable development.
11. The **Finalised Aberdeenshire Local Plan (as amended by the Proposed Modifications published 11 November 2005)** includes more detailed policies. The main policy applicable to the proposed development is **Policy Hou4 on New Housing in the Countryside and the Aberdeenshire Part of the Cairngorms National Park**, where it is stated that a single new house will be approved in principle if either :
 - (a) it is for a full time worker in an enterprise which itself is appropriate to the Countryside;
 - (b) the presence of that worker on-site is essential to the efficient operation of that enterprise;
 - (c) there is no suitable alternative **residential accommodation available**;

- (d) the proposed house is within the immediate vicinity of the worker's place of employment; AND
 - (e) it conforms with Appendix 1 (The Design of New Development in Aberdeenshire).
12. In terms of the justification of **Policy Hou\4**, the primary aim of the policy is to support a long term sustainable pattern of development, in addition to helping to protect the natural environment from incremental and sporadic new housing development. It should also be noted that in the event of evidence that it is essential for a worker to live in the countryside, developers may be required to enter into a Section 75 agreement ensuring that any proposed new dwelling is not subsequently sold to a non-essential worker.
13. Chapter 7 of the **Finalised Aberdeenshire Local Plan (with Proposed Modifications Published 11 November 2005)** details General Development Policies, with **Policy Gen\2** on the Layout, Siting and Design of New Development being of particular relevance in the context of the proposed development. The main aim of the policy is to achieve high quality new development, which respects the environment and provides a sense of place. The policy sets out a number of fundamental layout, siting and design principles, including the need for the development to fit successfully into the site and respect the character and amenity of the surrounding area; the scale, massing, height and design should be appropriate and display a high standard of design, materials, textures and colours which should be sensitive to the surrounding area; it respects existing natural and built features on or around the site; and it respects the characteristics of the landscape in which it is proposed.
14. Other relevant policies include **INF\4 Drainage and Water Standards** which is to ensure the adequacy of drainage facilities, and water supply; **GEN\1 Sustainability Principles** which is to ensure all new development is as sustainable as possible and that developers give increasing consideration to sustainability aspirations in their proposals; **GEN\2 The Layout, Siting and Design of New Development**, which is to achieve high quality new development particularly of buildings, which respects the environment and provides a sense of place; and **Appendix 1, The Design of New Development in Aberdeenshire**. The appendix provides design guidance on a variety of issues, including location, site layout, building design and also a specific section on housing design in the countryside.
15. **For information purposes only** : The subject site is located within an area identified as General Policy 1 in the **Consultation Draft of the Cairngorms National Park Local Plan. General Policy 1 Area** states that development will only be permitted if it is unlikely to have a significant adverse effect on the aims of the National Park or any of its special qualities. Where it is concluded that there would be adverse effects on the aims of the National Park, any of its special qualities, or

public health or amenity from a development, it will only be permitted where it is considered that these would be outweighed by social or economic benefits of national importance or of importance to the aims of the National Park and where appropriate measures are taken to minimise and mitigate the adverse effects of the development.

16. **Policy 38** of the **Consultation Draft Local Plan** relates to **Proposals for Housing Outwith Defined Settlements** and suggests that outwith established settlement boundaries proposals for new houses will be favourably considered where the proposal complies with at least one of the following:

-the applicant has lived and/or worked in the area for at least 3 years, and are currently un-/inadequately housed. Proof of residency and or work status will be required;

-the proposal can be justified as essential to house worker(s) of long-term economic activity, which is specific to that locality, with a fully reasoned case why housing elsewhere is not suitable. Permission shall be restricted by a Section 75 Planning Agreement/occupancy condition to remain as essential worker housing in perpetuity, or resort to an agreed tenure of affordable housing where the employment use is no longer required;

-the proposal is for a new house, which will be linked by a Section 75 Agreement to the active management of a crofting/agricultural unit, or other land based industry that requires to be based in that locality.

17. In each case the application must be for a single house for permanent occupation and must either join an existing group of at least 3 houses, or must be sited and designed to complement the existing pattern and character of settlement in that locality.

CONSULTATIONS

18. A consultation response from **SEPA** states that there is no objection to surface and roof waters from the development discharging to SUDS, such as separate cleanwater soakaways.
19. On the subject of foul drainage, **SEPA** note that it is intended to utilise a new septic tank draining to a mound infiltration system. In the event of consideration being given to a grant of planning permission **SEPA** requests that details are submitted to confirm that the system is designed to the standards set out in Section 3 (Environment) of Technical Handbooks for compliance with Building Regulations and also that the minimum distances to wells and watercourses, including ditches and field drains, can be achieved. The consultation response also advises that there should be secondary treatment prior to

discharge to a mound soakaway in order to ensure continuing effectiveness of the system.

20. The **Transportation and Infrastructure** department of **Aberdeenshire Council** state in their response that there is no objection to the application subject to a number of conditions being applied in the event of the granting of planning permission. The conditions include access provision to be improved in accordance with proposals shown on a drawing submitted with the application; the formation of adequate visibility splays (measuring 2.4 metres x 160 metres) either side of the proposed vehicular access; the formation of the proposed vehicular access onto the public road at the developer's expense and the carrying out of all works within the limits of the public road in accordance with the requirements of the Transportation and Infrastructure department.



Fig. 5 : visibility to NE of access lane



Fig. 6 : visibility to SW of access lane

21. In recent months it has become the standard procedure of Aberdeenshire Council to consult the **Planning Gain Co-ordinator** attached to the **Law and Administration** department of the Council on all applications for single dwelling houses. A consultation request to the **Planning Gain Co-ordinator** was therefore invoked at the time of initial receipt of this current application by Aberdeenshire Council. A detailed response has been received in respect of planning gain. The planning gain package relating specifically to this site includes a contribution towards affordable housing as well as infrastructure. The financial sum required in respect of affordable housing is £625 and such a contribution would be ring fenced for expenditure on Affordable Housing within the Aboyne Academy Catchment Area. A further contribution of £622 is recommended in respect of infrastructure, with the contribution in this instance relating specifically to 'education related provision.' The total financial contribution recommended is £1,247. The consultation response states that a Section 75 Agreement would be required, which should be concluded and signed prior to the release of any planning permission. The developer / applicant is provided with payment options including either a total lump sum

payment or alternatively the collection of the contribution quarterly in arrears.⁵

22. **Scottish Natural Heritage** was not consulted in respect of this current development proposal. A response was however sought from **SNH** in the course of assessing the previous identical application on the subject site. It is therefore considered pertinent to document the response received from **SNH** in that instance. The response noted that the proposed site is located a short distance from Loggie Burn which is part of the River Dee SAC, where designated status has been attributed for its internationally important populations of Atlantic salmon, freshwater pearl mussel and otter. **Scottish Natural Heritage** did not raise any objection to the proposal, subject to the attachment of conditions in the event of the granting of planning permission, in order to minimise any adverse impacts on the River Dee SAC. Some concern was expressed by **SNH** in their consultation response in relation to the release of silt into the drains during construction and the impact that this may have on the SAC. In order to avoid any possible effects on the freshwater pearl mussel or salmon, both of which are vulnerable to the effects of siltation, SNH recommends that SEPA's Pollution, Prevention Guidelines (PPG 1 and PPG 5) are adhered to during construction.
23. The **Scottish Natural Heritage** report also raised concern that the proposed development might impact on breeding birds which are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), suggesting that there is a possibility that the site, or any trees immediately adjacent to it, may be used by such birds. As a precautionary measure, SNH recommended that the site be visited by a competent ecologist in order to establish whether or not birds use it for breeding, and to determine whether or not there are any trees that may be affected. In the event that breeding birds are likely to be affected by the proposal, SNH recommended conditions in the event of the granting of planning permission, with the conditions including a restriction on any construction work that would disturb birds during the period between 01 March to 31 August, and also suggesting where feasible that proposals should mitigate against the impact on breeding birds by incorporating nest boxes (that are appropriate to the species affected) into the design of the new buildings.

REPRESENTATIONS

24. One letter of representation has been received from Mrs. M. Wyatt of Mains of Logie, objecting to the development. Mrs. Wyatt refers to the objections she previously raised in respect of the refused application on the site, stating that they "still stand". Objections previously raised

⁵ Within 14 days of the end of the previous quarter in which the unit was completed as evidenced by the issuing of a Certificate of Completion by the Council or by occupation of the unit whichever is the sooner.

include (i) the development not forming part of an existing settlement; (ii) "it is contrary to local development plans in that it lies in open countryside;" (iii) the site is wet, especially in winter, which gives concern about drainage; and (iv) fears that her access may be blocked.

25. The author raises additional concerns in the current letter of objection, where she notes that the current application differs from the previous application "only in that it is for an agricultural worker" and in this regard Mrs. Wyatt refers to the existing house at Galton remaining empty and suggests that "it is therefore difficult to see the need for another one." Further concerns raised in the letter of objection include reference to the site being a "regular nesting ground for curlew" and it is suggested that maintenance in its present form seems more likely to conserve the natural heritage of the area than the erection of a new building. The author also suggests in the event of there being a case for an agricultural dwelling in addition to an empty house at Galton "it would seem to fit more naturally in the proximity of Galton and its adjoining agricultural complex."

APPRAISAL

26. The proposed development is for a new dwelling house in the countryside. The key issues to assess in this application relate to the principle of a dwelling house on this site in relation to development policies, and the particular merits, or demerits of the site in terms of general siting, visual impact, amenity, road access and the precedent, which such development may set.
27. In terms of **Policy Hou\4** of the **Finalised Aberdeenshire Local Plan (as amended by the Proposed Modifications Published on 11 November 2005)**, one of the key issues to examine is the background to the need for the proposed dwelling house at this location. The description on the planning application form specifically states that the proposed development is for the "erection of a house and garage for essential agricultural worker." The essential agricultural worker is not however in employment on the landholding at either Galton or Drumneachie at present. It is a situation likely to occur in the future when Mr. McConnach snr. retires, which in recent correspondence submitted⁶ to the CNPA as a result of queries raised by the planning officer is suggested as being the end of this year. This differs somewhat from the justification initially provided upon submission of this application where the proposed house was required for an **additional** worker essential to the running of the farming operations at Galton and Drumneachie and at that time no reference was made to the retirement plans of Mr. McConnach Snr. other than a comment that the existing house at Galton would be used "some time in the future" when either Mr. & Mrs. McConnach or their son Philip move out of the

⁶ Information received 22nd May 2006.

house they currently reside in at Drumneachie. On the basis of this case, the proposal fails to comply with the policies on New Housing in the Countryside, as it is being proposed for an **additional worker**, and the SAC report submitted does not support a case for a third full time worker.

28. On the basis of the most recent justification advanced in support of the proposal i.e. the possible retirement of Mr. McConnach snr. at the end of the year and the need therefore arising to employ a new full time worker on the farm, I do not consider that this complies either with the requirements of **Policy Hou\4 on New Housing in the Countryside and the Aberdeenshire Part of the Cairngorms National Park**. The justification is based on a set of hypothetical circumstances which could result in the employment of a new full time worker. As the worker is not employed at present, a case cannot be made for their residential accommodation needs and this in particular would lead me to conclude that the proposal fails to comply with criteria (c) of Policy Hou\4 which requires (in addition to the worker being full time in the enterprise and the presence of that worker on site being essential for the efficient operation of the enterprise) that "there is no suitable alternative residential accommodation available." The case is based on speculation into the future and even in the event of the potential retirement of Mr. McConnach snr. resulting in the employment of a new full time worker on the farm, it cannot be determined at this time whether or not such a worker would have any accommodation need. It is quite plausible that a new full time worker may already have adequate residential accommodation at their disposal.
29. Although the previously refused, virtually identical planning application on the site (which included the same indicative site layout and indicative house type) was for a different applicant, the case advanced for a dwelling house in this countryside location was also based on a set of hypothetical personal circumstances. The decision of the Planning Committee in concluding that the proposed development of a new house in the countryside had not been justified as a place of residence for a full time worker in an enterprise appropriate to the countryside and that the development was not in the immediate vicinity of the worker's place of permanent employment, was essentially a rejection of a case based on speculation about the future rather than on an existing situation. Whilst the facts presented in this current application differ slightly, they are nonetheless derived from further hypothetical scenarios. In this respect it is my view than an acceptance of the justification advanced in support of the proposed development would, as well as being contrary to current planning policy, also be inconsistent with the Committee's view and ultimate decision made in relation to the previous application on the site (CNPA planning ref. no. 05/420/CP).

30. As highlighted in the planning report in respect of the previous application on the site it should also be borne in mind that all figures contained in both the SAC report and advanced in support of the applicants relate to the operation of two landholdings, with the one at Galton being within the National Park and the other located outside the Park area at Birse, near Aboyne, and no breakdown is provided on the distribution of working hours devoted by farm workers to agricultural practices between the land at Galton, as opposed to the holding at Birse. In addition, the development would also set a precedent for the acceptance of tenuous 'housing needs' cases, based on potential future circumstances, rather than compliance with planning policy, as well as accepting cases based on rural activities carried out across fragmented landholdings, where significant proportions of the land in question could in fact be located outside the National Park.
31. In terms of the actual siting of the dwelling house, it is proposed in a relatively well screened and unobtrusive location, and I consider that the site has the potential to accommodate an appropriately designed dwelling house. Although I accept that the elevation drawing and floor plans submitted are intended as indicative only (as this is an application for outline planning permission), I do not consider that the design concept employed, with extensive glazing and a prominent plunging roofline in the central section of the front elevation, is necessarily the most appropriate or sensitive approach at this site, nor does it adequately comply with the requirements of Appendix 1 (The Design of New Developments in Aberdeenshire) of the Finalised Local Plan, particularly in respect of shape and proportion, design details and relationship to neighbouring properties.
32. The lane over which access to the site is proposed appears to have relatively limited usage, leading only to agricultural land which is in the ownership of the applicant's family, and also serves one existing residential property, located to the north west of the subject site. Other than at its junction with the public road, the issue of width was not highlighted as problematic in the report received from the Transportation and Infrastructure section of Aberdeenshire Council, nor was concern raised regarding issues such as structural condition, alignment or potential traffic congestion. Given the low volumes of traffic using the laneway, I do not consider that the proposed development would be likely to affect access on the lane, as suggested in a letter of representation received.
33. As regards the potential impacts of the proposed development on the natural heritage of the area, in the previous report received from **Scottish Natural Heritage** as detailed in paragraphs 22 and 23 of this report, there is no objection to the proposal, although some concern was expressed in the report regarding the need to establish whether or not the site is used by breeding birds. Given that the principle of the development proposal fails to comply with planning policy, it was not considered appropriate to request at this stage that the site be

surveyed by a competent ecologist, as suggested by SNH in order to establish whether or not there are trees on site that might be used by breeding birds. The issue was however raised with the applicants agent in the course of the previous application and the response at that time indicated that "there are no specific breeding birds on the application site." In the event of any development proceeding on the subject site, I feel that it would be prudent to address the concerns of SNH in more detail prior to the commencement of any development.

34. In conclusion, having examined the technical aspects associated with the proposed development of a dwelling house at this rural location, and having regard to the case advanced for a dwelling house in this rural location, I do not consider that the proposal is in accordance with the current planning policy applicable to this area for New Housing in the Countryside and the circumstances do not warrant a departure from the stated development plan aims of achieving a long term sustainable pattern of development in countryside areas, whilst protecting the natural environment from incremental and sporadic new housing and ensuring that new houses remain available to essential workers in future years.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE AIMS OF THE NATIONAL PARK

Conserve and Enhance the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Area

35. The erection of a dwelling house and garage may have the potential to affect breeding birds in the vicinity, although measures could be employed to mitigate against any impacts, such as the incorporation of nest boxes (appropriate to the species affected) into the design of any new building.

Promote Sustainable Use of Natural Resources

36. Details of the new building are not sufficient to assess compliance with this aim.

Promote Understanding and Enjoyment of the Area

37. The proposal has little relevance to this overall aim.

Promote Sustainable Economic and Social Development of the Area

38. The location of another single house in the countryside has the potential to add to servicing costs for the local community in terms of services such as school transport, refuse collection, fire and health etc and would tend to promote reliance upon the private car.

RECOMMENDATION

That Members of the Committee support a recommendation to:

Refuse Outline Planning Permission for a dwelling house and garage for essential agricultural worker at Galton, Ordie, Aboyne, for the following reason:

- (i) That the proposal is contrary to Policy Hou\4 (New Housing in the Countryside and the Aberdeenshire Part of the Cairngorms National Park) of the **Finalised Aberdeenshire Local Plan 2002**. The proposal represents a new house in the countryside, which has not been justified as a place of residence for a full time worker in an enterprise appropriate to the countryside, particularly as such a full time worker is not currently in employment in the farming enterprise at the present time. The proposed development would therefore contravene existing policies on new development in the countryside and would encourage and set a precedent for the sporadic siting of other residential developments in similar rural locations, all to the detriment of the character of the countryside and the amenity of this part of the National Park area, and furthermore it is not considered to make any positive contribution to the sustainable socio-economic development of the National Park.

Mary Grier
26 May 2006

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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 produced within this Planning Committee Report can only be reproduced with the express permission of the Cairngorms National Park Authority and other Copyright holders. This permission must be granted in advance.