

---

## CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

---

**Title: REPORT ON CALLED-IN PLANNING APPLICATION**

**Prepared by: NEIL STEWART, PLANNING OFFICER (DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT)**

---

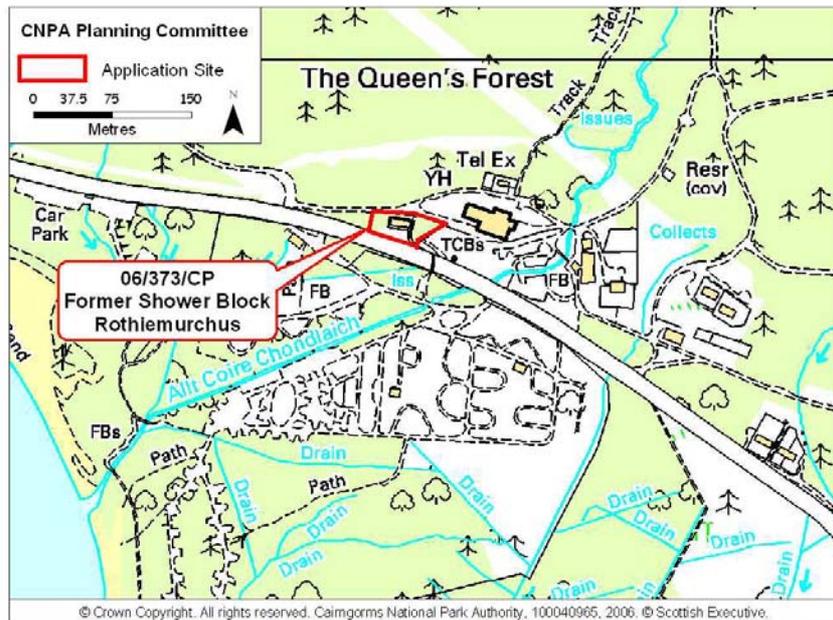
**DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED: APPROVAL OF RESERVED MATTERS FOR ERECTION OF TWO AFFORDABLE DWELLINGS AT FORMER SHOWER BLOCK, GLENMORE CAMPING AND CARAVAN PARK, ROTHLEMURCHUS**

**REFERENCE: 06/373/CP**

**APPLICANT: ALBYN HOUSING SOCIETY, c/o JOHN GILBERT ARCHITECTS, 201 WHITE STUDIOS, TEMPLETON BUSINESS CENTRE, GLASGOW, G4 1DA**

**DATE CALLED-IN: 22<sup>ND</sup> SEPTEMBER 2006**

**RECOMMENDATION: GRANT APPROVAL, SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS**



**Fig. 1. Location Plan**

## SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL

1. This application is for the approval of reserved matters for the erection of a pair of semi-detached houses on the site of the former shower block serving the Glenmore Campsite. The outline planning application for the development was approved, subject to conditions, by the CNPA Committee on 14 January 2005. The site lies on the north side of the Coylumbridge to Cairngorm Mountain Road within the grouping of buildings at Glenmore to the north east of Loch Morlich (Fig. 1.). The shower block is a single storey building which has a “bungalow” type appearance with a shallow roof pitch of black felt and brick and harled walls. It will be demolished. It is accessed from the campsite via an underpass which crosses under the public road to the south east side. The site slopes upwards from the public road and is “sandwiched” between the road and a private access to the rear which serves the Youth Hostel. The existing building nestles within a natural treed setting on the site.



**Fig. 2. Site viewed from public road looking west**

2. The original planning application for outline permission was approved with the submission of some indicative information relating to the site layout and building design envisaged. With the current application being one for approval of reserved matters, further details have been submitted relating to these matters and in particular in relation to how the siting and design of the houses take account of the trees and the slope. As part of the application, a planning statement has been submitted which refers to the planning policy context, housing demand, conditions on the outline permission, and the sustainable design approach taken.

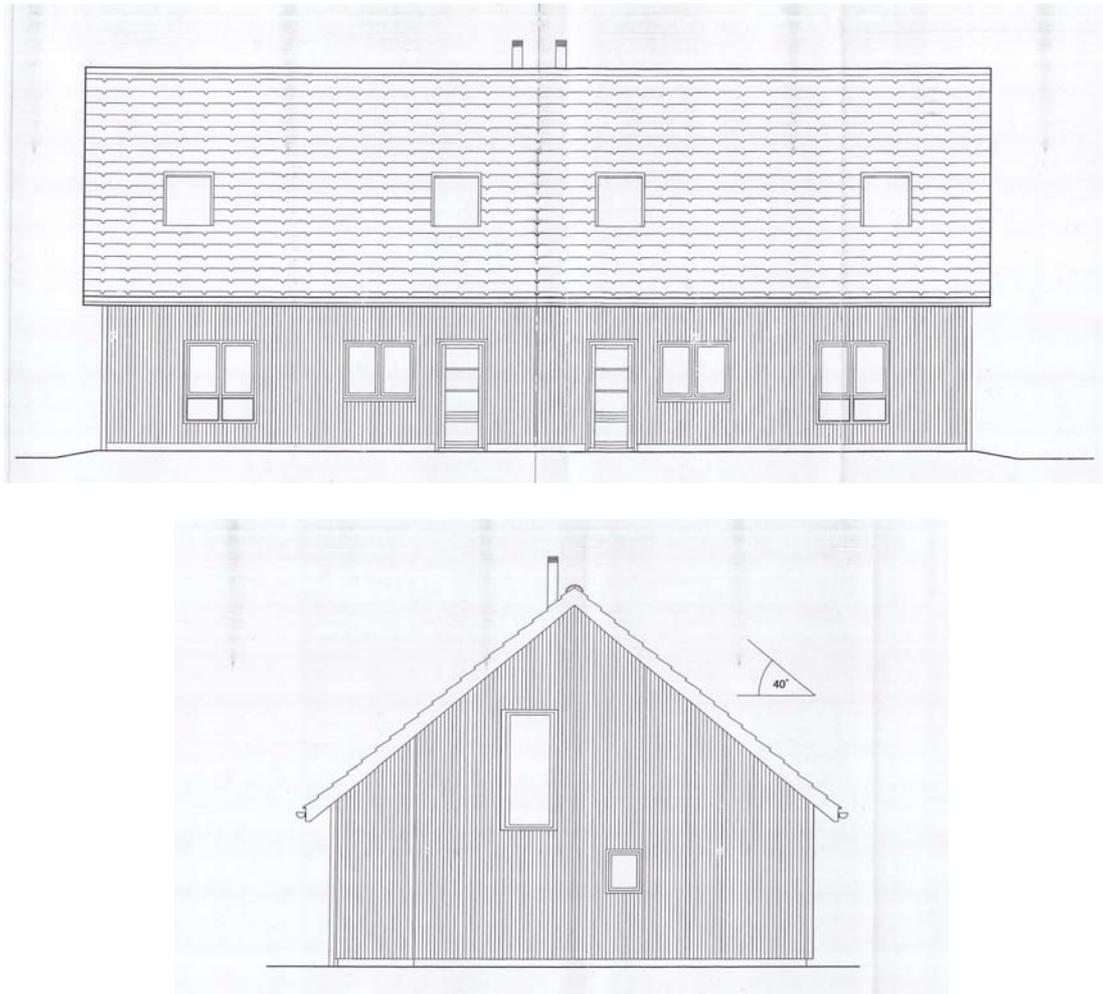


**Fig. 3. Site viewed from public road looking east**



**Fig. 4. Site/existing shower block viewed from private access to rear**





**Fig. 5. Front and Side Elevations**

5. Due to the amount of trees on the site and in line with a condition on the outline permission, a request for a full Tree Survey, Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Arboricultural Method Statement, in line with the British Standards, was requested and subsequently received. On site there are, Scots Pine, Silver Birch, Alder, Cypress, Willow, Bird Cherry and Rowan. The reports advise that, for three reasons (trees that lie directly within the footprint of development; trees that have root zones affected by the development and are likely therefore to be adversely affected; and trees that are of poor form/health/condition and require management and/or removal in any case), a total of 37 trees on the planning application site, are identified for removal. Of these, 11 require removal because of their actual position within the footprint of development alone; 17 require removal because of the impact of construction and development on root zones alone; and 7 require removal on current health or management grounds alone. Of all the trees identified for removal within the application site, and as a result of the proposal alone, 16 are considered to be within the high or moderate category in terms of importance, and 12 are considered to be of low significance.

## DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONTEXT

### Highland Structure Plan 2001

6. **Policy G2 (Design for Sustainability)** states that proposed developments will be assessed on the extent to which they, amongst other things; are compatible with service provisions; are accessible by public transport, cycling and walking as well as by car; maximise energy efficiency in terms of location, layout and design, including the utilisation of renewable sources of energy; make use of brownfield sites, existing buildings and recycled materials; impact on natural resources; demonstrate sensitive siting and high quality design; accommodate the needs of all sectors of the community, including people with disabilities, special needs and disadvantaged groups; and contribute to the economic and social development of the community. **Policy H3 (Housing in the Countryside)** states that housing development will generally be within existing and planned new settlements. However, amongst others, exceptions may be made for social housing providers in meeting demonstrated local affordable housing needs that cannot be met within settlements. **Policies H4 (Affordable Housing), H5 (Affordable Housing) and H6 (Affordable Housing in Rural Areas)** all provide general, in principle, support for the provision and implementation of affordable housing through various mechanisms. **Policy N1 (Nature Conservation)** requires new developments to minimise their impact on the nature conservation resource and enhance it wherever possible. **Policy L4 (Landscape Character)** seeks to ensure that present landscape character is maintained and enhanced in the consideration of development proposals.

### Badenoch and Strathspey Local Plan 1997

7. The site lies within the grouping of buildings which comprise the Glenmore small settlement area. However, within the small settlement area, **Policy 4.14.1 (Development)** states that whilst reasonable consolidation and improvement of businesses is acceptable in principle, there is a strong presumption against further new development except where this is considered essential for the proper management of visitors. **Policy 2.5.4. (Woodlands and Trees)** seeks to protect existing trees and established woodland areas including small groups of trees or individual granny pines which are important landscape, wildlife and amenity features of the countryside. Generally, development should not be sited within 20m of the trunks of mature trees. **Policy 2.5.10 (Landscape Conservation)** states that notwithstanding the Cairngorms NSA, efforts will be made to conserve areas of landscape importance, including waterside land, open areas and scenic views particularly over open water from main tourist routes.

## Cairngorms National Park Plan

8. In the “Conserving and Enhancing the Park” section, strategic objectives of relevance include; ensuring development complements and enhances the landscape character of the Park; and, new developments in settlements and surrounding areas complementing and enhancing the character, pattern and local identity of the built and historic environment. In the “Living and Working in the Park” section, strategic objectives of relevance include; increasing the accessibility of rented and owned housing to meet the needs of communities throughout the Park; improving the physical quality, energy efficiency and sustainable design of housing in all tenures in the Park; and ensuring that there is effective land and investment for market and affordable housing to meet the economic and social needs of communities in the Park. One of the Park Plan’s “Priorities for Action” is to make housing more affordable and sustainable.

## CONSULTATIONS

9. **Highland Council’s Area Roads Manager** has reiterated their requirements for vehicular access to the development to be from the existing road serving the Youth Hostel with no direct access to the public road, all as shown on the submitted drawing. Conditions are required relating to the management and maintenance of the private access serving the site; a suitable gate or pedestrian barrier being installed where the proposed footpath from the houses connect to the public footway; and the provision of visibility splays.
10. **Highland Council’s Forestry Department** initially described the proposed retention of trees to the west and southwest of the site as unrealistic. As a result of these concerns, the detailed arboricultural reports, in line with the British Standards, were requested.
11. **Forestry Commission Scotland** have no comments to make other than wishing close liaison with the applicants on water supply, waste water management and the shared access to the site, all of which involves land within their control.
12. **SEPA** notes that it is proposed to connect to the Glenmore Waste Water Treatment Plant, and that there is a condition on the outline permission, which ensures that the proposed houses are not occupied until the works are upgraded and operational. SEPA has no further comments in this regard. In relation to surface water, SEPA notes the requirement for the provision of SUDS in the outline permission conditions. The applicants propose a filter trench in the area of land to the west side of the site. In line with the conditions of the outline, exact details are required prior to the commencement of works on site.

13. The **Rothiemurchus and Glenmore Community Association** generally agree with the plans and wish to ensure that the roofing materials are slate or slate look-alike in order to blend with the Youth Hostel.
14. The **Aviemore & Vicinity Community Council** have no objections and congratulate all those involved in producing this sensitive and sustainable proposal. They hope that two local young families will be allocated these dwellings.

## REPRESENTATIONS

15. None.

## APPRAISAL

16. The issues raised by this proposal include the principle in relation to policy, the impact of the siting and design of the development, and infrastructure provision.

### Principle and Policy

17. The Local Plan defines Glenmore as a “small settlement” but provides a land use policy which presumes against any new development other than that proposed for consolidating or improving existing established businesses where it is considered essential for the proper management of visitors. The provision of two houses, even ones for the affordable sector, does not fit with this requirement. The proposal therefore continues to be considered as contrary to Local Plan Policy 4.14.1. in this respect. However, at the time of the outline permission, it was felt that there were other material considerations (provision of affordable housing, existing settlement area with some facilities on a public transport route, and existing unsightly building on the site) which justified the granting of permission in this instance. Notwithstanding the policy context, the principle of two affordable houses on this site has therefore been established. With the application being for Approval of Reserved Matters, the crucial issues to consider therefore are whether the proposal fits with the terms and conditions of the Outline Permission.

### Impact of the Siting and Design of the Development

18. The important conditions which remain relevant relate, in the main, to the siting and design of the proposal, and the effect on trees. Condition No. 4 of the Outline required the submission of cross-sections through the site indicating how the building will fit with the slope. The drawings submitted show the building being cut into the slope but because of its orientation, there is a need to raise ground levels to form a flat plateau

at the lower level. The applicants were asked to justify the north-south orientation of the building rather than an east-west orientation (which would have been parallel with the slope). The agents have advised that they closely considered both options but their decision was influenced by the following points; the stipulation that the road access must be taken from the private road to the rear; the need to meet criteria for accessibility in line with Building Regulations and the Disability Standards (a longer ramp with significant engineering would have been required); minimising tree loss; reduction in the need for a length of retaining wall and to reduce the risk of dampness; need to create useable private rear garden areas; desire to gain as much solar gain as possible via the rooflights at times of more use ie morning/evening; and the desire for views into forested areas. I am now satisfied that the orientation of the building, with its gable facing the road, can be justified in this instance and will not result in any adverse visual impacts.

19. Condition No. 6 of the Outline Permission required the building to be of a traditional sympathetic design in terms of its form, detail and materials (including extensive use of timber). I consider that the building proposed meets these requirements. The scale, proportions and roof pitch are appropriate and the form is simple. The use of the reclaimed slate and vertical timber cladding is considered to be wholly appropriate to the wooded setting and, in my opinion, the houses reflect the character of traditional houses associated with forestry uses, often found in such locations. The sustainability credentials of the design, in terms of use of renewable and reclaimed materials, energy efficiency, and water conservation, are commended.
20. Condition No. 7, of the Outline Permission, required the tree survey and details of tree retention. The studies carried out by the specialist arboriculturist, detailed in Paragraph 5 above, are extremely thorough and the conclusions are now completely honest and realistic. It is accepted that the number of trees that are actually required to be removed is perhaps more than was envisaged at the time of the outline permission. Within the actual application site a total of 14 trees out of a total of 50 will be retained. Outwith the site, immediately to the west, on land within the control of the Forestry Commission, there are several other trees which the arboricultural reports have also assessed. Some of these are recommended for removal on current health grounds (not as a result of the development proposals). Not being within the applicants control, this is a matter for the Forestry Commission.
21. The arboriculturists method statement identifies clear lines where protective tree fencing, and associated construction exclusions zones are required, all in line with the British Standards. It also stipulates procedures for the installation of the footpaths and services, where they pass through root protection zones (hand dig only), the siting of site offices etc, the storage of materials, the reporting of any damage caused, and on going monitoring and supervision of work by a qualified

arboriculturist. There is also a plan for replacement tree planting within the construction zones, on completion, of the works.

22. I consider that, in this location, within a National Scenic Area, and on a very popular tourist route, the loss of the trees will have an inevitable negative impact in the short term. However, the area of trees is essentially unmanaged at present, requires maintenance, and is not the subject of a Tree Preservation Order. In addition, there are a number of quite significant trees which, at present, are considered to be at risk on health grounds alone. The development provides an opportunity to actively remedy some of these problems and compensate for the loss with replacement planting which will improve the environmental quality of the site in the longer term. I am satisfied that with a conditional requirement for the implementation of the detailed procedures outlined in the arboricultural method statement, no long lasting detrimental effect will occur. This, in combination with the need for affordable housing in this area, brings me to the conclusion that the development is acceptable in relation to the aims and policies of the Park and the Development Plan for conservation of landscape character and natural heritage interests.

### **Infrastructure Provision**

23. The conditions of the outline permission relating to access, parking, turning, and layby provision, have been met. Some details of the SUDS proposals are still required but only prior to the commencement of works on site. As I understand it, the upgrade of the Glenmore Water Treatment Works has been carried out but any concern about this is covered by the fact that the condition of the outline, will not allow occupation of the dwellings, until such time as this has been confirmed.

### **Conclusion**

24. I am satisfied that the terms and conditions of the outline permission have been satisfied. Subject to conditions, I recommend approval.

## **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE AIMS OF THE NATIONAL PARK**

### **Conserve and Enhance the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Area**

25. The loss of trees is considered to be negative in terms of this aim. There will also be a change in the character of the immediate area as a result of the development. However, there is an opportunity to properly manage the remaining trees on the site and provide adequate replacement tree planting.

### **Promote Sustainable Use of Natural Resources**

26. The development promotes the use of renewable and reclaimed materials and energy efficient design.

### **Promote Understanding and Enjoyment of the Area**

27. The creation of a public footpath link through the site is positive in terms of this aim.

### **Promote Sustainable Economic and Social Development of the Area**

28. The provision of two houses for the affordable sector in this location is viewed as being positive in terms of the social and economic development of this community and meeting housing needs in the area.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

29. **That Members of the Committee support a recommendation to:**

**Grant Approval of Reserved Matters for the Erection of Two Affordable Dwellings, Former Shower Block, Glenmore Camping and Caravan Site, Rothiemurchus, subject to the following conditions:**

1. The development hereby approved shall be commenced prior to 28 September 2010.
2. This approval relates solely to the reserved matters referred to in the outline planning permission, granted by the Cairngorms National Park Authority dated 28 September 2005 (Reference number 05/013/CP). Nothing contained in this proposal or this notice shall be deemed to affect or vary the conditions imposed on that outline planning permission.
2. That the construction of the whole development shall be carried out fully in accordance with the submitted Arboricultural Method Statement (Scottish Arboricultural Services, 19 March 2007, Ref: HC211106). For the avoidance of doubt, this includes the following:
  - a. the sequence of operations;
  - b. the schedule of tree felling and surgery;
  - c. the creation of tree protection measures and construction exclusion zones;
  - d. the demolition of the shower block building;
  - e. the installation of footpaths and services;
  - f. the siting of temporary site offices, parking and sanitary facilities;
  - g. the storage and removal of materials;
  - h. the reporting of damage to trees and tree protection fencing; and

- i. the ongoing site monitoring and supervision by a qualified arboriculturist.
3. For the avoidance of doubt, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the CNPA acting as Planning Authority, following consultation with Highland Council's Forestry Officer, only those trees on the development site, which have been identified for removal in the submitted Arboricultural Method Statement (Scottish Arboricultural Services, 19 March 2007, Ref: HC211106), shall be felled.
4. The development shall be landscaped with replacement tree planting, and thereafter maintained in accordance with a detailed scheme (generally in accordance with the submitted indicative planting proposals contained in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment - Scottish Arboricultural Services, 19 March 2007, Ref: HC211106), which shall be submitted to and approved by the CNPA acting as Planning Authority before development commences. The scheme shall include precise indications of the siting, numbers, species and heights (at the time of planting) of all trees to be planted and shall ensure:-
  - (a) Completion of the scheme during the planting season next following the completion of the development, or such other date as may be agreed in writing with the CNPA acting as Planning Authority.
  - (b) The maintenance of the landscaped areas in perpetuity in accordance with the detailed maintenance schedule/table. Any trees, or which in the opinion of the CNPA acting as Planning Authority, are dying, being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased within three years of planting, shall be replaced by trees of similar size and species to those originally required to be planted.
5. That prior to the occupation of the dwellinghouses hereby approved, the approved timber gate shall be installed at the junction of the new footpath link from the dwellinghouses with the public road footway.
6. That unless otherwise agreed in writing with the CNPA acting as Planning Authority, on or before completion of the works for the construction of the dwellinghouses, the new public footpath linking the subway to the campsite and the private access road to the Youth Hostel, on the east side of the site, and as indicated on the approved site plan drawing no. PP01 C, shall be constructed and completed to the satisfaction of the CNPA acting as Planning Authority.

7. That prior to the commencement of works on site, exact details and specifications (samples may be required), for the following external finishing materials, shall be submitted for the further written approval of the CNPA acting as Planning Authority:-
- a. the finished colour/stain of the timber wall cladding;
  - b. the window and door frames (materials and colour/stain);
  - c. the finished colour/stain for the timber fences;
  - d. the footpaths surfacing; and
  - e. the retaining wall.

### **Determination Background**

The application was called-in on 22 September 2006. On receipt of consultations, further information was sought on trees, roads, design and layout, and drainage, on 19 October. Information was received from the agent on some of these matters in late October/early November. However, the detailed arboricultural reports were not received until 27 March 2007. This was not in time to meet the deadlines for reports to the April 6 Committee.

**Neil Stewart**  
**25 April 2007**

[planning@cairngorms.co.uk](mailto:planning@cairngorms.co.uk)

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.