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## CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

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

**Prepared by:** ANDREW TAIT, PLANNING OFFICER  
(DEVELOPMENT CONTROL)

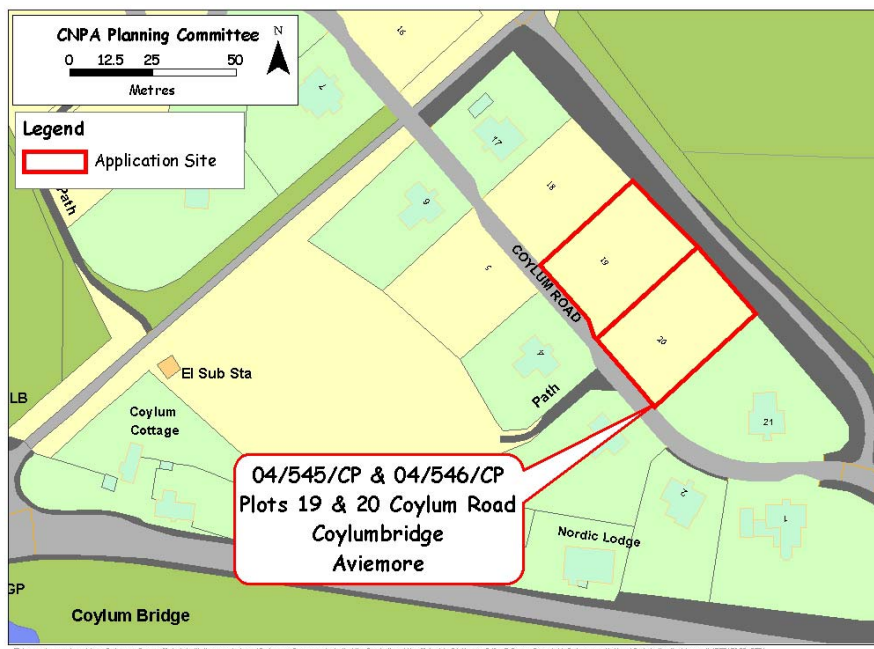
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**DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED:** ERECTION OF 2 DWELLINGS WITH GARAGES  
(FULL PLANNING PERMISSION) ON PLOTS 19  
& 20 COYLUM ROAD, COYLUMBRIDGE

**REFERENCE:** 04/545/CP & 04/546/CP

**APPLICANT:** ROTHIEMURCHUS ESTATE C/O A W LAING,  
110 HIGH STREET, GRANTOWN-ON-SPEY

**DATE CALLED-IN:** 3 DECEMBER 2004



**Fig. 1 - Location Plan**

### SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL

1. The 2 dwellings were submitted as separate applications. However, given that the plots are next to each other, could have been submitted as one application and revolve around the same issues they will be considered in a combined manner.
2. These proposals are linked to the previous item and in essence my recommendation is dependent upon the Planning Committee's decision on the previous item.
3. The proposals are simply for two houses (one for each plot) on two vacant building plots within the existing development site at Coylum Road on the north side of the Glenmore Road. The plots are side by side facing onto a cul-de-sac where the other houses have now been completed. The plots were subject to a planning condition on the previous consent that they should be reserved for affordable housing. These are the only two plots remaining on the site and have not been developed because of difficulties securing an affordable housing provider to take the sites on.
4. In terms of the planning history the whole site received outline planning permission for housing in 1999. A reserved matters application for the detailed design of 21 dwellings received planning permission in 2000 (a summary of the planning history has been produced by the applicant and is attached at the back of the report).
5. The current proposal is effectively a full planning permission for 2 open market houses, each with a double garage to the side. The justification being the offer of land opposite Dellmhor which was the subject site of the previous item on the agenda.
6. The houses proposed by these applications are two detached traditional style houses that are very much in line with what has already been constructed at the estate. One is 3-bedroom house the other contains 4. The houses are designed along traditional lines at one and a half storeys in height with dormer windows, a chimney to each gable end and a timber entrance porch. The facings are harl with natural slate for the roofs. Each house would have a double garage made of timber with a corrugated roof.

## DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONTEXT

7. **Policy G2 (Design for Sustainability) of the Highland Structure Plan** states that developments will be assessed on the extent to which they, amongst other things, impact on resources such as habitats, species, landscape, scenery and are in keeping with the local character and the historic and natural environment. **Policy L4 of the Highland Structure Plan** indicates that the Council will have regard to the desirability of maintaining and enhancing present landscape character in the consideration of development proposals.

8. **Policy H3 of the Highland Structure Plan Housing in the Countryside** considers that new housing will generally be within existing and planned new settlements and that new housing will not be permitted unless it is required for the management of land and related family purposes. Exceptions may also be made for social housing providers in meeting demonstrated local affordable housing needs that cannot be met within settlements.
9. In the **Badenoch and Strathspey Local Plan** the site is allocated for housing. Under **Policy 6.6.1** of the Plan development should include setback and landscaping of the frontage, suitable tree planting and separation from existing dwellings. High standards of design will be expected, and layout and density should be compatible with existing settlement character.

## CONSULTATIONS

10. **The Area Roads Manager** has no objection to the applications but recommends conditions relating to access to each plot, no structures within 2 metres of the road fronting each plot. Standard visibility splays and parking manoeuvring space are also recommended.
11. **SEPA** have no objection to the drainage arrangements proposed for surface and foul drainage and this accords with the existing houses constructed at the site.
12. **Highland Council Planning** provided a letter setting down that previous consents at the site had sought to reserve plots 19 and 20 for affordable housing. Considerable negotiation was undertaken regarding the possibility of providing affordable housing on at least two plots. These negotiations foundered for a number of reasons, not least of which related to the high servicing costs for the site. Notwithstanding that Communities Scotland were prepared to pay over bench mark values in order to secure development of the site. At the end of the day, however, the negotiations foundered and no affordable housing development took place.
13. Since this time there have been considerable discussions with affordable housing providers including the Highland Small Communities Housing Trust at Dellmhor for the development of up to 5 dwellings.
14. The Trust has been carrying out a feasibility study regarding the site but at the time of writing no application had been made (**this has of course now changed see previous item**). Accordingly, if the Park Authority is minded to approve this application then my view is that no permission should be issued until such time as the Trust has secured both the land and the planning permission at Dellmhor. I would have no difficulty with the National Park Authority considering the applications and indicating to the developer that planning permission could be forthcoming either based on a Section 75 Agreement relating to the Dellmhor site, or alternatively, the permission being held until such time as the Dellmhor site is secured with planning permission.

## REPRESENTATIONS

15. **The Rothiemurchus and Glenmore Community Association** notes that the plots were originally earmarked for affordable housing. It is understood from Highland Council that the development of these two sites are linked to a satisfactory feasibility study being completed for affordable housing at the Dellmhor site in Rothiemurchus. Could it be confirmed that this is the case and that the plots at Coylum Road will not be developed until such time as equivalent suitable affordable housing plots are secured on Rothiemurchus estate.
16. The Association is pleased to see that the proposed developments are modest and in-keeping with the majority of houses in Coylum Drive (response attached at the back of the report).
17. Representations from neighbours on the Coylum development are attached at the back of the report. There appears to be little objection in principle to the two houses provided they are of the same character as the existing houses at the site. One writer considers that the houses should be permanent residences or holiday homes and should not be rented out.
18. One writer raises a range of concerns including water supply to the proposed dwellings. The representation talks about the way in which water is charged. Concern is also raised that a commercial hotel type building was being run from one of the other houses on the development which has caused disturbance a number of times.
19. Concern is also raised that planning conditions on the original consent with regard to open space and landscaping are not being complied with. Further concern is raised regarding speed limits along Coylum Road and whether it is within the CNPA's remit to consider speed restrictions as part of the planning process.

## APPRAISAL

20. Firstly, it is clear that the principle of the residential development of these two plots has been accepted by the allocation of the Badenoch and Strathspey Local Plan and earlier outline consent on the site which included a condition that the two plots which are the subjects of this application should be for affordable housing.
21. This application effectively seeks to remove that constraint by applying for two open market houses on the site. Prolonged negotiations have taken place between the estate, affordable providers and Highland Council regarding trying to achieve affordable housing at this site but these broke down some time ago partly due to the high servicing costs involved with the plots. In addition, it is understood that providers were looking at securing 5 affordable units on the plots. While the plots are quite large it would be difficult to see

how 5 houses could be accommodated on these plots without harming the character of the overall development which is characterised by detached dwellings on spacious plots.

22. Essentially this proposal is linked to the previous application and my recommendation is dependent upon the Planning Committee's decision on the previous item at Dellmhor. The relationship between the two applications essentially involves the proposal for 5 dwellings at Dellmhor as a compensatory measure for the affordable housing on these two plots. I am of the view that this is an acceptable arrangement and would ensure some long needed affordable housing provision within the glen. From looking at the history file detailed negotiations involving affordable housing on these plots was ongoing throughout 1999 and beyond, no solution was found. There would appear to be little realistic opportunity of affordable housing coming forward on these plots. Therefore, if the Committee approve the Dellmhor application my recommendation is for approval of this scheme. Should the Dellmhor scheme prove unacceptable to the Planning Committee then I would suggest that this application is deferred, or refused, and that further attempts are made to secure affordable housing on this site, or elsewhere in the locality. However, in my view the two plots here could not reasonably hold more than one house each given the existing character of the development which is otherwise complete. It is understood that the Dellmhor site is still in the ownership of the estate. A condition on any consent for the Dellmhor scheme will ensure that it can only be developed for affordable housing regardless of the ownership involved. This removes the need for any form of linking Section 75 Agreement between the two sites.
23. Concerns are raised by objectors that the design of the dwellings is in-keeping with existing houses at the site. I am of the view that this clearly is the case. The houses proposed are one and a half storeys with dormer windows and central timber porches to the front elevations, materials include harled facings slate roofs and timber for the windows. The design of the dwellings is of a high standard and reflects a Scottish vernacular tradition. There are several other houses of this design completed on the development site.
24. One objector raises concern with regard to water supplied and traffic speeds on the Glenmore Road. With regard to the water issue this was dealt with at the time of the outline consent where the private water supply was considered acceptable. This concern has not been raised with us by other residents at the development and problems regarding water charges are a matter between the individual and the estate. The water is tested every two to three months by Highland Council and there have been no problems identified. There were problems identified three years ago but since then changes have been made to the system and all tests since this time have been satisfactory. With regard to the speed limit on the main road, no concerns have been raised by the Area Roads Manager and there is good visibility from the development's access onto the main road. It is also important to note that outline planning permission was granted on the basis of 21 houses in total being accessed from the Glenmore Road. In my view it would be unreasonable to revisit this issue on the basis of the last two plots on the development.

25. Further concern is raised about disturbance from one of the larger properties on the Coylum development from the large number of people staying there and causing a disturbance. The objector considers that the house in question is basically being run as a commercial enterprise with large numbers of people staying there for stag and hen parties. While this is of concern in my view it is a separate matter and should have no bearing on the consideration of these proposals. The problem would appear to be one of enforcement of existing regulations/planning conditions, the objection has been passed onto Highland Council to investigate. Suggestions are made that the houses should be restricted to either permanent residencies, or holiday homes. However, planning legislation makes no distinction between owner-occupied or rented housing; this is a private matter for property owners and investors.
26. Overall, the scheme is considered to be acceptable, providing that affordable housing is made available elsewhere in the locality I have no objection to the granting of planning permission on plots 19 and 20.

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

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

27. The application site is on flat open ground within an existing housing development site with houses on both sides. There is considered to be no detriment in natural heritage terms and the design of the houses proposed is considered to be entirely appropriate to the character of the area.

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

28. There is little information with the application to indicate where materials are to be sourced from. However, local building contractors would be likely to be used and the Glenmore Road where the houses are accessed from carries a bus service

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

29. The proposal has little relevance to this aim

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

30. The proposal is for two houses on an existing housing site, providing that affordable housing provision is consented elsewhere the provision of affordable housing in the area generally would not be prejudiced by approving this scheme. The Dellmhor report includes a condition that that site shall only be used for affordable housing.

## RECOMMENDATION

That subject to the satisfactory consent of affordable housing elsewhere in the locality Members of the Committee support a recommendation to: **GRANT FULL PLANNING PERMISSION** for the erection of 2 dwellings and garages at plots 19 and 20 Coylum Road, Rothiemurchus, subject to the following conditions:-

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun within five years from the date of this permission.
2. All external materials to be used in the construction of the dwellings shall strictly accord with the approved drawings unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Cairngorms National Park Authority acting as Planning Authority.
3. The materials for the construction of the garages hereby approved shall be strictly in accordance with submitted drawing No 03 dated November 2004 unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Cairngorms National Park Authority acting as Planning Authority.
4. The access to each house site shall be at least 3 metres wide with edge radii of at least 3 metres and shall be hard surfaced for a distance of at least 6 metres measured from the nearside channel of the main access road.
5. For the avoidance of doubt, no trees walls, fences, gate posts or similar obstructions shall be permitted within the adoptable 2 metre wide verge/service strip fronting the plot.
6. Visibility splays shall be provided and maintained on each side of the access to the site. These splays are triangles of ground bounded by the first 2.5 metres along the centreline of the access (the x dimension) and the nearside edge of the main road (the y dimension) measured 30 metres in each direction from the intersection of the access track with the main road.
7. Within the visibility splays nothing shall obscure visibility between a driver's eye height of 1.0 metres positioned at the x dimension and an object height of 1.0 metre anywhere along the y dimension.

**Andrew Tait**

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**28 October 2005**

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