

# **PLANNING PAPER**

## **APPENDIX 3**

**06/320/CP**

**ERECTION OF HOUSING; ASSOCIATED ROAD  
CONSTRUCTION, DRAINAGE AND LANDSCAPING**

**AT LAND BETWEEN SEAFIELD AVENUE &  
CASTLE ROAD EAST, GRANTOWN ON SPEY**

DANNY ALEXANDER MP  
Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathapey



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Cairngorms National  
Park Authority  
- 8 APR 2008  
RECEIVED

RECEIVED  
07 APR 2008

Don McKee  
Head of Planning & Development  
Cairngorms National Park Authority  
14 The Square,  
Grantown on Spey  
PH26 3HG

Our Ref: SP4935  
Your Ref:

Date: 27 March 2008

Dear Don,

**Planning Concerns**

Mr & Mrs David & Katherine Elder of Roseburn, 19 Seafield Court, Grantown On Spey, , PH26 3LE

I have been contacted by my constituents Mr & Mrs Elder about the issue of their concerns over a proposed development by Muir Homes.

I enclose for ease of reference a copy of their letter to me in which they outlines their concerns over this development.

I would be grateful if you could confirm that these concerns, along with other representations you receive, will be taken fully into account when you consider this application.

*Danny Alexander*

Danny Alexander

[www.dannyalexander.org.uk](http://www.dannyalexander.org.uk)

Highland Liberal Democrats Constituency Office: 45 Huntly Street, INVERNESS IV3 5HR  
Tel 01463 711280 Fax 01463 714900 email: [dannyalexandermp@parliament.uk](mailto:dannyalexandermp@parliament.uk)

2 0 MAR 2008

Roseburn  
19 Seafield Court  
Grantown-on-Spey  
Moray  
PH26 3LE

22 March 2008

Danny Alexander  
45 Huntly Street  
INVERNESS  
IV3 5HR

Dear Mr Alexander

**Proposed Development by Muir Homes at Seafield Avenue/Castle Road East**

We have been to see the revised plans for the above development and have now written to the Planners at the CNPA in Ballater.

We are very concerned at the impact this large development of 193 houses would have on the community of Grantown-on-Spey and its services.

We appreciate that there is a demand for more housing, especially affordable housing and we knew when we bought this house seven years ago that the area between ourselves and the Caravan Site and over to behind the Ian Charles Hospital was zoned for building. However we always imagined any development would be of a reasonable size and very much in keeping with its surroundings and existing local houses.

We have lived in Grantown for 85 years, ran a Guest House for 25 years and brought up two children here so we feel we are in a position to suggest what is suitable for the area and what is not. During our time here we have watched the town gradually expand with *reasonably sized* developments which it has been able to absorb without altering the character and ambience of the town. However a development of this size which will increase the population by 25% which have a major impact and is bound to change Grantown. This will put an added strain on already stretched resources which in turn will have an effect on the majority of residents.

We understand there is to be an upgrading of the sewerage system locally but just recently we have heard that the Water Board is struggling to cope with demand as it is at present and they are looking at controversial ways of increasing supplies.

Grantown has at least three good building firms of its own who would have provided employment locally and boosted the local economy. They would also have been more sympathetic to the local residents and would have wanted their development to enhance their town.

Seafield Court is a small residential estate of less than 30 houses all of them bungalows. Muir Homes plan to put 75 dwellings on roughly the same area of ground, comprising a mixture of 2-storey villas, 2-storey flats and bungalows. On the original plan the 2-storey villas were along Seafield Avenue opposite existing Victorian villas and there were bungalows opposite ourselves which we found acceptable. The revised plan shows bungalows along Seafield Avenue, 2-storey

affordable flats directly opposite ourselves and 2-storey villas overlooking the Caravan Site. We are at a loss to understand why Muir Homes have made this change and are very unhappy at the thought of being overlooked by these flats. These flats overlooking ourselves and the villas overlooking the Caravan Park can hardly be said to be in keeping with the existing buildings and environment.


The Caravan Park is a great asset to Grantown and has recently won accolades for its high standards. We know from speaking to residents of the park that a large part of its appeal is the fact that it is so convenient for the centre of town, but at the same time it feels as if you are in the country. The impact of 2-storey villas overlooking the Park will certainly not add to its appeal.

There is concern too for the increased volume of traffic that will come from 75 houses having their exit onto Seafield Avenue. Muir Homes plan shows that most of the rest of the development will be near to the hospital where the access road is much wider and where there would be minimal impact on the residents of Grantown.

The deadline for letters concerning this plan is 2<sup>nd</sup> April and we apologise for giving you such short notice. We would have hoped that this proposed project would have received more publicity as it is really a matter of concern for the whole community of Grantown.

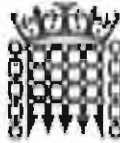
We feel it is important that we bring our concerns to your attention and are confident that you will give this matter your attention

Yours sincerely



David and Katherine Elder

DANNY ALEXANDER MP  
Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA



Don McKee  
Head of Planning & Development  
Cairngorms National Park Authority  
14 The Square,  
Grantown on Spey  
PH26 3HG

Our Ref: SP4934  
Your Ref:

Date: 27 March 2008

Dear Don,

**Planning Concerns**

**Mrs Sandra McKelvie of Grantown-on-Spey Caravan Park, Seaford Avenue,  
Grantown On Spey, , PH26 3JQ**

I have been contacted by my constituent Mrs McKelvie about the issue of her concerns over a proposed development by Muir Homes.

I enclose for ease of reference a copy of her letter to me in which she outlines her concerns over this development.

I would be grateful if you could confirm that these concerns, along with other representations you receive, will be taken fully into account when you consider this application.

*I hope all is well with you,*

Danny Alexander

[www.dannyalexander.org.uk](http://www.dannyalexander.org.uk)

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2 6 MAR 2008

# Grantown-on-Spey Caravan Park

Seafield Avenue, Grantown-on-Spey, Highland PH26 3JQ

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Danny Alexander MP  
45 Huntly Street  
Inverness  
IV3 5HR

Dear Sir

**Re: Planning application for 193 dwellings in Grantown-on-Spey made by Muir Homes**

We are a 5-Star (Excellent) graded Caravan Park under the same management for 20 years in Grantown-on-Spey. This year we were awarded the "Park of the Year Award" by Scottish Caravanner. To give you with some background, we enclose excerpts from our PowerPoint presentation made to the planning committee of CNPA in March 2007. Planning for our modest 10 Chalets project was refused despite the fact that we have a stellar track record and also had signed documents from more than 50 Grantown businesses and the Chamber of Commerce and the Grantown Business Association wishing us well and supporting us fully.

The above paragraph is background information! Now we come to our present struggle. Cairngorm National Park Authority (CNPA) planning committee wants to award planning permission to Muir Homes to build 193 dwellings adjacent to the Caravan Park. Our major objection is that we are zoned in the Local Plan for Tourism and we cannot maintain our position as the area's leading touring destination if two storey homes are built right on the boundary of the Caravan Park. Rather than repeat myself, I also enclose a copy of our recent letter to Mary Grier, Planning Officer at CNPA, objecting to the Muir Homes project.

We respectfully point out that our very high quality tourism business is a huge benefit to the Grantown economy. We attract those who seek peace and quiet in a rural location but adjacent to and within walking distance of the town. We have no problem with some additional single storey bungalows continuing the theme as currently exists in Seafield Court, but far fewer than 193 units for a variety of reasons (adverse impacts). We cannot accept two storey buildings as they would drastically change the whole topography and ambience of our immediate area, resulting in a significant loss in tourism to Grantown.

Can you help us? Is there anything you can do? I shall not be in Grantown until May but you can contact me by email. Alternatively you can contact my son and business partner, John Fleming, on 07977 005586. Can you approach the CNPA on our behalf? This matter is urgent.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Sandra McKelvie  
Partner

(Written by S McKelvie and signed on my behalf by John Fleming)

# Grantown-on-Spey Caravan Park

Seafield Avenue, Grantown-on-Spey, Highland PH26 3JQ

March 20, 2008

Mary Grier  
Cairngorms National Park Authority  
Albert Memorial Hall  
Station Square  
Ballater  
Aberdeenshire  
AB35 5QB

COPY

Dear Ms Grier

**Re: Planning application for 193 dwellings in Grantown-on-Spey made by Muir Homes**

Regarding the above application we wish to object to it and make the following points:-

### Density of the Proposed Development

The density of the dwellings should be similar to that of Seafield Court or risk devastating overload of existing infrastructure and services. Increasing the population of Grantown by 20% to 25% in one stroke will most likely cause major disruptions or risks related to:

- Road impacts, including the exacerbation of traffic flow and congestion problems
- Substantially higher risks to the safety of pedestrians (especially school children and the elderly) and vehicles resulting from the great increases at peak times in road traffic in already congested areas such as the Co-op corner at the beginning of Seafield Avenue and the High Street. This intersection is already a risky bottleneck due to the one lane traffic on Seafield Avenue created when the Co-op lorry is parked and unloading
- Capability of Seafield Avenue to handle rain and water runoff (flooding) – see discussion below under "Drainage"
- School and other community services that will probably require significant expansion in a very short time

### Infrastructure – Drainage

Field drains have for generations always drained into the field where the Muir development is proposed and these naturally flow into the swamp area there. What provision is being made to ensure minimal disruption to this naturally occurring flow? What will be the impact on those field drains to the local ecology? What assurances are there to those who would be impacted that this will not become a huge problem or financial burden?


### Two Storey Homes

Two storey homes are a major concern. Currently all houses in the Seafield Court area are single storey bungalows. The Caravan Park has always enjoyed a rural feel and view that has helped us attract repeat visitors.



# Grantown-on-Spey Caravan Park

Seafield Avenue, Grantown-on-Spey, Highland PH26 3JQ



Specific objections to two storey homes include:

- Resulting loss of rural feel
- Resulting loss of ambience important to tourism
- Resulting major negative impact on visitors (tourists) to the Caravan Park. Many of our regular visitors will feel that this rural feel and ambience have been lost if two storey homes are built in the adjacent field
- The Plan showing the comparative heights of the new development to adjacent homes highlights the incongruence of the proposed two story homes which not only appear to lack aesthetic merit, but worse, spoil the look and feel of existing Seafield Avenue structures and architecture

## Noise and Related Density Impacts on Caravan Park Visitors

Our Holiday makers come to Grantown partly for peace and quiet as well as the walks, wildlife and other rural attractions. Many Caravan Park visitors choose to stay at Grantown due to the very high quality experience which they enjoy when here. The present owners of the Caravan Park have made very considerable continuing investments in the Park and these efforts have been recognized by receiving in January 2008 the "Scottish Park of the Year Award 2007" from Scottish Caravanner magazine. The setting of the Caravan Park with its peaceful rural feel has been a very big draw and benefits the town in many ways. This attraction (rural feel and ambience plus peace and quiet) could be lost by the density and nature of the proposed housing development.

In summary we feel that the proposed development will negatively impact not only ourselves but also the residents of Grantown. The provision of homes on the site in question should at least be of a similar nature and density as the Seafield Court homes. Providing the infrastructure improvements needed are adequately addressed in advance of construction, we would regard a smaller number of single storey bungalow homes as acceptable. However, two storey homes would impact the present attraction of the Caravan Park as a place to visit and enjoy to such an extent that we could well be forced to become a residential caravan park with consequent loss of sustainable tourism and tourist expenditures to the Grantown economy.

The National Park Authority is already aware of the favorable economic impact that the Caravan Park, as the top tourism attraction, has on the town and local area. We sincerely hope that very careful consideration is given to our objections. These are not selfish, narrow objections, but reflect our long experience with and deep knowledge of our valued visitors and the tourism market.

Yours faithfully

Sandra McKelvie and John Fleming  
Partners



# **Grantown-on-Spey Caravan Park**

Presentation re Planning Application  
for 10 Chalets

March 2007

## **Presentation Will Cover...**

1. Who we are and our strategy
2. Our achievements to date
3. Expansion plans and rationale
4. The specifics of our application for 10 chalets

## Who We Are

- ❑ Partnership: John Fleming and Sandra McKelvie  
(a small, family-owned business)
- ❑ January 1988 - Leased from B & S District Council
- ❑ March 2004 – Bought the Park
- ❑ 2007 is our 20<sup>th</sup> Season at Grantown-on-Spey

## Our Strategy

- Maintain/increase customer loyalty & retention
- Provide a more balanced accommodation range
- Extend the tourist season
- Ensure sound financial management
- Become the best caravan park in Scotland

## Achievements to Date

- Visit Scotland 5 Star Excellent grading
- David Bellamy Gold environmental award
- Joint venture with The Caravan Club
- Chosen by STB for major landscape project
- AG Edwards & Partners (Caravan Park valuation experts) "Best toilet block ever seen"

## Existing Development

- 61 Caravan Holiday Homes
- 128 Touring Caravan pitches
- 50 Tent pitches
  
- Open 15 December to 31 October
- Luxury toilet blocks
- 52 super touring pitches with all services
- Extensive children's play area
- WI-FI internet on every pitch
- CC TV security cameras

## **Environmental Improvements Include**

- Full re-cycling station
- Low level energy saving down lighting
- Bird tables & nesting boxes around the park
- Numerous water butts
- 774 Rowan & 47 Birch trees planted since 1990  
- all individually netted

## **Expansion Plans -- Rationale**

- Lack of balance in range of accommodations  
(we have nothing for hire at present)
- Unmet demand (repeated requests for hire) =  
either an opportunity for us -- or another  
business outside the area
- Need high-quality self-catering units that are  
economically feasible to build



## **Project Request**

- Approval of 10 log chalets in woodland setting at rear of Caravans at Northern corner of the Park

## **Benefits for the Community**

- Contribution of £2.15 million per annum
- Eight full time job equivalents
- Supports further six jobs indirectly through local spending on goods and services
- Local spending by visitors contributes to supporting another 42 jobs
- Proposed 10 chalets will increase total spending by about £70,000 p.a.
- Enhanced word-of-mouth approval for the area from satisfied CP visitors

## Community Support

- Have full support from the community
- Examples:
  - Grantown Community Council
  - Cairngorms Chamber of Commerce
  - Grantown Business Association
  - Local business owners

## Summary

- We have a proven track record over 19 years
- There is an unmet need for quality self catering accommodation
- Asking for approval for a modest expansion of our existing, successful business
- We are sensitive to the environment and National Park status

Danny Alexander MP  
Constituency Office  
45 Huntly Street  
Inverness  
IV3 5HR

Please ask for: Richard Hartland

Our Ref: CRM 951204

Your Ref: SP4927

Date: 9 April, 2008

Dear Danny

**Muir Homes Development**

Thank you for your letter and copy e-mail from your constituent Jimmy Mitchell.

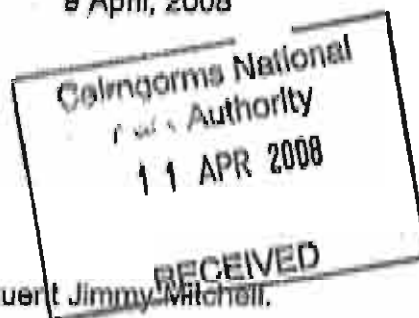
As has been acknowledged the field in question has been allocated for housing development since Adoption of the Badenoch and Strathspey Local Plan in 1997. The planning application has been called in by the Cairngorms National Park Authority. I have passed your letter, and Mr Mitchell's email, to Don McKee of the Park Authority and asked him to treat the email as a formal objection to the planning application.

Yours sincerely



**RICHARD HARTLAND**  
Head of Planning & Building Standards  
Planning & Development Service

c.c Don McKee, CNPA



DANNY ALEXANDER MP  
Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

H.C. PLANNING AND  
CONSERVATION SERVICE

7 APR 2008

| To | By | Date |
|----|----|------|
| RH |    |      |
|    |    |      |
|    |    |      |
|    |    |      |

Richard Harland  
Head of Planning & Building Standards  
The Highland Council  
Glenurquhart Road  
Inverness  
IV3 5NX

Our Ref: SP4927  
Your Ref:

Date: 25 March 2008

Dear Richard,

Mr James Mitchell of 18 Seafeld Court, Grantown On Spey, PH26 3LE

I have been contacted by my constituent Mr Mitchell about his concerns over a development by Muir Homes in Grantown.

I enclose for ease of reference a copy of his email to me and would hope that these, along with all other representations, will be taken fully into account.



Danny Alexander

Whilst Danny Alexander will treat as confidential any personal information which you pass on, he will allow staff and authorised volunteers to see this information if it is needed to help and advise you. We may pass some or all of the information to agencies such as the Inland Revenue or Local Council if necessary to help with your case. We may write to you from time to time to keep you informed on issues that you might find of interest. Please let us know if you do not wish to be contacted for this purpose.

[www.dannyalexander.org.uk](http://www.dannyalexander.org.uk)

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Tel 01463 711280 Fax 01463 714980 email: [dannyalexandermp@parliament.uk](mailto:dannyalexandermp@parliament.uk)



**GRIEVE, Fraser**

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 20 March 2008 10:31  
**To:** Alexander, Danny2  
**Subject:** Web Enquiry  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Yellow

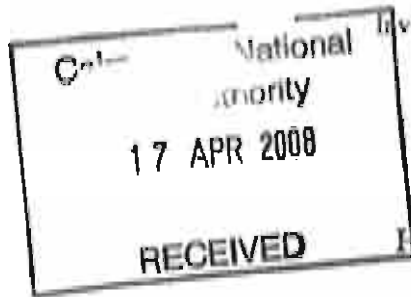
**Enquiry sent by - Jimmy Mitchell**

**Email -** [REDACTED]  
**Address -** 18 Seafield Court Grantown on Spey  
**Postcode -** PH26 3LE  
**Telephone -** [REDACTED]

**Message -** Good morning Danny, I wonder if I can trouble you with Grantown planning matter which is causing many local residents, (including myself), some anxiety. You will be aware of the camp site in Grantown. You may also be aware of the small field which lies between the camp site and the nearby bungalows of Seafield Court. I must point out that this field has always been zoned for housing as part of Highland Council's Local Plan. One of our many, but gravest concerns is the fact that developers, Muir Homes, are seeking to build 57 homes within this small field, 36 of which will be 2 stories high. Incredibly, 14 of these 2 storey buildings are to border the camp site. Living in bungalows and being overlooked by 2 storey blocks of flats raises privacy issues for many but we have serious concerns about the affects on the camp site. Instead of welcoming 52000 visitors p/a and ploughing £2.15m p/a into the local economy and supporting local jobs as this site currently does, we feel that this matter spells gloom for the camp site and economically for the town too. This development is only Phase One of four phases planned for Grantown in which a total of 193 homes are planned. Unsurprisingly, this matter is now with The Park's Planning Office in Ballater. They have advertised that all objections should be received by 2nd April. Is this a matter in which we can count on your support? I look forward to hearing from you. Kind regards, Jimmy Mitchell.

DANNY ALEXANDER MP

Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA



Don McKee  
Head of Planning & Development  
Cairngorms National Park Authority  
14 The Square,  
Grantown on Spey  
PH26 3HG

Our Ref: SP2617  
Your Ref:

Date: 03 April 2008

Dear Don,

**Donald M Scobbie of 22 Seafeld Court, Grantown On Spey, , PH26 3LE**

I have been contacted by my constituent Mr & Mrs Scobbie about their concerns over a development by Muir Homes in Grantown.

I enclose for ease of reference a copy of their fax to me and would hope that these, along with all other representations, will be taken fully into account.



**Danny Alexander**

Whilst Danny Alexander will treat as confidential any personal information which you pass on, he will allow staff and authorised volunteers to see this information if it is needed to help and advise you. We may pass some or all of the information to agencies such as the Inland Revenue or Local Council if necessary to help with your case. We may write to you from time to time to keep you informed on issues that you might find of interest. Please let us know if you do not wish to be contacted for this purpose.

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13 MAR 2008

Mr. and Mrs D. Scobbie  
22 Seafield Court  
Grantown on Spey  
PH26 3LE

27.03 .08

Dear Madame,

Muir Homes Development - Grantown on Spey

We have always accepted that the area known locally as "The Mossie" would be built on as the town evolved. We have no objections to a housing development in this area. There is an urgent need for affordable housing within the Badenoch and Strathspey and it is inevitable that the population will increase. We are, however, appalled at the proposed Muir Home plan and have already written to Cairngorm National Park Authority (CNPA) expressing our concerns about the nature of the development and CNPA's part in it. We anticipated gradual and sympathetic development within the Park area but it appears that Muir Homes has the single aim of building the maximum number of houses in the minimum possible area. There does not appear to be any independent examination of existing infrastructure, the supply of utilities, and the deleterious effect on one of the town's most successful commercial enterprises and major tourist attraction (Grantown Caravan Park) or the likely impact of a 25% increase in population within a short period.

As Muir Homes has been advertising the houses for some time one can only assume the development will start, as scheduled, in June. It seems that further objections and consultation are now meaningless and that CNPA is merely concluding a consultation ritual. After all, would CNPA really have us believe that eight weeks before construction starts the CNPA Board would dare to tell Muir Homes to delay the build up of materials, workers, transport and equipment required for the Grantown job?

This scepticism does not diminish our intention to clarify our reservations. These are as follows:

1. Density of Housing

Muir Homes has reduced the number of units from 235 to 193 but the density of units remains at an unacceptable level. I am advised that density of persons accommodated has increased. There are now over 650 bedrooms giving a potential for over 1000 people. A rule of thumb for estimating density in this area - ignoring the Aviemore disaster - is 10 houses per acre. This would mean 40 units in the area designated GS/H1 on the Deposit Plan and 13 in GS/H2.

A further reduction of some 90 units would probably bring density to an acceptable level

and, if staged over three or four years, might allow the construction of the support infrastructure required to absorb additional demand. Muir Homes have increased capacity by introducing two and three storeys, that aspect is addressed below. I am not alone in condemning the number of dwellings. Indeed one of CNPA's employees has described the development as "a hell of a lot of houses crammed into a tight space, someone is rubbing their hands in glee at the possibility of making a lot of money from rabbit hutches". I could not have put it more succinctly..

## 2. Education

Grantown Secondary School is now within two or three pupils of the maximum number allowed. Doubtless the problem will be overcome by the addition of a few more portakabins - and a couple of teachers of course. I understand however that school roles have not increased significantly following completion of new housing developments further south in the Strath. This indicates the likely age range of buyers which in turn indicates that we can anticipate the same reasons for house purchase, hopefully mitigated on this occasion by a limited percentage of affordable housing.

## 3. Drainage and Effluent.

Note: We have studied plans for Phase 1 only.

Scottish Water (SW) intends to increase capacity at Grantown water treatment works sufficient to absorb another 200 - 250 houses. Increased capacity should be available by early 2009 to coincide with Muir Homes coming on line. This is admirable because the unit has been operating over capacity for some time. SW should be congratulated on forward planning. We must hope that, unlike the Newtonmore upgrade, capacity proves sufficient to cater for current and future demand. The Grantown upgrade will of course set a limit to further house building in the town. Building in hand plus Muir Homes plus elimination of the current under-capacity should see a pause in construction until SW starts another upgrade.

Drainage has always been a concern among residents in the Seafield Court / Mossie Road areas. In the original 235 unit plan it was stated that 44 domestic units would drain by gravity, 191 units would have to be pumped. A survey carried out in June 07 by Mouchel Parkman on behalf of Scottish Water raises some interesting points.

The number of units in Phase 1(a) is stated as 44 and in 1(b) as 21 giving a total of 65. A company called Mouchel Parkman carried out a Development Impact Assessment, they used 65 units in Phase 1, it is now 75. They note in their conclusions that the assessment was a desk top study only, using a Type 1 (Skeletal) model and ignoring construction constraints such as ground conditions, levels, service clashes, available space and "land". They emphasize that the level data used in the Type 1 modelling represented 5.5% of the total model, the remaining data being inferred or taken from geographical data supplied by Scottish Water. Finally, they recommend that, should the project move to fruition, another survey would be advisable, this time using the best tool now available - a Type 3 Detailed Design Model.

To overcome a perceived problem they recommended the installation of 96 metres of 750 millimetre diameter pipe to act as a temporary reservoir when the system is overloaded. In the absence of documentation on a second study and the appearance of a 96 meter pipe



in the new plans it is presumed that the initial, limited, study forms the basis on which official approval for a drainage connection was issued.

The detailed drainage plan shows a repositioned foul water pumping station with drainage eventually joining the present Seafield Avenue sewer (225mm) that drains the caravan site. Unfortunately this sewer crosses Seafield Avenue at the entrance to Seafield Court, an area notorious for flooding.

We are not hydrogeologists but something seems not quite right with the drainage plans

#### 4. Carbon Footprint

Can CNPA or Muir Homes provide any information on the likely percentage increase in Grantown's carbon footprint provided by the proposed addition of 193 houses, cars, consumption of utilities and provision of additional infrastructure? Has CNPA carried out any tests or studies to establish a "benchmark" from which to determine the impact of the Muir Homes development, or -for that matter- any other development within the Park? It would be interesting to learn if any study has been made to determine how CNPA, or Muir homes, will approach carbon off-set or neutrality.

#### 5. Precedents

The latest plan includes a large number of two storey houses and a three storey building. This sets a planning precedent in this area of Grantown on Spey and is unacceptable both visually and aesthetically. The highest point in the Phase 1 development is in the southeast bordering on and overlooking Seafield Court. Two two-storey semi-detached blocks of flats are planned in this area but the high ground on which some of them will be built effectively converts them to three storeys. This too is unacceptable in a rural setting. There appears to be a concentration of two-storey units bordering the Caravan and Camping area. This is unfortunate in that it diminishes the attraction of the park. Who would willingly choose to holiday next to a housing scheme either during the years of construction or when closely invested and overlooked by two-storey buildings with the attendant noise and restricted view.

#### 6. Traffic Matters

Even assuming that each household has only one car, the development adds 193 cars to Grantown's already well developed parking problem. Should Grantown become a dormitory suburb for Inverness a more realistic total would probably be 250.

The crossroads at the southern end of the Square is a natural choke point and whatever is intended for traffic control at that junction will be hampered by routine deliveries made to the Cooperative store, by service delivery vehicles and by the main crossing for pupils going to and from the primary school. The Seafield Avenue/ High Street junction is a tight 90 degree corner and is the main route taken by car/caravan combinations and mobile homes going to and from the caravan park. It will be difficult, if not impossible, to negotiate when eastbound traffic from Seafield Avenue is waiting to enter the main street. It may well be that a one way system will have to be introduced.

At the northern end of the town is a long sweeping bend on the A939. Visibility is limited in both directions. Care has to be taken when leaving Grant House, the Ian Charles

Hospital and medical/dental unit. Traffic also joins the main road from the east (B9102) and from Grantown Secondary School; again care must be taken when entering the main road. The main entrance/exit road for Phases 2 and 3 (118 vehicles min) will be positioned on the western side of this short stretch of road. To cater for any children going to and from the secondary school a crossing will be required.

Effectively, poor traffic planning will create a high risk area at the northern end of the town and a choke point in the centre. The north/south route through the town is used by many heavy goods vehicles, tour busses and medium/light commercial vehicles. A roundabout would ameliorate the situation but slow traffic clearance.

Plans for further housing developments in nearby villages, such as Cromdale, Dulnain Bridge, Nethybridge and Boat of Garten, whose inhabitants routinely drive into Grantown for business and shopping will also increase congestion.

#### 7. Public Service Sustainability.

On 7<sup>th</sup> March Highland Council issued a report on delivering new care homes, a major and hard won priority in Highland Region. This report concentrated on site consultations and included a section on Grant House. At sub-paragraph 3.6.1 it refers to the potential for joint working with Muir Homes to develop some (sheltered) housing for the elderly adjacent to the site of both the existing and new, extended Grant House Care Home. Such a development would benefit significantly from being co-located to the services provided by the new Grant House and close proximity to the Ian Charles Hospital, Medical and Dental centre. The Muir Homes development is so dense that it removes any possibility of provision of sheltered housing, the future expansion of Grant House and of the Ian Charles Hospital. It does, however, provide an increase of some 25% in potential users of these essential public services.

This is a planning policy somewhat akin to that used for the provision of lifeboats on the Titanic.

Yet again, we wish to lodge an objection to the Muir Homes development as presented in its latest form. We consider it to be:

- of too high a density. It appears to be an exercise in extracting the highest return from placing as many units as possible in an area in which they will be inappropriate. The Muir Homes development remains unacceptable unless numbers are reduced by a half and the percentage of affordable housing increased.
- overstretching current infrastructure, to the town's long term disadvantage.
- unlikely to fulfil the stated aims of CNPA.
- detrimental to an existing major commercial enterprise.
- obstructing future expansion of a care home, co-located sheltered housing and expansion of a medical and dental centre.
- an unacceptable increase in traffic in an identified congestion area and at a road junction with an inbuilt high risk potential.
- most unfortunate that Grantown will be the site of what is probably the last major development built under the outdated 1997 Badenoch and Strathspey local plan and.

before the modern and much more demanding standards in CNPA's Local Deposit Plan come into force. It is ironic that the first major development in the "home" of CNPA will be built without benefit from the document setting out its own aims, standards and aspirations.

Yours sincerely,



D. Scobbie



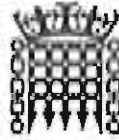
E.E. Scobbie

Mary Grier  
CNPA  
Albert Memorial Hall  
Station Square  
Ballater  
Aberdeenshire  
AB35 5QB

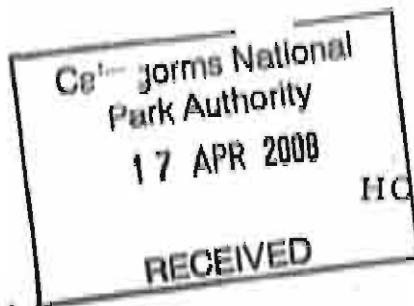
Copies to:

Mr. Fergus Ewing MSP  
Mr. Danny Alexander MP ✓  
Mr. I. Jardine Chief Executive, Scottish Natural Heritage.  
Councillor Sandy Park, Convenor, Highland Council.  
Councillor John Finnie, Highland Council  
Councillor J. Douglas, Highland Council.

DANNY ALEXANDER MP  
Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey



HOUSE OF COMMONS  
LONDON SW1A 0AA



Don McKee  
Head of Planning & Development  
Cairngorms National Park Authority  
14 The Square,  
Grantown on Spey  
PH26 3HG

Our Ref: SP4946  
Your Ref:

Date: 03 April 2008

Dear Don,

**Mr & Mrs Frank & Janet Jemmett of 1 Rhuarden Court, Grantown On Spey, , PH26 3DA**

I have been contacted by my constituent Mr & Mrs Jemmett about their concerns over a development by Muir Homes in Grantown.

I enclose for ease of reference a copy of their fax to me and would hope that these, along with all other representations, will be taken fully into account. I would be grateful if you could let me know to what timescale this application will be processed, and for your reassurance that community views will be taken fully into account, including the right of objectors to speak at a planning meeting.

I look forward to your response,

**Danny Alexander**

Whilst Danny Alexander will treat as confidential any personal information which you pass on, he will allow staff and authorised volunteers to see this information if it is needed to help and advise you. We may pass some or all of the information to agencies such as the Inland Revenue or Local Council if necessary to help with your case. We may write to you from time to time to keep you informed on issues that you might find of interest. Please let us know if you do not wish to be contacted for this purpose.

[www.dannyalexander.org.uk](http://www.dannyalexander.org.uk)

Highland Liberal Democrats Constituency Office: 45 Huntly Street, INVERNESS IV3 5HR  
Tel 01463 711280 Fax 01463 714960 email: [dannyalexandermp@parliament.uk](mailto:dannyalexandermp@parliament.uk)



27 MAR 2008

1 Rhuarden Court  
Grantown on Spey  
Morayshire  
PH26 3DA

27<sup>th</sup> March 2008

BY FAX TO 01463 714960, TOTAL 5 PAGES

Mr Danny Alexander M.P.  
45 Huntly Street  
Inverness  
IV3 5HR

Dear Mr Alexander,

Re: The Proposed Development by Muir Homes, Grantown on Spey

We are writing to inform you of our concerns about the proposed Muir Homes development off Seafield Avenue, Grantown on Spey. While we accept the need for housing that meets local needs, we have genuine concerns about the timescale, traffic implications and environmental impact that such a large and dense development would have on the special heritage of Grantown on Spey.

We believe that building this number of houses in the proposed timescale will inevitably lead to many of the dwellings being bought either as second homes or by commuters, leading to them standing empty and unavailable to local people in the former case or posing an unsustainable pressure on the town's infrastructure and traffic congestion in the latter case.

Neither of these outcomes would bring economic value to the town and in fact could lead to deterioration in the attraction of Grantown to tourists, on which its economy is so dependent.

We would be grateful if you would take time to read the attached letter which outlines our objections and which we have sent to the CNPA Planning Office.

We would appreciate your support in ensuring that the heritage of Grantown is preserved and that development of the town is in keeping with that culture and is in line with local needs.

Yours sincerely

  
  
Frank and Janet Jemmett

1 Rhuarden Court  
Grantown on Spey  
Morayshire  
PH26 3DA

22<sup>nd</sup> March 2008

Mary Grier  
Planning Officer  
Cairngorms National Park Authority  
Albert memorial Hall  
Station Square  
BALLATER  
AB35 5QB

Dear Ms Grier,

**Re: Muir Homes Proposed Development, Grantown on Spey**

I write to register our objections to the above-named revised, proposed development plans submitted on behalf of Muir Homes dated 7<sup>th</sup> March 2008.

While appreciating the need for new housing and a sustainable growth plan for the town, our objections to the current proposal from Muir Homes arise mainly from the impact of the number of houses in the time scale of the proposal. We believe this will have a detrimental effect on the community in relation to the town's size, culture, heritage, economy and its setting within a National Park.

To expand on our objections:-

1) **Non-Compliance with Local Plan**

- a) The Muir Homes proposal is not in line with the September 1997 Badenoch and Strathspey Local Plan adopted by the Highland Council for Grantown on Spey and represents significant increases in density and number of dwellings and rate of development. Namely, 193 dwellings proposed compared to 180 in the plan (7% increase), 12.4/HA proposed compared to 11.5/HA in the plan (8%) increase and 6.5 years proposed compared to 10 years in the plan (35% increase).
- b) Page 5 of the Badenoch and Strathspey Local Plan recognises the special heritage and setting of Grantown on Spey. "The (ir) attractive townscape features are threatened by insensitive infill and over development. Safeguards are needed to redirect these pressures to more appropriate locations" Such a large estate as Muir Homes proposes is, in our opinion, in direct conflict with this aim.

2) Contrary to the CNPA Community Conversation Findings

- a) The recent, to be applauded, community conversations with the CNPA clearly showed that a priority topic for Grantown on Spey is the need for housing for local people with organic, sustainable growth. At the same time there was strong opposition to "Aviemore-Type Large Developments". If these conversations are to be taken into account, then again the Muir Homes proposal runs contrary to the needs and wishes of the community.

3) Contrary to the stated aims of the CNPA

- a) The Muir Homes proposal also runs contrary to the stated housing policy of the Cairngorms National Park Authority as published in the "ParkLife" Newsletter, Issue 8 which states that development of local communities should be sustainable, while also conserving and enhancing the natural and cultural heritage of the Park.

4) Impact on Traffic and Road Safety

- a) The number of houses to be accessed from Seafield Avenue has increased in this amended application- from 65 to 75 (an increase of 15%). This egress for this number of houses into Seafield Avenue is inappropriate.

At a reasonable assumption of 1.5 vehicles per house this would produce additional local traffic onto Seafield Avenue and in and out of the High Street junction of some 115 cars. Assuming, also, that the new residents will leave and return to their homes on average once per day this is an extra 230 journeys along this route per day.

- b) The traffic evaluation in the amended plans, apparently having been conducted in October (low holiday season), does not seem to take account of additional traffic to and from the Caravan Park at the end of Seafield Avenue.

When the Caravan Park is open, there is a steady but almost constant flow of caravans and camper vans, many of which are of significant size. In addition, the local paper article referred to in point 9b puts the number of visitors to the park at 52,000 per year. Modelling this over 9 months averages around an additional 6,000 visitors per month, and with, say, an average of 3 people per vehicle results in an estimated 4,000 movements of vehicles per month just to arrive and leave the park. Inevitably, there is a significant traffic flow along Seafield Avenue as visitors to the Caravan Park come and go to explore the area on a daily basis.

- c) The junction with High Street is very congested with delivery lorries often parked along the side of the Co-op store which reduces Seafield Avenue to single file. Further congestion arises from cars competing for parking spaces in front of the store, parking in the High Street and general traffic (plus caravans) trying to get in and out of Seafield Avenue. This is the junction at which children making their way to and from school (many on cycles) cross the High Street. The new road-narrowing structures in the High Street will not address these issues adequately.
- d) Seafield Avenue already has on it a 4 way cross roads (Grant Road leading across to Mossie Road) which are tight junctions and always busy. These roads could well become "rat runs" and are unsuitable for such use as they lack adequate pavements or width.

#### 5) General Traffic Impact

- a) The building of 193 dwellings, providing that they are not all bought as second homes, will inevitably lead to more commuter journeys as the employment locally could not be developed to keep pace with the building rate. Assuming that the new residents will work in Inverness, Aviemore, and Elgin etc. this will lead to an increase in traffic on all roads in and out of Grantown.

#### 6) Environmental Impact and Flooding

- a) We have serious concerns that building on what is known to be wet ground ("The Mossie") will result in a significant increase in water run-off. Currently the area drains into a burn at the rear of Seafield Court/Rhuarden Court which runs into the Kylvetra and on into the Spey. We would like assurances that all of these water courses can cope with the additional flow without risk of flooding to the neighbouring properties or increasing the flooding that already exists in Seafield Avenue.

#### 7) Setting a Precedent?

- a) If so large a development is allowed, this could set a precedent for more, similar sized developments around Grantown on Spey which would quite definitely ruin its setting and attraction to tourists.

#### 8) Negative impact on infrastructure

- a) The increase in population resulting from the Muir Homes proposal presents a significant challenge to the town's resources, facilities and infrastructure in terms of policing, health and medical facilities, education, culture, sanitation, leisure, library, youth community facilities and so on.



9) Negative impact on the town's economy

- a) Such a large number of houses being built over this period is likely to lead to purchase by commuters and second home owners. We know from personal experience that this can negatively impact the local economy and kill the centre of a country town. People shop where they work or where their primary residence is. More houses does not guarantee more shoppers in the town centre.
- b) The award winning Caravan Park in Grantown on Spey is adjacent to the proposed development and two storey houses are planned close to that boundary. A recent article in the local paper describes the following facts: 52,000 visitors in 2006, 8 employees with a further 42 jobs supported in the area, and a contribution of £2.15 million per year to the regional economy. The proposed development would blight the semi-rural setting of the park, obstruct views to the Cromdale hills and have a negative impact on the ambience of both the Caravan Park and the town.

This letter expresses genuine concerns about the impact that this proposed development will have on the immediate area and the special heritage of Grantown itself. We do recognise and accept the need for more housing to meet local demand and would find a smaller number of bungalows such as the examples shown for the Seafield Avenue street scene acceptable.

I would appreciate your recognition of these concerns and acceptance of our objections to the current plans as submitted by Muir Homes.

Yours sincerely



H D Jemmett and J E Jemmett

Cairngorms National  
Park Authority

17 MAR 2008

RECEIVED

Strathkinness,  
Seafield Avenue,  
GRANTOWN ON SPEY,  
Moray,  
PH26 3JG

13<sup>th</sup> March, 2008

Cairngorms National Park Authority,  
Planning Department,  
Albert Memorial Hall,  
Station Square,  
BALLATER,  
AB35 5QB

|   |
|---|
| <b>Cairngorms National Park Authority</b> |
| Planning Application No. 06/320/CP        |
| <b>REPRESENTATION</b>                     |
| ACKNOWLEDGED 17 March 08                  |

Dear Sirs,

Planning Application – Muir Homes  
Land between Seafield Avenue and Castle Road East,  
Grantown on Spey  
Reference No. 06/320CP

We find ourselves having to write again in objection to the above.

The amended proposals submitted recently by Muir Homes do nothing to lessen the devastating effect which this development will have on Grantown on Spey.

1. Seafield Avenue will have the extra strain of providing a vehicular and pedestrian access for 75 new homes terminating at a severely stretched junction at the Bank of Scotland.
2. IT IS OBSCENE THE NUMBER OF HOUSES PROPOSED IN THE FIRST PHASE OFF SEAFIELD AVENUE. THIS FIELD, IN OUR OPINION, SHOULD NOT BE DEVELOPED AT ALL BUT LEFT AS PRECIOUS OPEN SPACE.
3. The designs of the houses are typical suburbia more suited to Slough than a famous Highland Town
4. The materials proposed for the exterior of the houses are poor and will look very dated in a few years time.
5. All in all a total disaster for Grantown on Spey – we don't want it to move forward we are very happy with it as it is. Do we have to ruin all the villages in this area i.e. Aviemore, Boat of Garten, Nethybridge and Carrbridge?

Yours faithfully,

  
Alistair and Helen McLeod

**Marie Duncan**

**From:** Mary Grier  
**Sent:** 12 January 2010 09:41  
**To:** Planning  
**Subject:** FW: 06/320/CP - representation

**Cairngorms National Park Authority**

Planning Application No. 06/320/CP.

REPRESENTATION

ACKNOWLEDGED 12 JAN 2010

Marie,

Can you log this in Park Planner and stamp a print copy for the file.

Thanks,  
Mary

Mary Grier  
Planning Officer - Development Management

Cairngorms National Park Authority  
Albert Memorial Hall  
Station Square  
BALLATER  
Aberdeenshire  
AB35 5QB

Website: [www.cairngorms.co.uk](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk)

---

**From:** A McLeod [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 11 January 2010 17:18  
**To:** Mary Grier  
**Subject:** 06/320/CP

Dear Ms Grier  
Muir Homes Application, Grantown on Spey

My wife and I are obviously very pleased with the Reporters recommendation to delete housing site GS/H1 from the Local Plan and really hope that CNP planning will see their way to concur.

Grantown on Spey is the perfect size, a great community where everyone still know most people and help each other which was very evident in this hard winter. Schools, Health and Elderly Care can all just cope but would not if there was a big influx of housing resulting in enormous expenditure to supplement these facilities. The Moasie area is particularly beautiful and unspoilt and should ideally remain as such which would be greatly appreciated by the vast majority in Grantown.

Yours sincerely,

Alistair and Helen McLeod  
Strathkinness  
Seafield Avenue  
Grantown on Spey  
PH26 3JG

Cairngorms National  
Park Authority

- 8 APR 2008

RECEIVED

Dr Josef Tainsh PhD MSc BSc  
Monzievairst  
12B Woodside Avenue  
Grantown-on-Spey  
PH26 3JR

Mary Grier  
Cairngorms National Park Authority  
Albert Memorial Hall  
Station Square  
Ballater  
Aberdeenshire  
AB35 5QB

  
7th April 2008

Please delete my 'Grantown-on-Spey Muir Homes Development' letter dated 5<sup>th</sup> April 2008.

Replace it with this corrected version dated 7<sup>th</sup> April 2008.

Yours





|   |
|---|
| <b>Cairngorms National Park Authority</b> |
| Planning Application No. 06/320/CP        |
| <b>REPRESENTATION</b>                     |
| ACKNOWLEDGED 8 APRIL 08                   |

|   |
|---|
| <b>Cairngorms National<br/>Park Authority</b> |
| <b>- 8 APR 2008</b>                           |
| <b>RECEIVED</b>                               |

Dr Josef Tainsh PhD MSc BSc  
Monzievairst  
12B Woodside Avenue  
Grantown-on-Spey  
PH26 3JR

Mary Grier  
Cairngorms National Park Authority  
Albert Memorial Hall  
Station Square  
Ballater  
Aberdeenshire  
AB35 5QB

7th April 2008

**GRANTOWN-ON-SPEY MUIR HOMES DEVELOPMENT - RIVER SPEY &  
NETWORK OF MARINE RESERVES PLANNED FOR UK COASTLINE**

**Proposed Muir Homes Development**

I understand that the proposed Muir Homes development and its associated sewage discharges into the River Spey, along with other developments and proposals for water extraction, are all likely to have an adverse environmental impact upon the various ecosystems inside and outside of the Cairngorms National Park.

The additional pollution which one can forecast will be caused by the Muir Homes proposed development, by water running into the Kyllintra Burn and down to the River Spey, will inevitably also make a contribution to climate change and global warming, no matter how small or insignificant, and be it intentional or unintentional.

Whilst some of the wider public may well consider the potential pollution and global warming implications of this proposed development, to be of irrelevant and trivial detail. I suggest that now, when the Muir Homes development is being evaluated, is an appropriate time, for greater scrutiny and attention to be paid to all of these issues (including possible flooding problems along Kyllintra Burn), by both the public and the CNPA Board Members.

Furthermore, in the local and global big picture scenario, I certainly accept that any further unwarranted pollution in the CNP area and River Spey which is already an SSSI, will inevitably contribute to our inability and ongoing interests in successfully; "halting the decline in biodiversity to create clean, healthy, safe, and productive and a biologically diverse oceans and seas".

### Network of Marine Reserves Planned for UK Coastline – International Public Interest

As you will see from the enclosed Guardian Article dated 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2008 by Jessica Aldred, a network of new marine nature reserves that will protect endangered species and habitats along Britain's coastline are among plans included in the Government's long awaited draft Marine Bill.

These proposed Marine Reserves and the future of the River Spey, and its tributaries like Kyntra Burn, all have international public interest implications, which I feel should all be taken into serious consideration, by the Scottish Parliament, the CNPA, and the wider public at large.

### The River Spey

Please also see the enclosed extract from Kikipedia, the free encyclopaedia, which outlines that; The River Spey, which at its estuary is tidal, and supports migratory fish, is the second longest and the fastest flowing river in Scotland.

### Creation of an Aquatic Site of Special Scientific Interest

As you are aware, the River Spey is a central feature of the Cairngorms National Park, and one of immense environmental, economic and international global importance, which should be protected at all costs, for future generations.

Even without the Governments intention to see Marine Reserves zones in place by 1012, I believe that there is justification now, for the CNPA Board Members to ensure greater protection of the River Spey tributaries (Kyntra Burn & surrounding area), as they will inevitably be adversely affected by large new development housing proposals.

### Opportunity for CNPA & Scottish Parliament to Contribute to Spirit of the Marine Bill

As outlined in the enclosed Guardian Article; "In order to secure robust protection of UK seas it is essential that the Marine Bill is passed in both Westminster and Scotland, with appropriate devolved legislation in Wales and Northern Ireland".

Surely this is an ideal opportunity for the CNPA, the Scottish Parliament, and the Scottish People, to make a valuable contribution to the proposed Network of Marine Reserves planned for the UK coastline.

### Recommendations

I strongly recommend that when evaluating the merits of the proposed Muir Homes development:

Due consideration is given to the preservation of the Kylintra Burn and surrounding area.

The CNPA Board Members, also make a recommendation that in an appropriate forum, they should:

Recommend to the Scottish Parliament that the sea area around the River Spey estuary, which is already a Scottish Wildlife Trust, becomes a Marine Conservation Area.

Through the Scottish Parliament, support the Marine Bill.

Yours

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the sender.

Enclosures:

1. [Guardian.co.uk](http://Guardian.co.uk) Network of Marine Reserves Planned for UK Coastline 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2008.
2. River Spey – Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopaedia.



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guardian.co.uk

3pm BST update

## Network of marine reserves planned for UK coastline

Jessica Aldred

guardian.co.uk, Thursday April 3 2008



Britain's coastline offers areas of natural beauty which the government is keen to preserve while making coastal regions accessible to the public. Photograph: Corbis

A network of new marine nature reserves that will protect endangered species and habitats along Britain's coastline are among plans included today in the government's long-awaited draft marine bill.

The network of marine conservation zones will have clear goals to ensure that some types of fishing, dredging or other forms of development do not damage protect habitats and species of national importance.

The government has said it wants to see the zones in place by 2012, with varying levels of protection for individual sites.

Measures to give people the freedom to walk along the English coast for the first time are also included.

The draft bill proposes a new nationwide marine planning system to help manage Britain's seas and make it simpler to license offshore developments such as wind farms.

Publishing the bill, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), said modernised powers would allow for better management of fisheries around the UK.

The measures will be supervised by the Marine Management Organisation, which will be created to regulate development and activity at sea and enforce environmental protection laws.

The environment secretary, Hilary Benn, said: "Our seas are already showing the effects of climate change and with increasing use of the sea by many competing interests we must make sure that the marine environment can cope with changing conditions. We have a duty to look after our seas for future generations.

"Our proposals will raise protection and management of our seas to a new level, halting the decline in biodiversity to create clean, healthy, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas.

"For the first time in our history all of us will be able to walk the length of the coast and get close to the sea right around England."

Jonathan Shaw, the marine and fisheries minister, added: "The draft marine bill is a major step forward in marine protection and planning. It will benefit all who make a living from the sea by helping to get the most we can from it in a sustainable way while protecting precious resources."

But concerns have been raised by environmental groups that the bill will not go

far enough in protecting marine species and ecosystems.

WWF said that while the bill included "encouraging measures", its effectiveness would be limited unless it was implemented throughout the UK. Sally Bailey, the north-east Atlantic marine manager, said: "WWF is concerned that there is still no indication of how this legislation will deliver for the whole of the UK's seas. Without effective legislation across UK and devolved seas, many species and habitats will still be at risk."

"In order to secure robust protection of UK seas it is essential that a marine bill is passed in both Westminster and Scotland, with appropriate devolved legislation in Wales and Northern Ireland."

The Marine Conservation Society (MCS) said it appeared to be a rebash of existing laws, and did not put "ocean recovery" at its heart.

Simon Brookington, head of conservation at the MCS, said: "Our seas are in a thoroughly run-down state, as can be seen from the collapse of our fisheries, and it's about time the government recognised the consequences of its actions over the last three or four decades.

"But they don't appear to have recognised that in this bill."

Natural England welcomed the bill's publication, in particular the access to the English coastline it would afford the public.

Sir Martin Doughty, chairman of the conservation agency, said: "This is a real opportunity to secure both a future for wildlife in and around our seas and give people clear and secure access to our coast for the first time.

"The government has clearly marked its support for a historic right of access to the English coastline and we look forward to making this right a reality.

"Currently, large sections of the coast lack any secure access rights at all for the public - others just fail to join up properly with each other or are physically unusable."

But the National Farmers' Union said it was deeply disappointed with the government's decision on opening coastal areas and questioned whether there was sufficient cash for the scheme.

NFU vice president Paul Temple said: "I can see a situation where pathways will fall into disrepair because the local authorities are under-resourced and these costs will have to be met by the landowner.

"I believe the limited public funds would be much better spent on making the walking experience better and safer where there is an actual need."

Shadow environment secretary Peter Aldworth also criticised the move towards further legislation on coastal access, saying it should be on a voluntary basis with incentives for landowners and protection for sensitive areas.

And he said: "It is a pity that the government, having first promised a marine bill in 2004, has dithered for so long before getting to this stage while our marine habitats have deteriorated."

Currently just 1% of the UK's seas are protected, with less than 0.001% afforded full protection according to the MCS. Legislation to protect Britain's coastline has been a long drawn-out affair, with two previous consultations on the marine bill.

Proposals for a marine bill were first put forward in Labour's 2005 manifesto after lobbying from conservation groups. It announced a draft marine bill in the 2005 Queen's speech, but nothing came of it and a full bill and act did not follow.

In March 2006, the government published the first consultation document on its proposals for the scope and content of the bill, and invited feedback.

In March 2007 it published a white paper, *A Sea Change*, which proposed eight offshore "national parks" within three years and as many as 80 highly protected sea areas. Consultation on the white paper was completed in June.

Figures released last October by Defra showed that 82% of the responses to the consultation supported plans for a bill.

Jonathan Shaw, the minister for marine, landscape and rural affairs, promised last summer that the bill would be published "in draft" early this year.



# River Spey

from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The **River Spey** (Scottish Gaelic: **Uisge Spè**) is a river in the north-east of Scotland, the second longest and the fastest flowing river in Scotland. It is important for salmon fishing and whisky production.

## Contents

- 1 Course
- 2 Industry
- 3 Settlements
- 4 External links

## Course

Rising at over 1000 feet (300 m) at Loch Spey in Corrieyairack Forest in the Scottish Highlands, 10 miles (16 km) south of Fort Augustus, it descends to flow through Newtonmore and Kingussie crossing Loch Insh before reaching Aviemore at the start of Strathspey. From there it flows the remaining 60 miles north-east to the Moray Firth.

The Spey changes its course very frequently; either (relatively) gradually as a result of deposition and erosion from normal flow, or in a matter of hours as a result of going into spate. The Spey spates very quickly due to its wide catchment area in the mountains, as a result of rainfall or snowmelt.

Insh Marshes, areas of roughly two miles on either side of the Spey in the lower reaches are designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest, as are the extensive shingle systems at Spey Bay.

## Industry

The river traditionally supported many local industries, from the still popular salmon fishing industry to shipbuilding. At one stage, Garmouth was the shipbuilding capital of the UK, with timber from the forests around Aviemore and Aberlour being rafted down to create wooden hulled ships.

The river is also known for the quality of its salmon and trout fishing, including a particular form of fly fishing where the fisher uses a double-handed fly rod to throw a 'spey cast' whereby the fly and the line do not travel behind the fisher (thereby keeping these away from the bushes and trees lining the banks behind him or her). This type of cast was developed on the Spey.

Speyside distilleries produce more whisky than any other region.

The Speyside Way is a long-distance footpath that follows the River Spey through some of Morayshire's most beautiful scenery.

River Spey



The River Spey at Aberlour

|                        |                                     |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Origin</b>          | Loch Spey (grid reference NN419937) |
| <b>Mouth</b>           | Moray Firth at Spey Bay             |
| <b>Basin countries</b> | Scotland                            |
| <b>Length</b>          | 107 miles (172 km)                  |
| <b>Avg. discharge</b>  | 64 m <sup>3</sup> /s <sup>[1]</sup> |
| <b>Basin area</b>      | 3008 km <sup>2</sup> <sup>[1]</sup> |

The River Spey is unusual in that it increases speed as it flows closer to the coast, due to the surrounding geography. The mean flow is around 16 m/s making it the fastest flowing river in Scotland, possibly the UK (depending on what constitutes a river.) The Spey does not meander, although it does rapidly move its banks. South of Fochabers the banks are reinforced with a high earth barrier, but this has been broken by the river on several occasions, removing a large portion of Garmouth Golf Course, sections of wall surrounding Gordon Castle, parts of the Speyside Way and some of the B9104 road.

The Spey railway bridge (now pedestrianised) Spey Bay to Garmouth was originally designed with the main span over the main flow of the river, however before construction was completed the river had changed its course and was running at one end of the bridge.

Ptolemy named the river as Tuesis Aest.

## Settlements

*from source*

- Laggan
- Newtonmore
- Kingussie
- Kincaig
- Inverdrurie
- Aviemore
- Boat of Garten
- Grantown on Spey
- Speybridge
- Cromdale
- Mains of Dalvey
- Advle
- Ballindalloch
- Pitchroy
- Blacksboat
- Marypark
- Knockando
- Carron
- Speyview
- Aberlour
- Craigellachie
- Dandalieth
- Rothes
- Crofts
- Newlands of Dundercas
- Garbity
- Ordiequish
- Fochabers
- Stynie
- Garmouth
- Kingston on Spey
- Spey Bay

## External links

Cairngorms National Park Authority

Planning Application No. 06/220/CP

REPRESENTATION

ACKNOWLEDGED 1 9 06

Received

'Owl Wood'  
Mossie Road,  
Grantown-on-Spey,  
Moray,  
PH26 3HW.

25<sup>th</sup> August 2006

Area Planning & Building Standards Manager  
Badenoch & Strathspey; Highland Council,  
100, High Street,  
Kingussie,  
PH21 1HY.

Dear Sir,

**PLANNING APPLICATION BY MUIR HOMES  
FOR THE ERECTION OF 235 HOUSES IN GRANTOWN-on-SPEY**

I write to record my objection to the above Planning Application submitted by Muir Homes for the erection of 228 houses and the provision of 7 serviced plots, under the terms of Section 34 of the Local Plan. This is not a blanket objection, nor an objection in principal to the building of new houses in Grantown-on-Spey, but one which focuses on a number of specific issues.

The first of these issues is the size of the proposed development which is grossly in excess of any requirement for the town and would completely overwhelm the present infrastructure. I note that the development is shown as progressing in four phases and at a rate which would result in a construction period of approximately ten years. This is a much more rapid development rate than envisaged in the current Local Plan and it would almost certainly result in the release of houses onto the "holiday or second home" market rather than satisfying any need for additional housing within the National Park.

This proposal has been devised by a Central Scottish property developer who has no knowledge of the cultural heritage of Grantown-on-Spey and little or no interest in the devastating effect which a housing expansion of this size would have on the community. It is a blatant attempt to push through a planning application for an excessively large and no doubt extremely lucrative development, before the Cairngorms National Park Local Plan, Draft Document is finally adopted. Since the proposal contravenes the Park's Local Plan which is likely to be ratified in the near future and since it also involves a construction period of up to ten years, I believe that it would be both unreasonable and unethical to even consider such an application at this time.

Apart from any other considerations it is quite wrong that a national builder, who would employ very little local labour, import most of the tradesmen, either directly or by subcontract and impose a more or less standard 'country wide' house design on our town,



should be allowed to control the majority of the housing development in Grantown for the next 10 years or more, at the expense of local builders who would be left with the 'crumbs' of the building work in the town. It is also pertinent that if housing development progressed on the basis of 'need and not desire', as is the case in most other National Parks, then the local builders would cope admirably, which would be much more in line with the principle of sustaining local industry and retaining earnings within the valley, for the general economic benefit of the area.

The Ecological Impact Assessment which accompanies Muir's application, acknowledges that there are species of bird, animal and plant on this site which are either endangered or protected and there can be no doubt that a development of the size proposed would have a disastrous effect on all of these species.

The application is also accompanied by a Flood Assessment document which projects figures based on the past 200 years, but at a time when so much emphasis is being placed on the effects of global climatic change and many areas have suffered flooding on an unprecedented scale, it would be extremely rash to accept this type of report as anything other than an approximation of what might happen. Even adopting current rainfall figures it is highly unlikely that the moss area – the Mossie – would be able to absorb the excess water arising from a flash rain storm, or cloud burst, once the development had disturbed the existing water table as a result of the removal of Birch trees and foundation excavation works, particularly in Phase 3. This problem would be exacerbated by the construction of so many houses and the accompanying roads, which would greatly increase the run off in times of exceptional rainfall and result in serious flooding at the lower end of Grantown which already has a history of flooding.

Having mentioned Phase 3, I shall now move on to this area for which the proposals are probably the most unbelievable of the whole development. This is an area of great natural beauty and very poor building land, having several metres of peat in many places and much of the ground is either just above or just below water level depending on the time of year. The developer's proposals for this Phase include an access road which would pass through an area (E1) designated as a Protected Environment and also one (C3) which is shown for Community Use in the Cairngorms National Park Draft Local Plan. The proposals then indicate 38 dwellings of which 9 would be two storey houses backing onto a row of bungalows on Mossie Road and one of the 9 would also be alongside another two bungalows. In addition there would be a further 12 two storey houses built on some of the least suitable ground, backing onto the moss and the Birch Wood and overlooking the four bungalows on the lane which leads from Mossie Road to the 'Mossie'. In the whole of this North West corner of Grantown including Mossie Road, Seafeld Avenue, Seafeld Court and Rhuarden Court there are no two storey houses other than those built around the beginning of the last century. It is therefore clear that Muir's proposals for this area are not only in architectural conflict with all of the existing houses in the immediate vicinity due to the fact that they are two storey villas, but also because of their design and the density of the development.

If Phase 3 is permitted to proceed along with that part of Phase 4 which consists of 9 houses backing onto the Northern edge of the moss then the valuable habitat which is highlighted in the Cairngorms National Park Draft Local Plan, will unquestionably be destroyed because the water level will be disturbed by construction and the plant life will disappear, as will the birds and animals which will lack the tranquillity which currently encourages them to breed and live in this area.

Every one who reads the local news paper knows that there is a serious shortage of available domestic water due largely to the high volume of expensive speculative housing which has been built over the last few years, so at this time we should surely be reserving our supplies for essential housing within our communities. This would also minimise the problem of over loading out schools and medical facilities.


I note that the Highland Council Local Plan has some very relevant Principles and Main Objectives which I believe are worth quoting.

- 1) To accommodate the town growth within its landscaped setting consistent with maintaining local heritage assets.
- 2) To maximise economic benefit deriving from tourism.
- 5) To safeguard the town's built heritage and setting including semi natural woodlands.

All three of these objectives appear to indicate an intention to preserve the heritage of the town, both built and natural and to maximise the tourist potential rather than flood Grantown with second homes or turn it into a dormitory town for Inverness.

I hope that my comments and objections may be given due consideration and that a wise and balanced decision will be made regarding this application.

Yours faithfully,



Gregor I. Mackenzie



Cairngorms National Park Authority  
Planning Application No. 06/320/cf  
**REPRESENTATION**  
ACKNOWLEDGED 15/3/07

'Owl Wood'  
Mossie Road,  
Grantown-on-Spey,  
Moray,  
PH26 3HW.

13<sup>th</sup> March 2007

Mr Don McKee  
Head of Planning,  
Cairngorms National Park Authority,  
Ground Floor,  
Albert Memorial Hall,  
Station Square,  
Ballater,  
Aberdeenshire,  
AB35 5QB.

Cairngorms National  
Park Authority  
15 MAR 2007  
**RECEIVED**

Dear Mr. McKee,

**PLANNING APPLICATION BY MUIR HOMES  
FOR THE ERECTION OF 235 HOUSES IN GRANTOWN-on-SPEY**

Further to my letter of 25<sup>th</sup> February 2006 and also that of 25<sup>th</sup> August 2006 (originally sent to Badenoch & Strathspey Area Planning Manager) I feel it is appropriate to write again at this time.

As you will be aware from previous correspondence, one of my primary objections to this excessively large development proposal for Grantown-on-Spey concerns the inevitable disturbance to the "Mossie", which is identified in the CNP Draft Local Plan as "a large area of valuable habitat which must be maintained".

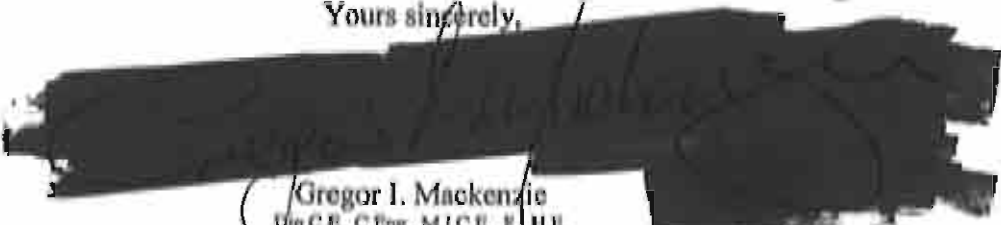
However this area is not only a valuable habitat, but is equally important for the function it performs as a mechanism for controlling the effects of sudden heavy rainfall and the resulting runoff from the high ground to the north and north west of the moss. The volume of water which flows into this area via the main burn and numerous smaller burns and ditches is very considerable and is largely contained in the moss which acts as a natural sponge, allowing the surplus water to seep away gradually, thereby reducing the danger of flooding at the lower end of Grantown. There is absolutely no doubt that any disturbance of the moss or the birch trees growing in it, could have a catastrophic effect on the function which it currently performs, particularly in view of the increased rainfall which, according to expert predictions, is likely to accompany global warming.

It is also relevant to the proposed development that new data on flood control has been released by WWF Scotland, which proves conclusively that the reintroduction of wetlands along with other natural devices is an efficient and economical means of controlling the flow in water courses which are prone to flooding. I am sure you will be well aware of the existence of the River Devon Natural Flood Management demonstration site in Clackmannanshire and may have had sight of the technical publications relating to this area. This new data which is the result of a four year study of the area, must surely emphasise the value of retaining an existing moss which currently acts as a flood control medium, as well as casting doubt on the wisdom of permitting any form of construction which would disturb this moss and consequently its effectiveness in minimising flooding caused by the water course which ultimately flows through the lower part of the town.

In this connection I believe that a site visit by as many of your planning committee as possible would be quite invaluable, in order that they might see the present waterlogged condition of the entire moss, which is a recurring feature of the winter months.

I hope that these comments which are offered as constructive opinions will receive due consideration along with the many other representations you will undoubtedly have received.

Yours sincerely,



Gregor I. Mackenzie  
Dip.C.E., C.Eng., M.I.C.E., F.I.H.E.

Cairngorms National  
Park Authority  
13 MAR 2008  
RECEIVED

'Owl Wood'  
Mossie Road,  
Grantown-on-Spey,  
Moray,  
PH26 3HW.

11<sup>th</sup> March 2008

Miss. Mary Grier  
Planning Officer,  
Cairngorms National Park Authority,  
Ground Floor,  
Albert Memorial Hall,  
Station Square,  
Ballater,  
Aberdeenshire,  
AB35 5QB.

Cairngorms National Park Authority  
Planning Application No. 06/320/CP  
REPRESENTATION  
ACKNOWLEDGED 13 MARCH 08

Dear Miss. Grier,

**MUIR HOMES - PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**  
**GRANTOWN-ON-SPEY**

Further to my telephone conversation with you last week I enclose a copy of the drawing to which I referred. While it is clearly a drawing of the proposed development area and is entitled "Mossie Development, Muir Homes Obligations" it bears no indication of either its source or the date on which it was produced. My inclination is to think that it is some form of draft, since it lacks detailed information and is therefore of limited use. However it does contain sufficient detail to enable me to mark the areas to which I referred during our conversation.

The areas which I have marked Area 1 and Area 2 are those to which Muir Homes' site investigation contractor returned approximately fifteen to eighteen months ago, for the specific purpose of establishing their suitability for the construction of bridge foundations. I visited the work site at Area 2 and talked with the drilling foreman who told me that they were currently making slow progress due to the presence of large boulders, which would suggest that the area was probably suitable for the developer's purpose. However he also told me that having entered the site from Seafield Avenue, his team had first tried to set up in Area 1 which was the other proposed bridge site, but had found the ground conditions to be so bad that their towing vehicle had become bogged down and they were unable even to set up their drilling equipment, far less carry out any investigative drilling. This area of unsuitable ground is quite extensive and covers the precise location of the proposed road shown on the enclosed drawing running from Phase 1 to Phase 2 in the vicinity of the main burn, which of course would require to be bridged.


I feel that it is also relevant to point out that the "marshland" extends much further into the Phase 1 area, in a south westerly direction, than is shown on the enclosed drawing.

Although on a slightly different topic I shall take this opportunity to mention that yesterday I received by post, a Town and Country Planning Notice dated Friday 7<sup>th</sup> March from the developer's agent, intimating that a period of 14 days from the date of the notice was available for public inspection of and comment on, the drawings and documents resubmitted by Muir Homes. However on visiting the CNPA Grantown office I was informed that not only was there no copy of the documents in this office, but that the Ballater office did not even have a complete set and it was likely to be Friday before Grantown received a copy. This would of course be exactly one week after the date of Muir's agent's official "Planning Notice for Serving on Neighbours" and would therefore require the public inspection period to extend to 21 days from the date of their notice.

Finally I would draw to your attention the fact that Muir Homes have been advertising their "Future Development" in Grantown-on-Spey on their web site for several months now, which might suggest that they assume their resubmitted planning application merely requires to be rubber stamped. It is to be hoped that any such assumption on their part is entirely unfounded and that at no time have they been encouraged to believe this would be the case.

I hope that the above information may be of some use to you in considering the Muir Homes resubmitted planning application.

Yours sincerely,



Gregor I. Mackenzie

Encl.:- Drawing of proposed development area.

Mary Grier

---

**From:** Gregor Mackenzie [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 07 April 2008 11:05  
**To:** Mary Grier  
**Subject:** Muir Homes Revised Planning Application - Response - Typing Errors amended.  
**Attachments:** MUIR HOMES - 4.doc

Dear Miss Grier,

Please accept my apologies for the typing errors in the letter attached to my e-mail of Friday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2008.

Due to other pressures, the letter was drafted over a period of several days, but was then typed out in some haste on Friday with no time to adequately check for errors.

The most significant error appears on page 4, item 4 headed Increased Traffic.

Seafield Avenue has been described as Seafield Road on two occasions and I think that in order to avoid any confusion or misunderstanding

the original attachment should be destroyed and replaced by the amended copy of the letter which is attached to this e-mail.

I apologise for any inconvenience which this may cause.

Yours sincerely,

Gregor Mackenzie

Cairngorms National Park Authority The information contained in this e-mail is confidential and intended for the exclusive use of the individual(s) or organisation specified above. Any unauthorised dissemination or copying of this e-mail, or mis-use or wrongful disclosure of information contained in it, is strictly prohibited and may be illegal. Please notify the sender by return e-mail should you have received this e-mail in error. Virus Warning: Although this email and any attachments are believed to be free from viruses, it is the responsibility of the recipient to ensure that they are virus free. No responsibility is accepted by the Cairngorms National Park Authority for any loss or damage arising in any way from their receipt or opening Spam. This e-mail has been scanned for Spam. However if you feel that this is Spam please forward this to mailmanager@cairngorms.co.uk



"Owl Wood"  
Mossie Road,  
Grantown-on-Spey,  
Moray,  
PH26 3HW.

3rd April 2008

Miss Mary Grier  
Project Planning Officer,  
Cairngorms National Park Authority,  
Ground Floor,  
Albert Memorial Hall,  
Station Square,  
Ballater,  
Aberdeenshire,  
AB35 5QB

Dear Miss. Grier,

**REVISED PLANNING APPLICATION BY MUIR HOMES  
FOR THE ERECTION OF 193 HOUSES IN GRANTOWN-on-SPEY**

Having now studied Muir Homes revised planning application in some detail, I feel obliged to write to you once more to register my concerns about the entire project and my objections to specific aspects of the proposed development.

This is not an objection in principle to housing development in Grantown-on-Spey, because in common with most of the town's residents I fully support the building of houses "to meet the needs of the community", to quote a much repeated objective from your Deposit Local Plan. This project however meets only the desires of developer's.

**OBJECTIONS**

**1. Position**

The semidetached bungalows sited on plots 39 and 40 are an example of extremely bad building practice in that the rear of these houses is overlooked by the principal public rooms of the two existing adjacent bungalows. Reference to Muir Homes' drawings reveals that this situation has been carefully avoided within the entire proposed development, which tends to indicate a complete disregard for existing residents. I would therefore suggest that the two offending bungalows should be removed, since the available area of plots 39 and 40 is so restricted that any alternative orientation would also be completely unacceptable.

**2. Density and Height of Buildings**

The proposed density of this development together with the inclusion of two storey houses is entirely at odds with the adjacent built environment. The houses which

have been built in the last forty or fifty years in the Seafield Avenue / Mossie Road area of Grantown-on-Spey, with one exception, have been bungalows and the only exception which is at the end of a row of bungalows in Mossie Road, is of one and a half storey design which is substantially lower than the two storey houses in the proposed development.

### 3. Design

This proposed development does not even approach the design requirements of the Deposit Local Plan. No attempt has been made to design houses with a remotely Scottish character, far less "reinforce the local vernacular and local distinctiveness." Muir Homes have elected simply to impose their standard designs on Grantown-on-Spey, which are completely out of character with every aspect of the built environment of the town. In addition to this, the affordable housing appears to be concentrated in two and three storey blocks which represent a much greater density than the remainder of the proposed development. Are we to see the Grantown which is such a tourist attraction destroyed and turned into a hideous monster like Aviemore.

I feel this is an appropriate point at which to draw to your attention, the Cairngorm National Park Deposit Local Plan, Section 5, sub-section 3, Policy 18, Design Standards for New Development, which states inter alia that "new developments will reflect and reinforce the pattern and character of the surrounding area and reinforce the local vernacular and local distinctiveness" and further that "the amenity enjoyed by neighbouring properties will be protected".

In your Consultative Draft Plan there was also a Policy 38, Proposals for Housing Within Defined Settlements, which states in paragraph c) that "the layout and density of a scheme should be a natural growth of the existing structure." It also states that "Affordable housing secured as part of a larger development should be fully integrated within the scheme and should not be of significantly higher density or lower quality."

I am aware that the Consultative Draft Plan was superseded by the Deposit Local Plan and in the process Policy 38 appears to have been lost. It seems most unfortunate that such a laudable policy should have been considered irrelevant or perhaps inappropriate in the present circumstances.

## CONCERNS

### 1. Rate and Size of Development

The proposed joint size and rate of development of this project is considerably in excess of anything envisaged in the Highland Council Local Plan for this area and a 25% increase in the town's population over seven years will overwhelm the existing infrastructure, unless there are advanced plans and funds, of which the local population has no knowledge, for the upgrading of the schools, medical centre, traffic management, water and sewerage and pretty well every other service. This proposed rate of development will also produce far more houses than are required "to meet the needs of the community" which will result in a dramatic increase in second homes and commuter homes for those working in Inverness, both of which will bring little or no economic or commercial advantage to the



town. One of the greatest dangers of a large development such as this is the probability of planning permission being sought and granted for an out of town supermarket which will quite simply destroy the centre of Grantown. Anyone who doubts this and believes that a large supermarket on the outskirts of the town would bring extra business to the existing shops in the High Street should visit Forbes or Huntly and talk with town centre shopkeepers.

A recently published report, commissioned by a government sponsored organisation called The Empty Homes Agency, is worthy of your attention. In the context of this letter the reasons for the report are irrelevant, but the findings are significant. The report resulted from a study comparing the CO<sub>2</sub> given off in the building of new homes with that produced by refurbishing old properties.

The relevant findings may be summarised as follows:-

CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from new homes emanate from two distinct sources: embodied CO<sub>2</sub> given off during the house building process and operational CO<sub>2</sub> given off from normal energy use in the house once it is occupied. The new homes in the research each gave off 50 tonnes of embodied CO<sub>2</sub>, but it was established that well-insulated new homes eventually make up for their high embodied energy costs through lower operational CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. However it was calculated that in most cases it takes more than 50 years to redress the balance.

This report highlights the folly of encouraging the mass proliferation of unnecessary housing, if the problem of reducing the "carbon footprint" of the National Park is to be seriously addressed. At the same time the results would support the sound philosophy of the stated policies of the CNPA, to ensure the provision of houses "to meet the needs of the community".

## 2. Local Building Industry

A development of the size proposed, which will produce an excess of the wrong type of housing and will mean that the majority of the building work in Grantown will be in the hands of a national developer for a period of seven to ten years, will have a devastating effect on our local builders who, given the opportunity, would be more than capable of meeting "the needs of the community" with houses of an appropriate design which would indeed "reinforce the local vernacular and local distinctiveness". This problem will not end with the completion of the proposed project, because unless the infrastructure of Grantown is rapidly upgraded to a level which incorporates spare capacity, before the completion of this proposed development, the CNPA Planners will find themselves compelled to withhold planning approval for even single property developments due to the total inadequacy of the over stretched public services. Once again the losers will be the local builders and the local economy, despite the fact that the sustainability of both employment and business are declared objectives of the CNPA Deposit Local Plan.

## 3. Tourism

In a town and an area such as Grantown and the Spey valley, which are so heavily dependent on tourism for their economic survival, it is unbelievable that Muir Homes or any other developer could imagine that a proposal to build two storey

houses and flats along the boundary of an award winning caravan park, there by obscuring the principal mountain view from the park, could possibly receive approval. While the developer would have no reason to know the significance of the caravan park's contribution to the local economy, in terms of employment as well as money, a casual inspection of the park while walking along the boundary fence would reveal that this is no ordinary caravan park, but one which is outstandingly well designed, well maintained and well run. This is yet another branch of the local business community which must be guaranteed a sustainable future by the CNPA.

Grantown-on-Spey is a unique and beautiful town in a truly exquisite setting which attracts from far and near, the visitors whose presence supports the town's fragile economy and the approval of a development of the size and nature proposed would cause irreparable damage to both the town and the surrounding area.

#### **4. Increased Traffic**

The proposed new development in its present form of 193 homes would produce an increase of at least the same number of vehicles and probably nearer 300, of which 39% (over 100 vehicles) would exit onto Seafield Avenue, with the majority attempting to gain access to the High Street via the junction with Seafield Avenue. Even during the winter there are periods in the morning and late afternoon / early evening when the congestion at this junction, due to large articulated lorries unloading at the side of the Co-op store, combined with the constant movement of vehicles into the road in front of the Co-op, which serves as a car park for the store's customers, makes it very difficult for traffic to flow up or down Seafield Avenue. If the number of local vehicles attempting to use this road is increased by more than 100, plus all of the additional and unwieldy traffic created by the caravan park from Easter till October (52,000 visitors over the season) then the junction with the High Street (which is actually cross roads) will simply seize up. This problem will of course be compounded by the installation of the new traffic light controlled pedestrian crossing and associated street narrowing between the Bank of Scotland building and the Hydro Electric showroom.

The perceived solution to this problem in many cases will be to use Grant Road or Mossie Road both of which are narrow and frequently have residents vehicles parked outside their houses, which renders these roads completely unsuitable as rush hour relief routes.

It seems unbelievable that Highland Council Roads Engineers have not raised objections to this aspect of the developer's proposals and one must wonder if they have actually undertaken a traffic flow study of this particular junction in relation to the proposed development.

#### **5. The Moss (or Mossie)**

I have expressed concern about the future of various aspects of the moss in my previous five letters to your department, but reference to the drawings submitted with Muir Homes Revised Planning Application has done nothing to allay my fears.



Examination of the Bore Hole Drawing confirms that no bore holes were sunk nor trial pits dug in the vicinity of the proposed road bridge abutments. This was of course for the reason which was intimated in my letter of 11<sup>th</sup> March 2008 to Miss Grier, namely that the ground conditions were so bad that the drilling team were unable to set up their equipment. This information is not hearsay, it was imparted to me by the drilling foreman whilst still on site.

As a Chartered Civil Engineer with extensive experience of major road and bridge construction including large diameter bored and driven piling, I cannot believe that the Land Drill foreman did not note on his drilling log that he had been unable to set up his equipment and carry out trial bores in the area of the proposed road bridge. The Land Drill team had been sent back to the proposed development site for the express purpose of determining the soil conditions at two specific locations. The first was the road bridge site and the second was the foot bridge site, where I met and talked with the foreman.

The Mason Evans Partnership drawing entitled "Conjectured Thickness and Distribution of Depths of Peat" shows the area in the immediate vicinity of the proposed road bridge to contain no peat, in other words it is shown as good ground. The probability is that the draftsman who produced the drawing, noted that there was no borehole log for the bridge location and referred to the nearest information which was Trial Pits 3 and 4 on one side of the burn and Trial Pit 57 on the other side. These Trial Pits are a considerable distance apart and to guesstimate that there will be no ground variation over this distance is extremely risky, especially when there is a watercourse running through the area in question. In this case the guess was wrong, because the ground adjacent to the burn consists of deep peat and I do not make this statement entirely on the basis of what I was told by the drilling foremen, but backed up by my own examination of the site. My investigation was carried out with the aid of an extremely amateur, but very effective device - a 3 metre garden cane - which enabled me to penetrate the ground in the proposed bridge area to a depth of over 2 metres without encountering any resistance.

The Mason Evans Partnership Report states "Whilst we have carried out interpretation of the conditions between the exploratory holes, it should be recognised that soil and groundwater conditions can vary from point to point. As such, ground conditions other than those indicated by the exploratory holes may exist in areas not investigated, .... and further inspection may ultimately be required to ensure that the conditions encountered are consistent with those contained within this report."

It also states "While we have not conducted any detailed assessment of road construction requirements as part of this assessment, it was considered that the Local Authority Roads Department would not permit the construction of any adoptable roads or private driveways over areas underlain by peat soil."

The error in guesstimating the soil conditions within the proposed road bridge area very clearly underlines the significance of the Mason Evans Partnership first statement above. The second statement effectively means that unless Highland



Council Roads Engineers have carried out a detailed assessment of the ground conditions on the line of the proposed road, then whether or not a road could be built to an acceptable standard within this part of the site is completely unknown. Since the road line has certainly not been set out by anyone and has probably not yet been finalised by the developer, the Roads Engineers could not have done any assessment, detailed or otherwise at this point in time.

In view of the above situation, together with the fact that the proposed development is not on a "green field" site, but is to be built around a very important and vulnerable wetland area which is both a "valuable habitat" and a highly effective natural flood control mechanism, the developer cannot be allowed to enter the site until all of the many questions are satisfactorily answered. What ever else happens, the moss cannot be permitted to suffer any damage whether direct or indirect, accidental or otherwise. This view is backed by the SEPA report which states that the sides of the burn flowing through the site must sustain no damage.

It is quite obvious at this time that there are far too many unanswered questions surrounding this proposed development to permit an imminent decision on the future of the project and a sample of these questions is listed below.

- a) Why does the CNPA appear determined to put the cart before the horse as far as this project is concerned?  
It is a well known and well documented fact that the local infrastructure is already stretched to the limit in terms of education, health, water and sewerage, hospital, residential care and emergency services.
- b) Are the designs for the school extensions well advanced?
- c) Is the funding available for the necessary school extensions?
- d) Is the funding available to equip and staff the extended schools?
- e) The above questions apply equally to the health centre, water and sewerage services, the hospital and emergency services.
- f) The proposed development is to include around 40 affordable homes which sounds like excellent news for Grantown except for the fact that under current Government Legislation, very few of these homes may end up in the hands of Grantown people, because Highland Council may fill them with people from anywhere in the Highland area or even further away.

Does the CNPA Planning Department seriously believe that it is reasonable to overload Grantown with 193 houses in the hope that we may benefit by perhaps 10 or 12 affordable homes over the next 7 or 10 years?

This might be an appropriate point at which to draw attention to the 4 affordable houses which are currently being built by a local builder in Grantown, with no

strings attached and many similar small developments have been completed over the years.

- g) Has Highland Council Roads Department been asked to undertake a traffic management study in connection with this propose Development?
- h) Was the section within the Roads Department, which designed the new traffic light controlled pedestrian crossing, actually aware that a massive housing development was under consideration for Grantown?
- i) Has Highland Council Roads Department had any involvement in approving or checking the road system and suitability of the site for the roads within the proposed development?

In conclusion I would urge the CNPA Planning Department to embrace the terms of the Park Protocol, in particular Section 6 Liaison Procedures, paragraph 6.3, item 4 which reads "In addition, the CNPA and local authorities will encourage.....public consultation and participation." Adoption of this policy would greatly assist in alleviating the present feeling of exclusion and suspicion which pervades a large proportion of the Grantown community. Please remember, it is after all our town and our future.

I trust that my objections, questions and observations will be accepted in the spirit in which they are offered. Any criticism is intended to be both constructive and helpful.

Yours sincerely,



Gregor I. Mackenzie

CC. Fergus Ewing MSP  
Danny Alexander MP  
Stuart Black Councillor  
Jim Beveridge Community Councillor

**PLEASE ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF THIS E-MAIL.**

Cairngorms National  
Park Authority  
- 2 JUN 2008  
RECEIVED

"Owl Wood"  
Mossie Road,  
Grantown-on-Spey,  
Moray,  
PH26 3HW.

28th May 2008

Miss Mary Grier  
Project Planning Officer,  
Cairngorms National Park Authority,  
Ground Floor,  
Albert Memorial Hall,  
Station Square,  
Ballater,  
Aberdeenshire,  
AB35 5QB

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Cairngorms National Park Authority</b> |           |
| Planning Application No.                  | 06/820/cp |
| <b>REPRESENTATION</b>                     |           |
| ACKNOWLEDGED                              | 2/6/08    |

Dear Miss. Grier,

**REVISED PLANNING APPLICATION BY MUIR HOMES  
FOR THE ERECTION OF 193 HOUSES IN GRANTOWN-on-SPEY**

Having now had the opportunity to read the Muir Homes File in some detail, as well as further studying the drawings submitted as part of the Revised Planning Application, I have a number of additional comments and observations which I believe to be pertinent to the proposed development.

**Road Layout**

The revised layout drawings show the access road from the proposed bridge crossing to the Mossie Road section of the development, cutting through a considerable area of the birch wood which is so vital to the control of the water level in the moss. In view of the potential damage which could be inflicted on the moss by the removal of a significant number of trees, I believe that prior to any further consideration of the development in this area, it would be prudent to ask the developer to produce a detailed setting out drawing for the road and then to arrange for the centre line of the road to be set out on site. This would have two benefits, firstly it would clarify exactly where the proposed road would run and what area of birch wood would require to be removed and secondly it would enable accurate soil testing to be carried out at predetermined intervals along the line of the proposed road. This approach would have the advantage of producing a more accurate overall result by eliminating the possibility of any undue influence arising in the choice of trial/bore hole position.



### Housing Design Layout and Density

The Highland Council Local Plan for Badenoch and Strathspey shows quite clearly that the projected development for the whole of the Seafield Avenue – Castle Road East – Mossie Road area totals 180 houses on a developable site of 15.6 hectares (equivalent to 11.54 houses per hectare). For a variety of reasons it has been necessary to reduce this developable area to around 7.9 hectares (figure supplied by the developer's architect). Not least of the reasons for this reduction in area is that Highland Council, quite obviously, did not visit this site prior to producing the layout drawing, which allocates areas for housing development in what is clearly part of the moss, which acts as a natural flood control mechanism for a significant part of Grantown.

While Roy Mitchell Design Ltd. considers 10% to be a normally acceptable increase in the notional housing numbers in the Local Plan, the siting of 110% of the original planned number of houses in an area restricted to 50% of the planned size, is most certainly not normally acceptable practice. The suggestion that the density of housing should be double that shown in the Local Plan is so outrageous it is hard to believe that an experienced firm of professional architects would even consider making such a proposal and it is certainly to be hoped that the CNPA Planning Department will remind the developer, in the strongest possible terms, that the matter of excessive density was pointed out to the architect in a letter of 21<sup>st</sup> December 2006, paragraph (23).

The developer's architect states that 25 houses per hectare is nationally considered to be a medium density development, but national standards are calculated as averages and include large urban areas, which renders this category completely inappropriate for a small highland town which is characterized by its outstanding architecture and open layout and is prominently positioned within a National Park

It is also noted that Roy Mitchell Design Ltd. were informed in paragraph (25) of the letter of 21<sup>st</sup> December 2006 that five of the house designs were "unacceptable" and revised proposals should be submitted to "replace" them. They were also told that "there is a clear need for a design concept which is unique to the proposed location and reflects the vernacular architecture of the area in which it is proposed." The reaction of the architect and presumably the developer, to this request, has been to retain the same inappropriate urban designs which produced the criticism of the first submission. In addition the drawings included in the Resubmitted Planning Application of March 2008 reveal that the "unacceptable" designs have not been "replaced", but are still included in the proposals. Is this a demonstration by the developer, of unbelievable stupidity, or simple arrogance and contempt for the planning process? No, the truth is that large building companies like Muir Homes are not set up to cope with any major deviation from their standard house design, which in this case is totally unsuitable for the proposed location, for Grantown and for the National Park and must therefore render this type of company wholly inappropriate for any housing development within a National Park. Once again it must be stressed that the local building firms are best equipped to provide the necessary housing within their area, quite apart from the fact that the stated policy of the CNPA is to sustain local business and hence employment.



The Revised Planning Application of March 2008 indicates that of the twelve houses proposed for the area between Mossie Road lane and the proposed road bridge, six are of the above "unacceptable" designs, four are of an inappropriate two storey design and a further one is of unacceptable orientation, while the whole of this area of the project is grossly over developed and completely at variance with both the Local Plan and CNPA stated policy. These comments are fully supported by Policy 18, Design Standards for New Developments, which states that "New developments will reflect and reinforce the pattern and character of the surrounding area....." and that "The amenity enjoyed by neighbouring properties will be protected... ."

It is interesting to note that under the sub-heading of "Woodlands" in their Planning Consultation Response, the CNPA Natural Heritage Section acknowledge that "the untouched fringe" of the birch wood "would also provide a high amenity outlook for the front of the new units" as a result of developing only one side of the proposed new access road for the Mossie Road area of the project. This sentiment is reiterated in the CNPA Planning letter of 21<sup>st</sup> December 2006 which states under a similar sub-heading that "This would also address ..... concerns regarding security and surveillance of areas of public open space, as well as the aesthetic benefits of housing fronting onto such areas..." as the birch wood.

I believe that in these circumstances the residents of Mossie Road are entitled to expect this same sentiment to be applied by the CNPA Planning Department when considering the design, orientation and density of housing proposed for this area of the project, because under the present proposals, the "high amenity outlook" and "aesthetic benefits" which have been enjoyed by the Mossie Road properties for the past twenty or thirty years, would be completely destroyed and this loss of amenity would be magnified in the case of the two bungalows directly overlooking the moss.

I trust that these comments and criticisms will be regarded in the manner in which they are intended, namely to be positive and helpful.

Yours sincerely



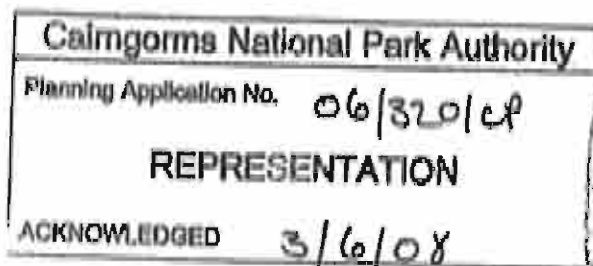
Gregor I Mackenzie



"Owl Wood"  
Mossie Road,  
Grantown-on-Spey,  
Moray,  
PH26 3HW.

29th May 2008

Miss Mary Grier  
Project Planning Officer,  
Cairngorms National Park Authority,  
Ground Floor,  
Albert Memorial Hall,  
Station Square,  
Ballater,  
Aberdeenshire,  
AB35 5QB.



Dear Miss. Grier,

**REVISED PLANNING APPLICATION BY MUIR HOMES  
FOR THE ERECTION OF 193 HOUSES IN GRANTOWN-on-SPEY**

On this occasion my comments relate to one specific area of the proposed development site and to the relevant paragraph in the Local Plan.

Paragraph 3.3.9 states that land adjoining the Ian Charles Hospital and Grant House will be safeguarded from development for amenity purposes "and to retain scope for expansion of the facilities, should the need arise."

The site layout drawing which accompanies the Local Plan, once again indicates that very little thought was given to the likely extent of a hospital expansion or indeed to the significance of Paragraph 3.3.9 of the Local Plan. However since the housing areas are purely representational, it may be assumed that the "safeguarded" land adjoining the hospital, while hopelessly inadequate, is also purely indicative of the requirement specified in the Local Plan. The inadequate land allowance has unfortunately been carried over into the site plan which accompanies the Deposit Local Plan, which in turn has resulted in Muir Homes producing a development drawing indicating full use of the entire area between the Hospital boundary and that of Grant House, as well as developing right up to the north western boundary of the hospital, thereby leaving insufficient land available for compliance with Paragraph 3.3.9.

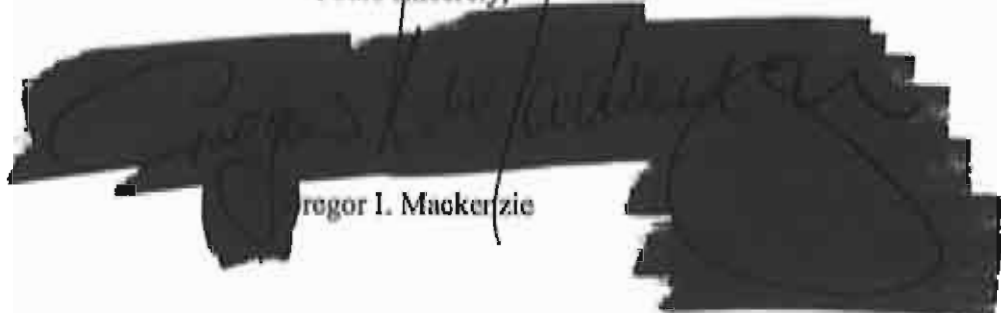
In the light of two recent reports in the local newspaper (April 23<sup>rd</sup> & May 28<sup>th</sup> 2008), of discussions taking place between Highland Council and NHS Highland regarding a possible combined medical and social care facility, it would appear that the quoted "need" may be about to "arise". It is therefore of the utmost importance that no

decision should be reached regarding the access area from Castle Road East (Phase 2B), of the Muir Homes project, until those involved in the current discussions are able to provide a realistic assessment of the extent and position of the area of land which they will require for the new facility.

While these discussions are in their infancy and it may be some considerable time before any detail of the required development area can be produced, this should not be regarded as a reason to proceed with the approval of a large, unsuitable and unnecessary housing project at the subsequent expense of a modernised and enlarged health and care facility for the whole of the local community in Grantown and the surrounding area.

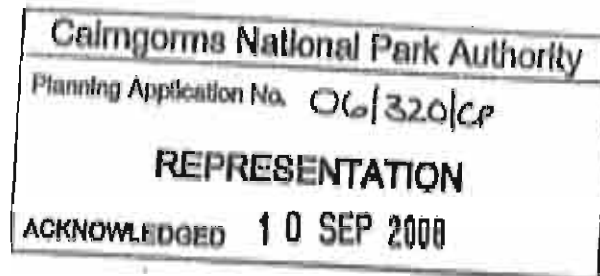
I have no doubt that you are acutely aware of the conflicting interests in this part of the development site, but the issues involved are of such magnitude that it is of paramount importance that the long term interests of the local community are given preference over the commercial aspirations of a national developer and that the final decision is the correct one.

Yours sincerely,



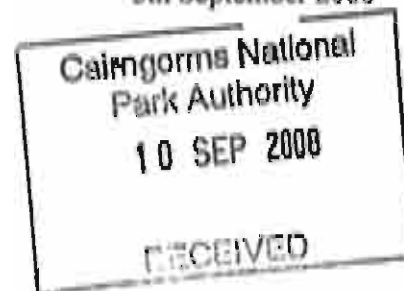
regor I. Mackenzie





"Owl Wood"  
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5th September 2008



Miss Mary Grier  
Project Planning Officer,  
Cairngorms National Park Authority,  
Ground Floor,  
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Dear Miss. Grier,

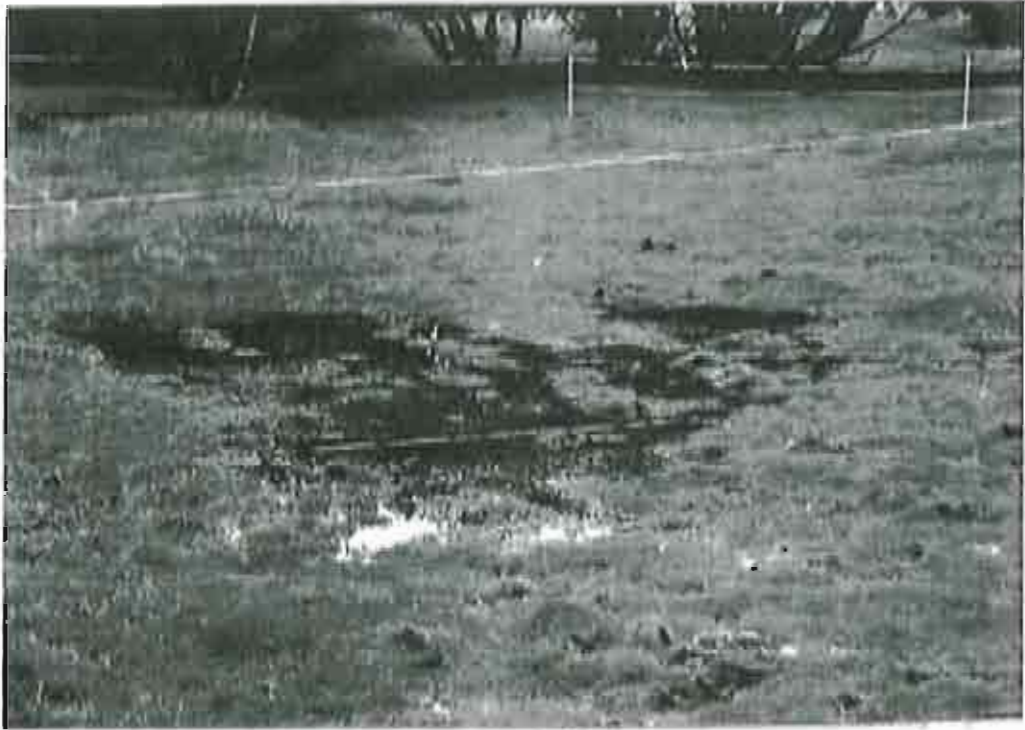
**REVISED PLANNING APPLICATION BY MUIR HOMES  
FOR THE ERECTION OF 193 HOUSES IN GRANTOWN-on-SPEY**

Having now had time to carry out a closer inspection of the surface water drainage details for the Muir Homes proposed development for Grantown-on-Spey, I find that there are a number of areas of concern and for this reason it is my intention to copy this letter to SEPA.

The entire site of the proposed development has a very high water-table, the level of which fluctuates with relatively modest rainfalls. A walk over the site and a casual inspection of the vegetation growing there reveals that substantial areas are affected by this fluctuating water level. Although the bulk of the site investigation, carried out on Muir's behalf, was undertaken during an extremely dry summer period in 2005, no serious attempt has been made to monitor the ground-water level variations during the subsequent three years.

Photograph No 1 on the next page shows one of the numerous areas in which water regularly takes several days to infiltrate the ground due to the effect of the high water-table. This particular flooding occurred after one day of rain in August 2008, but is a regular occurrence in the area of Phase 1A of the proposed development. Photographs No 2 & 3 illustrate a similar problem on the land behind the hospital, which flooded on this particular occasion, as a result of heavy winter rain causing a local burn to overflow its banks. This flood was sufficiently extensive to require the services of the local fire brigade to pump out the hospital car park and surrounding land. Photograph No 4 gives a clear indication of the volume of water which required to be pumped off the site, even although the photographs were all taken towards the end of the pumping operation.





**Photograph No 1**



**Photograph No 2**



Photograph No 3



Photograph No 4

The areas shown in these photographs, along with many others within the vicinity of the moss, experience varying degrees of flooding on a regular basis, due to the presence of a high or shallow water-table.

In view of the very obvious indications that this was a wet site, it would have been both professional and prudent for Muir Homes to have arranged for the water level to be measured at a significant number of points throughout the site, on a regular basis (weekly or fortnightly) over a period of twelve or eighteen months and for the results to be plotted against the recorded rainfall over the same period. The failure to acquire this information and the consequent ignorance of what actually happens to the ground-water levels, casts considerable doubt on the value of much of the surface water drainage proposal.

It might also be appropriate to point out at this juncture, that Highland Council have clearly failed in their duty to properly examine this site before allocating it for housing in their 1997 Local Plan.

Returning to the drainage design for the proposed development and considering only the surface water drainage at the present time, I would direct your attention to SEPA's Consultation response dated 26<sup>th</sup> September 2006 which states, inter alia, that *"SEPA notes that it is proposed to construct swales around the site adjacent to roadways..... An existing wetland area will also be utilised in the overall surface water treatment scheme. Provided the above proposals still apply to the application then this is acceptable to SEPA in terms of water quality."*

G & D Engineering Services Drainage Report – Rev C ( received by CNPA on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2008) states in paragraph 3 that *"The principal means of providing SUDS for the development will take the form of "At Source" measures such as swales, porous paving and other infiltration measures."* It also states that any surface water flows from the remainder of the development (this comment refers to Phases 1A, 2, 3, and 4) *"will discharge to the existing wetland area at various locations as indicated on our drawings.... This wetland area will not only provide attenuation volume but also provide a level of surface water treatment in accordance with SUDS guidelines."*

SEPA's Consultation response dated 8<sup>th</sup> April 2008 reiterates approval similar to that of 26<sup>th</sup> September 2006, in the form of *"SEPA notes that:- Surface waters will be drained via swales; porous paving and infiltration measures (as shown on drawing 11605/007Rev C). From a water quality perspective this is acceptable to SEPA."*

However, the proposal to use the existing wetland to *"provide a level of surface water treatment"* is not *"in accordance with SUDS guidelines"*. In fact numerous bodies involved in the development and design of the SUDS system have produced papers on the subject and almost without exception they state that:-

- ❖ *"wetlands" incorporated into SUDS drainage systems "are specially constructed features";*



- ❖ *"existing wetlands are rarely suitable, for a variety of reasons, not least of which is disturbance of the natural balance that has evolved within that system"*
- ❖ *"only specially constructed wetlands should be used to treat surface water"*.

In addition to these quotations from erudite publications, I would draw to your attention a SEPA publication "for developers, landowners, planners, consultants, architects and engineers" entitled "A DO's and DON'T's GUIDE for PLANNING and DESIGNING Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)".

- ❖ Item 1 on the DON'Ts List
- ❖ DON'T use existing ponds, wetlands or ditches for SUDS treatment.

How then can SEPA possibly say that:-

- ❖ "...this is acceptable to SEPA in terms of water quality" (Planning Consultation Response 26<sup>th</sup> September 2006)
- ❖ "From a water quality perspective this is acceptable to SEPA" (Planning Consultation Response 8<sup>th</sup> April 2008)

Although the design engineers' drawing No 11605/PRE 4 claims to show a "Proposed Swale Detail" it incorporates none of the features of a swale and the Notes on the main drainage drawings do not even list swales as being incorporated in the drainage works. The detail on drawing No 11605 / PRE 4 is in fact a type of filter drain, the use of which is prohibited by SEPA on sites in which the water-table is shallow.

- ❖ SEPA Guide for Planning and Designing SUDS, item 6 in the DON'Ts list.
- ❖ DON'T use filter drains/infiltration trenches where the water-table is shallow.

All of the road drainage shown on the main drainage drawings Nos. 11605/007 Rev C and 11605/008 Rev B either conforms to the detail for a *"Proposed road filter drain in grass verge"*, as shown in the Notes on the drawings, or consists of a standard piped gully system. This means that all of the surface water drainage in Phases 1A, 2, 3 & 4 of this project is by means of filter drains infiltrating the ground water or by road gullies and pipe runs discharging into the existing wetland, both of which are contrary to SEPA's guide lines and SUDS principles and are therefore totally unacceptable.

Having demonstrated that the proposal to use the existing wetland for surface water treatment is contrary to SEPA guide lines and to the general principles of SUDS, this is an appropriate point at which to explain that the wetland on this site is a moss, which is entirely different from the wetland described in SUDS literature. The SUDS wetland takes the form of a settling or balancing pond of sufficient depth to provide additional temporary storage for a significant volume of excess surface water arising



from an exceptional storm, but also incorporating shallow areas planted with marsh and wetland vegetation which provides a good level of natural filtration as well as encouraging wildlife. The moss in contrast accommodates naturally occurring increases in surface water during storm periods and functions as a flood regulating mechanism, by absorbing the excess water to the point at which the fibrous ground becomes completely water logged. This process has developed over many decades if not centuries and is currently further assisted by the natural regeneration of birch trees within its boundaries. Contrary to the beliefs of G & D Engineering, the moss has no capacity to attenuate the flow or store the excess of storm water being delivered through seven pipes, ranging in size from 225mm (9") to 400mm (16") in diameter, in addition to the storm water it currently absorbs. Under extreme storm conditions this design proposal would result in the destruction of the habitat and balance of the moss as well as over spilling into the burn which runs through the moss and into the River Spey.

It should also be noted that the water which Muir Homes proposes to discharge into the moss will be untreated (i.e. polluted) surface water which would flow straight into an area described in the CNPA Local Plan as "*a valuable habitat which must be maintained*". This clearly means that the design of the proposed surface water drainage system is totally unacceptable for this site. In fact what it does mean is that this site is wholly unsuitable for any form of major construction.

In Phase 1 of the proposed development the drainage is much more straightforward and all surface water leaves the site untreated, via a storm water pipe system which discharges directly into what is referred to in the introduction to the Development Impact Assessment as an "*existing drain that runs through the development site*". Unfortunately however, this "*existing drain*" is in fact an existing burn which is a tributary of the River Spey and the surface water which will not be subjected to any form of chemical filtration, will flow down the burn to pollute the River Spey, which is an SAC (Special Area of Conservation) strictly protected under the EC Habitats Directive.

At this point it is also worth noting that:-

- 1) The Environment Agency information on SUDS, highlights the following facts:-
  - ❖ Surface water run-off can contain contaminants such as oil, organic matter and toxic metals.
  - ❖ Although often at low levels, cumulatively they can result in poor water quality in rivers and ground water, affecting biodiversity, amenity value and potential water abstraction.
  - ❖ After heavy rain, the first flush is often highly polluting.

2) The CIRIA information on SUDS states that "Pollutants that need to be controlled include:-

- ❖ Car oil and antifreeze
- ❖ Detergents (from car washing)
- ❖ Household chemicals
- ❖ Garden chemicals

Exactly how it is proposed to effect this required control remains unanswered, but it would be a fond hope indeed, to believe that any new development such as Muir Homes propose, could possibly be free of all of the above pollutants as well as salt from winter road maintenance and diesel and oil from delivery and service vehicles. Yet without an absolute guarantee that the surface water discharged from Phase 1 is free of any pollutants, this proposed surface water drainage system cannot be implemented

This entire site poses an enormous drainage problem which only serves to emphasise its total unsuitability for any form of major development.

Yours sincerely,



Gregor I. Mackenzie

cc. Don McKee CNPA  
SEPA  
Scottish Water  
Fergus Ewing MSP  
Danny Alexander MP  
Jim Beveridge - CC