
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Title: REPORT ON CALLED-IN PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Prepared by: HILARY MACBEAN PLANNING OFFICER
(DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT)

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED: ROAD REALIGNMENT AND JUNCTION WORKS AT ST. ANDREWS TERRACE AND MAR ROAD, BRAEMAR

REFERENCE: 08/364/CP

APPLICANT: GORDON LAND LTD. 479 NORTH DEESIDE ROAD, CULTS, ABERDEEN

DATE CALLED-IN: 14 NOVEMBER 2008

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT FULL PLANNING PERMISSION SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS

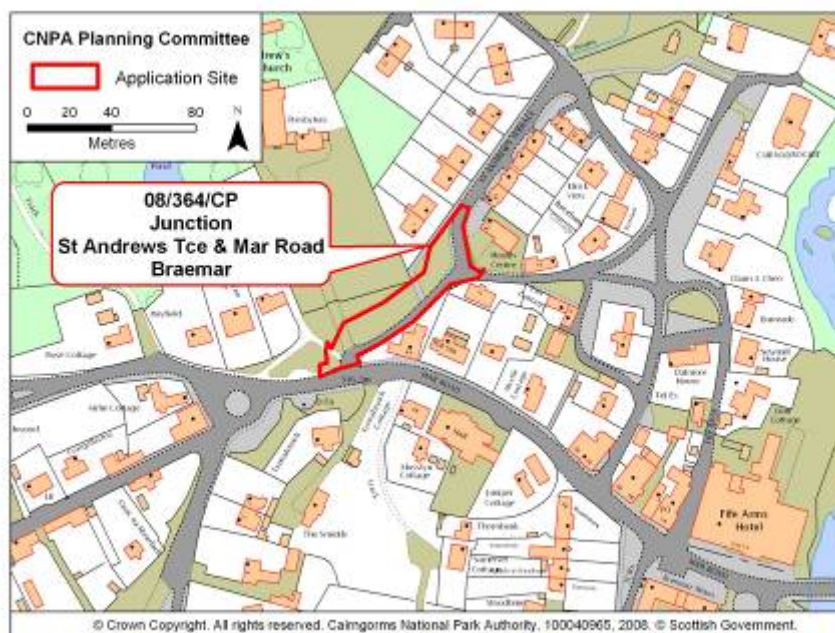


Fig 1. Location Plan

SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL

1. On 30th May 2008 the Planning Committee of CNPA granted planning permission subject to conditions and a S75 Agreement, for the development of 30 private houses at St Andrew's Terrace, Braemar (07/219/CP, Item 8). A further application for the provision of 11 affordable houses (07/222/CP, Item 8) was approved at Kindrochit Court, Braemar. The S75 remains outstanding but is close to completion. This report covers the junction and road works to St Andrews Terrace, between Mar Road, Braemar and the approach to the main development site off St Andrews Terrace, past the junction with Cairnadrochit. These works are required in order to provide a satisfactory access to the St Andrew's housing site. They involve a realignment of the junctions, the provision of a new stretch of St Andrews Terrace to replace the substandard road off Mar Road and a realignment of pedestrian footpaths. Two small trees would be removed. The works require full planning permission because they are within the Braemar Conservation Area.
2. Condition 2 of the forthcoming planning permission 07/219/CP requires the completion of these works to at least base course level prior to the commencement of any other works on the main housing site.

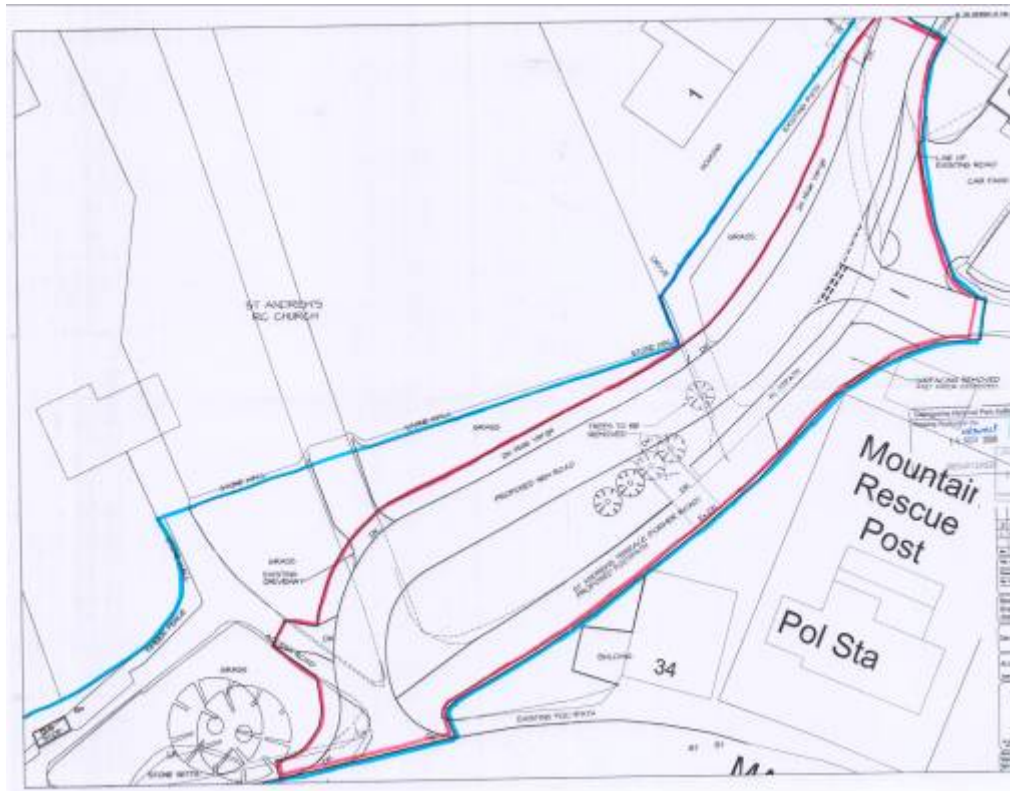


Fig. 2 Layout plan of proposed realignment scheme



Fig. 3 For information. The main housing site layout off St Andrew's Terrace.



Fig. 4. St Andrew's Terrace looking East



Fig. 5 St. Andrew's Terrace looking West



Fig. 6 Access to St Andrew's Church at the point where the realigned junction leaves Mar Road

DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONTEXT

Cairngorms National Park Plan 2007

7. Strategic objectives for Landscape, Built and Historic Environment, include; maintaining and enhancing the distinctive landscapes across the Park; ensuring that development complements and enhances the landscape character of the Park; and ensuring that new development in settlements and surrounding areas complements and enhances the character, pattern and local identity of the built and historic environment. Strategic objectives for Sustainable Communities, include making proactive provision to focus settlement growth in the main settlements and plan for growth to meet community needs in other settlements. Strategic objectives for Housing include; increasing the accessibility of rented and owned housing to meet the needs of communities throughout the Park; promoting effective co-ordination and co-operation between all public and private organisations involved in housing provision in the Park and the communities living there; and ensuring there is effective land and investment for market and affordable housing

to meet the economic and social needs of communities throughout the Park.

8. **SPP3 (Planning for Housing)** acknowledges that good housing in the right locations makes an important contribution to achieving Scottish Government policy objectives in relation to economic competitiveness, social justice and sustainable development. SPP3 provides general policy advice on creating quality residential environments, guiding new housing developments to the right places, and delivering housing land.

Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Structure Plan (NEST) 2001-2016

9. **Policy 11 (General Housing Considerations)** states that local plans shall ensure that housing developments respect all relevant planning policies and make a positive contribution to sustaining the community in which they are located through sensitive siting, good quality design and use of appropriate densities; take account of the availability of infrastructure, services and facilities, and direct housing preferentially to brownfield sites within settlements. **Policy 20 (Built Heritage and Archaeology)** seeks to protect and enhance conservation areas and protect the integrity and setting of Listed Buildings.

Aberdeenshire Local Plan 2006

10. **Policy Env\5A (National Scenic Areas)** does not permit development that would have an adverse effect on a National Scenic Area, unless the developer demonstrates any adverse effects are outweighed by social and economic benefits of national importance, the overall integrity of the area will not be compromised and there is no alternative site for the development. The highest standards of design are required.
11. **Policy Env\8 (Trees and Woodland)** states that development that would cause the loss of trees or woodlands which are either covered by an existing TPO or of significant ecological, recreational, historical, shelter or landscape value, will be refused, unless, its public benefits at the local level clearly outweigh the value of the habitat, the development is sited and designed to minimise adverse effects and there are satisfactory measures to replace or enhance existing trees and woodlands.
12. **Policy Env\17 (Conservation Areas)** advises that such areas will be protected against any development that would have a detrimental effect on their special character or setting. New development must be of the highest quality. **Policy Env\18**

(Listed Buildings) advises that all listed buildings shall be protected against works which would have a detrimental effect on their listed character, integrity or setting. **Policy Env\22 (Public Access)** states that development that would have an adverse effect on any existing or potential public access for walking, cycling or horse riding will be refused unless, it retains existing and potential public access while maintaining or enhancing its amenity value or it makes alternative access provision that is no less attractive, safe and convenient.

13. **Policy Inf\2 (Parking, Servicing and Accessibility)** advises that development will be approved if it is, amongst other things, it is well integrated to existing settlements, complies with the Council's standards, and it can be accessed conveniently by walkers and cyclists. **Policy Inf\4B (SUDS)** requires surface water to be dealt with in a sustainable manner.
14. **Policy Gen\1 (Sustainability Principles)** requires development to be assessed against sustainability indicators that relate to the local environment, community and economy. **Policy Gen\2 (The Layout, Siting, & Design of New Development)** sets out general criteria for siting and design of new development. **Policy Gen\5 (Landscaping Standards)** seeks development to provide adequate landscaping proposals

CONSULTATIONS

15. **Aberdeenshire Council's Transport and Infrastructure Service** advised at the time of the main housing application that the junction of Mar Road and St. Andrews Terrace is steep and poorly aligned and a section of St. Andrews Terrace is narrow. Improvements to the existing road network, outwith the application site, will be required to provide adequate access to the site. Cairnadrochit Road is an alternative route to the housing site but, for various reasons, this cannot be upgraded. The proposed road and junction improvements will be required before house construction commences and construction vehicles should use the improved access and not Cairnadrochit. It is not expected that permanent traffic would use Cairnadrochit as the improved road would provide the easier access. The improvements should be completed at an early date as they serve an established part of the village and a number of existing residential properties, the church and the clinic. No one way system or other traffic measures are necessary at the present time.

16. **Braemar Community Council:** At the time of the main housing application, the CC raised several issues of general concern to the community including the need to see the detail of the associated road works. There was a concern about general disturbance during construction, particularly from traffic. All existing well used footpaths require to be accommodated during the construction phase and fully reinstated on completion of the works. The Community Council have made no further comments on the current planning application for the road realignment works.

REPRESENTATIONS

17. Four letters of representation have been received. In summary, these raise the following points:
- *St Andrews Church is a category B Listed Building and part of Braemar's cultural heritage. The realignment almost to its gate would severely detract from its vista and serenity, tantamount to vandalism.*
 - *Loss of trees.*
 - *Construction vehicles and future residents may use Cairnadrochit to approach the site. Cairnadrochit is narrow with many accesses and is entirely unsuitable for lorries and a one way system should be put in place to manage traffic.*
18. Copies of the representations are attached to the report.

APPRAISAL

The Need for the Development

19. The need for the road realignment and junction improvements arises out of the impending housing development at St Andrew's Terrace. The Aberdeenshire Council's Transportation and Infrastructure Service has identified the improvements necessary in order to provide a safe and competent access capable of supporting an additional 30 houses plus the traffic already using the road. The improvement will also deflect traffic from the very narrow and substandard Cairnadrochit by providing a much better access into St Andrew's Terrace. Parking and pedestrian access to the clinic off St Andrew's Terrace would be reorganised and improved to provide separated arrangements.

20. Condition 2 of the approved planning permission for houses at St Andrews Terrace requires the access road to be realigned to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority in consultation with the Transport and Infrastructure Service. The housing development cannot go ahead without these works.

Listed Building and Conservation Area

21. The realignment works are located outside the entrance to St Andrew's Church and within the Braemar Conservation Area. It is incumbent on the Planning Authority to preserve and enhance the character and setting of Listed Buildings and the character and amenity of conservation areas. The realignment cuts directly through the approach road to St Andrew's Church and slices through a pleasant and characterful grassed public amenity area on the approaches to St Andrew's Terrace. There would be a noticeable reduction in the grassed area as the existing road would be retained to provide a separate pedestrian access. St Andrew's Church itself is set 100 metres back from the existing public road, amongst mature trees. A stone wall marks a clear boundary between the curtilage of the church and the public amenity space. The wall would be unaffected and the setting of the church would barely be affected. The vista towards the church, as seen up the private approach driveway would be foreshortened but the effect on the setting of the church would be marginal and may even improve in that less cars would park on the approach road. There is alternative parking in the general vicinity.
22. The quality of the character of the public amenity space at the locality would be reduced and to this extent the works are not desirable unless the housing development goes ahead. However, there are benefits to pedestrian enjoyment of the area in that the pedestrian route would be clearly separated from vehicles. Two small semi-mature but stunted Horse Chestnut Trees would be removed but should be replaced by more appropriate species elsewhere on the site. In all, the character and setting of both St Andrew's church and the Conservation Area are preserved to the extent that public enjoyment of these assets will continue and the relevant planning policies are met.

Conclusion

23. The realignment will enable a housing development on allocated residential land to go ahead in support of social objectives to support the community. The setting of the nearby

listed St. Andrew's Church would be only marginally diminished and the attractiveness of the grassed public amenity space, although reduced, would be largely maintained and could be better enjoyed by pedestrians. The improvements would reduce existing and anticipated pressures on Cairnadrochit by providing a much better vehicular approach to St Andrew's. Planning policies to protect the special designations and amenity of the area are therefore met and the application is recommended for approval subject to conditions.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE AIMS OF THE NATIONAL PARK

Conserve and Enhance the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Area

24. There will be some diminution of the old character of the immediate vicinity and some tree loss but balanced with all other considerations and adopted planning policy, these are not of such significance to result in resistance to the proposals.

Promote Sustainable Use of Natural Resources

25. There are limited implications for this aim in providing the materials and resources for the construction and reduction in green space.

Promote Understanding and Enjoyment

26. No material implications for this aim.

Promote Sustainable Economic and Social Development

27. The development will enable the main housing development that in turn provides the opportunity for the provision of the off site affordable residential units in an area of need. This can be considered to be positive to this aim.

RECOMMENDATION

28. That the Committee agree a recommendation to:

Grant Full Planning Permission for the road realignment and junction works at St Andrew's Terrace and Mar Road, Braemar, subject to the following conditions:

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun within five years from the date of this permission.
2. That no works in relation to the planning permission hereby granted shall commence until planning permission for the related development of houses at St Andrew's Terrace (07/219/CP) is issued.
3. Prior to the commencement of works for the implementation of planning permission (07/219/CP), the works hereby approved shall be completed to at least base course level. The works shall be completed to adoptable standard, including the footpaths, grassed areas and installation of lighting columns, to the satisfaction of CNPA acting as Planning Authority in consultation with Aberdeenshire Council's Transportation and Infrastructure Service within 6 months of the commencement of the development hereby approved.
4. Prior to the commencement of development, the developer shall submit full working details of the method of on-site disposal of surface water drainage. This shall be in accordance with the Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems Design Manual for Scotland and Northern Ireland, CIRIA (C521), to the satisfaction of the CNPA acting as Planning Authority in consultation with Aberdeenshire Council's Transportation and Infrastructure Service.
5. At no time shall Cairnadrochit be used by construction vehicles and signage shall be put in place prior to the commencement of works, directing all contractor's vehicles to access the site via Mar Road.
6. That prior to the commencement of works for the installation of the street lighting, exact details and specifications for the proposed street lighting columns, which shall be of a heritage style to match others in Braemar, shall be submitted for the further written approval of the CNPA acting as Planning Authority, in consultation with Aberdeenshire Council's Transportation and Infrastructure Service.

7. Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, details of the positions, types and sizes of two replacement trees shall be submitted for the approval of the CNPA acting as Planning Authority. The trees shall be at least semi-standard size and of a native deciduous species and shall be positioned within the public amenity area on the application site (08/364/CP) and planted with suitable deer protection. The trees shall be planted by the end of the first planting season following the commencement of the development hereby approved.
8. There shall be no works at the site in relation to the development hereby approved on Sundays or during the conduct of funerals, weddings, Christenings or special services at the St Andrews Church.

Advice Notes

Roads Authority

The road realignment is subject to an application for Roads Construction Consent to the Aberdeenshire Council Transportation and Infrastructure Service. The application is required prior to the commencement of the works and must be submitted at least three months before the road works commence.

An application for a Road Opening Permit is required prior to the commencement of the works. For information and an application form telephone 01569 768455.

Hilary MacBean
16 January 2009

planning@cairngorms.co.uk

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