
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Title: REPORT ON CALLED-IN PLANNING APPLICATION

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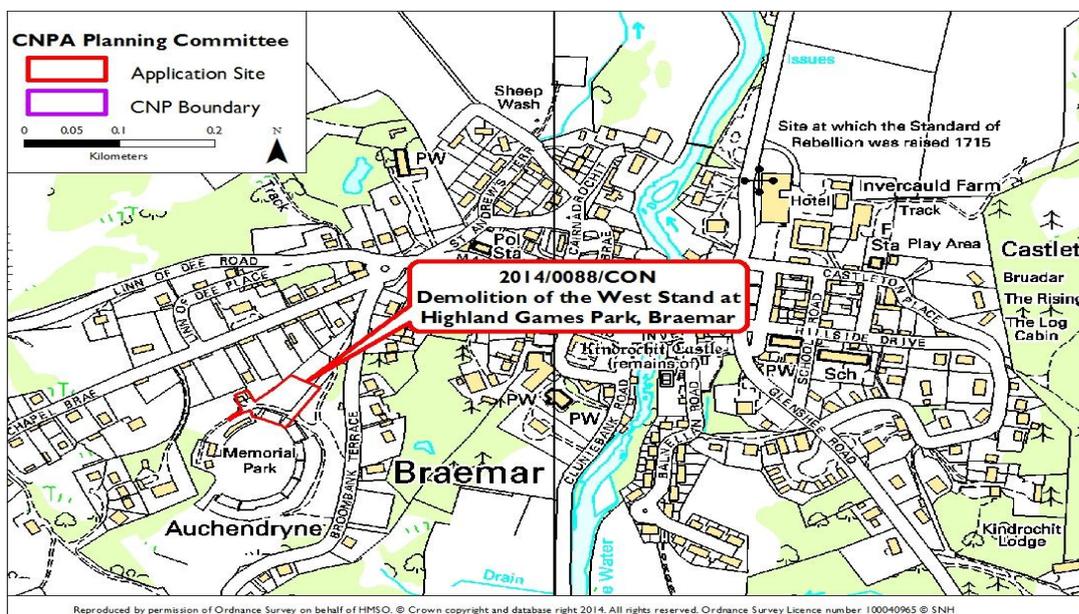
DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED: Demolition of West Stand at Land To North Of Princess Royal And Duke Of Fife Memorial Park, Moorfield House Road, Braemar

REFERENCE: 2014/0088/CON

APPLICANT: Mr William Meston, Braemar Royal Highland Charity

DATE CALLED-IN: 24 March 2014

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS



Grid reference: (E/314711, N/791301)
Fig. I - Location Plan

SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL

1. Conservation Consent is sought to demolish the West Stand at the Memorial Park in association with the development of a Grandstand and Visitor Centre incorporating exhibition/interpretative spaces, BRHS office, reception, retail, cafe and supporting ancillary accommodation (CNPA Application No 2014/0026/DET) at the same address. The application site lies to the south-west of the village centre and comprises the northern part of the Memorial Park.



2. The site lies within the Braemar Conservation Area. The Princess Royal and Duke of Fife Memorial Park, Patron's Pavilion, Private Enclosure and Gatepiers only, Broombank Terrace, Braemar are Category C Listed Buildings and were listed on the 15 January 2014.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONTEXT

National policy

3. **Scottish Planning Policy¹ (SPP)** is the statement of the Scottish Government's policy on nationally important land use planning matters. It supersedes a variety of previous Scottish Planning Policy documents and National Planning Policy Guidance. Core Principles which the Scottish Government believe should underpin the modernised planning system are outlined at the outset of **SPP** and include:
 - The constraints and requirements that planning imposes should be necessary and proportionate;
 - The system shouldallow issues of contention and controversy to be identified and tackled quickly and smoothly; and
 - There should be a clear focus on quality of outcomes, with due attention given to the sustainable use of land, good design and the protection and enhancement of the built and natural environment.
4. **SPP** emphasises the key part that development management plays in the planning system, highlighting that it should “operate in support of the Government’s central purpose of increasing sustainable economic growth.” Para. 33 focuses on the topic of Sustainable Economic Growth and advises that increasing sustainable economic growth is the overarching purpose of the Scottish Government. It is advised that “the planning system should proactively support development that will contribute to sustainable economic growth and to high quality sustainable places.” Planning authorities are encouraged to take a positive approach to development, recognising and responding to economic and financial conditions in considering proposals that would contribute to economic growth.
5. Under the general heading of Sustainable Development, it is stated that the fundamental principle is that development integrates economic, social and environmental objectives, and that the “aim is to achieve the right development in the right place.”
6. As a replacement for a variety of previous planning policy documents the new **Scottish Planning Policy** includes ‘subject policies’, of which many are applicable to the proposed development. Topics include economic development, rural development, historic environment and landscape and natural heritage.

Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP) December 2011

7. The Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP) sets out Scottish Ministers’ policies, providing direction for Historic Scotland and a policy framework that informs the work of a wide range of public sector organisations. It states that the remains of the past can act as a powerful catalyst and a stimulus to high quality new design and development, leading to successful regeneration and community-building. The Ministers believe that the historic environment should be valued as an asset, rather than thought of as a barrier to development. This reinforces the identity of
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communities, and can add value, provided that value is recognised at the outset and it becomes an integral part of any development or regeneration project.

8. The SHEP states that the protection of the historic environment is not about preventing change. Ministers believe that change in this dynamic environment should be managed intelligently and with understanding, to achieve the best outcome for the historic environment and for the people of Scotland. Such decisions often have to recognise economic realities.

Strategic Policies

Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan (2012 - 2017)

9. The Partnership Plan sets out the vision and overarching strategy for managing the Park and provides a strategic context for the Local Development Plan. Three long term outcomes have been identified to deliver the vision for the Park and development proposals would be expected accord with those :
 - A sustainable economy supporting thriving businesses and communities;
 - A special place for people and nature with natural and cultural heritage enhanced; and
 - People enjoying the park through outstanding visitor and learning experiences.

The CNP Partnership Plan can be viewed on the Cairngorms National Park Authority website at <http://cairngorms.co.uk/park-authority/about-us/publications/?publicationID=299>

Local Plan Policy

Cairngorms National Park Local Plan (2010)

10. The Cairngorms National Park Local Plan was formally adopted on 29th October 2010. The full text can be found at :
<http://www.cairngorms.co.uk/parkauthority/publications/results.php?publicationID=265>
11. The Local Plan contains a range of policies dealing with particular interests or types of development. These provide detailed guidance on the best places for development and the best ways to develop. The policies follow the three key themes of the Park Plan to provide a detailed policy framework for planning decisions:
 - Chapter 3 - Conserving and Enhancing the Park;
 - Chapter 4 - Living and Working in the Park;
 - Chapter 5 - Enjoying and Understanding the Park.
12. Policies are not cross referenced and applicants are expected to ensure that proposals comply with all policies that are relevant. The site-specific proposals of the Local Plan are provided on a settlement by settlement basis in Chapter 6. These proposals, when combined with other policies, are intended to meet the sustainable development needs of the Park for the Local Plan's lifetime. The following paragraphs list a range of

policies that are appropriate to consider in the assessment of the current development proposal.

13. Policy 9 – Listed Buildings: There will be a presumption in favour of development that preserves a listed building, or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. The layout, design, materials, scale, siting and use of any development will be appropriate to the character and appearance of the listed building and its setting. Where a listed building is in serious risk of collapse or irrevocable decay, enabling development may be considered where all alternative means of funding or enabling have been exhausted and the proposal will secure the preservation of the building. Any such development will be the minimum required to secure the buildings restoration.
14. Policy 10 – Conservation Areas: Development within a conservation area or affecting its setting, will preserve or enhance its character. Policy 10 requires that the design, materials, scale, layout and siting of any development will be appropriate to the character and appearance of the conservation area and its setting. The supporting text includes reference to the protection given to trees in conservation areas in the legislation and advises that the removal of such trees will only be considered appropriate in exceptional circumstances. This is based on an assessment of the contribution that the tree makes to the character of the conservation area.
15. Policy 16 – Design Standards for New Development: This is one of a number of policies which is intended to encourage developers to consider how they can best include the principles of sustainable development in their proposals, and consider the impact on the environment, economy and community. Policy 16 requires that all proposals are accompanied by a design statement which sets out how the requirements of the policy have been met. The design of all development is encouraged to :
 - Reflect and reinforce the traditional pattern and character of the surrounding area and reinforce the local vernacular and local distinctiveness, whilst encouraging innovation in design and materials;
 - use materials and landscaping that will complement the setting of the development;
 - demonstrate sustainable use of resources;
 - protect the amenity enjoyed by neighbouring properties and all proposals will be designed to help create environments that can be enjoyed by everyone; and
 - be in accordance with the design standards and palette of materials as set out in the Sustainable Design Guide.
16. Braemar is identified as an intermediate settlement within the settlement hierarchy in the CNP Local Plan. The subject site is within the settlement boundary and is neither designated specifically for development nor specifically excluded from development, provided the relevant policy criteria are met.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

17. In addition to the adoption of the Cairngorms National Park Local Plan (2010) on 29th October 2010, a number of Supplementary Planning Guidance documents were also adopted, including the Sustainable Design Guide, Developer Contributions and Natural Heritage, all of which are relevant to the current application.

Sustainable Design Guide

18. The guide highlights the fact that the unique nature and special quality of the Cairngorms National Park and the consequent desire to conserve and enhance this distinctive character. The guidance has at its core the traditional approach to design which aims to deliver buildings which provide a resource efficient, comfortable and flexible living environment. The **Sustainable Design Guide** requires the submission of a Sustainable Design Statement with planning applications. It is intended that applicants would use the Sustainable Design Statement to demonstrate how standards set out in the Sustainable Design Checklist will be achieved.
19. One of the key sustainable design principles referred to in the document is that “future development in the Park should be sensitively located, reflect existing development pattern and setting, and respect the natural and cultural heritage of the Park.” Developments are also required to reflect traditional materials and workmanship, and take on board innovation, contemporary design and the emergence of modern methods of construction.

CONSULTATIONS

20. **Aberdeenshire Council Environment Planner** advises that although in principle Aberdeenshire Council do not object to the formation of a visitor's centre, exhibition/ interpretive space, offices, retail area and café they do wish to raise the following concerns:-
- As mentioned in the Sustainable Design Statement, the above property was listed category C on 15th January 2014 under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) (Scotland) Act 1997 Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest. This highlighted the location as a rare example of a permanent highland games structure and in particular makes note of the Patron's Pavilion.
 - Following this, we would have concerns over the scale and proportions of the proposed centre in its current location. The proposed site is directly adjacent to the above mentioned pavilion and due to its scale it dominates the current structure. It is our policy that new developments in a historic setting should be submissive to the original structure and this does not comply.
 - Secondly, the current entrance to the Memorial Park from the North heading out of Braemar, is very open and plays an important role in the

setting and visual connection with the overall park area on the approach. The proposed building would block this view and therefore have a detrimental impact on the setting. Again in terms of built heritage this is not something we would support.

21. The officer advises that the overall design and materials chosen are sympathetic and would in principle be supported by Aberdeenshire Council, however, they would look to see either a reduction in scale or a proposal to separate the visitors centre from the grandstand and have it situated in a less prominent location.

REPRESENTATIONS

22. None

APPRAISAL

23. This application requires to be considered in parallel with the planning application for the redevelopment of the same site (CNPA Application No 2014/0026/DET). This related application is being reported to the same Planning Committee Meeting with a recommendation that it is approved subject to a series of planning conditions.
24. Aberdeenshire Council's Environment Planner has identified issues with the replacement building but has not specifically objected to the demolition of the existing West Stand. The report on the planning application has addressed the points that have been made.

Conclusion

25. In the event that the planning permission is granted for the proposed replacement building, it is considered that granting conservation consent for the demolition of the West Stand would accord with the Development Plan policies subject to a condition to tie in the demolition works with the replacement building.
26. If the Members of the Committee are minded to approve this application it will require formal referral to Historic Scotland.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE AIMS OF THE NATIONAL PARK

Conserve and Enhance the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Area

27. The Braemar Highland Games is a major element of the cultural heritage of the National Park and will be enhanced by the creation of new visitor facilities. The demolition of the West Stand will facilitate this development.
28. The demolition of West Stand would facilitate the wider development proposals for the site, which are the subject of a separate planning application and will, in

themselves, promote contribute towards conserving and enhancing the natural and cultural heritage of the area.

Promote Sustainable Use of Natural Resources

29. The demolition of the West Stand will have no impact on this aim.

Promote Understanding and Enjoyment of the Area

30. The demolition of the West Stand will have no impact on this aim.

Promote Sustainable Economic and Social Development of the Area

31. The demolition of West Stand would facilitate the wider development proposals for the site, which are the subject of a separate planning application and will, in themselves, promote sustainable economic and social development of the area.

RECOMMENDATION

That Members of the Committee support a recommendation to grant conservation consent for the demolition of the West Stand at Land To North Of Princess Royal And Duke Of Fife Memorial Park, Moorfield House Road, Braemar subject to the following conditions:

- I. No works of demolition shall take place until construction contracts have been entered into for the replacement development of the site and written evidence of this has been submitted and approved in writing by Cairngorms National Park Authority acting as Planning Authority. The replacement development shall be for a scheme, which has a current full planning permission.

Reason: To ensure that the Cairngorms National Park Authority acting as Planning Authority retains effective control over the timing of the development to avoid premature demolition within the Conservation Area, in the interests of visual amenity.

Advice Notes

- 1 In accordance with section 58(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended), this permission lapses on the expiration of a period of 3 years beginning with the date on which this permission is granted unless the development to which this permission relates is begun before that expiration.
- 2 It is recommended that all construction works (including deliveries of materials) shall take place within the hours of 0800 to 1800 Mondays to Fridays and 0900 to 1300 on Saturdays, there shall be no work or deliveries of materials on Sundays and Public Holidays.

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23.05.14

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.