
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

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

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DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT)**

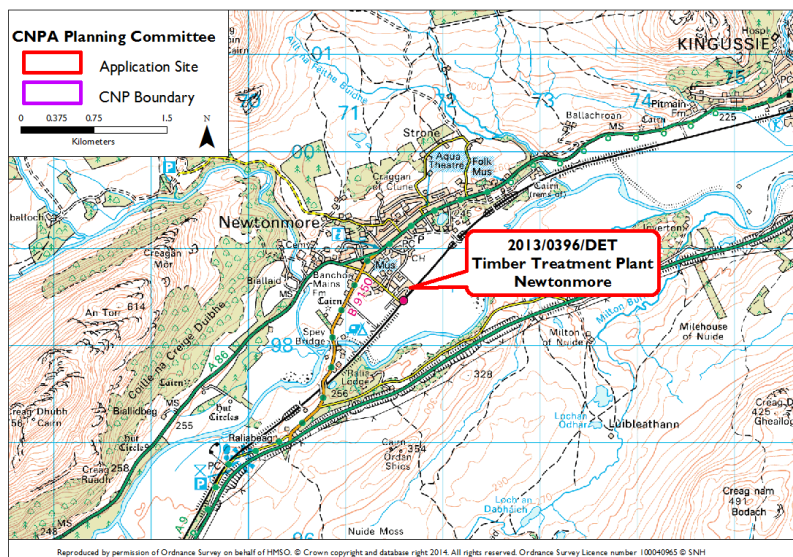
DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED: **ERECTION OF OFFICE/SHOW, ACCESS & CAR PARKING WILL BE VIA A NEW NON-ADOPTED ROAD FROM THE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE & ERECTION OF LEAN-TO TO EXISTING SAWMILL SHED FOR A NEW LOG BOILER HEATING SYSTEM AT TIMBER TREATMENT PLANT, NEWTONMORE INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, STATION ROAD, NEWTONMORE**

REFERENCE: **2013/0396/DET**

APPLICANT: **RUSSWOOD LIMITED**

DATE CALLED-IN: **16 DECEMBER 2013**

RECOMMENDATION: **APPROVAL SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS**



Grid reference: E/271616, N/798611)

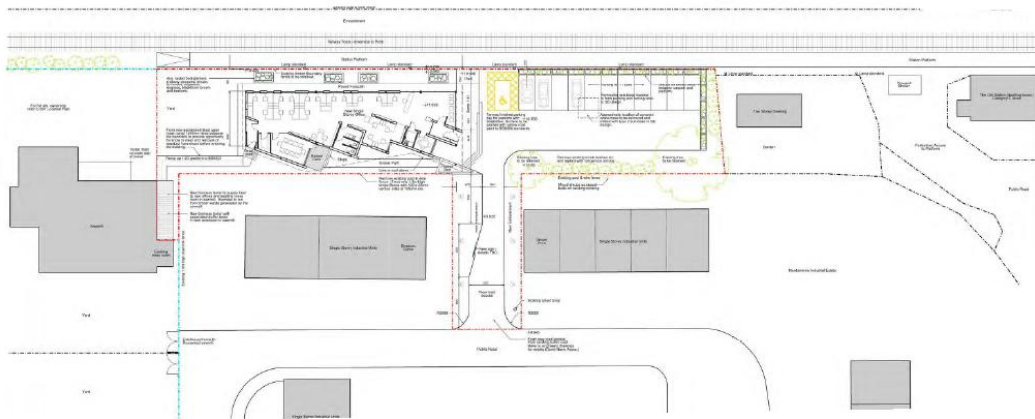
Fig. I - Location Plan

SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL

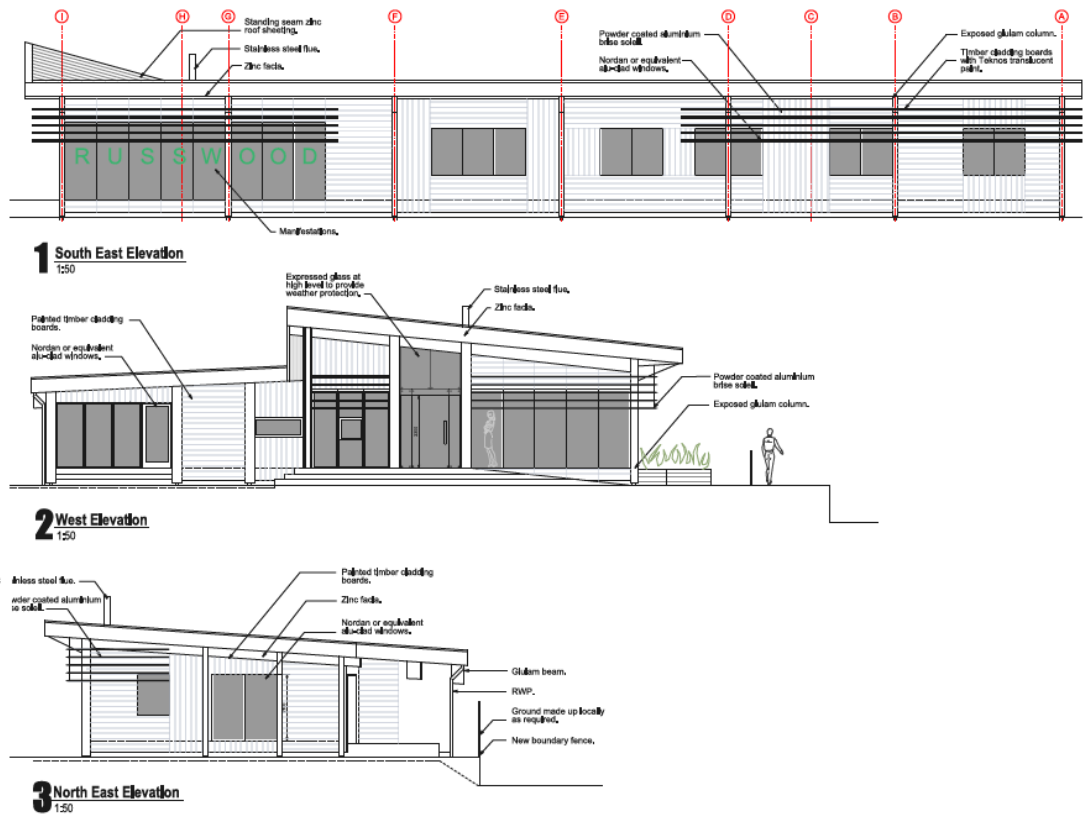
- 1 The site is the former railway siding located between the platform of Newtonmore railway station and the single storey business units that form part of the Newtonmore Industrial Estate. This part of the site is currently used for storage of timber in connection with the main business. The site is highly visible from the railway station and has open views towards the east and south to the Cairngorms.
- 2 The site is long and narrow, relatively flat but level generally with the station platform. Access is only from the sawmill yard, hence a new access is proposed from the industrial estate. The surrounding properties are a mixture of mainly single or two storey buildings with low pitch or flat roofs, and have different use classes; public transport, light industrial, residential and offices/workshops.
- 3 The station building is a listed building Category B and the site is separated from this building by the recent 'signal box' development. The station is one of the main entrances into the National Park by train and the application site is readily visible by railway users.

Development Proposal

- 4 The development site is accessed via a new access route between the existing industrial units. The development comprises a single storey office/showroom building and an adjoining car park for visitors with 12 spaces in total.



- 5 The application describes the ethos of the proposed design as to create an architecture that respects the site, the wider landscape and the function of the building. As well as providing much needed office accommodation the building will act as the 'shop window' for the company, incorporating materials that demonstrate best practice for the products that the applicant manufactures and supplies.



- 6 The proposed building is single storey. The application states that the large roof plate has been designed to mimic the rolling hill forms nearby as well as give necessary protection to the external cladding. The north-west side of the building has been developed as a series of parallel walls reflecting the traditions of railway sidings in plan and the stratified nature of rock formations seen within the wider landscape.
- 7 The proposed materials comprise best practice use of render and timber cladding with high performance windows and zinc roof cladding. The Design Statement advises that this simple collection reflects the traditions of highland architecture, subtle colours with an emphasis towards grey and white mimicking the snow clad hills in winter and giving depth to the form providing visual interest.
- 8 Some hard and soft landscaping will be introduced to enhance the amenity of the building. Space for new planting is at a premium but the scheme includes the use of timber raised beds along the railway elevation, the railway side of the new car park and near the main entrance that will contain a mixture of indigenous shrubs appropriate for the local climate that will provide a habitat for wildlife and soften the visual impact of the existing fence at the back of the platform.

- 9 In this context, the application drawings show the retention of an existing tree but the company has taken the decision to remove it, as it was a poplar planted in 1988 and had grown to a size where its presence in close proximity to buildings nearby would eventually pose a danger. In its place, 3no half standard silver birch will be situated in the western corner of the car park.
- 10 In terms of sustainability, the application includes the following information:-
- The proposed materials will be sourced locally where possible.
 - The proposed construction will give approximately 25% improvement on insulation levels currently required by Building Standards.
 - The principal heating will be provided from biomass and renewable, a combination of a wood burning stove and log boiler with ducted heat distribution and heat recovery and cooling designed in such a way as to minimise the buildings running costs and reduce energy consumption.
 - The proposed life of the new dwelling is approximately 60 years. Construction materials will be suitable for re-use.

Site History

- 11 Planning permission has been granted by Highland Council for a number of previous developments on the Russwood site, the most recent ones being a timber drying shed (08/00191/FULBS), an extension to an existing shed for painting area (10/04011/FUL) and an office and showroom (11/01874/FUL).

DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONTEXT

National policy

- 12 *Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) (February 2010)* is the statement of the Scottish Government's policy on nationally important land use planning matters. It encourages planning authorities to take a positive approach to development, recognising and responding to economic and financial conditions in considering proposals that would contribute to economic growth and has the basic aim 'to achieve the right development in the right place'.
- 13 As a replacement for a variety of previous planning policy documents the Scottish Planning Policy includes 'subject policies'. The key ones in relation to the proposed development are policies relating to economic development and the historic environment. Decisions on the location of new development should:
- Promote regeneration and the re-use of previously developed land,
 - Reduce the need to travel and prioritise sustainable travel and transport opportunities,
 - Promote the development of mixed communities,
 - Take account of the capacity of existing infrastructure,
 - Promote rural development and regeneration, and

- Prevent further development which would be at risk from flooding or coastal erosion.
- 14 The SPP advises that authorities should respond to the diverse needs and locational requirements of different sectors and sizes of businesses and take a flexible approach to ensure that changing circumstances can be accommodated and new economic opportunities realised. Removing unnecessary planning barriers to business development and providing scope for expansion and growth is essential.

Strategic Policies

Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan (2012 - 2017)

- 15 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. A sustainable economy supporting thriving businesses and communities;
 - b. A special place for people and nature with natural and cultural heritage enhanced; and
 - c. 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)

- 16 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>
- 17 The Local Plan contains a range of policies and new development requires to be assessed in relation to all policies contained in the Plan. 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.
- 18 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.

- 19 *Policy 6 – Landscape* - This policy states that there will be a presumption against any development that does not complement and enhance the landscape character of the Cairngorms National Park, and in particular the setting of the proposed development.
- 20 *Policy 15 – Renewable Energy Generation* states that developments for small scale renewable energy schemes which support the aims of the Park will be supported where they have no adverse impact on the landscape, the amenity of neighbouring properties or the environment.
- 21 *Policy 16: Design Standards for Development* sets out the design standards to be met with new development and is supported by Supplementary Planning Guidance in the form of the Sustainable Design Guide.
- 22 *Policy 25 – Business Development* which specifies that development proposals which support economic development will be considered favourably where the proposal is compatible with existing business uses in the area and is located within an allocated business site.
- 23 The site lies within the settlement boundary of Newtonmore and is covered by Policy NM/ED2, which states that the existing industrial estate/business park will be protected and developments which consolidate the economic provision of this site will be supported.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 24 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:-

Sustainable Design Guide

- 25 This guidance encourages everyone involved in development in the Cairngorms National Park to adopt a more sustainable approach to design, and this should help to deliver individual buildings and larger scale developments which:
 - Are sensitively located, reflect existing development pattern and setting, and respect the natural and cultural landscape of the Park;
 - Reflect traditional materials and workmanship and take on board innovation, contemporary design and the emergence of modern methods of construction;
 - Maximise efficient use of natural resources;
 - Minimise negative environmental impacts; and
 - Provide the foundation stone for sustainable communities.

CONSULTATIONS

- 26 **Network Rail** - no objections in principle to the proposal, but due to its close proximity to the operational railway, request that the construction methods are taken into account, and included as conditions or advisory notes, if granting the application.
- 27 **Newtonmore Community Council** – no response.
- 28 **Highland Council TEC Services Roads** – no objection to the proposed development.
- 29 **Highland Council EPC** - Their records indicate that the site has a current/historic use as a Timber Treatment Works which may have resulted in land contamination. From the information provided as part of the application, the proposed development would not appear to materially change the risk of potential contamination, and a contaminated land condition which requires further investigation is not recommended for this application.
- 30 However, it is recommended that the Applicant is informed of potential contamination issues in an informative on any decision notice.
- 31 **CNPA Economic Development Manager** - Although a project which proposes to invest a significant amount of money into the local economy, create new employment and provide the basis for business growth, is welcome it is very difficult to give a precise steer on the impacts to the village and surrounding area without seeing further information (ideally a business plan with financial projections and a marketing strategy).
- 32 However given the applicants past record of delivering a high quality product and service it would be safe to assume that any significant investment will have been well planned and researched to ensure an adequate return on investment and therefore economic benefits to the wider area through an increase in trade.
- 33 **Highland Council Environmental Health** – Satisfied that it is unlikely that the development as proposed will have a significant effect on local air quality. No objections subject to conditions relating to dust and odour and noise.

REPRESENTATIONS

- 34 No representations have been received.

APPRAISAL

- 35 The planning legislation requires that applications are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

- 36 The application proposes an office/showroom development, which is acceptable in principle within the industrial estate. The proposal has not met with objections on technical issues.
- 37 The development then stands to be considered against the design policy and Supplementary Planning Guidance on Sustainable Design. It is considered that the design approach has followed the guidance and that the proposed building will create an interesting feature that fits well into its setting, both when viewed from the station platform by railway users and when viewed by customers visiting the facilities.
- 38 In particular, the architect has sensitively located the proposed building, taking care to respect the setting both in relation to the station but also the wider landscape setting of the site. The design is innovative and contemporary but reflects traditional materials, maximises efficient use of resources and minimises negative environmental impacts.

Conclusion

- 39 It is considered that the works are in compliance with the Development Plan policies and that there are no material considerations which would indicate that permission should not be granted.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE AIMS OF THE NATIONAL PARK

Conserve and Enhance the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Area

- 40 By reason of their considered design, the proposals will blend well with their setting and help contribute towards conserving and enhancing the natural and cultural heritage of the area.

Promote Sustainable Use of Natural Resources

- 41 The proposals have been designed to be as sustainable as possible and include a biomass boiler and other design features in this respect, thereby contributing to the sustainable use of natural resources.

Promote Understanding and Enjoyment of the Area

- 42 The proposals will not make a significant contribution towards this aim.

Promote Sustainable Economic and Social Development of the Area

- 43 The provision of new offices and showroom will support and enhance an important local business and is expected to have economic benefits to the wider area through an increase in trade. The construction of the offices will also support the building trades.

RECOMMENDATION

That Members of the Committee support a recommendation to GRANT Planning Permission subject to the following conditions:

1 No development shall commence until details of the materials for the roof, walls and doors have been approved by the Cairngorms National Park Authority acting as planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that the building materials are appropriate in this sensitive location, in the interests of visual amenity.

2 No development shall commence until details of the colour and finish of the boiler flue have been approved by the Cairngorms National Park Authority acting as planning authority. The boiler flue shall have a matt finish in an unobtrusive colour.

Reason: To ensure that the colour and finish is appropriate in this sensitive location, in the interests of visual amenity.

3 No development shall commence until details of the proposed landscaping have been approved by the Cairngorms National Park Authority acting as planning authority. All landscaping shall be completed during the first growing season following the completion of the building.

Reason: To ensure that the planting scheme is appropriate in this sensitive location, in the interests of visual amenity.

4 All necessary measures shall be taken to control any dust or odour which arises from operations.

Reason: To avoid nuisance to neighbouring residents, in the interests of residential amenity.

5 The design and installation of any plant, machinery or equipment should be such that any associated noise complies with Noise Rating Curve 25 when measured and/or calculated within any nearby noise sensitive dwelling, and that no structure borne vibration is perceptible within any nearby noise sensitive dwelling.

Reason: To avoid nuisance to neighbouring residents, in the interests of residential amenity.

Informatives

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.
3. There is the potential for contamination at this site due to its current/ former use as Timber Treatment Works. As the proposed development would not appear to materially change the risk of potential contamination at the site an investigation is not required at this stage. However, be advised that all sites with a former industrial/commercial use have been prioritised by the Highland Council under duties conferred by Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, and may require investigation in the future. In addition land contamination issues may affect property value. Should you wish to discuss potential contamination issues or commission your own investigation, please contact TEC Service - Contaminated Land for advice.
4. Network Rail advises that construction works must be undertaken in a safe manner which does not disturb the operation of the neighbouring railway. Applicants must be aware of any embankments and supporting structures which are in close proximity to their development.
 - Details of all changes in ground levels, laying of foundations and operation of mechanical plant in proximity to the rail line must be submitted to Network Rail's Asset Protection Engineer for approval prior to works commencing on site. Where any works cannot be carried out in a "fail-safe" manner, it will be necessary to restrict those works to periods when the railway is closed to rail traffic i.e. by a "possession" which must be booked via Network Rail's Asset Protection Engineer and are subject to a minimum prior notice period for booking of 20 weeks.

The developer must contact Network Rail's Asset Protection Engineers regarding the above matters, contact details below:

Network Rail Asset Protection Engineer
Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road
Glasgow, G4 0LQ
Tel: 0141 555 4887
E-mail - AssetProtectionScotland@networkrail.co.uk

Fiona Murphy
planning@cairngorms.co.uk
Date 25.11.13

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