

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

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

Prepared by: **NEIL STEWART, PLANNING OFFICER
(DEVELOPMENT CONTROL)**

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED: **ALTERATIONS TO AND EXTENSION OF
STEADING, ROAD END, BALLIEWARD,
GRANTOWN-ON-SPEY**

REFERENCE: **04/087/CP**

APPLICANT: **MR. & MRS. C. SWAN, WESTER
INVERUGLAS, INSCH, BY KINGUSSIE**

DATE CALLED-IN: **27 FEBRUARY 2004**



Fig. 1 - Location Plan

SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL

1. Ballieward Steading is a disused former agricultural building located approximately 2km to the north of Grantown-on-Spey on the west side of the A939 public road to Nairn (see Fig. 1.). The building sits in an open position at a level slightly higher than that of the road. Open agricultural land rises up to the west but drops down towards the south affording views in this direction towards the Cairngorms Mountains. Woodland exists on the north east boundary, across a minor road. The building itself is rectangular in configuration with a pitched roof. It is constructed with stone although the north gable is partially formed in timber. The roof is finished in corrugated sheeting (see Figs. 2. and 3.).



Fig. 2 - View towards site from the North Fig. 3 - Existing building (North gable)

2. An application to change the use of the building to a dwellinghouse was approved by Highland Council in December 2002. This application did not provide information on any alterations and extensions but the approval imposed a condition that required the submission of an application indicating these details. The result is this application.
3. The submissions show the conversion of the existing building with an extension to the rear to accommodate a 4/5 bedroomed house. The rear extension runs parallel with the existing building and is attached by a glazed link corridor. The extension has accommodation on two floors (upper floor within the roofspace) but the existing building is converted on the ground floor only. A single garage is proposed on the north gable of the extension and a detached pitched roof garage with log store is proposed within the grounds on the north side. Access is to be taken from the minor road at the northmost corner of the site and an existing access located close to the junction with the A939 is to be removed. The extension is to be finished in slate, timber cladding and a painted Scots wet dash render. The roof of the existing building is to be removed and replaced with a new slate roof.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONTEXT

4. Highland Structure Plan Policy G2 (Design for Sustainability) states that proposed developments will be assessed on the extent to which they, amongst other things, make use of brownfield sites, existing buildings and recycled materials, impact on resources including habitats, species, landscape, scenery and cultural heritage, and demonstrate sensitive siting and high quality design in keeping with local character and the historic and natural environment. Policy H3 only precludes the conversion of non-traditional buildings in the countryside.
5. Badenoch and Strathspey Local Plan Policy 2.2.1(b) (Agricultural Diversification) states that the conversion of redundant buildings for small scale business and residential purposes will be supported, subject to adequate access and compatibility with neighbouring uses and amenity.

CONSULTATIONS

6. The technical issues of drainage, access, water supply and archaeology were addressed, in the main, at the time of the original change of use application. However, a reconsultation exercise has been carried out.
7. Highland Council's Area Roads Manager has advised that the conditions recommended at the time of the previous application be imposed again if approval is given. These required the closing of the existing access near to the junction with the A939 and a new access being formed off the minor road at least 50m from the A939. The submission indicates this. Other conditions relate to visibility splays, surfacing, and the provision of a service bay.
8. Highland Council's Environmental Health Officer initially stated that the original geodivining survey for the private water supply indicated that the likelihood of success of a borehole was in the region of 75%. This did not confirm that the supply would have been adequate for the development. The applicants have, however, dug a 50m borehole and it is stated that it produced a flow of water of approximately 1000/1500 gallons of water per hour. The test was carried out by a suitably qualified person. The Environmental Health Officer has stated that this is adequate.
9. Highland Council's Archaeology Service has stated that the building is of historic interest and of value to future research. It was depicted on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of c.1870. They state that works should not be carried out without a visual record first being made. A condition requiring a photographic record of the building and its immediate setting should be imposed. A similar condition was imposed on the previous permission and the applicants agent has confirmed that they are happy to provide the required information.

10. At the time of the previous application, Highland Council's Building Control Service inspected several trial pits for foul drainage and it was found that the ground was unsuitable for an underground soakaway. An above ground mound soakaway system of drainage was therefore agreed. SEPA have been consulted on this method of drainage and have stated that they have no objection providing it complies with the Building Regulations, in particular in relation to distances from watercourses. In addition, they have a preference for there being secondary treatment of effluent prior to the discharge to the mound soakaway. The applicant's agent has confirmed that there are no watercourses in close proximity to the site and that the position of the mound soakaway has been chosen to avoid any cross contamination. A secondary means of treatment can be provided.

REPRESENTATIONS

11. No representations have been received.

APPRAISAL

12. As detailed above the technical issues of drainage, access, water supply and archaeology have been addressed. The previous application has established the principle of allowing this building to be converted and extended to form a house. Planning policy in the Structure Plan and the Local Plan permit the re-use of traditional buildings in the countryside. The determination of this proposal therefore hinges on the design of the proposals and their appropriateness to the character of the existing building and its surroundings.
13. At the time of the call-in, in relation to the need to conserve and enhance the cultural heritage of the area, the Committee were concerned about the size of the extension and the impact that this would have on the character of this rural building. The building certainly has a simple form and character, typical of many in rural areas throughout the National Park. There are few apertures, except for a large double cart door in the north gable. It is clearly a functional building. By setting back the extension to the rear and using a glazed link between the two parts, the integrity, form, character and scale of the original is retained. Amendments to the proposal were suggested in order to try and reduce the extent of the additions and the architect has submitted a revised scheme. In this revised proposal, to further emphasise the character and form of the original, all additions to this part of the house have been removed and there has been a reduction in the size and number of new openings. Also timber cladding and a glazed opening with external timber storm doors have been employed on the north gable to reflect the character of what exists at present.
14. The footprint size of the new wing to the rear is marginally larger than that of the existing building. The overall ground to ridge height is also higher but due to the ground level differences between the structures, at its maximum, this difference in height, is only 1m. The overall form, massing and scale of the

new build wing is similar to the original and due to the fall in ground levels to the south and east, and the fact that it is set back from the original, the extension will not appear out of scale or overbearing. The materials proposed are traditional to the area and complement those on the original steading. For these reasons, although the site is fairly prominent in the landscape, it is submitted that the proposal will not adversely effect the character of the existing building or its surroundings and that the proposal will allow for the retention and appropriate re-use of this rural building.

15. To conclude, the proposal complies with planning policy in terms of the Highland Council Structure and Local Plans. Unlike in other Council areas of the National Park, these policies do not restrict the amount of extension permitted when carrying out rural building conversions. The National Park Authority will be developing its own policies on this type of development in due course and it may be that restrictions will evolve. However, the determination of this application is reliant on the extant Council policies and the wider aims of the National Park. As stated below, it is felt that the development does not create any overriding negative implications for the aims of the Park. As such, the recommendation is one of approval.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE AIMS OF THE NATIONAL PARK

Conserve and Enhance the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Area

16. The site is not located in a sensitive area in terms of nature conservation. Although the site is fairly prominent in the immediate landscape, the building already exists and the scale and design of the extension will not provide any significant landscape or visual impacts which would impinge on the character of the countryside. The applicant's agent has also stated that some native tree planting and landscaping will be carried out within the site to provide a setting. In relation to cultural heritage, the proposals are allowing the retention and re-use of this traditional rural building and it is found that the development proposals will not adversely affect the character of this former steading. There are no negative implications in terms of natural or cultural heritage.

Promote Sustainable Use of Natural Resources

17. There are no discernible effects, positive or negative, in terms of this aim.

Promote Understanding and Enjoyment of the Area

18. There are no discernible effects, positive or negative, in terms of this aim.

Promote Sustainable Economic and Social Development of the Area

19. The development is of a small scale and therefore there are no discernible effects, positive or negative, in terms of this aim.

RECOMMENDATION

That Members of the Committee support a recommendation to:

Grant Full Planning Permission, subject to the following conditions:-

- i. The development to which this permission relates must be begun within five years from the date of this permission.
- ii. That notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992, no house extension shall be formed, and no greenhouse, shed or garage erected without the prior written consent of the Planning Authority.
- iii. The development shall be landscaped and maintained in accordance with a scheme which shall be submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority before development commences. The scheme shall indicate the siting, numbers, species and heights (at time of planting) of all trees and hedges to be planted and to the extent of any areas of earthmounding, and shall ensure:-
 - a. Completion of the scheme during the planting season next following the completion of the development, or such other date as may be agreed in writing with the Planning Authority.
 - b. The maintenance of the landscaped areas in perpetuity. Any trees removed, or which in the opinion of the Planning Authority, are dying, being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased within three years of planting, shall be replaced by trees of similar size and species to those originally required to be planted.
- iv. The boundaries, if marked, may only be marked by a simple post and wire fence and/or drystone dyking and/or deciduous hedging, unless an alternative is first approved in writing by the Planning Authority.
- v. Prior to the commencement of the wall rendering works, a sample panel, approximately 1 metre square, of the wet harling and its paint colour shall be prepared on site for the inspection and further written approval of the Planning Authority.
- vi. Prior to the commencement of the works to stain the external timber boarding, exact details of the stain colour shall be provided for the further written approval of the Planning Authority.
- vii. The oil tank shall be screened by a timber fence and/or shrub and tree planting, to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority.
- viii. Prior to the commencement of the development, a combined access and service bay shall be formed at a point at least 50 metres north west of the A939 public road. The access drive shall meet the public road at an angle

between 75 and 105 degrees. Construction for at least the first 6 metres from the nearside of the public road shall consist of a minimum of 40 millimetres thick close graded wearing course on 60 millimetres dense base course on a minimum thickness of 350 millimetres type 1 sub-base all on a sound foundation. Thereafter the access road shall be at least 3 metres wide and construction shall consist of 350 millimetres thick type 1 sub-base all on a sound foundation. The existing access shall be permanently closed off and the roadside verge reinstated to its natural condition.

- ix. Prior to the commencement of the development, there shall be formed, and thereafter maintained in perpetuity, visibility splays on both sides of the access to the public road measuring 3 metres by 90 metres in a north westerly direction and 3 metres by the distance to the junction with the A939 public road to the south east. Within the visibility splay areas so defined there shall be no obstruction to visibility exceeding 1 metre in height as measured from the adjacent carriageway level.
- x. Any gates that are provided shall be set back at least 6 metres from the edge of the public road and shall open into the property only; any fencing along the roadside boundary of the plot shall be set back at least 2 metres from the nearside carriageway edge and 1 metre from the edge of the service bay.
- xi. Prior to the commencement of development, a photographic record shall be made of the remains of the existing building and/or other features affected by the development, in accordance with the attached specification, and shall thereafter be submitted to the Planning Authority. No site clearance work shall take place until confirmation in writing has been received from the Planning Authority, following consultation with the Highland Council's Archaeology Service, that the record made has been lodged and is satisfactory.

Neil Stewart
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