

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

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

**Prepared by: HILARY MACBEAN, PLANNING OFFICER
(DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT)**

**DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED: DEMOLITION OF EXISTING HOUSE AND
ERECTION OF REPLACEMENT HOUSE AND
GARAGE AT FESHIE COTTAGE, FESHIE
BRIDGE**

REFERENCE: 08/312/CP

**APPLICANT: JOHN ARDILL C/O LESLIE HUNTER, 4
SEAFIELD PLACE, CULLEN**

DATE CALLED-IN: 19 SEPTEMBER 2008

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL

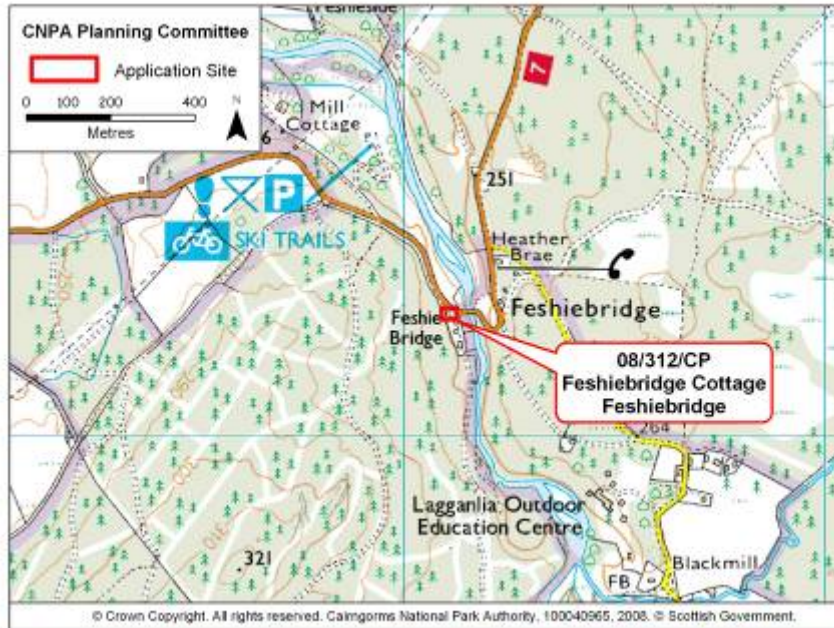


Fig. 1 - Location Plan



Fig. 2 Front of Feshie Cottage



Fig. 3 Rear of Feshie Cottage

SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL

1. The site is located immediately to the South West of Feshie Bridge, on rising land above the road. The existing house is a typical traditional Victorian cottage comprising a long symmetrical frontage with a central porch, two lower windows and two small dormers in a slate roof. The house has been modified with modern plastic windows and a modern white harl to the walls. There is a significant crack in the stone chimney at the South end. The timber work shows extensive decay and a rear single storey offshoot has already been demolished with the wall left in a dilapidated state. A small garden area to the front is bounded by a Snowberry hedge with a traditional vertical boarded fence below.
2. To the rear (West), the bank rises steeply to Forestry Commission land behind. To the North are two significant Fir Trees and woodland behind the road verge. To the South is a new house in a modern idiom, with a garage close to the application site. Beyond this house are a 1970's bungalow and a very traditional cottage. To the East, a shared access drops to the public road and a significant public path, proposed as a Core Path, runs below the houses to provide a link South through Glen Feshie to Linn of Dee and Atholl. To the East are the bridge and a sloping

wooded amenity area with picnic tables close to the river. The foot path runs on down river to the North, into the Forestry Commission car park at Feshiebridge.



Fig. 4 Proposed site plan

3. It is proposed to demolish the existing 2 bedroom/5 apartment cottage and replace it with a 3 double bedrooms/6 apartment house. The replacement would be very traditionally styled and finished in wet harl and vertical timber to the walls, a slate roof and timber sash windows and exposed rafter ends. Slate and stone will be salvaged for re-use. The front elevation would follow the same symmetry as the existing cottage but would be 1.7metres longer and 2.5 metres further forward. The height would be increased by 0.9m but the ratio of wall height to roof height would offer the same 50:50 ratio as the traditional existing cottage. There would be two lower windows and a central porch and two traditional dormers in the roof, with chimney stacks at each end. A rear extension measuring 6.25 metres long would form a T-shaped house. It would be the same height as the main cottage, with ground floor and roof space accommodation. It would be finished in vertical timber boarding and slate. A single garage with harled walls and a corrugated metal profiled roof

would be positioned to the rear South side. Drainage would be to the existing septic tank and soakaway.



Fig. 5 : Proposed elevations

DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONTEXT

National Planning Advice

4. **NPPG 18 Planning and the Historic Environment:** states that the historic environment “has tremendous visual appeal, provides inspiration and enjoyment and helps reinforce a sense of local, regional and national identity. Scotland's historic environment is characterised by its diversity..... More modest historic buildings, townscapes and landscapes are valued for their distinctive style and character, quality of workmanship, and important archaeological remains. The historic environment is of immense importance for education, recreation, leisure, tourism and the wider economy”.

Cairngorms National Park Plan 2007

5. Strategic objectives for Landscape, Built and Historic Environment include; ensuring that development complements and enhances the landscape character of the Park; with new developments within settlements and surrounding areas complementing and enhancing the character, pattern and local identity of the built and historic environment.

Highland Structure Plan 2001

6. **Policy G2 (Design for Sustainability)** considers that proposed developments will be assessed on the extent to which they are compatible with service provision, are accessible by public transport, cycling and walking, maximise energy efficiency, make use of brown field sites, existing buildings and recycled materials, impact on individual and community residential amenity, impacts on landscape, habitats, species, cultural heritage, promote varied, lively and well used environments and contribute to the economic and social development of the community.

Badenoch and Strathspey Local Plan 1997

7. The policy thrust of the Plan links social and economic development to maintaining the cultural and natural environment, with recognition of the need to improve urban design and enhance the character and identity of settlements.

CONSULTATIONS

8. **Heritage and Landscape Management (Ecology Officer):** the garden of the cottage is fringed by an old established hedge that is of (local) landscape and habitat significance for a range of species. Advice is given on enhancing the site for birds and a bat survey is required. Landscaping should use native species.
9. **Archaeology:** the building pre-dates 1870 and is considered to be of historic interest due to its age. The building, associated structures and the setting must not be significantly altered without a visual record first being made. A condition is recommended.
10. **Forestry Commission Scotland:** the adjacent forest is a managed crop in which trees will be felled and replanted, affecting views and shelter. The developer should take account of wind blow and surface water flows when developing close to the forest edge. Any deer fencing would be provided at the developers sole cost.
11. **Kincraig and Vicinity Community Council:** no comment.

REPRESENTATIONS

12. None

APPRAISAL

Legal Considerations

13. Outside Conservation Areas demolition in itself is defined as permitted development. Demolition of a dwelling house is permitted subject to the prior approval of details of the method of demolition and the reinstatement of the site. When demolition is proposed as part of a redevelopment scheme then the details should be included in the proposals for the redevelopment of the site. The suitability and acceptability of the redevelopment proposal is therefore material to considering the reinstatement of the site following demolition. The Planning Authority is therefore entitled to consider the redevelopment in the context of its contribution to the character of the area when compared with the qualities and condition of the existing building to be removed. This is particularly material in the context of the statutory Aims of the National Park, to conserve the natural and cultural heritage of the area and to promote a sustainable economic and social development of the area's communities. The emphasis must therefore be on considering the merits of the new house proposed for the site, in the context of the qualities and condition of the building to be removed and not merely the merits or otherwise of the house to be demolished.

The Principle of the Development

14. The existing house has suffered neglect and demolition of a rotten modern rear off shoot has already taken place. In a letter accompanying the application, the agent reports that the stone fabric is affected by a high water table. There is evidence of dry and wet rot. Removal of affected lath and plaster has revealed that surface cracking visible on the external gables penetrates through to the interior and has likely been caused by settlement due to the high water table as well as chimney fires. There is a major crack in the South chimney. All timber work is in a very poor condition and all windows and doors have been replaced with modern plastic. Some elements could be recovered but despite this, the fundamental problem of damp and drainage, the extent of work to the existing cottage, the limitations of retrofitting full insulation and emission reduction measures and the desirability of moving the building forward by 2.5 metres to facilitate improved drainage interception from the rear bank, all

indicate that a demolition and sensitively designed replacement is desirable in this case.

15. The existing cottage is particularly appealing due to its striking position above the bridge and traditional long, low and symmetrical style. This produces an attractive composition evocative of the old settlement at Feshiebridge, despite the more modern infill house to the South. The traditional proportions and style of the existing cottage are very important to the character and appearance of the area, so it is imperative that the replacement respects these features. This would be achieved by a proposed design for a carefully crafted new house expressed with all the scale, proportions, detailing and materials of a very traditional local cottage. The garage is of a traditional shape although the door should be of vertically boarded timber. The end gable facing North would be more visible from the approach road but adjacent Douglas Firs outwith the site and other vegetation would still provide a leafy setting.

Ecology

16. A bat survey reveals that the cottage does not contain a bat roost although there is evidence of foraging. The demolition may therefore proceed. It is recommended that provision for Bats and Swifts is considered for the new house and that the frontage hedge is retained or replaced with a native hedge rather than hard landscaping such as a wall. A condition is therefore recommended.

Amenity of Neighbours and Access

17. The proposed house contains side windows facing towards the neighbour, at ground floor level. There are no facing windows in the side of the neighbouring house. There would be no loss of privacy due to intervening garages and a separation distance of 20 metres. The access would be via the existing shared access to the public road and no alterations to the access are proposed.

Conclusions

18. A demolition and replacement of this characterful cottage in a prominent site would be undesirable unless the proposed replacement offered a structure highly respectful of the site and the original traditional design. This is achieved by the proposed replacement house and, in time, it will offer as much authentic traditional character to the area as the original, with the added

benefit of much improved energy efficiency. A demolition and replacement are therefore recommended for approval.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE AIMS OF THE PARK

Conserve and Enhance the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Area

19. The proposed design protects for the long term, the character and heritage represented by the traditional appearance and prominent siting of the existing house. Steps to protect local ecology are also included.

Promote Sustainable Use of Natural Resources

20. The replacement house will include much more effective emissions reduction measures than can be achieved by renovating the existing house. Stone down takings will be re-used on site.

Promote Understanding and Enjoyment

21. The character and amenity of Feshiebridge, enjoyed by walkers and passing vehicles, will be upheld by the proposed design.

Promote Sustainable Economic and Social Development

22. No specific implications.

RECOMMENDATION

That Members of the Committee agree to a recommendation to:

Grant Full Planning Permission for the demolition of existing house and erection of replacement house and garage at Feshie Cottage, Feshiebridge 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. Notwithstanding the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development (Scotland) Order 1992, the North, East

and South garden boundaries shall be marked only by the existing hedge or by an alternative hedge in a native deciduous species, with or without a fence of equal height to the existing, unless an alternative is first approved by the Planning Authority.

3. Other boundaries, if marked, shall only be marked by traditional stone walling, or native deciduous hedging or traditional vertically boarded fencing or stock fencing, and by no other means, to the satisfaction of the Planning Authority.
4. Notwithstanding the details on the approved plans, the garage door shall be finished in vertically boarded timber.

ADVICE NOTE

Bats and swifts

The applicant is requested to have regard to the notes from the Cairngorm National Park Ecology Officer dated 20.10.08, regarding legal obligations to protect the nesting and roosting sites of birds and bats and to avoid the introduction of non-native invasive plant species. Particularly, the applicant is requested to consider incorporating opportunities for bat roosts and nesting sites for Swifts in the new building.

Hilary MacBean
19 December 2008

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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.