

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED:

Installation of car park barriers at Cairngorm Mountain Glenmore Aviemore
Highland PH22 1RB

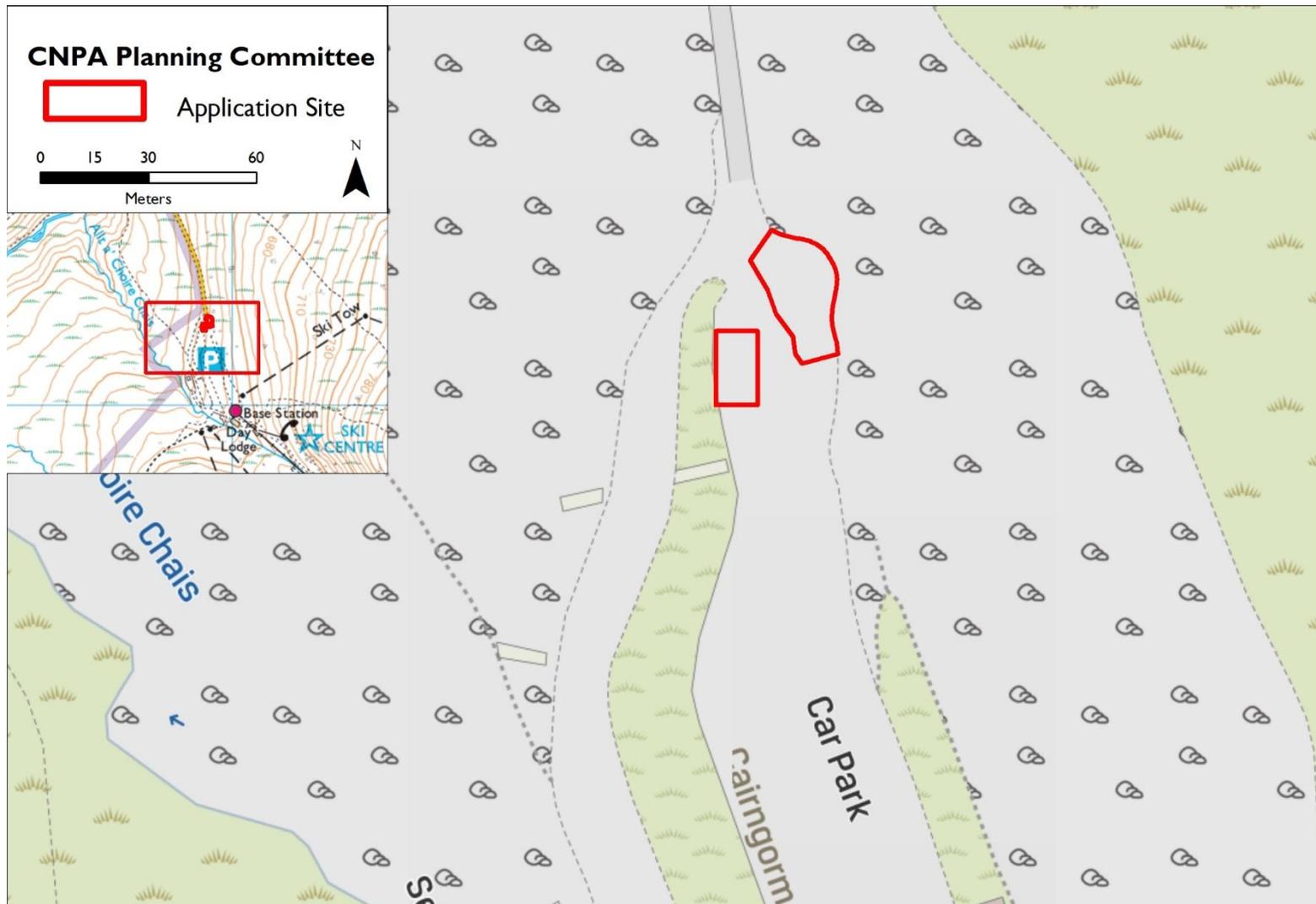
REFERENCE: 2020/0097/DET

APPLICANT: Cairngorm Mountain (Scotland) Limited

DATE CALLED-IN: 14 April 2020

RECOMMENDATION: Approve subject to conditions

CASE OFFICER: Robbie Calvert, Graduate Planner



SITE DESCRIPTION, PROPOSAL AND HISTORY

Site Description

1. The application site is located in the north of the Coire Case Car Park which is adjacent to the Cairngorm Mountain Ski Centre Day Lodge and Funicular Railway Base Station.
2. The car park is accessed by the existing B970 road from Glenmore.
3. The application site lies within the Cairngorms National Scenic Areas, but is not covered by any other specific environmental designations. The Glenmore National Nature Reserve lies approximately 40 metres west of the application site. The Cairngorms Wild Land Area No.15 as identified in Scottish Natural Heritage's wild land area map lies around 760 metres west of the site at its closest, circling the entire ski area.

Proposal

4. The drawings and documents associated with this application are listed below and are available on the Cairngorms National Park Authority website unless noted otherwise:

<http://www.eplanningcnpa.co.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=Q8GVV3SI0CH00>

Title	Drawing Number	Date on Plan*	Date Received
Location Plan	-	-	14/04/20
Site Plan	-	-	25/05/20
Layout Plan	-	-	14/04/20
Proposed Barriers	-	-	14/04/20

*Where no specific day of month has been provided on the plan, the system defaults to the 1st of the month.

5. Plans of the proposal are included in **Appendix I**.
6. Planning permission is sought for the erection of two, permanent, solar powered car park barriers on the entrance and exit of the Upper Coire Cas car park on Cairngorm Mountain. The proposals for each barrier include a foundation measuring 2 x 2 metres with two mounting poles and solar panels, a main barrier housing unit with 5 metre boom and end support. The entry barrier will be installed to the north entrance of the Coire Cas car park and the exit barrier on the north east.

7. The new controlled entry system at the Coire Cas car park will enable automatic payment for the existing car park charging regime that has been applied between April and October without the need for staff to manage it.

History

8. In June 2019, planning permission was granted by Highland Council for the installation of tube slide, zip line and play area Coire Cas Car Park Cairngorm for a temporary period only with a cessation date on 1st November 2021 (reference 19/01765/FUL). In November 2019 an associated application was made under Section 42 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act, 1997 was approved by Highland Council to amend Condition 1 of 19/01765/FUL requiring the removal of equipment during the winter period.
9. In November 2018, planning permission was granted by Highland Council for the installation of a double unit snow factory in the Coire Cas car park (reference 18/05078/FUL). In November 2019 an application (reference 19/04135/S42) for the variation of condition 1 of planning permission 18/05078/FUL to alter the cessation date of the permitted snow factory was approved by Highland Council.
10. An application for the installation of two tube slides and extension and realignment of existing tube slide (2020/0105/DET) on land to the south of the site has also been called in by the CNPA.
11. There have been numerous planning applications within the wider Cairngorm Mountain area, the most recent of which are summarised below:
12. In May 2020, planning permission was granted by the CNPA for engineering works related to strengthening the funicular viaduct (reference 2020/0076/DET).
13. In 2019, planning permission was granted by the CNPA for engineering works to smooth and re-grade land (reference 2019/0247/DET) and for the renovation and erection of extension to the Ptarmigan Restaurant building (reference 2018/0177/DET).
14. In October 2018, planning permission was refused by the CNPA for the installation of a beginner and intermediate artificial ski slopes with associated services (reference 2018/0112/DET).
15. In 2017, retrospective planning permission was granted by the CNPA for the “retention of a ski area access track” (reference 2016/0295/DET) and the Highland Council granted permission for the “siting of a snow factory unit” in (reference 17/04736/FUL).

DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONTEXT

Policies

National Policy	Scottish Planning Policy 2014	
Strategic Policy	Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2017 - 2022	
Local Plan Policy	Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan (2015) Those policies relevant to the assessment of this application are marked with a cross	
POLICY 1	NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT	
POLICY 2	SUPPORTING ECONOMIC GROWTH	X
POLICY 3	SUSTAINABLE DESIGN	X
POLICY 4	NATURAL HERITAGE	
POLICY 5	LANDSCAPE	X
POLICY 6	THE SITING AND DESIGN OF DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT	
POLICY 7	RENEWABLE ENERGY	
POLICY 8	SPORT AND RECREATION	X
POLICY 9	CULTURAL HERITAGE	
POLICY 10	RESOURCES	X
POLICY 11	DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS	

16. All new development proposals require to be assessed in relation to policies contained in the adopted Local Development Plan. The full wording of policies can be found at:

<http://cairngorms.co.uk/uploads/documents/Park%20Authority/Planning/LDPI5.pdf>

Planning Guidance

17. Supplementary guidance also forms part of the Local Development Plan and provides more details about how to comply with the policies. Guidance that is relevant to this application is marked with a cross.

Policy 1	New Housing Development Non-Statutory Guidance	
Policy 2	Supporting Economic Growth Non-Statutory Guidance	X
Policy 3	Sustainable Design Non-Statutory Guidance	X
Policy 4	Natural Heritage Supplementary Guidance	
Policy 5	Landscape Non-Statutory Guidance	X
Policy 7	Renewable Energy Supplementary Guidance	
Policy 8	Sport and Recreation Non-Statutory Guidance	X
Policy 9	Cultural Heritage Non-Statutory Guidance	
Policy 10	Resources Non-Statutory Guidance	X
Policy 11	Developer Contributions Supplementary Guidance	

Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2020

18. The emerging Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan (“Proposed Plan”) which will cover the period of 2020 – 2025 is currently being progressed. The proposed plan has been through a public consultation process and the formal responses have been assessed and submitted along with all other relevant materials to Scottish Ministers for examination. As the examination of the Proposed Plan is on-going, the Proposed Plan and its contents currently carry limited weight.

CONSULTATIONS

19. A summary of the main issues raised by consultees now follows:
20. **Highland Council Transport Planning** were consulted and made no objection to proposals.
21. **Aviemore and Vicinity Community Council** were consulted and have objected to proposals due to lack of sufficient information and lack of strategic coordination from an approved Masterplan for the wider site. Additional information was subsequently provided by the applicant

REPRESENTATIONS

22. A total of three letters of representation have been received from the Badenoch and Strathspey Conservation Group (BSCG), the Cairngorms Campaign and one member of the public objecting to the application. Copies of the public responses can be viewed at **Appendix 2**. A summary of the comments is provided below:
 - a) Barriers will not be able to keep up with volume of traffic at peak use in the car park.
 - b) No information has been provided over the specific location of the barriers and how they are to operate in terms of fee charging and seasonality of use.
 - c) Information regarding power output from solar panels used to operate the car parking barriers insufficient, concerns expressed that operation could fail in poor weather conditions.
 - d) Not coordinated with other proposals being submitted concurrently at Cairngorm Mountain.
 - e) Lack of Masterplan has prevented full public engagement in redevelopment of site.

APPRAISAL

23. The main planning considerations are considered to be the principle of development and landscape impact, design and scale and impact on the operation of highways from the development.

Principle of Development

24. **Policy 2:** Supporting Economic Growth of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2015 supports other economic development proposals which support or extend the economy or which enhance the range and quality of economic opportunities or facilities will be considered favourably if they are compatible or complementary with existing business activity in the area and supports the vitality and viability of the local economy and the broader economy of the park. **Policy 8:** Sport and Recreation also seeks to support diversification or extension to existing sport and recreation related business activities.
25. The proposal is for two small solar powered automatic barriers at the entrance/exit to the existing upper Coire Cas car park. The use of the car park is long established and the operators have applied car parking charges during the summer over a number of years. In this regard, the principle of development, which is related to the operation of a long established ski centre car park complies with policy. Under normal visitor conditions, receipt of a car parking charge from summer visitors would supplement other revenue streams for the business.
26. It is therefore considered that the application complies with Policy 2: Supporting Economic Growth and Policy 8: Sport and Recreation of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2015.

Design and Landscape Impact

27. **Policy 5:** Landscape of the Cairngorms Local Development Plan 2015 seeks to ensure that all new development conserves and enhances the landscape character and special landscape qualities of the National Park. Similarly, **Policy 3:** Sustainable Design seeks to ensure that development is suitably designed and minimises environmental impacts.
28. Car parking barriers are a common feature in many large public car parking facilities and this is a low impact development visually with the barriers being minimalist in design and scale. They will be seen in context of the main car, existing signage and wider ski infrastructure both on arrival and exit and will have negligible impact on views to or from the resort either nearby or from a distance. It is considered that the car parking barriers will not be visually incongruous or detract from the wider setting.
29. The construction will all be within the existing car park areas and will involve the creation of a small foundation for the barrier housing and solar panel pole. There will be no adverse impacts on surrounding habitats, species, or neighbouring sites designated for ecological or geological interest.

30. It is therefore considered that the application complies with Policy 3: Sustainable Design and Policy 5: Landscape of the Cairngorms Local Development Plan 2015.

Impact on Vehicular access and operation of highways

31. **Policy 3:** Sustainable Design and **Policy 10:** Resources of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2015 set out the need for new development to be satisfactorily serviced and without harm to resources or the environment.
32. Highland Council Transport Planning were consulted but made no objection to proposals. It is concluded therefore that the proposal would not result in harm to the safe operation of the highway. Therefore the proposed development is considered to comply with Policy 3: Sustainable Design and Policy 10: Resources of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2015.

Other Issues Raised in Consultations and Representations

33. A number of objectors have raised concern that the application has been submitted in advance of any masterplan for the wider site at Cairngorm Mountain being produced as set out in the Cairngorm and Glenmore Strategy (CGS) and the CNPA's working principles for Cairngorm Mountain. Both the CGS and the working principles set high level objectives for the area and reflect the CNPA's desire for new development on Cairngorm to be based on a rational long term plan. HIE have now started the process of developing a masterplan for the whole site but this will take some months to be completed.
34. The application under consideration relates to an existing intensively used carpark but is very small in scale, with minimal impact. Officer's view is that the application does not prejudice any future development or management of the ski centre that a masterplan may set out, and may enhance future development through improving the financial sustainability of the existing business. Officers consider that to delay determination or to refuse planning permission of this application simply on the basis of the lack the masterplan would be unreasonable.
35. Concerns were raised by objectors around the operational capacity of the solar powered barriers. The barrier houses a low voltage DC motor which will still work during a power outage, including low power output from the photovoltaic panels. This technology is widely used in car parks and private roads across the UK and is unlikely to have significant impact on traffic conditions at peak use.

CONCLUSION

36. On the basis of the above, and in light of any other material considerations, the proposal is considered to be in accordance with the development plan. Accordingly, the recommendation is to grant permission.

RECOMMENDATION

That Members of the Committee support a recommendation to the Installation of car park barriers at Cairngorm Mountain Glenmore Aviemore Highland PH22 IRB subject to the following condition:

Condition

1. The development shall be constructed in accordance with the approved plans.

Reason: To ensure that the new development conserves and enhances the landscape character of the Cairngorms National Scenic Area in accordance with Policy 3: Sustainable Design and Policy 5: Landscape of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2015.

Informatives

1. The development hereby approved must commence within 3 years of the date of this decision notice. If development has not commenced within this period then this planning permission will lapse;
2. The person undertaking the development is required to give the Planning Authority prior written notification of the date on which it is intended to commence the development. Attached to this decision notices is a Notice of Initiation of Development for completion and submission. Submission of this information assists the Cairngorms National Park Authority Monitoring and Enforcement Officer in monitoring active work within the area to ensure compliance with the approved details and to identify and correct any potential problems, as they arise, rather than later when it may be more difficult and more costly to rectify. Failure to give notice would constitute a breach of planning control which may result in enforcement action being taken.
3. Following completion of the development, a notification of the completion shall, as soon as practicable, be given to the Planning Authority. Attached to this decision notice is a Notice of Completion of Development for completion and submission. Submission of this form will assist the Cairngorms National Park Authority Monitoring and Enforcement Officer in making a final inspection and checking compliance with the approved drawings and conditions. If the

development hereby approved is to be carried out in phases, then a notice of completion should be submitted at the completion of each phase.

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.