
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Title: REPORT ON CALLED-IN PLANNING APPLICATION

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(DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT)

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED: FULL PLANNING PERMISSION FOR ERECTION OF SMOKERY BUILDING AND WIDENING OF EXISTING ENTRANCE, LAND TO THE SOUTH OF NORTH LODGE, DINNET, ABOYNE

REFERENCE: 07/278/CP

APPLICANT: DINNET & KINORD ESTATE, C/O ROBB KEIR DESIGN, BRIGDEND, BRIDGEVIEW ROAD, ABOYNE

DATE CALLED-IN: 27 JULY 2007

RECOMMENDATION: GRANT, SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS

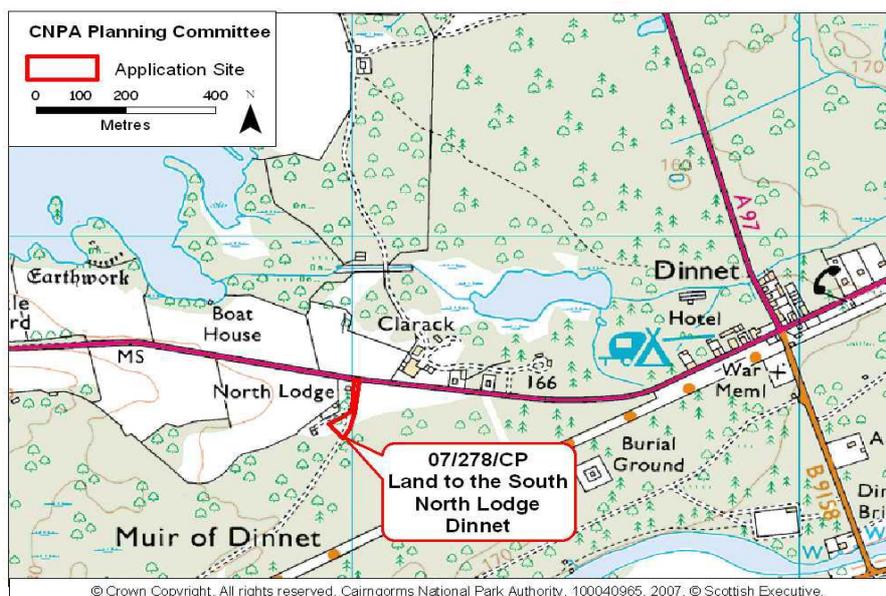


Fig. 1. Location Plan

SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL

1. Dinnet & Kinord Estate seek a full planning permission for the construction of a new building to accommodate a smokery for the smoking of meat from the Estate. The site is located to the south of North Lodge, which is a Category C(S) Listed Building, and which is located to the west of Dinnet on the south side of the A93 North Deeside Road. The site at present consists of a yard area with an estate storage building and a kennels structure. There is also a game larder structure. Access to the site is from an existing track directly off the A93 which also extends past the site and leads through to Dinnet House. The landscape context is characterised by a birch woodland and meadow type setting.



Fig. 2. Proposed site looking south west

2. The new building, following revisions to the design, is a pitched roof structure with a rectangular shaped footprint of 15.5m x 25.5m dimensions. Its total height to ridge is 6m. The building will accommodate a preparation room, curing/salting room, drying room, kiln room and a slicing/packing room. In addition there will be an office and staff and toilet facilities. Four flues, which are part of the smoking kiln equipment rather than the building, will project from the roof. Finishing materials are now render and horizontal timber cladding to the walls, and a metal profiled roof sheeting to match the colour of the adjacent estate storage building. Windows will be timber framed. Parking will be provided on site and drainage will be to an existing septic tank. The access, at its junction with the A93, will be widened. This will involve a realignment of an existing stone wall.



Fig. 3. Site and Existing Storage Building looking south east



Fig. 4. Existing storage building viewed from the proposed site

3. The applicants were asked to submit further information in relation to the operation and management of the premises. The business will be operated primarily on the basis of mail order as this is the largest proportion of sales for smoked goods. There may be an element of “drop-in” buyers, but this will not be actively encouraged because it can be disruptive and unpredictable for stock control. In terms of staffing, initially there will be a smoker and office staff, who will operate the mail order side of the business – a maximum of 5 full time equivalents. There will be the potential for increasing this depending on seasonal demands. Operating times are slightly unknown at present, as smoking does not have to be done every day of every week because the shelf life is around 5-6 weeks. However, it is anticipated that the mail order business will be year round so the office will be staffed from 10am -4pm and perhaps longer in the busiest parts of the year. The smoking process entails the meat being brought in for butchering in the preparation room before moving to a brine tank in the curing room. From here it will be dried ready for smoking in the kiln room. The smoking process can be either a cold or hot process depending on the end product. Initially, most products will be hot smoked, using oak chippings and sawdust (pure oak has no contaminants and smoke emissions will be equivalent to a wood burning stove). When smoked, the product is transferred to the packing area where it is cooled, trimmed, weighed and vacuum packed. It is stated that the building has been designed to function well with these production flows and with Environmental Health Regulations.

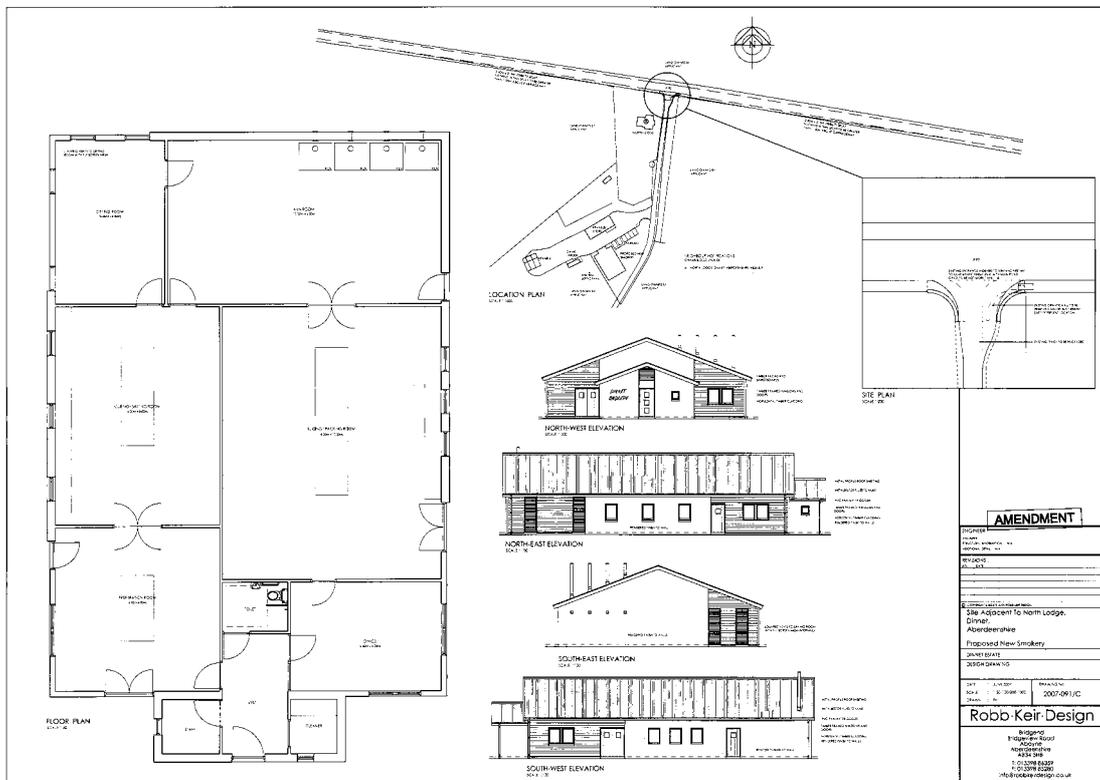


Fig. 5. Proposed site layout, floorplan and elevations

DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONTEXT

Cairngorms National Park Plan 2007

4. Strategic objectives for **Landscape, Built and Historic Environment**, include; ensuring development complements and enhances the landscape character of the Park; and new development complementing and enhancing the character, pattern and local identity of the built and historic environment. The strategic objective for **Sustainable Use of Resources** is that all management and development in the Park should seek to make the most sustainable use of natural resources, including water and energy. Strategic objectives for **Air** include; maintaining, and where possible enhancing the existing high level of air quality. Strategic objectives for **Economy and Employment** include; encouraging entrepreneurship in sectors which complement the special qualities of the Park; promoting opportunities for economic diversification across all areas of the Park; and raising the profile and excellence of local produce and services.

Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Structure Plan 2001- 2016 (NEST)

5. **Policy 3 (Other Employment Opportunities)** states that proposed unemployment uses on unallocated sites shall be considered acceptable providing reasonable account is taken of certain criteria relating to integration with existing patterns of land use, availability of access and infrastructure, location in relation to population, proven economic need, and minimisation of pollution. **Policy 13 (Developer Contributions)** requires developers to address the impact of their developments by making contributions as appropriate. **Policy 19 (Wildlife, Landscape and Land Resources)** advises that development will be sited and designed to avoid adverse impacts on the biodiversity of a site, including its environmental quality, ecological status and viability. All new development should take into consideration the character of the landscape in terms of siting, scale, form and design. **Policy 20 (Built Heritage and Archaeology)** states that the built heritage of the North East will be conserved and promoted as a valuable non-renewable resource. The integrity and setting of listed buildings will be protected.

Aberdeenshire Local Plan 2006

6. **Policy Env\5B (Areas of Landscape Significance)** states that development within or adjacent to an ARLS will not be permitted where its scale, location or design will detract from the quality or character of the landscape, either in part or as a whole. In all cases the highest standards of design, in terms of location, scale, siting, aesthetics and landscaping will be required. **Policy Env\18 (Listed Buildings)** advises that all listed buildings shall be protected against any works

which would have a detrimental effect on their listed character, integrity or setting by refusal. **Policy Emp\3 (Employment Development in the Countryside)** states that new employment development uses in the countryside will be approved in principle, if they meet certain criteria, including demonstration of an economic need, protection of the natural and built environment, location close to population, the availability of access and infrastructure, and suitable design. **Policy Gen\1 (Sustainability Principles)** advises that developments will be assessed against sustainability indicators that relate to the local environment, community and economy. **Policy Gen\2 (The Layout, Siting & Design of New Development)** sets out siting and design criteria to be met by all new development. **Policy Gen\3 (Developer Contributions)** requires fair and reasonable developer contributions to be made towards the cost of public services, facilities, and infrastructure and the mitigation of adverse environmental impacts that would have been necessary but for the development.

CONSULTATIONS

7. **SNH** have no comments to make.
8. **Aberdeenshire Council's Environment Team** have no concerns in relation to archaeology. In relation to trees though, they suggest that an assessment of the impact of the proposals on the trees adjacent to the site, in line with the British Standards, should be made.
9. **The CNPA's Natural Heritage Group** have stated that the landscape and visual impacts of the proposals are localised and with attention to some existing trees, some supplementary planting, and re-instatement of an entrance feature at the access, the siting, scale and design of the proposals seem appropriate. The localised views towards the site are though significant from the A93. However, with retention of trees and new planting this can be addressed. The main impact of the proposals on landscape character will be the building itself which is generally agricultural in style to complement the existing store. While not enhancing the situation, it should not detract from it, given the predominantly agricultural/estate character of the immediate area. It is suggested that more birch trees should be planted to supplement the existing. Planting could take place along the track and to the east and south of the new building.
10. **The CNPA's Economic and Social Development Group** state that the application shows a strong fit with the aims of the National Park Plan. It will increase the provision of local produce, support jobs and help diversification of the estate which in turn will help make the estate more sustainable. Increasing the supply of local produce will also help reduce food miles and offer more local produce to visitor and local markets.

11. **Aberdeenshire Council's Planning Gain Officer** is seeking a developer contribution towards the provision of affordable housing in the area and Percent for Art.
12. **SEPA** note that an existing septic tank is to be used for the foul drainage. Prior to the determination of the application they wish to be satisfied that this tank can accommodate the effluent created by the development. In relation to surface water, SUDS are required. Information has been provided regarding foul and surface water drainage and **SEPA** have confirmed that they now have no objections.
13. **Aberdeenshire Council's Transportation and Infrastructure Service** initially recommended refusal on the basis that the applicants had not demonstrated that the required visibility splays (2.4m x 215m) and the required widening and realignment of the access at its junction with the A93, could be achieved. A revised plan has been submitted showing this. The **Transportation and Infrastructure Service** have now confirmed that their initial refusal recommendation has been withdrawn and that approval, subject to conditions can be given.

REPRESENTATIONS

14. The application was advertised by Aberdeenshire Council on 13 July 2007. No representations have been received.

APPRAISAL

Principle and Policy

15. The proposal represents a diversification and a further development of estate uses at the Dinnet and Kinord Estate. It can be considered in the context of economic and employment related development. Structure and Local Plan policy are fully supportive of the principle of such a development, subject to certain criteria. There are also positives in terms of some of the strategic objectives of the National Park Plan, particularly in relation to economy and employment. The strengthening of the production and marketing of local National Park produce and supply chains is considered to help retain a greater share of the economic value deriving from resources in the Park.
16. The site is in a countryside location but it is land that is associated with established estate uses. Indeed, it is land that is immediately adjacent to other estate buildings. The detailed siting and design aspects are covered below but, in principle, I do not consider that the site is inappropriate for such a use or that it will adversely affect any neighbouring land uses. There is an existing access, which subject to some improvements, can be utilised, and there are no negative servicing or infrastructure implications. Employment opportunities are

to be provided and although the site is not located close to a sizeable centre of population, the development is of limited scale and is clearly related to existing estate operations. In principle, I do not consider the proposal to offend the criteria set down for employment related development in countryside areas as stated in the adopted development plans.

Siting, Design and Landscaping

17. As stated above, the site is located on the estate, close to existing estate buildings and served by an existing access. The site is characterised by a scattered birch woodland with some more open field areas adjacent. The trees provide a setting and a context for development but they do not provide any significant screening. It is therefore the case that the site can be quite easily viewed from the A93 North Deeside Road particularly when approaching from the east. The site also lies within the wider Area of Landscape Significance. Building design, tree retention, and landscaping have therefore been considered to be critical in this instance.
18. The initial design of the building raised a degree of concern. With its shallow roof pitch, wide gable span, use of materials (including PVC window frames), I considered the building design to be too utilitarian in appearance and therefore inappropriate in this location. Revisions, and an explanation of the functional aspects and justification for the design, were sought. The revisions received, improve the design considerably. The roof pitch has been increased and the scale of the wide gable span has been lessened by the introduction of differing materials (including timber), fenestration (louvred vents, windows and doors) and the incorporation of a pitched roof central entrance area to the front elevation. The windows have also been amended to timber framed types. In respect of the design, it is important to recognise the functional use of the building and that the smoking process must comply with standard environmental health requirements for food processing and hygiene. The nature of the process and the flow of product through the building has governed, to an extent, what can be achieved. In this respect, I also acknowledge the existence of the functional agricultural storage building opposite the proposed building.
19. A tree survey and landscaping proposals were requested, and have been received. The southern extremity of the site does lie within an Ancient Woodland designation. However, only three existing birch trees are required to be removed to allow for the development. The report confirms that all other trees on the site can be retained and protected, in line with the British Standards, during construction. In addition, and in compliance with the suggestions of the CNPA's Natural Heritage Group, supplementary tree planting will be carried out along the access track and adjacent to the building and the parking area. With this tree retention and additional tree planting, the natural landscape setting of the site will be retained and additional natural

screening will be provided. In addition, due to the location and the existence of mature tree planting between the sites, the proposal will have no detrimental impact on the character of the North Lodge which is a listed building.

Servicing and Developer Contributions

20. Traffic levels in and out of the site and using the existing access track junction with the A93 will not be significant. However, taking account of the nature of the A93, at this location (straight with fast moving traffic) there is still a need to improve the junction. It has been confirmed that the appropriate visibility splays can be achieved and that the widening of the track where it meets the public road will take place. The widening will require the removal and rebuilding of an existing stone wall near to the North Lodge. However, the proposals indicated are acceptable and they will not adversely affect the setting of the listed building or the character of the immediate area.
21. Drainage arrangements are now acceptable and environmental health legislation will govern the operation of the kilns and any emissions.
22. Finally, the applicants are agreeable to the level of developer contribution required. This can be achieved through a S75 legal agreement or by the legal exchange of letters and remit of the payment prior to the issue of the planning permission.

Conclusion

23. Following amendments to the design and the submission of the additional information, the proposal is found to be acceptable in terms planning policy and all other material considerations.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE AIMS OF THE NATIONAL PARK

Conserve and Enhance the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Area

24. The site lies within an Area of Landscape Significance and a small part of the site lies within an Ancient Woodland designation. However, following the amendments to the design and the proposals for tree retention and additional tree planting, there will be no adverse impacts on the landscape character of the area or any natural heritage features. The character and setting of the North Lodge will not be affected.

Promote Sustainable Use of Natural Resources

25. There are no significant implications for this aim. However, the amendments to the design do now incorporate the use of timber.

Promote Understanding and Enjoyment

26. There are no implications for this aim.

Promote Sustainable Economic and Social Development

27. The proposal will have positive implications for this aim. It will allow for a diversification in the operation of the estate and will be generally beneficial in terms of promoting local produce derived from the Park. It will also create some employment opportunities.

RECOMMENDATION

28. That Members of the Committee support a recommendation to:

Grant Full Planning Permission for Erection of Smokery Building and Widening of Existing Entrance, Land to South of North Lodge, Dinnet (07/278/CP), subject to:

- a. Completion of a S75 Legal Agreement or Legal Exchange of Letters and Remit of Developer Contribution Payment Prior to the Issue of Planning Permission; and**

b. the following conditions:

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun within five years from the date of this permission.
2. The development shall be landscaped and maintained in accordance with the approved tree planting scheme (The Ross Partnership Landscape and Forestry Consultancy Drawing No. 0760), as follows:-
 - (a) Completion of the scheme during the first planting season following the completion of the development, or such other date as may be approved in writing with the CNPA acting as Planning Authority.
 - (b) The maintenance of the landscaped areas in perpetuity. Any trees removed, or which in the opinion of the CNPA acting as Planning Authority, are dying, being severely damaged or becoming seriously diseased within five years of planting, shall be replaced by trees of similar size and species to those originally required to be planted.
3. That from the date at which this planning permission is granted, no trees on the site, other than those marked for removal on the tree survey plan (The Ross Partnership Landscape and Forestry Consultancy Drawing No. 0760), shall be uprooted. Trees on the site shall only be felled with the prior written approval of the CNPA acting as Planning Authority.
4. That no development shall commence on this site until the trees marked for retention on the approved tree survey plan (The Ross Partnership Landscape and Forestry Consultancy, Drawing No. 0760), have been

protected to the satisfaction of the CNPA acting as Planning Authority, and all in accordance with BS5837:2005, Trees in Relation to Construction.

5. That prior to the commencement of any works in association with any of the following finishing materials, exact details and specifications (samples may be required), shall be provided for the further written approval of the CNPA:
 - a. the colour/stain and type of timber cladding;
 - b. the colour and type of the metal roof sheeting;
 - c. the wet harling for the walls;
 - d. the colour and finish of the kiln flues; and
 - e. the colour and finish of the windows and external doors.
6. That prior to the commencement of the use of the building hereby approved, details for the management and disposal of refuse (including siting and design of any refuse store), shall be submitted for the further written approval of the CNPA acting as Planning Authority.
7. That prior to the commencement of the use of the development hereby approved the existing access at its junction with the A93 public road, shall be improved, in line with the details shown on the approved drawing no. 2007-091/C, all to the satisfaction of the CNPA acting as Planning Authority, in consultation with Aberdeenshire Council's Transportation and Infrastructure Service.
8. That prior to the commencement of the use of the development hereby approved, the first 6m of the access track shall be surfaced in bitmac or equivalent hardstanding material (no loose material), all to the satisfaction of the CNPA acting as Planning Authority, in consultation with Aberdeenshire Council's Transportation and Infrastructure Service.
9. That, prior to the commencement of any other construction works on site associated with the approved development, visibility splays measuring 2.4m x 215m shall be formed either side of the improved access at its junction with the A93 public road and thereafter retained free from any permanent obstructions above the adjacent public road channel all to the satisfaction of the CNPA acting as Planning Authority, in consultation with Aberdeenshire Council's Transportation and Infrastructure Service.

Neil Stewart
7 November 2007

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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.