
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Title: REPORT ON CALLED-IN PLANNING APPLICATION

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DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT)**

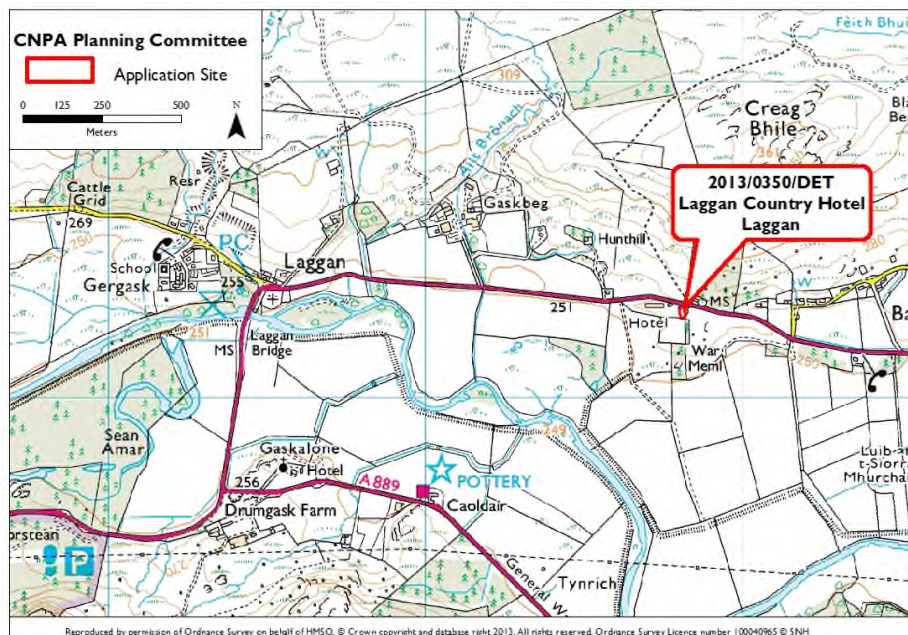
**DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED: ERECTION OF HOUSE FOR
HOLIDAY LETTING PURPOSES AT
LAGGAN COUNTRY HOTEL
NEWTONMORE**

REFERENCE: 2013/0350/DET

APPLICANT: MR DAVID HUISMAN

DATE CALLED-IN: 4 NOVEMBER 2013

**RECOMMENDATION: APPROVAL SUBJECT TO
CONDITIONS**



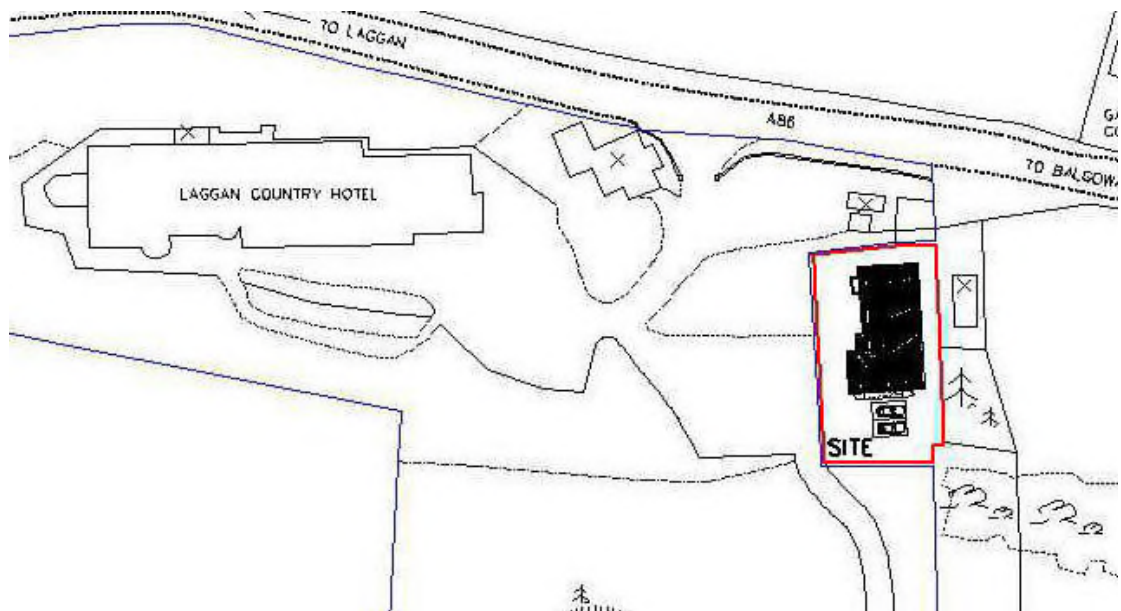
Grid reference: 262718 / 794293 (Easting / Northing)

Fig. 1 - Location Plan

SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL

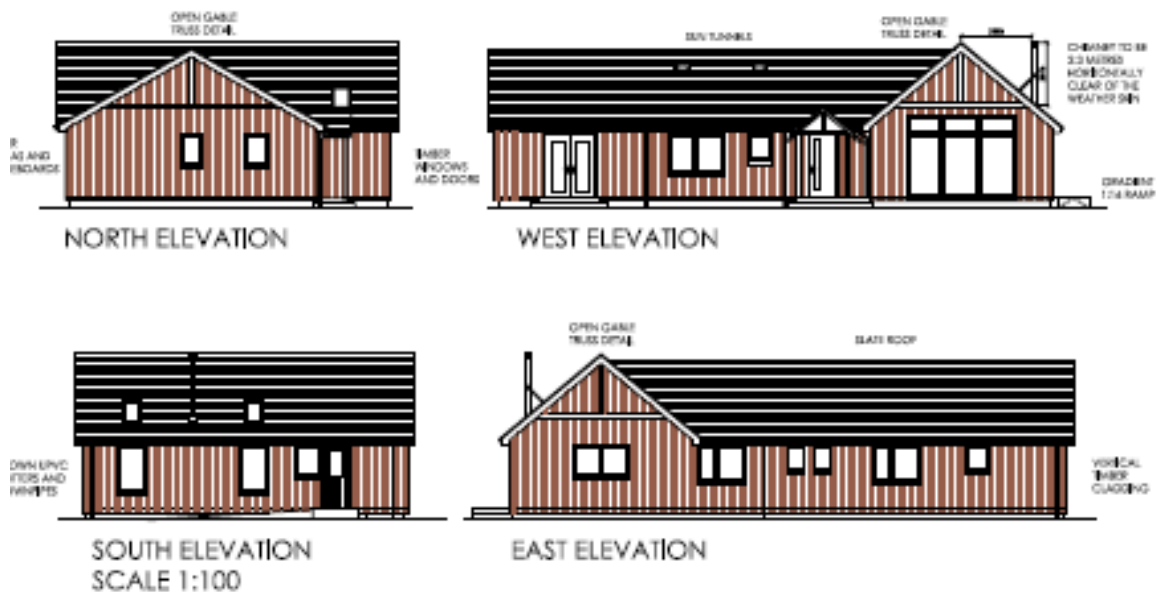
1. This application seeks full permission to erect a holiday letting house on a site within the grounds of an existing hotel at Laggan Country Hotel just to the east of the village of Laggan, taking access off the Newtonmore to Spean Bridge trunk road (A86) via the hotel's existing access point.
2. The proposed site is currently occupied by a rather dilapidated chalet building. There were two chalets on this site, one of which has already been demolished and removed and it is proposed to similarly demolish the remaining one to make room for the new development. A caravan has already been removed from site too.
3. The site is a level one, enclosed by ranch type fencing with trees to the rear (east) outwith the site where a small telephone exchange building is also located. To the north of site, between the site and the trunk road, at a lower level is an area for parking and bin storage. Access is shared with the Hotel, the applicant's recently built new house to the south west, and a small lodge house at the entrance to the site.
4. It is proposed to erect a four bedroom property on this site once cleared. It will use existing services (septic tank drainage, water supply and access). The building will be centrally located on the plot with parking to the side (south) and will be sited some 3 metres from the rear (east) boundary. The proposed site layout and relationship to the existing hotel is shown in **Figure 2** below.

Figure 2: Site Layout



5. The proposed building will be finished in timber walls, slate roof and wooden windows and doors. Heating will be by wood burning stove with external flue. Some minor alterations to window proportions and chimney design were agreed with the applicant and the proposed elevations are shown in **Figure 3** below.

Figure 3: Proposed Elevations



6. The Hotel caters for coach trips over the summer months. It has 25 bedrooms and as coach parties now tend to require more single occupancy rooms there is not enough room in the Hotel to accommodate the coach driver, tour guide and hotel staff. Consequently, the applicants currently require to transport support personnel to hotels in Newtonmore, and wish to be able to accommodate them on site and also to have the potential for overspill accommodation as required.
7. Consent was granted by Highland Council in 2012 for the erection of two three bedroom chalets on this site for this purpose. This consent has not been implemented and the applicants have decided that it would be more cost effective to erect a single larger building hence this current application. The agent has submitted a supporting statement explaining this background which is attached as **Appendix I**.

Planning History

8. There has been considerable planning history on this site, the relevant history is summarised below.
9. First, planning consent was granted by the CNPA Planning Committee for the erection of a new house for the applicants related to their business need in 2007 (reference 06/336/CP). This was subject to a section 75 legal agreement restricting occupancy and the house is now built and occupied. It is located to the south west of the hotel.
10. In 2009 the CNPA Planning Committee granted consent for an extension to the time period for the siting of a staff caravan on the southern part of the application site (reference 09/0156/CP). This time extension was for a further two years and related to an earlier 2004 consent. (This caravan has now been removed.)
11. Highland Council granted full planning permission in 2011 for a four bedroom extension to the Hotel and work has not commenced on site to date. (reference 2011/03773/FUL)
12. Finally, as mentioned earlier, in 2012 Highland Council granted full planning permission for the erection of two chalets to replace the existing chalets on this site and the caravan mentioned in paragraph 10 above (reference 11/03730/FUL). The chalets were required to accommodate the coach driver and tour guides associated with their tourism trade at the hotel. A condition restricting occupancy of the chalets to staff working in the hotel or as holiday accommodation ancillary to the hotel use was imposed. This consent has not been implemented to date, and the proposed chalets were of standard design, with wooden walls and metal roofs.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONTEXT

National policy

13. **Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) is the statement of the Scottish Government's policy on nationally important land use planning matters.** It sets out that planning authorities are encouraged 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."
14. As a replacement for a variety of previous planning policy documents Scottish Planning Policy includes 'subject policies'. The key ones in relation to the proposed development are policies relating to economic development which highlight the importance of tourism to the economy and the need to make provision for high quality tourism facilities.

Strategic Policies

Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan (2012-2017)

15. The Cairngorms National Park Plan sets out the vision and overarching strategy for managing the Park and provides focus and priorities at a time of limited financial resources. The Plan also provides a strategic context for the Local Development Plan and shows how the four aims of the National Park can be achieved together. It sets out the strategic direction and priorities for the Park.

Three long term outcomes for the Park are set out as follows:

- A sustainable economy supporting thriving businesses and communities;
- A special place for people and nature with natural and cultural heritage enhanced; and
- People enjoying the park through outstanding visitor and learning experiences.

16. These outcomes address the interaction of the three main characteristics of the National Park these being that the Park is an internationally important area for nature conservation; a fragile rural economy, and an internationally known tourism destination. Recognising the relationship of these outcomes is at the heart of the National Park. A series of work programmes to help deliver the outcomes is set out in the Plan

Local Plan Policy

Cairngorms National Park Local Plan (2010)

17. 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>
18. The Local Plan contains a range of policies dealing with particular interests or types of development. New development requires to be assessed in relation to all policies contained in the Plan. In this case the key polices are as follows
19. *Policy 16: Design Standards* for new development applies which 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
20. *Policy 33 – Tourism Related Development* which supports development which has a beneficial impact upon the local economy through enhancement of the range and quality of tourism attractions including accommodation providing that the development will not have an adverse impact upon the landscape, built and historic environment nor upon biodiversity etc unless these impacts are outweighed by the benefits of the development.

21. Policy 6 – Landscape which sets out that there will be a presumption against any development that does not complement and enhance the landscape character of the Park. Where development does not complement and enhance the landscape character, any significant adverse effects must be clearly outweighed by social and economic benefits of national importance and all adverse effects must be minimised and mitigated.
22. Policy 5 – Biodiversity which seeks to ensure that new development does not have an adverse effect on species or habitats identified in the biodiversity plans.
23. Policy 25 – Business Development which supports proposals which support or extend an existing business

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. Key for the current proposal is the sustainable design guide which sets out guidance on design and siting.

CONSULTATIONS

25. **Transport Scotland** was consulted as the site will take access onto the Trunk Road. They initially asked for clarification as to the use of the building, having had no objections to the previous application for two chalets once they had received clarification of its use - their concern being to fully consider the implications of increased traffic movements onto the trunk road. This current proposal should, in theory, result in less traffic movements as staff will not require to move off site during coach party stays at the hotel.
26. On this basis Transport Scotland has confirmed that they have no objection to the application.
27. **Laggan Community Association** has been consulted and has not responded to date.
28. **Highland Council's Forestry Officer** has no objections, but recommends that due to the proximity of the proposed building to the belt of semi mature mixed conifer and rowan trees to the rear (east) that consideration be given to moving the building further away from this boundary given that over time these trees will mature and may conflict with the building. *Note – as the existing building on site is closer to this boundary and consent has already been granted for two new chalets closer to the boundary than presently proposed it is not considered appropriate to seek revision of the position in this case.*

REPRESENTATIONS

29. The application has been advertised and no objections have been received. The applicant's agent has requested to be **heard** at Committee.

APPRAISAL

30. The principle of providing ancillary residential accommodation on this brownfield site has been established by the earlier consent granted by Highland Council for two holiday chalets. It is also in line with Local Plan policies which seek to support existing businesses (in this case the Laggan Country Hotel) and to enhance the range of tourism accommodation. Provision of accommodation on site for the tour guide/coach driver and staff will help support the ongoing viability of the hotel and is to be welcomed in general terms.
31. The main remaining land use planning considerations relate to visual impacts, servicing and whether the proposal raises any new planning issues as compared to the current live consent.
32. The proposal for a single unit as opposed to the two chalets previously approved does not raise any new servicing issues and will not create any additional demand on services.
33. The layout of the development is acceptable with no neighbours in the vicinity who may be affected. The level of amenity space around the building is considered sufficient for the proposed use. In landscape terms the site is screened from the eastern approach by existing trees and forms part of an existing grouping with the Hotel and its environs.
34. The design and finishes of the building are in keeping with the area and this, together with some minor changes made to window proportions, has secured a design which is a considerable improvement on the existing situation on site. A larger building, as opposed to two single chalets, is acceptable here and will fit in with the development pattern.
35. In these overall circumstances the development is considered to comply with Local Plan policies and with the aims of the National Park, subject to conditions, as attached previously by Highland Council, to control the use of the building to that applied for.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE AIMS OF THE NATIONAL PARK

Conserve and Enhance the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Area

36. The site is a suitable one for development, being a brownfield one located within the grounds of an existing hotel. The development will replace an existing substandard building with one of suitable design, whereby it is considered that the development readily supports this aim.

Promote Sustainable Use of Natural Resources

37. The proposal involves replacing existing poorly constructed and insulated structures with a new building to modern standards which will be more sustainable in the long term. The use of sustainable finishes (timber) and heating source (wood burning stove) also supports this aim.

Promote Understanding and Enjoyment of the Area

38. This proposal helps to support the ongoing use of an existing hotel by providing supporting holiday accommodation staff related to the hotel, thus sustaining its future use for visitors to the park. This would support their enjoyment of the area

Promote Sustainable Economic and Social Development of the Area

39. The development will support the ongoing operation of an established hotel and as such supports this aim. The local economy may also benefit from construction of the building whilst improved facilities at this hotel may help encourage visitors to return thereby supporting continued social and economic development.

RECOMMENDATION

That Members of the Committee support a recommendation to GRANT FULL PLANNING PERMISSION for the Erection of house for holiday letting purposes at Laggan Country Hotel, Newtonmore subject to the following planning conditions:

- I. The development hereby approved shall be occupied either by staff working in/associated with the Laggan Country Hotel (or their relatives or dependents), or as holiday accommodation ancillary to the use of the hotel.

Reason: To ensure the development complies with planning policies for tourism and housing development.

2. Prior to occupation of the development hereby approved, the parking area shall be formed in accordance with the approved plans and thereafter be kept free for this purpose throughout the lifetime of the development.

Reason: To ensure that the development is satisfactorily serviced in accordance with Local Plan policies

3. Unless otherwise agreed with the Cairngorms National Park Authority acting as Planning Authority, the finishes of the development hereby approved shall be as per the approved plans and the following requirements :

- Locally sourced timber clad walls
- Slate roofs
- Timbers doors and windows
- Black downpipes and rainwater goods.

Reason: In order to ensure the new development fits in well with the surrounding area, in accordance with Local Plan Policies

INFORMATION NOTE

- It is recommended that construction work (including the loading/unloading of delivery vehicles, plant or other machinery) should not take place outwith the hours of 0800 hours to 1900 hours Mondays to Fridays, 0800 hours to 1300 hours on Saturdays or at any time on Sundays or Bank Holidays in order to minimise disturbance to residents in the area.
- 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.

Katherine Donnachie

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Date: 30 December 2013

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.