
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Title: REPORT ON CALLED-IN PLANNING APPLICATION

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(DEVELOPMENT CONTROL)

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED: DISPLAY OF WELCOME SIGNS ON LAND ADJACENT TO B9153 ON SOUTHERN APPROACH TO CARRBRIDGE

REFERENCE: 04/089/CP

APPLICANT: CARRBRIDGE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

DATE CALLED-IN: 27 February 2004

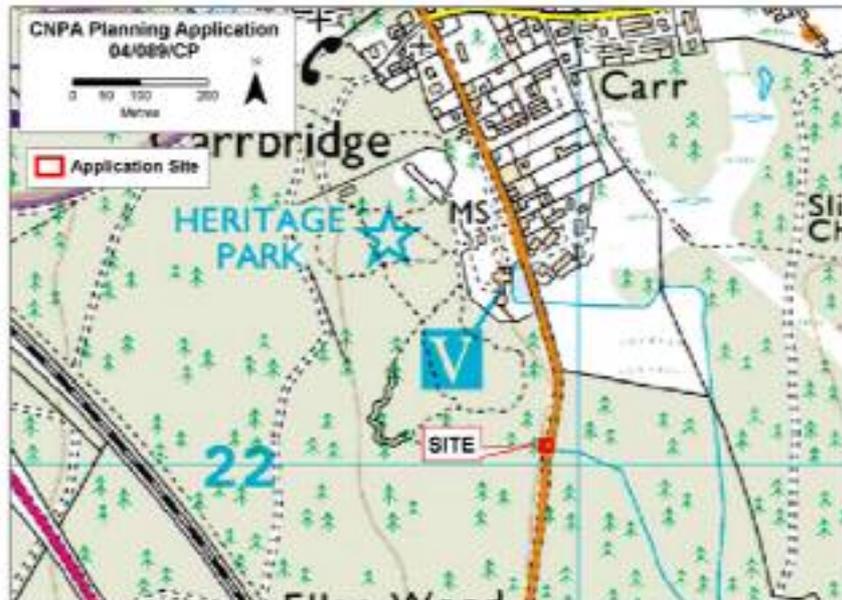


Fig. 1 - Location Plan

SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL

1. The site to which this application relates is located on the B9153 to the south of Carrbridge and involves the installation of visitor welcome signs on both sides of the road. There is an existing steel panel welcome sign on the west side of the road fixed on two tubular supports. The proposed signs would be positioned 109 metres to the south of the existing welcome signs and 30 metres in front of the first speed restriction 3/2/1 marker. There would be one sign on either side of the road with the western sign being set in a clearing in the trees and the one on the eastern side on the site of some young self seeded trees. The signs would be made from cedar wood and would measure 1.65 metres in width with a height of 2.25 metres. The top of the sign would be shaped to a mountain landscape with bridge that would be painted onto the sign, the signs would in effect be double sided with welcome greetings on the entrance side to the village and farewell greetings on the reverse side for vehicles leaving the village. The proposal suggests granite boulders and rocks around the base of the sign.
2. The proposal also suggests that some tidying up of the verge will take place with some tree felling to allow for a visibility splay of 8 metres at the signs over a 100 metre length each way along the road. The applicant has provided confirmation that the sign on the western side of the road will be situated in a clearing to reduce the need for tree felling.
3. The plans for the signs originally indicated them as being set back approximately 1 metre from the road. The Highland Council Area Roads and Community Works Manager has no objection to the application on the condition that the signs are set back so that the nearest point of the sign, or boulders set below it, are a minimum of 3 metres behind the carriageway line. Revised plans have been received indicating this.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONTEXT

4. The **Highland Structure Plan** has no direct policy relating to the control of advertisements. However, Policy G5 (Integration of Environmental and Community Interests) states that the Council will support measures to link the protection, enhancement, understanding and enjoyment of the natural and cultural heritage with the sustainability and vitality of local communities.
5. Policy G7 of The **Highland Structure Plan** (Partnerships and Community Planning) states that the Council will adopt a partnership approach in developing and implementing community planning initiatives at both the strategic and local levels.

CONSULTATIONS

6. Highland Council Area Roads and Community Works Manager has no objection to this application on the condition that, in the interests of road safety, a clear

distance of 3 metres is maintained between the adjacent edge of the carriageway and both the nearest edge of the sign and the nearest boulder.

7. The National Park Visitor Services Group consider that the site does not conflict with any of the current sites under consideration within the Point of Entry Marker Project. It is noted that the sign is to be based on natural materials, which is in line with the current thinking of the Gateways Working Group. The Working Group is however, giving strong consideration to the maintenance and upkeep of the markers and it is unlikely to use paint, as this will need replacing or upgrading on a regular basis.
8. There is no response from the Community Council as they are the applicants for the proposal.

REPRESENTATIONS

9. No representations have been made in relation to this proposal.

APPRAISAL

10. The determination of this application hinges on the acceptability of the siting and design of the signs (although not the information contained upon it) and the potential for the sign to impact upon highway safety issues.
11. The signs would be sited either side of the B9153 well in front of the existing welcome sign on either side of the road. This existing sign is of a greater height than those proposed and its removal in favour of the proposed timber sign would be beneficial in terms of reduced height. There is currently no sign on the opposite side of the road in this position, but the plan has been revised to indicate that the signs would be set back 3 metres from the carriageway in line with the advice of the Area Roads Manager. Given this, the siting of the signs is considered acceptable and their siting and lower level combined means that they would not interfere with the visibility of the speed restriction markers. The Visitor Services Group have confirmed that the siting of the signs does not conflict with any of the sites that they currently have under consideration for the Point of Entry Marker Project.
12. The size of the signs is significant, but given the fact that the intended material is timber and that the signs would be set against a background of trees, limits any visual impact. In addition, the removal of the existing metal welcome sign (which the applicants have indicated will be removed) on the west side of the road will reduce the limited clutter of signage immediately outside of the village. The Visitor Services Group also note that the materials proposed are in line with current thinking and raise no objection relating to the scale, or design of the signage. However, it is pointed out that painted signs would require regular upkeep. In response to this, a standard advertisement consent condition for the application should ensure that it is kept in good order.

13. The proposal does result in the removal of some self seeded trees on both sides of the road to open up visibility towards the sign in the form of a visibility splay. However, the signs are positioned in a way that gives consideration to the removal of as few trees as possible. There is no general objection to the opening up of the visibility splay and it is important to note that the tree works could be carried out without the need for planning consent

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE AIMS OF THE NATIONAL PARK

Conserve and Enhance the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Area

14. The signs result in the loss of a small number of small to medium sized trees in a heavily forested area. This is balanced against the nature of the sign reinforcing the cultural heritage of the community of Carrbridge

Promote Sustainable Use of Natural Resources

15. The proposal has limited implications in relation to this aim, although it may well be the case that local materials would be used for the sign.

Promote Understanding and Enjoyment of the Area

16. The proposal by signing the entrance to the village using symbols such as the bridge will contribute towards promoting understanding and enjoyment of the area.

Promote Sustainable Economic and Social Development of the Area

17. The signs will help to promote Carrbridge as a visitor destination and thereby contribute to the economic development of the area.

RECOMMENDATION

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

Grant Advertisement Consent for the Display of welcome signs on land adjacent to B9153 on southern approach to Carrbridge subject to the following conditions:-

- i. All advertisements displayed, and any land used for the display of advertisements, shall be maintained in a clean and tidy condition to the reasonable satisfaction of the Planning Authority.
- ii. Any hoarding or similar structure, or any sign, placard, board or device erected or used principally for the purpose of displaying advertisements

shall be maintained in a safe condition to the reasonable satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.

- iii. Where any advertisement is required under the regulations to be removed, the removal thereof shall be carried out to the reasonable satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority.
- iv. Before an advertisement is displayed on land, the permission of the owner of that land, or other person entitled to grant permission, shall be obtained.

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