

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED:

Refurbishment of hotel to serviced apartments with ground floor events space and cinema room, erection of leisure facilities, change of use of dwellinghouse to offices, conversion of dairy building to staff accommodation, conversion of mews to artist studio, replace existing footbridge, and erection of associated ancillary buildings at Invercauld Arms Hotel A93 U4m Near Invercauld Bridge To Glenshee Road Braemar Braemar Ballater Aberdeenshire AB35 5YR

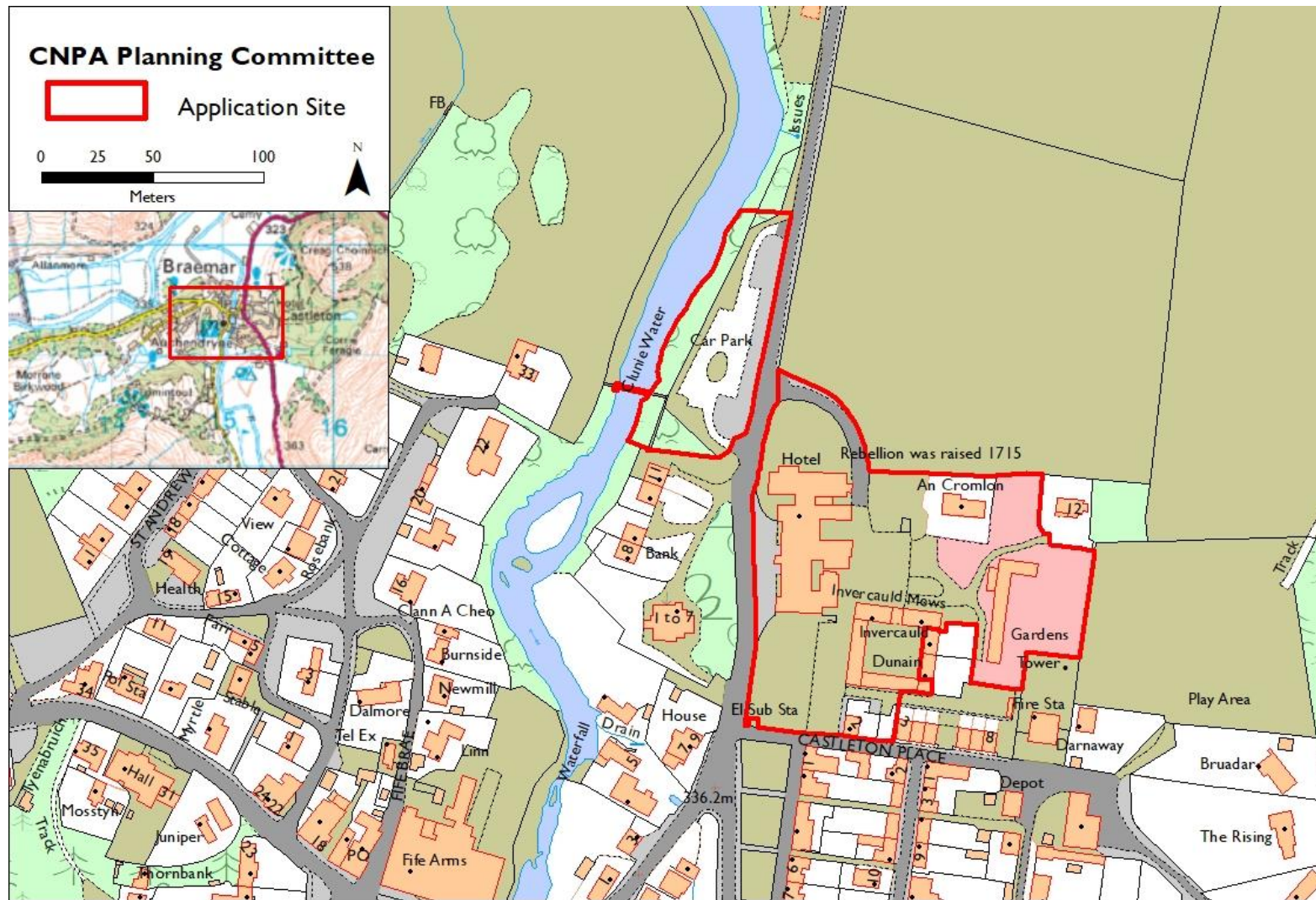
REFERENCE: 2023/0229/DET and 2023/0221/LBC

APPLICANT: ARTFARM Property Ltd

DATE CALLED-IN: 29 May 2023

RECOMMENDATION: Approve applications for Full Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent subject to conditions

CASE OFFICER: Emma Bryce - Planning Manager
(Development Management)



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SITE DESCRIPTION, PROPOSAL AND HISTORY

Site Description

1. The application site principally relates to the existing Invercauld Hotel and its ancillary buildings. The hotel is category C listed and is of typical Scots baronial design with features such as turrets, corbels and buttresses. The building has been sensitively extended over the years, although there are some less sympathetic 20th century additions. Located to the rear of the hotel are the former dairy building and mews which are also both category C listed. The dairy is currently a ruin, however parts of the mews have been recently refurbished and are in use as a village pub (west wing) and staff accommodation for the applicants' other hotel (north wing). The east wing of the mews is under separate ownership. The Omnibus House also lies within the application site. This is a category B listed timber building. It is of a distinctive design and finish, originally constructed as the terminus of the Great North of Scotland Railway. It is currently used as staff accommodation for the applicants' other business. There are a number of trees on the site, the mature elms and limes are covered by a Tree Preservation Order.
2. The main hotel site is accessed off the Glenshee Road to the north. There is also access from the south off Castleton Place. The site, which is relatively flat, is located to the northeast corner of Braemar and is bound by agricultural land to the north and east, to the south by Castleton Place and to the west by the Glenshee Road (A93).
3. The application site also incorporates a small area of land to the northeast of the hotel site, across Glenshee Road which is used as an informal car park. This area is bound by the A93 to the east and Clunie Water to the west with an existing bridge over the river providing access to the existing core path (UDE12) on the opposite side.

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=RV7YNVSI0CP00>

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Title	Drawing Number	Date on Plan*	Date Received
Plan - Location Plan	MP-005 Rev.03	21/04/23	26/05/23
Plan - Proposed Site Plan	MP-020 Rev.07	21/04/23	26/05/23
Plan - Masterplan - Roof Plan	MP-020 Rev.05	31/03/23	26/05/23
Plan - Masterplan - Ground Floor Plan	MP-024 Rev.04	31/03/23	26/05/23
Plan - Hotel - Demo Ground Floor GA Plan	PL-205 Rev.05	01/11/22	26/05/23
Plan - Hotel - Demo First Floor GA Plan	PL-206 Rev.05	01/11/22	26/05/23
Plan - Hotel - Demo Second Floor GA Plan	PL-207 Rev.05	01/11/22	26/05/23
Plan - Hotel - Demo Third Floor GA Plan	PL-208 Rev.05	01/11/22	26/05/23
Plan - Hotel - Proposed Ground Floor GA Plan	PL-200 Rev.06	01/11/22	26/05/23
Plan - Hotel - Proposed First Floor GA Plan	PL-201 Rev.06	01/11/22	26/05/23
Plan - Hotel - Proposed Second Floor GA Plan	PL-202 Rev.07	01/11/22	26/05/23
Plan - Hotel - Proposed Third Floor GA Plan	PL-203 Rev.07	01/11/22	26/05/23
Plan - Hotel - Proposed Roof GA Plan	PL-204 Rev.04	01/11/22	26/05/23
Plan - Hotel - North and South Proposed Elevation	PL-301 Rev.02	01/11/22	26/05/23
Plan - Hotel - East and West Proposed Elevation	PL-300 Rev.01	01/11/22	26/05/23
Plan - Proposed Site Axonmetric 1 of 2	MP-080 Rev.01	31/03/23	26/05/23
Plan - Proposed Site Axonmetric 2 of 2	MP-081 Rev.01	31/03/23	26/05/23

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Plan - Omnibus House - Proposed Floor Plans	OB-PL-205 Rev.01	13/07/22	26/05/23
Plan - Omnibus House - Proposed Roof Plan	OB-PL-206 Rev.01	13/07/22	26/05/23
Plan - Omnibus House - Proposed Elevations	OB-PL-301 Rev.01	13/07/22	26/05/23
Plan - Omnibus House - Proposed Internal Elevations	OB-PL-350 Rev.01	13/07/22	26/05/23
Plan - Mews - Proposed Ground Floor Plan	MS-PL-200 Rev.01	13/07/22	26/05/23
Plan - Mews - Proposed First Floor Plan	MS-PL-201 Rev.01	13/07/22	26/05/23
Plan - Mews - Proposed Roof Plan	MS-PL-205 Rev.01	13/07/22	26/05/23
Plan - Mews Loft - Proposed External Elevations	MS-PL-300 Rev.01	13/07/22	26/05/23
Plan - Mews Loft - Proposed External North Elevation	MS-PL-301 Rev.01	13/07/22	26/05/23
Plan - Mews Loft - Proposed Sections	MS-PL-400 Rev.01	13/07/22	26/05/23
Plan - Dairy - Proposed Plans	DR-PL-206 Rev.03	13/07/22	05/09/23
Plan - Dairy - Proposed Elevations	DR-PL-301 Rev.02	13/07/22	05/09/23
Plan - Dairy - Proposed Detail Elevation	DR-PL-320 Rev.02	13/07/22	05/09/23

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Plan - Dairy - Proposed Sections	DR-PL-401 Rev.02	13/07/22	05/09/23
Plan - Leisure Building - Ground Floor GA Plan	NB-PL200 Rev.01	14/04/23	26/05/23
Plan - Leisure Building - Basement GA Plan	NB-PL201 Rev.01	31/03/23	26/05/23
Plan - Leisure Building - Roof GA Plan	NB-PL205 Rev.01	31/03/23	26/05/23
Plan - Leisure Building - GA Elevations 1 of 2	NB-PL300 Rev.01	31/03/23	26/05/23
Plan - Leisure Building - GA Elevations 1 of 2	NB-PL301 Rev.01	31/03/23	26/05/23
Plan - Ancilliary Buildings - GA Site Section and Elevation	AB-PL-300	10/01/23	26/05/23
Plan - Ancilliary Buildings - GA Plan	AB-200	10/01/23	26/05/23
Plan - Ancilliary Buildings - GA Roof Plan	AB-200	10/01/23	26/05/23
Plan - Clunie Footbridge - Proposed GA Plan and Elevation	BR-202 Rev.01	31/03/23	26/05/23
Plan - Clunie Footbridge - Proposed 3D Perspective Views	BR-204 Rev.01	31/03/23	26/05/23
Plan - Clunie Footbridge - Proposed Detail Sections	BR-206 Rev.01	31/03/23	26/05/23
Plan - Vehicle Tracking - Fire Tender	21.0159- NAR-XX- XX-DR-C- 9500 P02	01/01/23	26/05/23
Plan - Vehicle Tracking - Van	21.0159- NAR-XX- XX-DR-C- 9501 P04	01/01/23	26/05/23
Plan - Vehicle Tracking - Car	21.0159- NAR-XX- XX-DR-C- 9502 P02	01/01/23	26/05/23

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Plan - Vehicle Tracking - Refuse	21.0159-NAR-XX-XX-DR-C-9503 P03	01/01/23	26/05/23
Plan - Proposed Drainage Layout	21.0159-NAR-XX-XX-DR-C-9400 P03	01/01/23	26/05/23
Plan - Tree Protection and Management	IAB-2203-TP	31/03/22	26/05/23
Plan - Tree Protection	IABB-2302-TP	09/02/23	26/05/23
Other - Planning Statement	Rev. P03		26/05/23
Other - Sustainability Report	Rev. P01		26/05/23
Other - Noise Impact Assessment	R-9117D-CM-DJC	14/03/23	26/05/23
Other - Lighting Report			26/05/23
Other - Ecological Survey Report	IABH-2110-ES	19/10/21	26/05/23
Other - Tree Survey Report	IAB-2203-TR	31/03/22	26/05/23
Other - Tree Survey Report - Clunie Water Bridge	IABB-2302-TR	09/02/23	26/05/23
Other - Elm Tree Management Report	IAB-2023-TM		26/05/23
Other - Drainage Strategy			26/05/23
Other - Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment			26/05/23
Other - Transport Report	784-B034048		26/05/23
Other - Preliminary Environmental Risk Assessment			26/05/23
Other - Design and Access Statement			30/05/23
Other - Construction Method Statement			31/05/23
Other - Omnibus House Offices Document		31/03/23	04/09/23

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Other - Hotel - Swift Survey	IAH-2308-SS	30/08/23	30/08/23
Other - Hotel - Bat Emergence Survey	IAH-2308-BS	23/08/23	24/08/23
Other - Hotel - Bat Roost Potential Survey	ICH-2201-BRP	20/01/21	26/05/23
Other - Bat Survey - Mews	ICB-2110-BS	05/10/21	26/05/23
Other - Bat Survey - Dairy	IMP-2110-BS	05/10/21	26/05/23
Other - Bat Survey - An Cromlon	ICB-3209-BS	30/09/21	26/05/23
Other - Hotel - Swift Survey Report	IAH-2308-SS	30/08/23	30/08/23
Other - Mews and Dairy - Swift Survey Report	ICB-2110-SS	07/10/21	26/05/23

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

5. Two applications have been submitted seeking planning permission and listed building consent for the refurbishment and restoration of the Invercauld Hotel and its ancillary buildings. The full planning permission also seeks consent for the construction of a new leisure facility and the overall redevelopment and upgrading of the wider site. The proposals comprise the following elements:
 - a) the refurbishment and restoration of the C listed hotel building to provide short term let, serviced apartments, a ground floor events space and cinema room. The proposed works will include the removal of unsympathetic extensions and the addition of respectful infill elements which will be mainly to the rear, the replacement of all the uPVC windows with timber sash and casement windows to reflect the original ones and the repair or exact replacement of the building's architectural features, slate roof areas, leadwork and masonry. Existing and new service penetrations will have heritage cast iron grills and where they terminate at roof level, will have leaded heritage cowls.
 - b) A new entrance canopy is proposed in the recess between the original building and a slightly later extension. This is a secondary entrance and will be to the main events space to allow for functions held here to be kept separate from the main use of the premises (serviced apartments). The rear (east) elevation of the hotel building will be rationalised and poor 20th

century additions removed and new, more sympathetic and respectful elements of contemporary design introduced. It is intended that this façade will also be a public face to the hotel, addressing the reinstated courtyard and providing public access as well as 'back of house' services. An existing chimney will be reduced in height and finished and detailed to match adjacent ones. Internally the proposals seeks to retain as many original features as possible, and where necessary reintroduce traditional materials where these have been lost in the past. It is proposed to subdivide the bar which will in part form a hotel library with the remaining space being incorporated into a new apartment. The dining room will also be subdivided to form a new apartment. Downtakings and modifications will be greater on the upper levels to accommodate the twenty one 1, 2, 3 and 4 bedroom apartments.

- c) the refurbishment and restoration of the C listed Dairy building to provide staff accommodation (10, one bedroom units). The remnants of the original granite walls will be utilised at ground floor level. A second storey will be introduced which will be clad in vertical timber with a pitched roof clad in natural slate. Existing groundfloor archways will be infilled with recessed timber and glass and a new pend formed at the hinge point of the 'L' shaped footprint providing access to the internal courtyard;
- d) the refurbishment and restoration of the C listed Mews south wing to provide 2 artist studios and workshop facilities (the north wing is in separate ownership and will be retained as existing with some minor, 'make good' works). The works to the mews will include a high level dormer barn door to match existing mews doors, a dormer to match existing ones which will accommodate a lift and an external metal fire escape stairway. Existing archways will be infilled in timber and glass with timber shutters replacing existing barn doors. Where exiting features can be retained these up be repaired and refurbished;
- e) the refurbishment and restoration of the Category B listed Omnibus House to provide office space. Works will involve a minor amendment to the internal layout and reinstating original finishes both internally and externally;
- f) the erection of a new leisure facilities building which will contain a four lane, 25m swimming pool, a gym, yoga studio and ancillary space (back of house offices, changing facilities and a plantroom space). The design concept takes reference from a

defensive wall enclosure (a barmkin) surrounding the principal building with small ancillary buildings behind it. The proposal is for a granite wall which will run round the north and part of the east and west elevations of the leisure building. The building itself will be single story and of a contemporary design, predominantly finished in timber. The building will have a flat, 'green' roof;

- g) the construction of additional ancillary buildings including a workshop, battery and the CHP plant building, a generator, back up generator, fleet vehicle fuel tank and buried LPG tanks;
- h) the replacement of an existing footbridge over the Clunie Water; the proposed bridge is of a simple design with a single steel beam supporting a steel grate decking and timber balustrade made from larch. It will be approximately 1.2 metres wide with a stepped platform at the west side providing a safer access to and from the core path. Adjoining fencing and deer gates will be replaced or made good.
- i) an integrated landscaping scheme incorporating pedestrian and vehicular circulation across the site. Existing hard and soft landscaping to the north, south and west of the site will be retained where appropriate and upgraded as necessary. The rear (east) of the site involves level changes and points of access and therefore requires a more informal approach to the landscaping here with stepped and ramped access, seating and sheltered areas.

6. Plans of the proposals are included within **Appendix 1**.

History

7. There have been several applications for minor works (signage, installation of flues, electric charging point, etc.) to the hotel in the past.

Habitats Regulations Appraisal

8. A Habitats Regulations Appraisal [HRA] has been undertaken to consider the effects of the proposal upon the conservation objectives of the European Sites: River Dee Special Area of Conservation (SAC). A copy of the HRA is attached at **Appendix 2**.

9. The HRA identifies that there are potential impacts to the River Dee SAC due to the works associated with the renewal of the footbridge

directly above the Clunie Water which could lead to a pollution event e.g. silt or fuels entering the watercourse which could potentially impact on populations of Atlantic salmon and freshwater pearl mussel. Short term effects could rise from changes in water quality or longer term impacts from smothering of any suitable breeding habitats downstream of the works. However, mitigation measures are recommended and a condition requiring a Pollution Prevention Plan to ensure the risk of pollution can be reduced to a minimal level should be attached to any consent granted. The pollution prevention plan should include detailed measures to protect Clunie Water from the release of sediments or other pollutants and adhere to good practice measures. This will ensure all conservation objectives are met and there will be no adverse impact on site integrity for the River Dee SAC

DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONTEXT

Policies

National Policy	National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) Scotland 2045 Officer will delete policies that are not relevant	
POLICY 1	Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises	
POLICY 2	Climate Mitigation and Adaptation	
POLICY 3	Biodiversity	
POLICY 4	Natural Places	
POLICY 6	Forestry, Woodland and Trees	
POLICY 7	Historic Assets and Places	
POLICY 9	Brownfield, Vacant and Derelict Land, and Empty Buildings	
POLICY 12	Zero Waste	
POLICY 13	Sustainable Transport	
POLICY 14	Design, Quality and Place	
POLICY 22	Flood Risk and Water Management	
POLICY 25	Community Wealth Building	
POLICY 27	City, Town, Local and Commercial Centres	
POLICY 29	Rural Development	
POLICY 30	Tourism	
POLICY 31	Culture and Creativity	

Strategic Policy	Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2022 – 2027
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Local Plan Policy	Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan (2021) 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	DESIGN AND PLACEMAKING	X
POLICY 4	NATURAL HERITAGE	X
POLICY 5	LANDSCAPE	X
POLICY 6	THE SITING AND DESIGN OF DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT	
POLICY 7	RENEWABLE ENERGY	
POLICY 8	OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION	
POLICY 9	CULTURAL HERITAGE	X
POLICY 10	RESOURCES	X
POLICY 11	DEVELOPER OBLIGATIONS	

10. All new development proposals require to be assessed in relation to policies contained in the adopted Development Plan which comprises National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021. The full wording of policies can be found at:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-planning-framework-4/documents/>

and at:

<https://cairngorms.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/CNPA-LDP-2021-web.pdf>

Planning Guidance

11. 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	Housing Supplementary Guidance	
Policy 2	Supporting Economic Growth Non-Statutory Guidance	X
Policy 3	Design and Placemaking Non-Statutory Guidance	X
Policy 4	Natural Heritage Non-Statutory Guidance	X
Policy 5	Landscape Non-Statutory Guidance	X
Policy 7	Renewable Energy Non-Statutory Guidance	

Policy 8	Open Space, Sport and Recreation Non-Statutory Guidance	
Policy 9	Cultural Heritage Non-Statutory Guidance	X
Policy 10	Resources Non-Statutory Guidance	X
Policy 11	Developer Obligations Supplementary Guidance	

CONSULTATIONS

12. A summary of the main issues raised by consultees now follows:
13. **NatureScot** advise that the site lies next to the River Dee SAC protected for its European otters, freshwater pearl mussels and Atlantic salmon. They agree with the conclusions of the Habitats Regulations Appraisal, that with appropriate mitigation measures secured through planning condition that there will be no effect on the site integrity of the River Dee SAC.
14. In terms of the Deeside and Lochnagar National Scenic Area (NSA), given the development is within an existing settlement and is for the refurbishment of existing buildings, the objectives of the designation and overall integrity of the NSA will not be compromised.
15. **Scottish Water** has no objection to the proposals, but suggest the applicant completes a Pre-Development Enquiry (PDE) form ensuring the development can be serviced. There is currently capacity in the Braemar Water Treatment Works to service the proposed development. The proposed development is within the Braemar Waste Water Treatment Works catchment area but suggest the applicant completes a Pre-Development Enquiry (PDE) form ensuring the development can be serviced.
16. Scottish Water records show that there is live infrastructure within the site boundary (a 3-inch uPVC main and 150mm foul main) and therefore the applicants should be aware that any conflict with assets identified will be subject to restrictions on proximity of construction. Written permission must be obtained before any works are started within the area of any assets.
17. A review of records shows that the proposed development falls within a drinking Water Catchment where a SW abstraction point is located. This is a designated Drinking Water Protected Area (DWPA) and it is essential that water quality and quantity in the area are protected. It is a relatively large catchment and activity will be located a sufficient distance therefore risk is low, however all SW precautionary advice

must be adhered to and this designation referred to in all future documentation and publicised to those working on the site.

18. Only in exceptional circumstances will surface water connections into the SW combined sewer system be permitted. Any intended connection into the combined sewer system will have to be assessed by SW.
19. **North East Scotland Biological Records Centre (NESBReC)** provided information on the biological data it holds for this site. It does not provide any advice in terms of the proposed development.
20. **Aberdeenshire Archaeology Officer** states that there is no archaeological mitigation required in this instance.
21. **Aberdeenshire Built Heritage Officer** initially sought for some additional information and subsequently a number of minor amendments that have been incorporated.
22. **Aberdeenshire Contaminated Land Officer** states that there are potential risks from the previous use of the site and therefore further investigations are required. The submitted Preliminary Environmental Risk Assessment report outlines a scope of works for an intrusive site investigations and it is recommended a condition is attached to any consent to ensure appropriate investigations are undertaken in accordance with the British Standard.
23. **Aberdeenshire Flood Risk team** have no comment to make on this proposal.
24. **Aberdeenshire Infrastructure Roads Development team** has no objections to the proposals subject to conditions relating to car parking provision and surface finishes and visibility splays.
25. **CNPA Ecology Officer** notes that bat surveys were undertaken in July & August 2023 which identified three common pipistrelle roosts. One roost will be destroyed by the proposed works, one disturbed and the other roost will be unaffected by the works. The effected roost is for a single pipistrelle and does not appear to be used for breeding purposes therefore it is considered that the impact on the local bat population will be slight. Notwithstanding this, given the proposed destruction of one roost and the potential disturbance of another, a licence from NatureScot will be required. However, given the types of roosts identified, the works are considered low impact and therefore it is considered that a licence is likely to be granted or works could take

place under a BLIMP (bat low impact licence). As per licensing guidelines, a bat protection plan will be required and a copy of it and the licence should be submitted to CNPA for records prior to works commencing on site. It is expected that the works will be monitored by a bat licensed ecologist and for works which may disturb bats to commence outwith sensitive bat periods e.g. Oct/Nov or March/April. Bat boxes should be installed as compensation for the loss of the roost - advice on location should be sought from experienced bat ecologist. These matters can be covered by an appropriately worded condition.

26. The officer also recommends pre-construction surveys and where required, Species Protection Plan for red squirrel and otter. It is also recommended that a condition be attached requiring a condition regarding the timings of works to ensure breeding birds are not impacted on. In terms of the Clunie Water, it is recommended that the Preliminary Construction Method Statement is updated to include site specific construction methods and should detail pollution prevention methods. Tree protection methods and the Arboricultural Method Statement must be implemented in full.
27. **CNPA Landscape Officer** has no objections and states that the proposed development would generally relate well to the local landscape character and visual amenity of the area and the relevant SLQs. The proposed development is of a high quality design and will result in many positive effects in the local landscape and will reinforce the distinctiveness of the landscape and local sense of place. There concern regarding how the proposed development will fit with the landscape on its northern side and the impact on the view on the approach to Braemar from this direction. Specifically, the proposed leisure building will appear prominent and contrasting given its large horizontal form. These effects, however, could be reduced with additional landscape mitigation measures. Furthermore, the prominent mature elm tree (T29) next to the hotel and A93 is extremely sensitive to the proposed development, however this can be safeguarded with additional commitment to protection measures. It is considered that both these issues could be covered by suspensive planning conditions.
28. **CNPA Outdoor Access Officer** has no objections to the proposed pedestrian replacement bridge over the Clunie Water subject to the subsequent agreement of the bridge deck finish.
29. **Braemar Community Council** has no objection, however state that they are hopeful that sufficient staff accommodation will be provided to alleviate housing pressure on the village.

REPRESENTATIONS

30. The applications were advertised when they were first submitted. The Aberdeenshire South Access Panel has provided comments on the Listed Building consent seeking an appropriate level of disabled parking provision. No other letters of representation have been received.

APPRAISAL

31. This appraisal covers both the full planning application, **2023/0229/DET**, and the listed building consent application **2023/0221LBC**.
32. The main considerations are considered to be, the principle of the development, cultural heritage and design, landscape and amenity, environmental impacts, access and servicing and contaminated land.

Principle

33. **NPF4 Policy 2: Climate mitigation and adaptation** supports development that retro fit existing developments, while **Policy 9: Brownfield, vacant and derelict land and empty buildings** supports development for the sustainable reuse of brownfield land including vacant and derelict land and buildings.
34. **Policy 2.2 Tourist Accommodation** of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021 supports tourist related accommodation where:
- it has no adverse environmental or amenity impacts on the site or neighbouring areas,
 - it contributes to/supports the provision of a wide range of visitor accommodation; and
 - it supports or contributes to a year-round economy.
35. **Policy 2.3 Other tourism and leisure developments** supports development which enhances recreation and leisure facilities; tourism and leisure-based business activities and attractions; and improved opportunities for responsible outdoor access where:
- it has no adverse environmental or amenity impacts on the site or neighbouring areas;
 - it makes a positive contribution to the experience of visitors; and
 - it supports or contributes to a year-round economy.

36. The proposed development will renovate and bring the former hotel building back into use with self-catering accommodation offering much needed additional and a more diverse type of tourist accommodation within Braemar. This will be augmented by the additional leisure facilities (pool, gym, yoga studio and cinema room) located on the wider brownfield site to the rear of the hotel building. This will also be available for local residents to use which will greatly improve the provision of local amenities and will ensure year-round use of these facilities. The site is well located and easily accessible by all modes of transport and the proposed replacement bridge will improve access links to the existing core path.
37. The principle of the development is considered to accord with NPF4 Policy 2: Climate mitigation and adaptation and Policy 9: Brownfield, vacant and derelict land and empty buildings and Policy 2: Supporting Economic Growth of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021 subject to compliance with other relevant NPF4 and Local Development Plan policies.

Cultural Heritage and Design

38. **NPF4 Policy 7: Historic assets and places** supports development proposals for the reuse, alteration or extension of a listed building where they preserve its character, special architectural or historic interest and setting. **NPF4 Policy 14: Design, quality and place** supports development where it is consistent with the six qualities of successful places; healthy, pleasant, connected, distinctive, sustainable and adaptable.
39. **Policy 3: Design and Placemaking** of the of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021 seeks to reinforce and enhance the character of the existing settlement and encourage new development to be sympathetic to the traditional pattern and character of the area, whilst encouraging innovative design and finishes. **Policy 3.5 Converting existing building stock** supports the conversion of existing building stock where the building conversion works maintain the style and original building in terms of form, scale materials and detailing where they contribute positively to the context and setting of the area.
40. **Policy 9: Cultural Heritage** of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021 aims to protect the cultural heritage of the Park and encourages the preservation of buildings of cultural significance by keeping them in active use. **Policy 9.1 Listed buildings** states that development affecting a listed building or its setting should preserve the special qualities of the building and enhance its character;

and the contribution it makes to the cultural heritage of the National Park. The layout, design materials, scale, siting and use of any development must be appropriate to the character and appearance of the building.

41. The proposals will bring the redundant listed, purpose built, hotel building and the listed ancillary dairy, mews and omnibus buildings back into use. External works to the hotel will include, where appropriate, the repair of original elements and features. The only new feature to the front (west elevation) is a recessed entrance canopy between the original part of the hotel and the later wing. Given this is recessed it will only be visible in elevational views and in the wider context will maintain symmetry to this elevation. The original hotel which was constructed in the mid-1800s has since been extended most notably by the construction of the north wing in the late 1800s. This element was more finely detailed than the original hotel building. The north facing elevation is prominent in that it is clearly viewed on the approach to the village from the north. It was proposed to replicate features found on the other original public elevations, such as ornate bargeboards, finials, etc. However, it is considered that the retention of this elevation as originally detailed will ensure the differing phases of the development are easily identified.
42. Further later additions, principally to the rear (east elevation), are much more unsympathetic and have impacted on both the appearance and function of the hotel. It is proposed to remove these elements and rationalise this elevation introducing more traditional detailing and finishes including pitched slate roofs with traditional lead work and reinstated timber work painted to match retained external joinery. The rear of the hotel will become a prominent elevation, fronting the reinstated courtyard, providing access points to public routes around the wider site.
43. Internally the works will also seek to retain or replicate original elements and features including corbels, cornicing, timber detailing, staircases, fireplaces, etc. The official HES Listing recognises that there are many details that are reproductions, however where there are original joinery and plasterwork features it is proposed to retain and refurbish them. It is also proposed to reintroduce traditional timber detailing such as dados, skirtings and cornicing where these are missing. There will be more downtakings and alterations to the upper floors to accommodate the proposed serviced apartments, however the existing layout on the upper levels is not original and the proposals reinstate the original plan form reverting the rooms back to suites of rooms. It is the principal rooms on the ground floor that have had less intervention and as such these have been mostly retained and the

central part of the building opened up to allow for easy access for those using the facilities. It is regrettable that the bar and dining room will be subdivided, however the majority of the existing features will be retained and a plaque marking the historic location of the Jacobite Rebellion will also be retained. The Council's Built Heritage Officer expressed concern about the removal of the fireplace from the dining room. However, this is not original and it will be relocated elsewhere in the building.

44. One of the most impressive rooms within the hotel is within the north wing, known as the Castle Room and this will form the events space. The Built Heritage Officer has recommended that the Castle Room ceiling remain exposed, however, it is proposed to retain the ceiling in its current form with secondary acoustic ceiling applied to the underside. As such the ceiling will be retained albeit covered over. This means it can be reopened and reinstated in the future and is considered to be acceptable in these circumstances.
45. Works to the mews and dairy building are considered to be acceptable. There are a number of solar panels proposed on the dairy, however these are located on an elevation that is not visible from public view. Granite from the duntakings and slate from the roof areas will be used for repair and new areas of the buildings. Some new Scottish slate will be required and therefore a condition is recommended for a sample to be submitted and approved to ensure a consistency in the finishes. It is also recommended that a window detail for the dairy is provided, again to ensure consistency with original details.
46. The proposed leisure facility extension is located to the north and provides a fourth side to the reinstated courtyard – the hotel, mews and dairy forming the three other sides. Historically there was a building in this location completing the courtyard. The single storey extension which is contemporary in its design, takes reference from a traditional feature (a barmkin wall and ancillary buildings) and will be finished in traditional materials which will harmonise with the finishes on the adjacent buildings.
47. The proposals will reuse the existing listed buildings and introduce a form of development that will preserve and enhance their character and setting in accordance with NPF4 Policy 7: Historic assets and places and Policy 14: Design, quality and place and LDP Policy 3: Design and Placemaking and Policy 9: Cultural Heritage.

Landscape and amenity

48. **Policy 5: Landscape** of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021 presumes against development which does not conserve and enhance the landscape character and special qualities of the National Park and in particular, the setting of the proposed development. This is reinforced by **Policy 3: Design and Placemaking** which seeks to ensure that all new development is sympathetic to the traditional pattern and character of the surrounding areas, local vernacular and local distinctiveness. **Policy 4.3 Woodlands** only supports woodland removal where it complies with Scottish Government Policy and where removal would achieve clearly defined additional public benefits.
49. **NPF4 Policy 6: Forestry, Woodland, and Trees** places significant emphasis on the protection of trees and woodland, noting that development proposals involving woodland removal will only be supported where they will achieve significant and clearly defined additional public benefits in accordance with the relevant Scottish Government Control of Woodland Removal policy. Where woodland is removed, compensatory planting should be delivered.
50. The proposed development will relate well to the local landscape character and visual amenity of Braemar and the relevant Special Landscape Qualities of the National Park. The proposed refurbishment of the existing hotel and ancillary buildings, in addition to creation of publicly accessible green spaces and the construction of a new footbridge will result in many positive effects in the local landscape, given the high quality of design proposed, which will reinforce the distinctiveness of the landscape and local sense of place.
51. There is concern, however, as to how the proposed development will fit within the landscape on its northern edge and how it will potentially affect views and the arrival experience into Braemar from this direction. Although the low, horizontal form of this building will help to retain the vertical focal qualities of the existing hotel building, this horizontal form will appear extensive and inconsistent with other buildings in the area. Five existing trees from this part of the site will be removed to accommodate the development. The prominence of the proposed leisure building has been reduced to some extent by architectural features such as a recessed façade and a green roof with native grasses, but it is recommended that additional landscape mitigation measures are required along the northern side of the site. For example, reintroducing some trees along this boundary will help break up the horizontality with vertical features.

52. An existing mature elm tree (T29) covered by a TPO, on the northern corner of the site is a very important specimen tree, both because there are few healthy, mature elm trees remaining in Scotland and because this large tree frames the entrance into Braemar from the north and the setting of the Invercauld Arms Hotel. A 'Tree Management Report' has been submitted for this tree which includes measures in terms of pruning its base for improved visibility splays and general thinning. There is concern about the thinning measures given the importance of this elm tree and that its existing canopy is not highly dense. Following discussion with the agent it is understood that the proposed thinning refers only to the ends of outreaching, smaller branches and that any works on these would be carried out only if essential and would be on an incremental basis. All such this work will have to be supervised on site by an arboriculturist/ecologist. It is recommended that this additional commitment to protecting the tree be covered by an appropriately worded condition.
53. Subject to suitably worded conditions to ensure additional landscape mitigation measures are incorporated into the landscape plan along with its proper establishment and long-term management and the robust protection and management of the existing elm tree, the proposed development is considered to comply with NPF4 Policy, Policy 3: Design and Placemaking, Policy 4.3: Woodlands and Policy 5: Landscape of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development 2021.
54. In terms of amenity **NPF4 Policy 30: Tourism (part e)** only supports development proposals for the reuse of existing buildings for short term holiday letting where there is no unacceptable impact on local amenity or character of a neighbourhood or area. **Policy 3: Design and Placemaking** seeks to ensure that new developments are designed to protect the amenity currently enjoyed by neighbours.
55. The site lies on the edge of the village and historically was a hotel. There are existing commercial premises and tourist related facilities within the immediate vicinity and therefore the proposal is considered compatible with its surrounding land uses. A preliminary Construction Method Statement (CMS) has been submitted, however it is recommended that a condition requiring a fully detailed finalised CMS is submitted for approval. This will ensure good construction working practices are adhered to in the interests of neighbouring amenity. Accordingly, the proposed development complies with NPF4 Policy 30: Tourism and the LDP Policy 3: Design and Placemaking in terms of protecting amenity.

Environmental Impacts

56. **NPF4 Policy 1: Tackling the climate and nature crises** requires that significant weight is given to the global climate and nature crisis when consideration is given to new development. **Policy 3: Biodiversity** seeks to ensure that development will conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity while **Policy 4: Natural Places** seeks to protect, restore and enhance natural assets including protected areas.
57. **Policy 4: Natural Heritage** of the Cairngorms National Park Development Plan 2021 seeks to restrict development that would have an adverse impact on protected species and where this cannot be avoided that appropriate mitigation measures are provided.
58. Surveys of the vacant buildings has shown there are bats roosts, however subject to the applicants ensuring they have the required NatureScot license and the subsequent submission of this and a Bat Protection Plan and bat boxes on the site, there is unlikely to be any significant impact on the bat population. Conditions requiring pre-construction surveys for squirrel and otters and where required, Species Protection Plans are also recommended as well as a condition to ensure works are not undertaken during the bird breeding season. The site lies adjacent to the River Dee SAC. A Habitats Regulations Appraisal has been undertaken by CNPA to assess any impacts on the qualifying interests – Atlantic salmon and freshwater pearl mussel. NatureScot has been consulted and agree with the conclusion reached and the recommendations made. These require a suspensive condition to be attached to any consent granted to ensure appropriate mitigation is undertaken and there will be no adverse effect on the site's integrity. A condition is recommended for the submission and approval of a Pollution Prevention Plan.
59. Subject to the imposition of the recommended conditions, the proposed development will comply with the terms of Policy 1: Tackling the climate and nature crises, Policy 3: Biodiversity and Policy 4: Natural Places of NPF4 and Policy 4: Natural Heritage of the Cairngorms Local Development Plan 2021.

Access and Servicing

60. **Policy 3: Design and Placemaking** of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021 seeks to maximise opportunities for responsible outdoor access, including links into the existing path network and ensuring consistency with the Cairngorms National Park

Core Paths Plan, and that all new development must include an appropriate means of access, egress and space for off street parking.

61. The proposed replacement bridge over the Clunie Water is welcomed and will provide improved access to the existing Core Path. Site constraints have resulted in it being retained as a pedestrian footbridge. A condition is recommended to ensure the bridge deck is finished in an appropriate material.
62. The Roads team has raised no objections to the proposed development however recommend conditions covering parking provision and visibility splays.
63. The development also incorporates ten, one bedroom staff accommodation units within the site. The applicants are a significant employer in the Breamar area and have since opening the Fife Arms, have purchased and converted a number of properties in upper Deeside to provide accommodation for staff working at the Fife arms and in anticipation of the redevelopment and opening of the Invercauld Arms. The staff accommodation provided will support the operation of their businesses in combination with other properties.
64. Subject to the recommended conditions it is considered that the proposals comply with Policy 3: Design and Placemaking of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021.

Contaminated Land

65. **Policy 10: Resources** of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021 states that development affecting contaminated land will be considered favourably where assessments are undertaken to identify actual and potential impacts, on site and off site, of all stages of development proposals on the risks to human health and to the Park's biodiversity, geodiversity, hydrology and other special qualities.
66. The Contaminated Land officer has identified that previous uses on the site could potentially mean there may still be ground contamination issues on the site. Given this, a suitably worded suspensive condition is recommended that a scheme to identify and address potential contamination issues should be submitted. Therefore, subject to a suspensive condition, the proposal is considered to comply with Policy 10: Resources of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021.

CONCLUSION

67. The proposed development will return the vacant listed hotel and its ancillary buildings into long term, sustainable uses and the proposed leisure building will complement this. The development will not harm either the character and appearance of the listed buildings nor their settings. The rejuvenation of this wider site will also be of benefit of the local community. Subject to the recommended conditions the proposed development is considered to comply with the policies contained within National Planning Framework 4 and the adopted Local Development Plan and approval is therefore recommended.

RECOMMENDATION

That Members of the Committee support a recommendation to APPROVE:

1) Full planning permission for the refurbishment of hotel to serviced apartments with ground floor events space and cinema room, erection of leisure facilities, change of use of dwellinghouse to offices, conversion of dairy building to staff accommodation, conversion of mews to artist studio, replace existing footbridge, and erection of associated ancillary buildings;

and

2) Listed Building Consent for the refurbishment of hotel to serviced apartments with ground floor events space and cinema room,

at Invercauld Arms Hotel, A93 U4m Near Invercauld Bridge To Glenshee Road Braemar, Braemar, Ballater, Aberdeenshire for the subject to the following conditions:

Those conditions listed below in bold text are suspensive conditions, which require to be discharged prior to implementation of the development. Separate decision notices will be issued for each application with appropriate conditions for the consent.

Conditions

- 1. No development shall commence on site until samples of slate and the window detail for the dairy are submitted to and approved in writing by the CNPA acting as Planning Authority.**

Reason: To ensure these elements of the scheme are sympathetic and complement the setting of the designated heritage assets in accordance with NPF4 Policy 7: Historic assets and places and Policy 14: Design, quality and place and LDP Policy 3: Design and Placemaking and Policy 9: Cultural Heritage.

- 2. No development shall commence on site until a fully detailed landscaping scheme for both hard and soft landscaping proposals and the future maintenance and management of the proposed scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the CNPA acting as Planning Authority. This shall include, but not be limited to:**
- a) hard landscaping material specification,**
 - b) soft landscaping plant and tree species;**
 - c) planting specifications;**
 - d) details of footways;**
 - e) tree planting along the northern boundary;**
 - f) maintenance and management details and implementation timetable.**

Thereafter the development shall be implemented in accordance with those approved details and not later than the expiry of the next planting season following commencement of the development or within such time as approved by CNPA acting as Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the long-term retention of an appropriate landscape setting, enhanced biodiversity and to ensure the development's visual impact will not have an adverse effect on the landscape setting or ecological value of the site in accordance with Policy 3: Biodiversity and Policy 4: Natural Places of NPF4 and Policy 4: Natural Heritage and Policy 5: Landscape of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021.

- 3. No development shall commence on site until a finalised Construction Method Statement, covering all construction and other works, is submitted to, and approved in writing by the Cairngorm National Park Authority acting as Planning Authority. Thereafter, the development shall be implemented in accordance with those approved details.**

Reason: To ensure that construction methods will not have an adverse impact on the setting of the listed buildings, the landscape features and the ecological quality of this designated area by reducing and mitigating the environmental impacts of the proposal to a satisfactory level and to protect amenity in accordance with NPF4 Policy 30: Tourism, Policy 3: Design and Placemaking, Policy 4: Natural Heritage, Policy 5: Landscape

and Policy 9: Cultural Heritage of the Cairngorms Local Development Plan 2021.

- 4. No development shall commence on site until a Bat Species Protection Plan has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Cairngorms National Park Authority acting as Planning Authority. Thereafter, all mitigation set out the approved Bat Species Protection Plan, including timing of works, shall be implemented in accordance the details contained in the Plan.**

Reason: To ensure that the development does not adversely affect European Protected Species in the area in accordance with Policy 3: Biodiversity of NPF4 and Policy 4: Natural Heritage of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021.

- 5. No development shall commence until pre-construction surveys are carried out by a suitably qualified ecologist for red squirrel and otter. The results, together with any associated Species Protection Plans shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Cairngorms National Park Authority acting at Planning Authority.**

Thereafter all mitigation measures shall be implemented in accordance with any approved Species Protection Plans and overseen by a suitably qualified Ecological Clerk of Works.

Reason: To determine the effects of the proposals on the ecology of the site and to inform mitigation measures for protected species during construction works in accordance with Policy 3: Biodiversity and Policy 4: Natural places of NPF4 and Policy 4: Natural Heritage of the Cairngorms National Park Authority Local Development Plan 2021.

- 6. No development shall commence on site until a Pollution Prevention Plan to ensure the risk of pollution from sediment or other pollutants (fuels/oil, etc.) that may be released during construction from entering the Clunie Water and River Dee, has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Cairngorms National Park Authority acting as Planning Authority.**

Reason: To protect the water environment and the integrity of the River Dee SAC in in accordance with Policy 3: Biodiversity and Policy 4: Natural places of NPF4 and Policy 4: Natural Heritage of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021.

- 7. No development shall commence on site until details of the deck finish to the pedestrian replacement bridge over the Clunie Water is**

submitted to and approved in writing by the Cairngorms National Park Authority acting as Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure the finish is of a standard that is appropriate and safe for use of the public accessing the core path in accordance with Policy 3: Design and Placemaking of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021.

8. **No development shall commence on site until visibility splays measuring 2.4 metres x 59 metres are to be formed on either side of the junction of the vehicular access with the public road. The visibility splays so formed shall hereafter be kept free of all permanent obstructions above and adjacent carriageway level.**

Reason: In the interests of road and pedestrian safety to ensure that there is appropriate, safe access to and egress from the site in accordance with Policy 3: Design and Placemaking of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021.

9. **No development shall commence on site (other than the demolition of the existing buildings) unless an investigation of the site has been undertaken in accordance with BS 10175:2011+A2:2017 – ‘Investigation of Potentially Contaminated Sites – Code of Practice’ and a report of that investigation has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.**

Where it is determined by the site investigation report that remediation of the site is required no works in connection with the development hereby approved (other than the demolition of the existing buildings) shall commence until a remedial scheme has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. The development hereby approved shall not be brought into use unless the approved scheme of remediation has been carried out in its entirety and a validation report has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

Any areas of hardstanding, clean cover or other such barriers within the application site boundary that are included within the approved scheme of remediation that are required to break one or more pollutant linkages shall be permanently retained as such and shall not be disturbed without the prior written approval of the planning authority.

Reason: In order to ensure any potential contamination of the site is dealt with appropriately in the interests of public safety in accordance with

Policy 10: Resources of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021.

10. Notwithstanding the management provisions as detailed in the 'Elm Tree Management Report' prepared by Astell Associates, canopy branches of the Elm tree (T29) will not be thinned except:
 - a) if branches extend over the A93 or Invercauld Arms drive and are at risk of being hit by vehicles;
 - b) if it is necessary to stabilise the tree and works will be carried out incrementally to the ends of smaller branches.

All works to this Elm tree (T29) must be supervised and directed on site by a suitably qualified arboriculturalist.

Reason: To this tree is conserved in an appropriate way in accordance with Policy 6: Forestry, woodland and trees of NPF4 and Policy 4: Natural Heritage and Policy 5: Landscape of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021.

11. Prior to the occupation of the development details of the provision of bat boxes throughout the site shall be submitted to and approved in writing by Cairngorms National Park Authority acting as Planning Authority. Thereafter the development shall be implemented in accordance with those approved details. The boxes shall then be maintained and retained in situ.

Reason: To ensure the provision of enhanced opportunities for bird and bat roosting in accordance with Policy 3: Biodiversity and Policy 4: Natural places of NPF4 and Policy 4: Natural Heritage of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021.

12. All felling, ground preparation and construction works should take place out with the breeding bird season (March to August inclusive). If this is not possible, then a pre-start breeding bird survey must be carried out by a suitably qualified and experienced ecologist to confirm that no breeding birds will be disturbed must be completed.

Reason: To avoid harm to breeding birds, and to comply with species protection legislation, in accordance with Policy 4: Natural Heritage of the Cairngorms National Park Authority Local Development Plan 2021.

13. The submitted Arboricultural Method Statement and Tree Protection Plan shall be implemented in full for the duration of the demolition works and subsequent construction works in accordance with the approved scheme unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the trees on and overhanging the site in the interests of amenity and nature conservation in accordance with Policies 3 and 6 of NPF4 and Policy 4: Natural Heritage and Policy 5: Landscape of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021.

14. Prior to the occupancy of the development, off street parking for 70 cars, surfaced in hardstanding materials must be provided within the site.

Reason: In the interests of road safety and to ensure there is sufficient and suitable car parking provision in accordance with Policy 3: Design and Placemaking of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021.

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 which it is intended to commence the development. Attached to this decision notice 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 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.
4. The applicants should submit a formal connection application to Scottish Water following the granting of planning permission for review of the availability of capacity. They will also require to contact Scottish Water's Assets Impact Team with regard to any Scottish Water infrastructure on the application site.
5. Construction work (including the loading/unloading of delivery vehicles, plant or other machinery) should not take place out with the hours of 0800 hours to 1900 hours Mondays to Fridays, 0800 hours to 1300 hours on Saturdays or at any time or Bank Holidays to minimise disturbance to residents in the area.
6. The applicants are advised that adequate provision should be made for internal surface water drainage to ensure that surface water does not run from the site onto the public road or vice versa.

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7. The applicants are advised that adequate precautions should be taken to protect Statutory Undertaker's plant which may be affected by the works / development.
8. Any alterations to the retained stained glass windows from the porch should be provided to Aberdeenshire Built Heritage Officer.

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.