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## CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

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**Title:** REPORT ON CALLED-IN PLANNING APPLICATION

**Prepared by:** ANDREW TAIT, PLANNING OFFICER  
(DEVELOPMENT CONTROL)

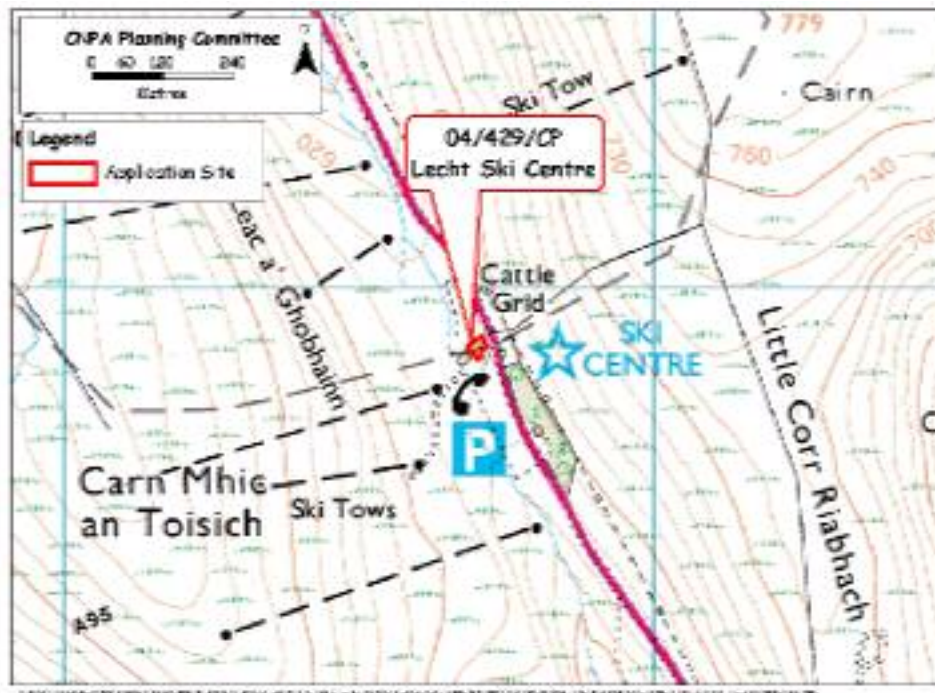
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**DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED:** ERECTION OF ILLUMINATED SIGNS,  
AT THE LECHT SKI CENTRE,  
CORGARFF, STRATHDON.

**REFERENCE:** 04/429/CP

**APPLICANT:** LECHT SKI COMPANY LTD., PER TCD  
ARCHITECTS, 4A ALFORD PLACE,  
ABERDEEN AB10 1YD

**DATE CALLED-IN:** 10 SEPTEMBER 2004



**Fig 1 Location Plan**



**Fig 2 Lecht Ski Centre building**

## **SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL**

1. The proposal is for the placing of 2 separate illuminated cut-out letter signs on the newly constructed catering, ski hire and ticketing building at the Lecht Ski Centre (see fig 2 and appendix A). This new building has been erected to the north of the former cafeteria and offices at the Lecht. Parking areas exist to the north and south of these buildings and the ski slopes are to the east and west sides of the A939 road.
2. The 2 signs are the same in size and design, and both face eastwards towards the public road with one on the gable wall nearest to the public road, and the other on a projecting wall of the stairwell in the centre of the south elevation of the main building. The signs, overall are 3055mm at their widest and 1195mm in height. The sign letters are in blue for the word 'Lecht', and red for '2090', with a line logo in red between the 2 (the figure 2090 refers to the height above sea level in feet). Each sign will be illuminated from below with a spotlight.
3. The former cafeteria and other facilities building is being removed from the site.

## DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONTEXT

4. In the **Moray Development Plan** (MDP) the site lies within the Lecht Ski Management Plan Area, which itself is within a Special Protection Area and an Area of Great Landscape Value. The MDP policy for the Lecht Ski Centre (**Policy L/CF5**) is for a presumption against expansion of development outside the boundaries of the existing centre, and any development proposals should not significantly prejudice local flora, fauna and habitats, the local and national designated areas, and the landscape areas designated in the Development Plan, or other policies that protect the environment.
5. Developments within Areas of Great Landscape Value (**Policy L/ENV7**) will only be permitted where they incorporate high standards of siting and design for rural areas, and where they will not have a significant adverse effect on the landscape character of the area. **Policy L/ENV8 Light Pollution**, requires that where developments incorporate exterior lighting within rural communities and countryside, designs, which minimise light spillage through use of low-pressure sodium lights, full cut-off lanterns and other measures are used, as appropriate.
6. For signs, **Policy L/ED17 Roadside Signs (Tourism)** refers principally to advance warning roadside signs and advertisements for tourist related businesses, within the highway boundaries.

## CONSULTATIONS

7. The **Transportation Manager for Moray Council** has indicated no objections to the signs on the building.

## REPRESENTATIONS

8. None received

## APPRAISAL

9. The site is extremely exposed, and lies within a very sensitive environmental area. None of the special flora, fauna and habitat protection designations are specific to the site, but these exist beyond the boundaries of the Ski Management Area itself. The new building for the various skiing and attendant facilities has been carefully designed to fit within the landscape, using appropriate materials. The external walls have various elements of natural stone, rendering and slatted timber, stained green. The signs are to be affixed to the timber wall areas, and will be externally illuminated. Because the signs will face directly towards the road, they will not be seen from a great distance away, and the illumination from the building's windows and other lights around the site will be more visible from a longer distance away on the A939 by approaching traffic.

10. In terms of the policies in the Development Plan, none, other than **L/ENV8 Light Pollution**, are specific to the siting and design of signs such as are proposed. The signs proposed are what would normally be expected on commercial premises to indicate the name of the premises or the business. No additional signage is currently proposed for the building. The degree of illumination with a single directional light below the signs, directs the light upwards onto the signs below overhanging eaves. This is more subtle lighting than internally illuminated signage, and with the green stained timber walls, on which the signs are proposed to be located, there will be minimal reflected light. The proposal is considered to be acceptable for a business of this nature and the signs have been reasonably located to have minimal impact from medium to long distance views.
11. It is recommended that the application be granted. The conditions proposed are adaptations of the standard conditions for advertisements (adapted for signs on a building).

## **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE AIMS OF THE NATIONAL PARK**

### **Conserve and Enhance the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Area**

12. The proposed signs are well designed and will have no impact on the natural and cultural heritage of the area. A new building has been erected for tourists and recreationalists to enjoy the sporting facilities at the Lecht, and the sign is an acceptable element to indicate the name of the place/site/building.

### **Promote Sustainable Use of Natural Resources**

13. The sign letters are coloured plastic to contrast against the timber walls.

### **Promote Understanding and Enjoyment of the Area**

14. The signs indicate the name of the place for tourists and other visitors.

### **Promote Sustainable Economic and Social Development of the Area**

15. The Lecht Ski Centre is a major contributor to the local economic and social development of the area, and with the development of the new facilities building it is reasonable to have signs on the building naming it for passers by and for visitors.

## RECOMMENDATION

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

**GRANT express Advertisement Consent for the two illuminated signs at the Lecht Ski Centre, Corgarff, subject to the following conditions**

- (i) Consent hereby granted shall be for a period of 5 years, following which the signs and illuminated fixtures shall be removed to the reasonable satisfaction of the Cairngorms National Park Authority acting as Planning Authority.
- (ii) All advertisements displayed shall be maintained in a clean and tidy condition to the reasonable satisfaction of the Cairngorms National Park Authority acting as Planning Authority
- (iii) The signs and lighting fixtures shall be maintained in a safe condition to the reasonable satisfaction of the Cairngorms National Park Authority acting as Planning Authority.

Reason for conditions: In the interests of amenity and as required by the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (Scotland) Regulations 1984.

**Andrew Tait**

*Date 14 October 2004*

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