
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Title: REPORT ON CALLED-IN PLANNING APPLICATION

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DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED: PLANNING PERMISSION FOR (A) RE-DEVELOPMENT OF EXISTING HOTEL AND ERECTION OF NEW EXTENSION; (B) CONVERSION OF PART OF EXISTING HOTEL TO DWELLING HOUSE; AND (C) ERECTION OF 8 FLATS (PHASING PROPOSALS TO SUPPORT VARIATION OF CONDITION NO. 13 OF 08/147/CP). LISTED BUILDING CONSENT FOR THE ERECTION OF A SINGLE STOREY EXTENSION FROM THE EXISTING BUILDING GABLE WALL AT THE STRATHSPEY HOTEL, GRANTOWN ON SPEY.

REFERENCE: 10/112/CP – PLANNING PERMISSION;
10/130/CP – LISTED BUILDING CONSENT

APPLICANT: RTD THISTLE LTD., C/O DOUGLAS STUART, CHARTERED ARCHITECTS, 32 CHURCH STREET, INVERNESS.

DATE CALLED-IN: 30 APRIL 2010 AND 14 MAY 2010

RECOMMENDATION : APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS



Fig. 1 - Location Plan

SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL

1. This report is intended to deal with two applications on the proposed site at the Strathspey Hotel, which is on the corner of Spey Avenue and High Street, Grantown on Spey. CNPA planning reference no.10/112/CP relates to the application for planning permission. The description refers to three elements for which permission is sought – (a) re-development of existing hotel and erection of new extension; (b) conversion of part of existing hotel to dwelling house; and (c) erection of eight flats (phasing proposals to support variation of condition 13 of 08/147/CP). The second application on the site is for Listed Building Consent for the “erection of a single storey extension from the existing building gable wall in order to retain hotel bar floor area lost by demolition of 1960’s flat roof extension” (CNPA planning ref. no. 10/130/CP refers). The existing hotel building is a category B listed building and is also located within the Grantown on Spey Conservation Area. The Strathspey Hotel occupies the entire High Street frontage of the subject site, and also returns onto Spey Avenue.

Site History

2. Full planning permission and listed building consent was previously sought for a similar development on the site in 2008. The CNPA Planning Committee agreed to grant full planning permission (CNPA planning ref. no. 08/147/CP) and Listed Building Consent (CNPA planning ref. no. 08/148/CP) for the erection of 8 flats, conversion of part of the hotel to a house and alterations and extensions to the hotel in June 2008.¹
3. Details of the history of the site were submitted with the application in 2008. Records indicate that the original buildings on the site date from the early nineteenth century (c. 1808). The property was in residential use until 1855, when it became an inn.² The property has been known as the Strathspey Hotel since the 1870’s, despite numerous changes of ownership. The proposed ‘townhouse’ element of the existing building was a separate residential entity until the mid 1970’s, when it was incorporated into the hotel and used as owners accommodation until 1985.
4. The planning permission which was granted by the CNPA in 2008 had three distinct elements, the first of which was the erection of 8 flats arranged in two blocks, along the Spey Avenue frontage of the site. The first of the approved blocks of flatted units was adjacent to the original hotel structure and involved the demolition of a two storey flat roof extension. The block of four flats was designed as a two and a half storey structure, having the same ridge height as the original hotel building. Accommodation was proposed to be arranged over three floors. The upper floor accommodation included a combination of pitched roof dormers and velux windows in the roof space. The second block of four flats was a one and three quarter storey design, with accommodation arranged on ground and first floor level. Each of the two new blocks included centrally positioned doors in the Spey Avenue

¹ The decision notices in respect of each of the applications were issued in July 2008.

² The establishment was known as the New Inn, later becoming known as Dunbar’s Hotel.

elevation, creating the impression of being dwelling houses as opposed to flats. The design of both of the approved new structures included vertically proportioned window openings in the front and rear elevations. The permitted finish on the external walls was a white wet dash harl, with slate proposed on the roof to match the existing hotel.

5. The approved site layout plan included vehicular access provision off Spey Avenue, between the two new blocks of flats. It also included 13 parking spaces to the rear to serve the new residential units. A condition was included in the planning permission stipulating that all areas of open space be communal, instead of the division of open space into extremely small private garden areas as shown on the plans originally submitted with CNPA planning ref. no. 08/147/CP. The planning permission also included a condition requiring that the eight new flats would be marketed on a priority purchase basis at a fixed price for a period of two months from the date of the first sales release, to people ordinarily resident in or working within the Cairngorms National Park.



**Fig. 2 : Spey Avenue elevation of new build flats and existing hotel (side elevation)
(CNPA approval 08/147/CP)**

6. The second element of the development approved in 2008 was the conversion of part of the Strathspey Hotel to a house. It was evident from examination of the High Street elevation of the structure that the area proposed for conversion had in the past been a dwelling house, before being amalgamated into the hotel premises. Due to the original separate uses, the conversion of that area of the building back to a dwelling house did not necessitate any material alterations to the front elevation of the property. The approved plans included some alterations to the rear of the structure - a new single storey extension was permitted to replace an older extension and adjoining sheds. Various works were also detailed internally, such as the construction of new partition walls at ground and first floor level in order to separate the residential unit from the hotel facility.
7. The third component of the development permitted under the 2008 planning application was for various alterations and extensions to the main hotel structure. The structure as it existed at that time included two very distinct elements – the original stone built hotel structure, which fronted onto the High Street with a return onto Spey Avenue, and the much later two storey flat roof extension extending along part of the Spey Avenue site frontage. Permission was granted for the demolition of the flat roof extension, and the erection of a small single storey extension to the side and extending to the rear of the original hotel section on Spey Avenue. The small new extension was positioned to be stepped back from the street frontage and in doing so

was intended to clearly mark the distinction between it and the original hotel. The approved single storey extension included a slate pitched roof on the side elevation and a lean to type roof on the rear elevation, similar to another extension already in place. The internal arrangement in the new extension was to accommodate new toilet facilities.



Fig. 3 : High Street elevation (red arrow identifies the area for conversion to dwelling house)

8. Development work commenced on the site in 2009. Discrepancies between the permitted works and works being undertaken on the site came to the attention of the CNPA, and investigations were subsequently undertaken by the CNPA's Monitoring and Enforcement Officer. Following investigations and subsequent discussions between the developers and CNPA officials, the two current planning applications have been submitted in an effort to regularise the development and address the aforementioned discrepancies.
9. The extent of work which has been undertaken on the site to date includes some site clearance, the demolition of the former flat roofed hotel extension on Spey Avenue, the partial development of a new smaller single storey hotel extension (although not in accordance with the originally approved drawings), the development of the new single storey extension to the rear of the townhouse, and the fitting of various new windows in the rear elevation, some of which differ from the approved window openings and fenestration. Various items of information have also been submitted to discharge a number of suspensive conditions on the planning permission dating from 2008. Information included the submission of survey drawings, a photographic record of the structures on the site, and proposals for the local marketing of the new residential flats for a period of time.

Current Proposal

10. The formal description of the current application for planning permission refers to three elements as detailed in paragraph I of this report. A supporting statement accompanying the application elaborates on the specific elements of the previously approved drawings that have been changed and the justification for the alterations and deviations from the approved plans.
 - (i) Dormer windows to townhouse – “the existing flat roof dormer to the rear of the hotel has been replaced with a pitched roof dormer.

The timbers of the existing dormer were found to be rotten and of generally poor condition, making replacement necessary. Since the existing dormers on the hotel have pitched roofs, this style is more appropriate for the replacement than a new flat roof;"

- (ii) New townhouse kitchen windows in rear extension – “the townhouse kitchen window has been revised to create vertical emphasis and proportions more in keeping with the existing windows;”
- (iii) New windows at rear of hotel and townhouse at first floor level – “the existing windows were of poor condition and did not provide adequate insulation. Astragals have been included to complement the style of the existing windows;”
- (iv) New render to gable of hotel to cover stonework – “the condition of the existing gable stonework is too poor to be exposed. The gable will be rendered along to the line of the new extension step back, creating a corner edge of exposed stone;”
- (v) 2 no. new conservation roof lights to south west roof elevation of townhouse - “the conservation roof lights have been added to improve the light levels within the new townhouse extension, which would have been unacceptably low without them. These additional roof lights will not be visible from any point on the site;”
- (vi) Phase I car parking provision during phase 2 construction – “for the duration of the phase 2 build, the area marked as common ground between the car parking and townhouse garden will be used as temporary parking for the phase I flats. At a suitable time the parking will revert to their specified locations and the temporary parking area will be landscaped as common area.”

In addition, the submitted drawings also show the inclusion of conservation style roof lights in the front elevation of Block I of the proposed new flats. This is consistent with the requirements of a condition of the original permission which required that the roof lights be designed “as conservation type, vertically orientated, flush with the roofline and with a vertical glazing bar.”

- II. With regard to point (vi) of the supporting statement, the proposed amendments to access and car parking provision on the site relate to the proposed variation of condition no. 13 of the original 2008 planning permission. The condition stipulated the undertaking of a variety of works in connection with access and car parking provision, prior to the commencement of any other works. The works which were required to be undertaken included
 - (i) the internal road and parking layout to be provided, with the main access road required to be 5.5 metres wide in order to facilitate opposing vehicles passing one another;
 - (ii) the construction of the internal road and parking area to comply with Highland Council’s Road Guidelines for New Development for a minor road; and
 - (iii) the achievement and maintenance of visibility splays.

Instead of proceeding to undertake all of the stipulated works at the outset, the applicants are seeking to vary the condition, in order to allow the work to be undertaken on a phased basis. Phasing proposals have been provided in this application to illustrate the proposed sequence of works –

Phase 1 – form entrance with kerbing and basecourse, to enable access to the site for construction purposes;

Phase 2 – form an access route for the hotel and townhouse, and use a protective barrier. All of this work is proposed to be carried out prior to building works commencing on the first of the two blocks of flats;

Phase 3 – completion of block 1 of the flats i.e. the block adjacent to the hotel structure;

Phase 4 – completion of access into the rear of the site, to facilitate provision of open space and parking allocated to the four flats in block 1. Block 1 would become capable of occupation at this stage;

Phase 5 – completion of block 2 i.e. the block furthest from the existing hotel structure;

Phase 6 – complete the remainder of all roadworks, parking and open space throughout the development. This would enable the occupation of the flats in block 2;

Phase 7 – undertaking of final landscaping.



Fig. 4 : Former rear elevation



Fig. 5 : Works on townhouse element

12. As the Strathspey Hotel is a Category B listed building, Listed Building Consent has also been sought for the elements of the works which would affect the structure i.e. the erection of the single storey extension from the existing building gable wall. It is stated that this is required in order to retain the hotel bar floor area lost by the demolition of the 1960's flat roof extension. The internal arrangement would therefore differ from that

previously approved in 2008, where the new extension was proposed solely to accommodate new toilet facilities. A smaller area of the proposed extension would now be utilised to create improved toilet facilities, while the majority of the extension would form part of the enlarged bar area.

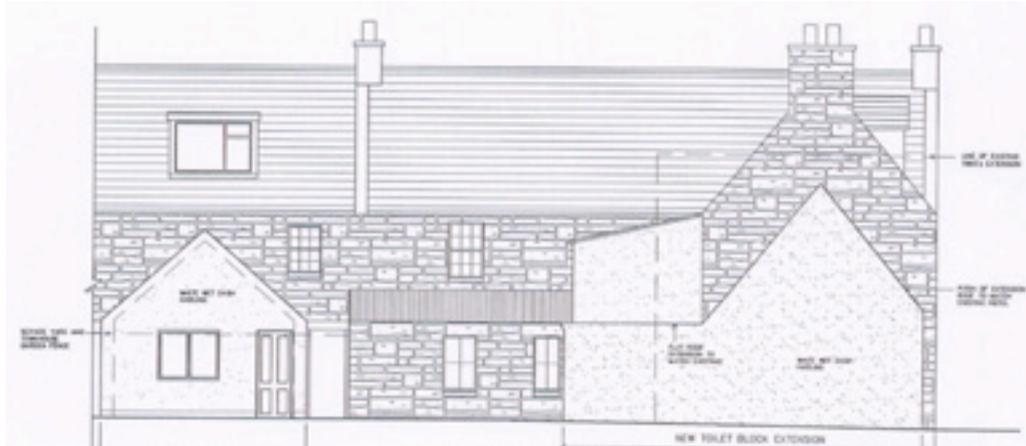


Fig. 6 : Approved rear elevation (CNPA ref. no. 08/147/CP and 08/148/CP)

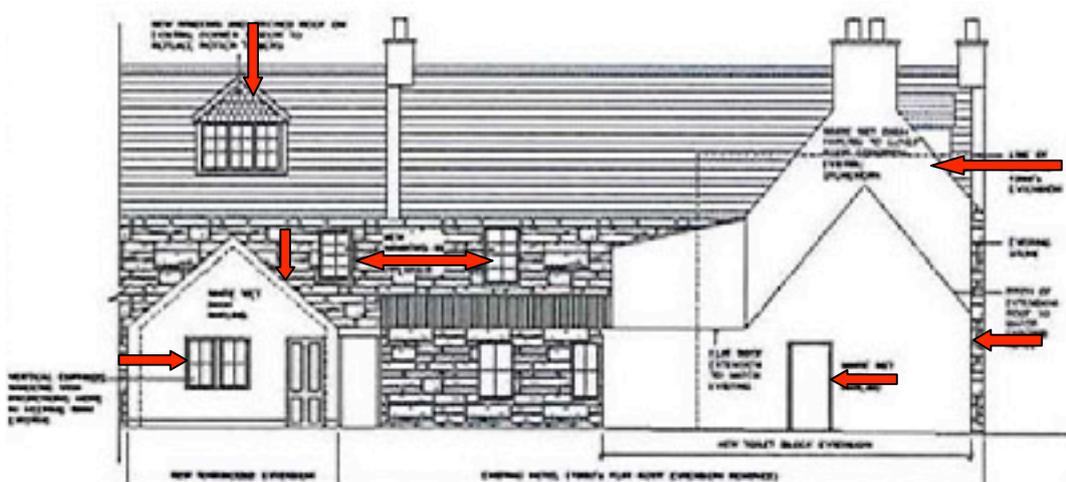


Fig. 7 : Proposed amendments to the approved rear elevation

DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONTEXT

National policy

13. **Scottish Planning Policy³ (SPP)** is the statement of the Scottish Government's policy on nationally important land use planning matters. It supersedes a variety of previous Scottish Planning Policy documents and National Planning Policy Guidance. Core Principles which the Scottish Government believe should underpin the modernised planning system are outlined at the outset of **SPP** and include:

- The constraints and requirements that planning imposes should be necessary and proportionate;
- The system shouldallow issues of contention and controversy to be identified and tackled quickly and smoothly; and

³ February 2010

- There should be a clear focus on quality of outcomes, with due attention given to the sustainable use of land, good design and the protection and enhancement of the built and natural environment.
14. **SPP** emphasises the key part that development management plays in the planning system, highlighting that it should “operate in support of the Government’s central purpose of increasing sustainable economic growth.” Para. 33 focuses on the topic of Sustainable Economic Growth and advises that increasing sustainable economic growth is the overarching purpose of the Scottish Government. The planning system is expected to “proactively support development that will contribute to sustainable economic growth and to high quality sustainable places.” 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.
 15. Under the general heading of Sustainable Development, it is stated that the fundamental principle is that development integrates economic, social and environmental objectives, and that the “aim is to achieve the right development in the right place.”
 16. As a replacement for a variety of previous planning policy documents the new **Scottish Planning Policy** includes ‘subject policies’, of which many are applicable to the proposed development. Topics include economic development, rural development, and landscape and natural heritage. The following paragraphs provide a brief summary of the general thrust of each of the subject policies.
 17. Economic development : planning authorities are required to respond to the diverse needs and locational requirements of different sectors and sizes of businesses and take a flexible approach to ensure that new economic opportunities can be realised. The planning system is expected to support development which will provide new employment opportunities, enhance local competitiveness and promote the integration of employment generation opportunities with supporting infrastructure and housing development.
 18. Housing : Planning authorities are required to promote the efficient use of land and buildings, and direct development towards sites within existing settlements where possible in order to make effective use of existing infrastructure and service capacity. Redevelopment of brownfield sites is also preferred to development of greenfield sites. Paragraph 82 notes that infill sites within existing settlements can also make a useful contribution to the supply of housing land. Proposals for development on infill sites are expected to respect the scale, form and density of the surroundings and enhance the character and amenity of the community. It also advises that the density of new developments should be determined in relation to the character of the place and its relative accessibility, with higher densities appropriate at central and accessible locations.

19. *Historic Environment* : the historic environment is recognised as being a key part of Scotland’s cultural heritage. In a section on Listed Buildings the listing is defined as covering “the whole of the building including its interior and any ancillary structures within its curtilage that were constructed before 1 July 1948.” When determining applications for planning permission or listed building consent special regard is required to be had to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
20. A section is also included on Conservation Areas, which are described as “areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.” The **SPP** advises that a proposed development that would have a neutral effect on the character or appearance of a conservation area should be treated as one which preserves that character or appearance.
21. **Scottish Planning Policy** concludes with a section entitled ‘Outcomes’ in which it is stated that the “planning system should be outcome focused, supporting the creation of high quality, accessible and sustainable places through new development, regeneration and the protection and enhancement of natural heritage and historic environmental assets.” Planning authorities are required to be clear about the standard of development that is required. Quality of place not only refers to buildings, but also how the buildings work together as well as the relationships between buildings and spaces. Design is highlighted as an important consideration and planning permission may be refused solely on design grounds.⁴ Finally it is stated that the planning system should be “judged by the extent to which it maintains and creates places where people want to live, work and spend time.”

Scottish Historic Environment Policy (July 2009)

22. The *Memorandum of Guidance on Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas*, which was last published in 1998, contained detailed guidance on conservation and listed building matters. The document has now been formally withdrawn and the policy elements have been superseded by the development of **Scottish Historic Environment Policy (SHEP)**.
23. **SHEP** highlights that the importance of the historic character of the environment on our quality of life and in our sense of identity. The historic environment requires careful and active management in order to secure its survival. Para. 1.8 stresses that the protection of the historic environment is not about preventing change, but about managing it intelligently and with understanding.
24. In a section entitled ‘Scottish Ministers’ Policy on Listed Building Consent’ it is advised that there is a presumption against demolition or other works that adversely affect the special interest of a listed building or its setting. However, it is also accepted that listed buildings will require alteration and adaptation from time to time if they are to remain in beneficial use. It is also

⁴ Para. 256.

recognised that they will be at risk if such alteration and adaption is unduly constrained. It is recognised that change, if approached carefully, can be managed without adversely affecting the special interest of the building. Guidance provided on the determination of applications states that “where a proposal involves alteration or adaption which will sustain or enhance the beneficial use of the building and does not adversely affect the special interest of the building, consent should normally be granted.

Highland Council Structure Plan (2001)

25. The Highland Council Structure Plan acknowledges that the availability of housing is fundamental to social and individual well being and to creating and maintaining balanced communities. Section 2.2.1 of the Plan states that “adequate provision of housing is also a pre-requisite of economic growth” but also acknowledges that at the same time that it must be provided in a way which minimises the impact on the environment.
26. Section 2.15 of the Plan discusses the Built and Cultural Heritage. It is the general policy of the Council to seek to preserve and promote the built heritage as a valuable tourist, recreational and educational resource wherever possible. **Policy BC5** relates specifically to listed buildings and conservation areas where it is the policy to “preserve the Highland’s buildings and groups of buildings of historic or architectural interest, some of which may be at risk of neglect, by the identification in Local Plans of opportunities for their productive and appropriate use.”

Badenoch and Strathspey Local Plan

27. **General Policy 2.5.13. (Historic Buildings)** advises that there will be a presumption against development which would adversely affect the character or setting of all listed buildings. In the **Grantown-on-Spey settlement statement**, the principle objectives include a need to accommodate growth of the town within its landscaped setting, consistent with maintaining local heritage assets; and safeguard the town’s built heritage and setting, including its semi-natural woodlands. **Policy 3.5.1. (Conservation Area)** advises that development, including ancillary buildings, should be of a form and scale compatible with the character of the town and consistent with guidelines, including, amongst other things; finishes (natural stone or harled walls with roofs in slate or similar); design (roofs of 40 degrees, windows and doors of traditional dimensions and proportions, and gabled dormers); orientation/building lines (reinforcing established street frontages, possibly single storey tenement cottages on backland sites, and reinstatement of walls); and open spaces (safeguard important features and vistas).

Cairngorms National Park Local Plan (Post Inquiry Modifications)

28. The CNP Deposit Local Plan was considered at a Public Local Inquiry in June 2009. Following this and the subsequent receipt of the DPEA⁵ Report, various post inquiry modifications were made. The post inquiry modifications

⁵ Directorate for Planning and Environmental Appeals

have recently been agreed by the Board of the CNPA and a 6 week period of consultation is on-going at present. The Local Plan contains a range of policies dealing with particular interests or types of development. These provide detailed guidance on the best places for development and the best ways to develop. The policies follow the three key themes of the National Park Plan to provide a detailed policy framework for planning decisions:

- Chapter 3 - Conserving and Enhancing the Park;
- Chapter 4 - Living and Working in the Park;
- Chapter 5 - Enjoying and Understanding the Park.

29. Policies are not cross referenced and applicants are expected to ensure that proposals comply with all policies that are relevant. The site-specific proposals of the Local Plan are provided on a settlement by settlement basis in Chapter 6. These proposals, when combined with the policies in the Local Plan, are intended to meet the sustainable development needs of the Park for the Local Plan's lifetime. The following paragraphs list a range of policies that are appropriate to consider in the assessment of the development proposal.
30. **Policy 9 – Listed Buildings** states that there will be a presumption in favour of development that preserves a listed building, or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. The layout, design, materials, scale, siting and use of any development is required to be appropriate to the character and appearance of the listed building and its setting.
31. **Policy 10 – Conservation Areas** requires that development within a conservation area or affecting its setting will preserve or enhance its character. As with development affecting a listed building, the design, materials, scale, layout and siting of any development is required to be appropriate to the character and appearance of the conservation area and its setting.
32. **Policy 20 – Housing Development within settlement boundaries** states that housing proposals within settlement boundaries will be considered favourably where the development occurs within an allocated site identified within the proposals map or where the development is compatible with existing and adjacent land uses.
33. **Policy 25 – Business Development** promotes favourable consideration of proposals which support economic development where such a proposal is compatible with existing business uses in the area, or where it supports or extends an existing business.
34. **Cairngorms National Park Plan (2007)**
The **Cairngorms National Park Plan** sets out the strategic objectives for the Park under three headings, all of which are of relevance to the development proposal – (i) conserving and enhancing the Park; (ii) living and working in the Park; and (iii) enjoying and understanding the Park.

35. In relation to conserving and enhancing the Park the objectives set out in the Plan include maintaining and enhancing the distinctive landscapes across the Park and ensuring that development complements and enhances the landscape character of the Park. The Plan also requires that new development in settlements and in surrounding areas and the management of public spaces should complement and enhance the character, pattern and local identity of the built and historic environment. In elaborating on this particular objective it is advised that new development should enhance the local identity, quality of public space and surrounding environment and that high quality design should be a feature of all new developments. The Plan also encourages new development to demonstrate an understanding of this heritage and complement it.
36. Under the heading of Living and Working in the Park, there is a specific section on Housing. Objectives include increasing the accessibility of rented and owned housing to meet the needs of communities throughout the Park and ensuring that there is effective land and investment for market and affordable housing to meet the economic and social needs of communities throughout the Park.
37. In relation to Enjoying and Understanding the Park there is recognition that enjoyment of the park area is not only relevant to those people travelling to the Park, but is part of the everyday experience of those living in and around the area. The experience of residents and visitors alike should be of the highest quality. The Plan contains a number of strategic objectives for outdoor access and recreation, which include encouraging people of all ages and abilities to enjoy and experience the outdoor environment.

CONSULTATIONS

38. The applications for planning permission and listed building consent have been considered by **Historic Scotland**. It is noted in the consultation response that the principle of this development has been established by previously approved planning and listed building consent applications. It is noted that some of the current application is retrospective and it has been submitted in response to works being carried out which deviate from the approved drawings. Nonetheless, **Historic Scotland** do not consider that it raises any significant issues.
39. The response from **Historic Scotland** highlights the current proposal to apply a render to the exposed upper gable elevation of the original hotel building, as opposed to leaving the original stonework exposed as per the approved drawings. Some concern is expressed at the possibility that this may involve rendering all faces of the chimney stack and it is advised that “this should ideally be avoided.” It is however recommended, in the event that the condition of the exposed stonework is such that render is the only practical solution, that a lime based render is used.

40. Highland Council's **TEC Services** division considered the proposal and in particular the proposed phasing proposals to support a variation of condition 13 of CNPA planning ref. no. 08/147/CP and confirmed that they are generally acceptable.
41. The **Archaeology Section** of Highland Council considered the proposal and advise that they have no recommendation to make regarding this development.
42. **Grantown on Spey Community Council** has been consulted on the development proposal. However no response has been received to date.

REPRESENTATIONS

43. The development proposal was advertised in the Strathspey and Badenoch Herald on 21st April 2010⁶ and 12th May 2010.⁷ One letter of representation has been received, from Mr. Graeme Stuart of Spey Avenue, Grantown on Spey. Reference is made to there being a substantial rise in the level of the site from the High Street along Spey Avenue. The author comments that "the proposed flats as shown with the eaves and ridge levels following that of the hotel" would be acceptable. However, he speculates that this may be "technically impossible" and that it would be necessary to step the buildings, resulting in substantially higher eaves and ridges than shown. Concern is expressed that were this to occur the development would have a substantially detrimental effect on the amenity of those in its shadow.
44. CNPA comment : The elevation drawings submitted reflect a rise in ground levels across the Spey Avenue frontage of the site.

APPRAISAL

45. The proposed development is located within the settlement area of Grantown on Spey and as noted earlier in this report is within the Conservation Area and affects a Category B Listed Building. The principle of the development, including the general design of the new build elements as well as the alterations to the hotel, and the overall nature and scale has already been established through the granting of full planning permission and listed building consent in 2008. Other issues assessed at that time included consideration of compliance with planning policy, the impact on the Category B Listed Building and on the Conservation Area, and consideration of the impact of the development on traffic and the general and residential amenity of the area. There are only relatively minor design variations between the currently proposed development and that previously approved, in addition to permission being sought in the current application to vary the terms of condition no. 13 of the original planning permission (which required a variety

⁶ Application for planning permission.

⁷ Application for Listed Building Consent.

of roads related works to be carried out prior to any other works commencing in connection with the development.

Principle of development

46. The land to the rear of the Strathspey Hotel is essentially brownfield, within the settlement area of Grantown on Spey. It is in an area of mixed use, including residential and commercial premises. The principle of new residential development on the site, together with various improvement works to the original hotel building and townhouse have been accepted in 2008 as being consistent with the settlement statement in the existing Local Plan which includes amongst its objectives to accommodate growth of the town within its landscaped setting, consistent with maintaining local heritage assets; and safeguard the town's built heritage and setting. It was also accepted that the proposed use was compatible with existing uses in the vicinity. The principle of the development continues to remain acceptable.

Land use, design and layout

47. As referred to in various foregoing sections of this report, the currently proposed design and layout remains almost identical to the previous proposal put forward in 2008, which now has the benefit of full planning permission and Listed Building Consent. The design changes in the current proposal relate to the hotel and townhouse element i.e. the original building on the site. They have been put forward in order to rectify unauthorised works and also to incorporate minor changes to fenestration etc.. The proposed changes have the potential to improve the overall aesthetics of the development. The fenestration proposed at ground and first floor levels in the rear of the hotel / townhouse structure is considered acceptable and would represent a significant visual improvement on the recently undertaken current arrangement.
48. The use of the pitched roof dormer in the rear roof area of the townhouse differs from the previously approved treatment of this area, which involved retaining the form of the flat roof dormer. In seeking retrospective permission for the new pitched roof dormer, reference has been made in supporting information to the rotting timber and poor condition of the formerly existing flat roof dormer. The point is made that the existing dormers in the hotel building are also of a pitched roof design. This is a reasonable point, although it should be noted that the new pitched roof dormer on the townhouse is of considerably larger proportions than the dormers on the hotel building. Nonetheless, it is likely that the larger proportions stemmed from efforts to work with the size of the former opening of the mansard dormer, rather than altering the size and proportions of the openings and necessitating additional works to the surrounding roof area.
49. One of the most significant aspects of the currently proposed amendments is the treatment of the original gable on the south east elevation of the hotel i.e. where a greater extent of gable has now been exposed as a result of the demolition of the flat roofed two storey extension. As previously approved, it was intended to expose the stonework on the gable, consistent with the

exposed stone visible on the remainder of the listed building. However, the demolition of the flat roof extension revealed that the stonework has been damaged in several places and is in poor condition, with part of it having been replaced at some time in the past by concrete blocks. It is now proposed to apply a white wet dash harl to the gable. This has been considered by **Historic Scotland** and while advising that this approach should be avoided if possible, it is nonetheless advised in the consultation response that if the condition of the exposed stonework is such that render is the only practical solution, a lime based render should be used. Other than discussing this point, **Historic Scotland** does not object to the proposal and accepts that planning permission and Listed Building Consent has previously been granted on the site.



Fig. 8 : Current condition of the exposed south eastern gable

50. The partially completed pitched roof extension on the south east elevation of the Strathspey Hotel, as noted in earlier sections of this report does not accord with the approved permission. This unauthorised development would be demolished and replaced with the new extension shown on the currently proposed elevation drawings. Consistent with the 2008 planning approval, the new extension would be stepped back from the footpath. This, together with the application of a white wet dash harl would clearly distinguish the new extension from the original building. This design approach was considered acceptable and welcomed in the previous approval. The current proposal to incorporate a fire door in the end elevation and the use of the internal area as an extension to the existing bar, rather than the previously proposed toilet facilities, is considered acceptable.
51. The proposed site layout remains the same as that previously approved. Permission is however being sought for to provide the required on-site access road, car parking provision and open space on a phased basis, in accordance with the intended construction schedule for each of the two new blocks of flats. The phasing arrangement is a practical solution to developing a somewhat constrained site, and it would facilitate the provision of car parking and open space areas for each block of flats prior to the units becoming ready for occupation.

52. In terms of open space provision the currently proposed site layout identifies areas of communal open space to serve the new flatted units. This addresses a point raised in the course of consideration of the previous application on the site, where extremely limited private garden space was considered to be of limited benefit and necessitating the provision of significant amounts of boundary treatment. Communal open space was considered to be a more aesthetically acceptable solution, as well as one which would provide an adequate amount of shared space that could be available for the use and enjoyment of all residents. As a result the previously approved planning permission included a condition requiring the provision of an amended site layout plan showing all open space as communal space. The currently proposed site layout incorporates this and negates the need for such a condition.

Impact on the Listed Building and Conservation Area

53. The site lies within a Conservation Area and the proposal affects a Category B listed building. In the course of considering the previous development proposal on the site consideration was given to its overall impact on the setting of the Listed Building. The relationship of the new build residential blocks, as well as the various alterations and extensions to the original hotel structure were deemed to be acceptable and were not considered to give rise to any negative impacts. The earlier proposal also included the demolition of the somewhat unsympathetically designed two storey flat roof extension to the hotel. This in itself was considered to be a positive step towards restoring much of the original character of the listed building. The demolition work was undertaken several months ago.
54. The currently proposed changes to the fenestration in the hotel and townhouse, together with minor amendments to the internal use of various areas on the ground floor of the hotel are all considered acceptable. The only issue raised by Historic Scotland is the current proposal to apply a harled finish to the south east gable of the hotel, rather than exposing the stonework. As discussed in the context of the overall design, the poor condition of the stonework that was uncovered upon demolishing the flat roofed extension is evidence of the impracticalities and aesthetic difficulties of leaving the stonework exposed. A condition could be applied to any planning permission or listed building consent granted to ensure that the new finish is lime based, as recommended by **Historic Scotland**.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE AIMS OF THE NATIONAL PARK

Conserve and Enhance the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Area

55. The proposed development would result in improvements to the fenestration on the rear elevation of the original hotel / townhouse structure and would improve upon its currently neglected appearance. The new single storey extension to the hotel, together with the new build residential elements on

the Spey Avenue frontage of the site would result in the creation of a strong streetscape on this prominent site within the Conservation Area.

Promote Sustainable Use of Natural Resources

56. The details provided indicate where possible that efforts would be made to source salvaged or recycled materials, and where new materials or products are used they would be sustainable and from renewable resources.

Promote Understanding and Enjoyment of the Area

57. The development which is proposed to occur on a type of brownfield site in a prominent position on one of the main approaches to the core area of Grantown on Spey would represent an appropriate visual enhancement of the area. The rejuvenation and improvement of the commercial facilities associated with the hotel would also contribute towards the general public's enjoyment of the area.

Promote Sustainable Economic and Social Development of the Area

58. The proposal would provide purpose built flats in Grantown on Spey. In terms of size and location it has the potential to cater for some of the open market housing needs of some sectors of the local community. The re-opening in recent years of the Strathspey Hotel and the proposals for the improvement of the quality of facilities within the enterprise would be of economic benefit.

RECOMMENDATION

That Members of the Committee support a recommendation to :

(A) Grant Planning Permission for (a) the re-development of the existing hotel and erection of new extension; (b) conversion of part of existing hotel to dwelling house; and (c) erection of eight flats (phasing proposals to support variation of condition 13 of 08/147/CP) at the Strathspey Hotel, High Street, Grantown on Spey, subject to the following conditions –

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun within three years from the date of this permission.

Reason : To comply with Section 58 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.

2. Prior to the commencement of development a complete set of survey drawings (including the internal layout and all elevations) of all existing structures on the site shall be submitted for the written agreement of the Cairngorms National Park Authority acting as planning authority.

Reason : In the interests of conserving and enhancing the character and integrity of the Listed Building and the cultural heritage of the area.

3. Prior to the commencement of development full specification of all works for the Listed Building shall be submitted for the written approval of the Cairngorms National Park Authority, acting as Planning Authority. All works shall thereafter be undertaken in accordance with the agreed specifications.

Reason : In the interests of conserving and enhancing the character and integrity of the Listed Building and the cultural heritage of the area.

4. Prior to the commencement of development a sample of the proposed slates shall be submitted for the approval and written agreement of the Cairngorms National Park Authority acting as Planning Authority. All slates shall closely match the existing slates on the Strathspey Hotel in terms of size, texture and colour. The agreed slates shall be used as the roof finish thereafter.

Reason : In the interests of conserving and enhancing the character and integrity of the Listed Building and the cultural heritage of the area.

5. Prior to the commencement of development, detailed drawings shall be submitted for the agreement and written approval of the Cairngorms National Park Authority acting as Planning Authority to show the extent of render finish on the south east gable of the original hotel building.

Reason : In the interests of conserving and enhancing the character and integrity of the Listed Building and the cultural heritage of the area.

6. All external render finishes throughout the development shall be lime based. Prior to the commencement of any wall rendering works, sample panels, approximately 1 metre square, of the render shall be prepared on site for inspection and the further written approval of the Cairngorms National Park Authority acting as Planning Authority.

Reason : In the interests of the character of the buildings and the visual amenity of the area.

7. All windows and external doors shall be timber.

Reason : In the interests of visual amenity and in the interests of maintaining the character of the Conservation Area.

8. Prior to the commencement of development detailed drawings and specifications of the windows proposed in the new extension to the Listed Building shall be submitted for the written agreement of the Cairngorms National Park Authority, acting as Planning Authority, in consultation with Historic Scotland.

Reason : In the interests of conserving and enhancing the character and integrity of the Listed Building and the cultural heritage of the area.

9. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Scotland) Order 1992, no house extension shall be formed, and no greenhouse, shed or garage erected without the prior written consent of the Cairngorms National Park Authority acting as Planning Authority.

Reason : In order to give separate consideration to these matters because of the sensitive and prominent nature of the site.

10. Drainage measures shall accord with SUDS principles. The drainage measures shall ensure that all properties within the development are free from the effects of a 1 in 200 years flood event and that shall be no increase in flood risk to any properties upstream or downstream of the development.

Reason : In the interests of public safety and general amenity.

11. A suitable management and maintenance agreement shall be established in respect of any SUDS measures, hard and soft landscaped areas, roads and footpaths not intended or not suitable for adoption by a statutory authority.

Reason : To ensure that all such areas are appropriately managed and maintained in perpetuity.

12. Prior to any other works commencing in connection with the proposed development the following works shall be completed and approved by the Cairngorms National Park Authority acting as Planning Authority, in consultation with the Roads Authority –

- (i) visibility splays shall be provided and maintained each side of the site access. These splays are the triangles of ground bounded by the first 2.5 metres along the centreline of the access road (the x dimension) and the nearside edge of the main road (the y dimension) measured at least 20 metres in each direction from the intersection of the access road with the main road; and
- (ii) within the visibility splay nothing shall obscure visibility between a driver's eye height of 1.0 metres positioned at the x dimension and an object height of 1.0 metres anywhere along the y dimension.

Reason : In the interests of traffic safety and public safety and to ensure that all vehicles may enter and leave the site safely at all times.

13. Notwithstanding the requirements of condition no. 12 of this consent, the development of the site and the provision of roads, footpaths, on site car parking, open space and landscaping shall be undertaken in accordance with the phasing proposals set out on drawing no. 2006-11-1287-64 (dwg. title Access Road Phasing), and shall also comply with the following requirements –

- (i) the internal road and parking layout shall be generally in accordance with the submitted details. The main access road shall be 5.5 metres wide, such that opposing vehicles can readily pass one another;
- (ii) construction of the internal road and parking area shall comply with the requirements for a minor access road as detailed in Highland Council's Road Guidelines for New Developments; and
- (iii) the public road footway fronting the north west and north east sides of the site shall be reconstructed, as required to the satisfaction of the roads authority.

Reason : In the interests of traffic safety and general amenity and to ensure that all vehicles may enter and leave the site safely at all times.

14. All car parking areas, driveways and other hard standing areas shall have a durable, dust free, porous surface.

Reason : In the interests of general amenity.

15. All public services for the development, including electrical, cable television and telephone cables, shall be located underground throughout the site. All such work shall be carried out prior to road surfacing and junction boxes shall be provided by the developer.

Reason : In the interests of the visual amenity of the area.

16. Prior to the commencement of development, a detailed landscaping plan shall be submitted for the agreement of the Cairngorms National Park Authority, acting as Planning Authority. The landscaping plan for the entire site area shall include comprehensive details of all species (which should be of indigenous origin), planting location and numbers to be planted. All new landscaping shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. The landscaping of all communal areas within the proposed development shall be completed within one year of the commencement of works. Any trees or shrubs that die or become seriously damaged or diseased within a period of five years from the time of planting shall be replaced with others of a similar size and species, suited to the climate of the area, within the next planting season.

Reason : In the interests of the visual amenity of the area.

17. The existing timber fence and rendered wall in the south eastern area of the Spey Avenue boundary of the site shall be replaced with a traditional stone wall, of similar construction to the existing adjacent portion of wall. The screening to be provided around the bike storage areas either side of the vehicular entrance shall also consist of stone walling.

Reason : in the interests of visual amenity and in the interest of conserving and enhancing the character of the Conservation Area.

18. The eight flats to be provided in Blocks 1 and 2 shall be marketed on a priority purchase basis at a fixed price to be determined by the Developer for a period of two months from the date of first sales release, to people ordinarily resident or working within the Cairngorms National Park unless otherwise agreed. Prior to the date of first sales release evidence shall be submitted to and approved by the Cairngorms National Park Authority acting as Planning Authority, indicating how the offer will be advertised locally. After the two months on this priority purchase basis sales can revert to the open market. After the last unit of the eight has been occupied information shall be submitted to the CNPA to indicate the origin of the purchasers.

Reason : in accordance with the CNPA National Park Plan Strategic Objective for housing that seeks to increase the accessibility of rented and owned housing to meet the needs of communities throughout the Park.

And

(B) Grant Listed Building Consent for the erection of a single storey extension from the existing building gable wall in order to retain hotel bar floor lost by demolition of 1960's flat roof extension at the Strathspey Hotel at High Street, Grantown on Spey, subject to the following conditions –

1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun within three years from the date of this permission.

Reason : To comply with Section 58 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act, 1997.

2. Prior to the commencement of development full specification of all works for the Listed Building shall be submitted for the written approval of the Cairngorms National Park Authority, acting as Planning Authority.

Reason : In the interests of conserving and enhancing the character and integrity of the Listed Building and the cultural heritage of the area.

3. Prior to the commencement of development a sample of the proposed slates shall be submitted for the approval and written agreement of the Cairngorms National Park Authority acting as Planning Authority. All slates shall closely match the existing slates on the Strathspey Hotel in terms of size, texture and colour. The agreed slates shall be used as the roof finish thereafter.

Reason : In the interests of conserving and enhancing the character and integrity of the Listed Building and the cultural heritage of the area.

4. Prior to the commencement of development, detailed drawings shall be submitted for the agreement and written approval of the Cairngorms

National Park Authority acting as Planning Authority to show the extent of render finish on the south east gable of the original hotel building.

Reason : In the interests of conserving and enhancing the character and integrity of the Listed Building and the cultural heritage of the area.

5. All external render finishes throughout the development shall be lime based. Prior to the commencement of any wall rendering works, sample panels, approximately 1 metre square, of the render shall be prepared on site for inspection and the further written approval of the Cairngorms National Park Authority acting as Planning Authority.

Reason : In the interests of the character of the buildings and the visual amenity of the area.

6. All windows and external doors shall be timber.

Reason : In the interests of visual amenity and in the interests of maintaining the character of the Conservation Area.

7. Prior to the commencement of development detailed drawings and specifications of the windows proposed in the new extension to the Listed Building shall be submitted for the written agreement of the Cairngorms National Park Authority, acting as Planning Authority, in consultation with Historic Scotland.

Reason : In the interests of conserving and enhancing the character and integrity of the Listed Building and the cultural heritage of the area.

Advice notes :

- (a) Prior to any work of demolition, excavation and surfacing starting within 2 metres of the public road edge a road opening permit shall be obtained from the Roads Authority.

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13 July 2010

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The map on the first page of this report has been produced to aid in the statutory process of dealing with planning applications. The map is to help identify the site and its surroundings and to aid Planning Officers, Committee Members and the Public in the determination of the proposal. Maps shown in the Planning Committee Report can only be used for the purposes of the Planning Committee. Any other use risks infringing Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Maps produced within this Planning Committee Report can only be reproduced with the express permission of the Cairngorms National Park Authority and other Copyright holders. This permission must be granted in advance.