
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Title: REPORT ON CALLED-IN PLANNING APPLICATION

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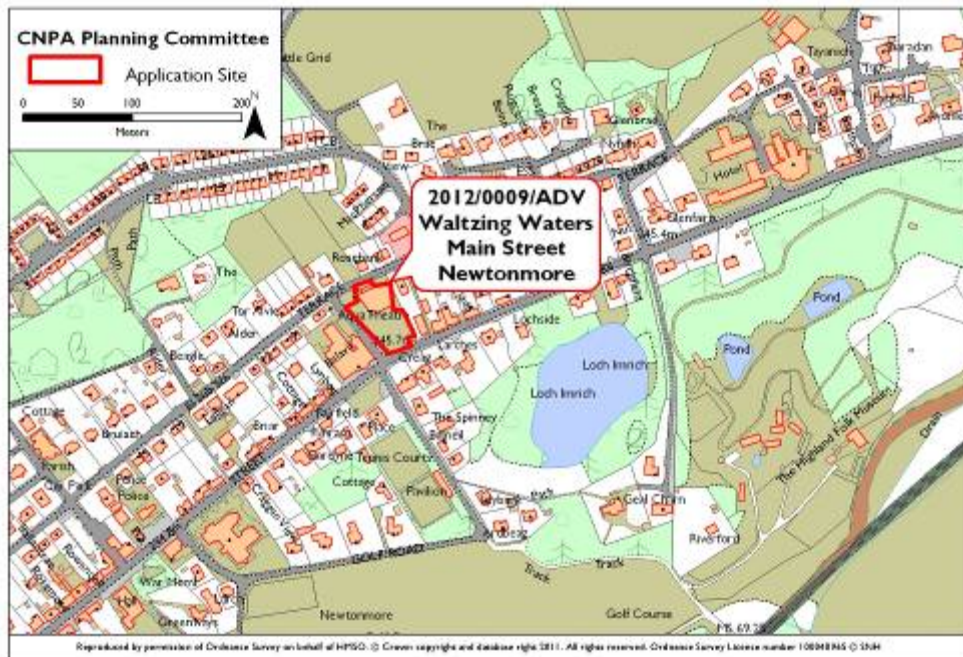
DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED: ADVERTISEMENT CONSENT FOR FACSIA SIGNS, TOTEM SIGN, POST MOUNTED SIGN AND WALL MOUNTED SIGN (ILLUMINATED AND NON ILLUMINATED) AT THE FORMER WALTZING WATERS, NEWTONMORE

REFERENCE: 2012/0009/ADV

APPLICANT: THE CO-OPERATIVE, C/O ASTLEY SIGNS, GATESHEAD

DATE CALLED-IN: 20 JANUARY 2012

RECOMMENDATION: APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS



Grid reference :271797 799382

Fig. 1 - Location Plan

SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL

I. Advertisement consent is sought in this application for the display of a number of advertisements at the new Co-Operative retail store in Newtonmore. The CNPA granted planning permission in 2011 for the change of use of the former Waltzing Waters tourist facility to a retail and residential development (CNPA planning ref. no. 11/179/CP). Work is currently on-going at the site in connection with the development of the retail facility. The adverts which are proposed in this application are :

- Fascia signs – 3 signs proposed to be erected at fascia level on the front elevation of the building. Each sign is approximately 6.5 metres (wide) X 1 metre (high). The fascia would be fabricated aluminium and finished in a green colour, consistent with the corporate colours of the Co-Operative. Two of the signs would bear the wording 'The Co-Operative Food'¹ and are proposed to be trough illuminated;



Fig. 2: Front elevation - proposed fascia and other signage

- Smaller signs at the building: Three small signs are proposed at the front elevation of the retail unit. Two of the signs would be post mounted, with one identifying a disabled car parking bay and the second identifying a parent and child parking bay. The circular signs would bear the standard recognised symbols for such facilities, with the symbols being white on an otherwise blue background. The third sign would be wall mounted, measuring 600x600mm and in addition to the Co-Operative Food logo it would also contain a disclaimer about the use of the parking area.



Fig. 3: locations of proposed signage

¹ The lettering would be raised out from the fascia. The lettering would be formed by moulded silver acrylic with blue vinyl applied to the face.

- Totem sign: the sign is proposed in a central position adjacent to the front boundary of the site. It would measure 4.5 metres high x 0.9 metres wide. The sign would be made from steel framework, clad with folded aluminium panels and would be internally illuminated. The sign would bear the standard 'Co-operative Food' lettering set against a green background, as well as including details of opening times and other logos such as the 'co-operative membership card.' The totem sign would be secured below ground in a caged concrete foundation.



Fig. 4: Totem sign



Fig. 5: Post mounted signs

2. Details on the application form indicate that advertising consent is being sought for a period of five years.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONTEXT

National policy

3. **Scottish Planning Policy² (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
 - 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.
4. **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

² February 2010

Scottish Government. It is advised that “the planning system should 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.

5. 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.”
6. 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. The topic which is of the most relevance to the current proposal is ‘economic development’.
7. *Economic development:* Planning authorities are encouraged to respond to the diverse needs and locational requirements of different sectors and sizes of businesses and take a flexible approach to ensure that changing circumstances can be accommodated.
8. **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.”

Strategic Policies

Cairngorms National Park Plan (2007)

9. The Cairngorms National Park Plan sets out the vision for the park for the next 25 years. The plan sets out the strategic aims that provide the long term framework for managing the National Park and working towards the 25 year vision. Under the heading of ‘conserving and enhancing the special qualities’ strategic objectives for landscape, built and historic environment include maintaining and enhancing the distinctive landscapes across the Park, ensuring that development complements and enhances the landscape character of the Park, and ensuring that new development in settlements and surrounding areas and the management of public spaces complements and enhances the character, pattern and local identity of the built and historic environment.
10. Under the heading of ‘Living and Working in the Park’ the Plan advises that sustainable development means that the resources and special qualities of the national park are used and enjoyed by current generations in such a way that future generations can continue to use and enjoy them. Strategic objectives for economy and employment include creating conditions that are conducive to business growth and investment that are consistent with the special qualities of the Park and its strategic location and the promotion of green business

opportunities. Section 5.3 of the Plan concerns 'enjoying and understanding the park' noting that the Cairngorms National Park is known for its outstanding environment and outdoor recreation opportunities.

Structure Plan Policy

Highland Council Structure Plan (2001)

11. **Highland Council Structure Plan** is founded on the principles of sustainable development, which are expressed as –
 - Supporting the viability of communities;
 - Developing a prosperous and vibrant local economy; and
 - Safeguarding and enhancing the natural and built environment.A variety of detailed policies emanate from the principles.
12. There are no specific policies pertaining to proposals for advertising although a number of other policies could be considered in relation to a proposal of this nature. The following provides a brief summary of the policies applicable to a development of this nature.
13. Section 2.3 of the Plan discusses Retailing. Shopping is acknowledged as an essential part of life and access to a range of quality shops is considered to make an important contribution to the health of communities. **Policy R2** Everyday Shopping Needs supports development which encourages and enhances the local provision of facilities to meet every day needs. Section 2.4 of the Plan deals with the subject of landscape, stating that "no other attribute of Highland arguably defines more the intrinsic character and nature of the area than its landscape." Similar to national policy guidance, there is a recognition that landscape is not a static feature and that the protection and enhancement of landscape and scenery must be positively addressed. **Policy L4 Landscape Character** states that "the Council will have regard to the desirability of maintaining and enhancing present landscape character in the consideration of development proposals."

Local Plan Policy

Cairngorms National Park Local Plan (2010)

14. The Cairngorms National Park Local Plan was formally adopted on 29th October 2010. The full text can be found at :
<http://www.cairngorms.co.uk/parkauthority/publications/results.php?publicationID=265>
15. 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 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.

16. 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 other policies, 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 current development proposal.
17. *Policy 6 – Landscape*: there will be a presumption against any development that does not complement and enhance the landscape character of the Park, and in particular the setting of the proposed development.
18. *Policy 16 – Design Standards for New Development*: this is one of a number of policies which is intended to encourage developers to consider how they can best include the principles of sustainable development in their proposals, and consider the impact on the environment, economy and community. Policy 16 requires that all proposals are accompanied by a design statement which sets out how the requirements of the policy have been met. The design of all development is encouraged to :
- Reflect and reinforce the traditional pattern and character of the surrounding area and reinforce the local vernacular and local distinctiveness, whilst encouraging innovation in design and materials;
 - use materials and landscaping that will complement the setting of the development;
 - demonstrate sustainable use of resources;
 - protect the amenity enjoyed by neighbouring properties, with all proposals designed to help create environments that can be enjoyed by everyone; and
 - be in accordance with the design standards and palette of materials as set out in the Sustainable Design Guide.

CONSULTATIONS

19. **Transport Scotland** considered the proposal in relation to the proposed totem sign adjacent to the front roadside boundary of the site. There is no objection to the development proposal subject to the inclusion of a condition relating to the lighting of the sign.

REPRESENTATIONS

20. No representations have been received in respect of the development proposal.

APPRAISAL

21. This application was called in by the CNPA primarily due to its association with the retail development which was granted planning permission in 2011. At the time of 'call in' there were a number of unresolved issues associated with the on-going development of the retail facility which had the potential to conflict with aspects of this current application.

Principle

22. It is reasonable to expect that the development of a new retail facility and its associated car parking area will require elements of signage in order to identify the facility and provide basic information such as details of the opening hours, and the identification of dedicated car parking spaces for specific user groups. In most instances signage details would form part of an overall application for a retail development. This was not possible in the case of the Co-Operative development on the subject site, as the initial permission for the change of use of the building from the former tourist facility (Waltzing Waters) to a retail and residential development was applied for by the Waltzing Waters operator and site owner. Further detailed elements specifically required for the new retail development were the responsibility of the retail operators, hence the submission of the current proposal for advertising consent by the Co-Operative. Notwithstanding the fragmented approach to seeking permissions for the overall development of the retail facility, the principle of the currently proposed signage is acceptable.

Visual impact

23. The fascia signage proposed on the front elevation of the retail premises is appropriate in size to the scale of the building. The materials, colour scheme and lettering reflect the corporate identity of the Co-operative Group and are similar to signs displayed on all of their retail premises, including the existing store on the Main Street in Newtonmore. The trough lighting which is proposed to backlight the fascia signs is a conventional means of lighting identification signage on retail premises such as this. Lighting of this nature generally provides relatively discreet illumination, without giving rise to adverse impacts such as creating dazzle or glare to road users or impacting on neighbouring properties.
24. The three signs proposed at the perimeter of the car parking area are of a discreet size and would provide necessary information regarding dedicated car parking bays, as well as a standard disclaimer usually found in car parks.
25. The most significant element of the proposal is the totem sign proposed at the front boundary of the site. The sign is of a substantial size, extending to a height of 4.5 metres. However, it should be considered in the context of its location on the main street within a settlement, and on a site which has had a history of commercial use³ with associated signage. The totem sign is effectively a composite sign, providing a variety of key information including the identification of the retail outlet, as well as opening hours and services offered in store. This composite approach is preferable to the potential alternative of a proliferation of smaller signs. The sign is proposed to be internally illuminated.

Road safety

26. Due to the proposed location of the totem sign at the front boundary, adjacent to the trunk road, and having regard to the position of the existing bus stop in the south eastern corner of the site, the views of Transport Scotland were

³ Originally as a petrol filling station and more recently as the Waltzing Waters visitor attraction.

sought. The response is detailed in paragraph 18 and there is no objection to the proposed signage. Transport Scotland has also been involved, at the request of the CNPA, in advising on the acceptability of the existing position and orientation of the bus stop from a traffic safety perspective, as the current position is not in accordance with the approved plan. Transport Scotland has not raised any concerns about the relationship of the totem sign and the bus stop and there is no suggestion that the sign would impede visibility. The only stipulation in the response from Transport Scotland is to set a level of illumination which the lighting of the sign would not exceed. While Transport Scotland's reason for recommending such a condition derives from concerns regarding the safety of traffic on the trunk road, curtailing the level of illumination on the sign would also be beneficial in minimising its impact on surrounding properties.

Conclusion

27. In the context of the overall commercial development which has been permitted at the site, the extent of signage proposed in this application is proportionate. The type of signage proposed and the positions in which the signs would be located are acceptable and are also consistent with the extent and type of signage permitted on similar types of premises elsewhere.
28. Advertising consent is sought for a period of five years. This is considered appropriate. Given the substantial nature of the signage and its key purpose of identifying the brand and type of retail facility, it is highly likely that a further application may be made at the end of that period to retain the signage or erect new signage. The granting of consent at the current time for five years would provide a later opportunity to assess the condition of the signage, and establish whether or not it has been liable to deterioration over that time.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE AIMS OF THE NATIONAL PARK

Conserve and Enhance the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Area

29. The proposed signage at the new retail facility is limited in scale and is appropriately located in order to minimise the visual impact in the immediate vicinity. While the signage is unlikely to present an opportunity to enhance the natural or cultural heritage of the area, it would not negatively impact on the first aim of the National Park.

Promote Sustainable Use of Natural Resources

30. The signage would consist of a range of manufactured materials, of which their origin is unknown. The proposal does not therefore appear to promote the sustainable use of natural resources.

Promote Understanding and Enjoyment of the Area

31. The proposal for signage would do little to contribute to the achievement of this aim, other than being of use to the general public through providing identification of the retail facility, as well as providing details of opening hours.

Promote Sustainable Economic and Social Development of the Area

32. The proposed signage is part of the infrastructure normally associated with commercial facilities such as the new Co-Operative retail store in Newtonmore. Due to its linkages with the new commercial facility, the proposal for signage is considered to make a limited contribution to the aim of promoting the sustainable economic development of the area.

RECOMMENDATION

That Members of the Committee support a recommendation to GRANT advertising consent for the display of advertisements (fascia signs, totem sign, post mounted signs and wall mounted signs) – illuminated and non illuminated at Waltzing Waters, Main Street, Newtonmore, 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 or amended by the Planning etc. Scotland Act 2006.

2. This consent hereby allows the display of the identified advertisements for a period of five years from the date of this decision notice. The advertisements shall be removed from the site upon the expiry of that time period and all areas affected shall be restored to the satisfaction of the Cairngorms National Park Authority acting as Planning Authority, unless further consent has been granted for the retention of the advertisements.

Reason: To accord with the time period for which consent is sought and to ensure that the appearance of the advertising signage does not deteriorate in the longer term.

3. Lighting illumination on the totem sign adjacent to the Main Street site boundary shall not exceed 1000 candelas per square metre.

Reason: To ensure that there will be no distraction or dazzle to drivers on the trunk road and that the safety of the traffic on the trunk road will not be diminished.

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21 March 2012

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