

AGENDA ITEM 5

APPENDIX 2

2018/0043/DET

**APPLICANTS SUPPORTING
CASE**

**Planning Application: Proposed Erection of Residential
Development on Site of Former Filling Station at Grampian Road,
Aviemore**

Applicant: Cairngorm Residential Limited

Application Ref: 2018/0043/DET

Overview Planning Statement

November 2018

Ryden Ref: CAIR0001

Ryden

Background Context

The site has been the subject of a number of planning applications and permissions during the past 20 years. The proposed uses included commercial and residential uses.

In 2016, pre-application consultations were undertaken with The Highland Council in relation to a proposed residential development. The reference number for these consultations was 16/04617/PREAPP.

The written advice issued by The Highland Council as part of that process included the following comments:

- Residential use of the site would appear to be acceptable in principle.
- Housing development on this site should reinforce and enhance the character of the settlement, maximising opportunities for infill. The supporting information for the eventual application should demonstrate compliance with this.
- Although the proposal (at pre-application consultation stage) accommodated buildings over relatively large scale, these buildings are seen in the context of a steep wooded bank to the rear of the site and, with the Grampian Road being a curvature from the south entrance to Aviemore, the proposed layout would not appear to be overly obtrusive.
- All relevant technical standards in relation to access, parking, drainage, water, and flood risk should be met.
- The ecology and tree cover on the site is important and should be considered carefully as part of the overall development proposals.

The planning application for a revised scheme was subsequently submitted, and was called-in by the Cairngorm National Park Authority for consideration and determination. This application was given the reference 2017/0198/DET. During the consideration of the application by the CNPA, the application was subject to a number of amendments. However, the application was subsequently withdrawn, to pave the way for a fresh application.

The subsequent application was also called-in by the CNPA and was given the reference 2018/0043/DET. It is this latest application to which this overview planning statement refers.

The Current Application

Even although the fresh, amended planning application took on board many of the comments and consultation responses which were generated in relation to the previous application, a number of further matters have emerged. These can be summarised as follows:

- The fresh proposals, although reduced in scale and massing when compared to the previous application, still represents a visual over-development of the site; and
- Additional work was required in matters of trees and landscaping, particularly on the interface between the development site and the trees beyond the boundary (in the existing TPO area) in order to avoid the creation of an unattractive boundary.

As a consequence of the comments and consultations from CNPA as planning authority, a revision of the proposed scheme has been undertaken. The scale and nature of the proposed buildings has been reduced and the landscaping and tree proposals substantially revised. There have been related design amendments regarding parking, refuse collection, etc.

These amendments to the existing scheme have been informed by further survey work, particularly in relation to trees and landscaping.

Fresh plans drawings, and a supporting Design Statement have been collated, prepared, and submitted by the Kearney Donald Partnership, the agent for the application. Ryden has provided professional planning advice in relation to the preparation and submission of the amended proposals.

The key amendments can be summarised as follows:

- Blocks A and C have both been reduced in scale, by a storey in each case. This assists in the visual massing of the frontage. The rhythm of the new buildings, as viewed from Grampian Road whether travelling north or south, is now more appropriate for this gateway site.
- An important stand of existing trees (three mature Scots Pines), at the southern end of the site has now been retained. This is in response to the consultation and the site meeting undertaken in conjunction with the Forrestry Officers.
- The landscaping and tree belt to the rear of the proposed development has been redesigned and the retaining wall will now be built in short sections to minimise disruption to the bank and to the trees on the bank.

Status of Amendments

The amendments reduce the scale and nature of the built form, and improve the landscape setting. In addition, trees will now be retained which were previously scheduled for removal.

This being the case, it is considered that the amendments are appropriate for consideration as part of the current planning application, and do not require the submission of a fresh planning application.

It is accepted that the amendments mean that the application may require to be re-notified and re-advertised.

Conclusion

The site, which has had a variety of uses over many decades, does not present an attractive environment for those entering Aviemore (travelling north) or those leaving Aviemore (travelling south or to the Loch Morlich/Cairngorm area). It is a site in need of appropriate development.

As agreed ever since the pre-application stage, the site is suitable for residential development. The key issues relate to the scale and massing of the development, the density of development on the site, and the way in which it integrates both with the public realm (to the front of the buildings) and the wooded area (to the rear of the buildings).

It is submitted that the latest revised proposals (as of November 2018) now satisfactorily address all these key issues and that the application is now suitable for approval.

28 Apartments at Grampian Road – Cairngorm Developments Limited**Forestry Officers Consultation Response dated 13 Feb 2019.**

Mr Stuart notes that 57% of the trees on site are proposed for removal. While this is technically correct in terms of the arithmetic, he makes no mention of the numbers for the different categories of trees. The Arboricultural Consultant, Rumroy Ltd has tagged and categorised all 370 trees on site in line with the recognised British Standard BS 5837:2012. An analysis of the different categories and therefore the quality and health of the trees on site is required.

SUMMARY OF SURVEYED TREES ON SITE TO BS 5837: 2012

42no Trees	Category A Trees	11% of total
119no Trees	Category B Trees	32% of total
203no Trees	Category C Trees	55% of total
6no Trees	Category U Trees	2 % of total

43% of the trees surveyed on site are category A or B, leaving 57% of the trees surveyed being classed as C or U. This means that more than half the trees on site are classed as having “serious, irremediable, structural defects” or “trees with very limited conservation or other cultural benefits”.

This does not accord with the picture portrayed by the Forestry Officer, Landscape Officer or the Ecology Adviser.

Since Rumroy Ltd produced the Arboricultural Report dated the 28th October 2018 our clients have carried out a further review of possible methods to construct the retaining wall on the site. We are now able to propose a method called a “Clutched Pile System”.

This would negate the requirement for any temporary works behind the area of the rear wall of the carports, as the sheet piles become the rear wall. A 20 tonne 360-degree excavator will form a level area where the block of carports is to be located. This will allow the clutched pile drill rig access to the rear building line of the carports to enable the piles to be driven into position over the length of the retaining wall. This is carried out via a vibratory action & would not cause additional disturbance of the landform to the rear of the retaining wall. The retaining wall, its foundations and the car port structure are all constructed from the road side of the wall with minimal impact of the bank and the trees on the bank.

This method of constructing the wall negates the need for excavations and working space behind the wall and significantly addresses the forestry officers’ concerns raised in points 2,3,6,7,8,18 and the summary. The 35 trees previously mentioned as having construction within the root protection area now number **3no** in total. WE have allowed 500mm behind the retaining wall in making this assessment although in reality the piles will be inserted on the line of the external face of the retaining wall.

Indeed, the proposed method of constructing the retaining wall will result in a further 14no being retained. They are tree no’s 113, 146,155,156,159,184, 185, 195, 241,275,297,298,299 and 312. Of these fourteen trees 4no are category A and a further 5no are category B. This changes the overall numbers on the site as 197 being removed and 173 trees being retained.

Section 5.0 of the Rumroy Ltd, Arboricultural Report refers to Tree Protection principles. Further to approval of the proposed planning application and prior to operations on site commencing, an Arboriculture Method Statement (AMS) will require to be produced and agreed with the Cairngorm Park Authority and the details outlined within it strictly followed. This Method Statement will be the working document which will

incorporate all detail required to protect the trees throughout the duration of the implementation of the physical operations. We would be content to have this as a condition of planning.

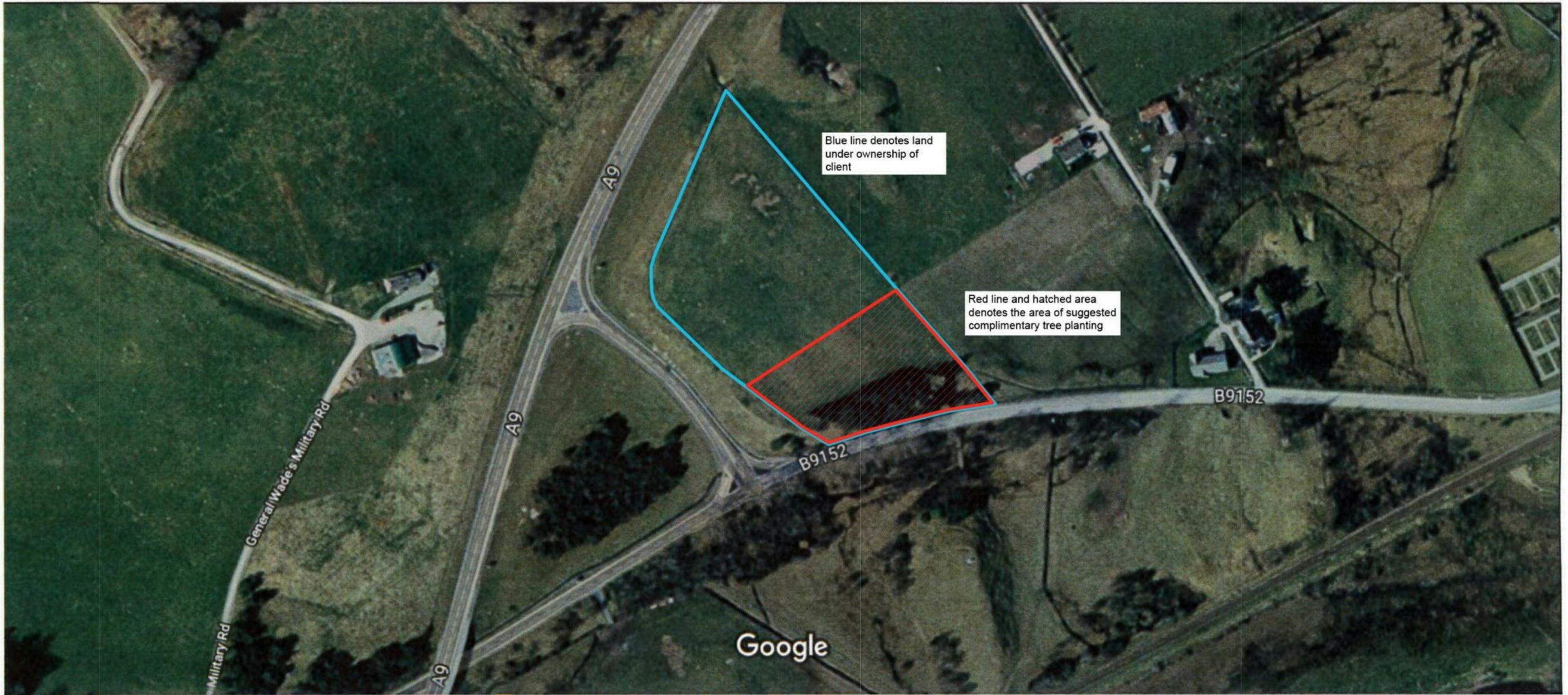
SUMMARY OF TREES BEING REMOVED

Category of trees to BS 5837:2012	% of Trees being removed		% of trees being removed against total trees on site
Category A	16no trees	8%	4%
Category B	67no trees	34%	18%
Category C	111no trees	56%	30%
Category D	3no trees	2%	1%
			Trees Retained 47%

Clearly the number of trees proposed for removal from categories A and B is 83no trees amounting to 22% of the total number of trees on site. Within our proposals we have indicated the planting of 85no native trees and 1476 shrubs within the site. We believe that the new proposed planting will compensate for the loss of trees within the site. The biodiversity and ecology of the site will be transformed. The site was formerly a petrol filling station and then a series of business uses and currently it is largely derelict although being used for wild camping with the resultant issues of human waste and rubbish.

The forestry officer offers comments on matters out with forestry issues, namely the soft landscaping proposals. These comments duplicate the comments from the landscape and ecology advisers. We have previously given our responses to the landscape and ecology consultations.

Our client is prepared to offer further compensatory planting off-site. They own an area of land at Kerrow in Kingussie extending to some 5.4acres. The diagram below shows the area of ground and we have marked an area within this site adjacent to the small area of woodland adjacent to the B9512 which could be planted with up to 200 trees, if this was deemed appropriate. We confirm that if this proposal is not acceptable, they do have other land holdings that could be considered in conjunction with the Cairngorm Park Authority.



Blue line denotes land under ownership of client

Red line and hatched area denotes the area of suggested complimentary tree planting

Imagery ©2019 Getmapping plc, Map data ©2019 Google 50 m

28 Apartments at Grampian Road – Cairngorm Developments Limited

A summary response to the points raised per the latest consultation responses for the above:

Community Council letter dated 11th January 2019

We are pleased to note the Community Council accept that the site is suitable for infill housing.

“development does not make a positive statement about Aviemore’s status as a world class resort “

Indeed, we believe that it does. The site is presently an abandoned brownfield site subject to wild camping and rogue parking with all the attendant refuse, human waste and debris resulting. The site is a positive eyesore on entering this ‘world class resort ‘and with an acceptance that housing is a suitable use, the substantial private investment to be made will transform this, and along with the modern addition of the Premier Inn, substantially improve first impressions on entering or leaving the town.

“the 4.5 storey statement is also a misdirection on behalf of the developers – the building has 5 habitation floors”

We believe that we are correct when referring to the buildings being 3.5 and 4.5 storey in height. The Robert J Naismith book referred to is an accepted guide on the architecture of buildings in the Scottish countryside. The book gives clear guidance on describing the heights and proportions of building relative to storey height and rooms contained within roof spaces.

There has been no attempt to mislead or misdirect. Blocks A and C have 3 full storeys of accommodation with a master bedroom suite contained within the roof space with a slightly raised wall head of 550mm. It is correct to refer to this building as 3.5 storeys. Similarly blocks B and D are 4 full storeys of accommodation with the master bedroom suite contained within the roof space 4.5 storeys in height.

The topmost flats in each block are “duplex” style flats with the master bedroom flat on the top floor. The top floor is not a separate apartment which is why there is no kitchen/living/dining room shown at this level. It is clear from the drawings that there is a stair connecting the two floors.

We would also respectfully point out that the drawings for blocks B and D are correct and not misleading. The floor plans are clearly labelled. Bottom left – Ground Floor, Bottom right- First and Second Floors (these floors are identical), Top left – Third Floor, Top right – Fourth Floor

The overall development now only has 28 no apartments in total. This is reflected accurately in the proposed floor plans.

“residential flats at Grampian Court are 2 storey”

The Grampian Court flats closest to Grampian Rd are 2 storeys but the rest of the development is 3 storeys in height and built on ground considerably higher than Grampian road level and built within the protected woodland area.

“there are no buildings along the length of Grampian Road that are more than 2.5 storeys high”

We would point out that this statement is incorrect. The buildings along the length of Grampian Road vary significantly in height and this fact gives Aviemore part of its character and street scape. The lack of uniformity should be considered a positive.

While the buildings in the MacDonald resort do not have a Grampian Road address one of the hotels within the resort is set back from Grampian Road but its grounds come down to the edge of Grampian Road. This hotel is clearly seen when travelling along Grampian Road. This hotel is 9 storeys in height.

Further North along Grampian Road, the Cairngorm Hotel is partly 3 storeys high with traditional floor to floor proportions which give the added height when compared to today’s buildings. There are also a couple of flatted developments at the northern end of Grampian Road that are 2.75 storey and 3 storeys in height.

“the Street Elevation from Grampian Road is a total misrepresentation of what the visual impact of the buildings will be to anyone on Grampian Road”

The way we have drawn the elevations of the buildings including the overall “street view” is correct in terms of standard architectural presentation. We acknowledge that the elevations do not take into account the perspective of viewing the building from close by or from further away. They are however correct in terms of levels and the heights of the buildings relative to the trees on the slope of the bank behind. These drawings demonstrate that the proposed buildings are significantly lower than the tops of the trees behind.

“non-compliance with Policy 5 as it does not ensure that the development conserves and enhances the distinctive characteristics of Aviemore ”

The actual text of Policy 5 states:

There will be a presumption against any development that does not conserve and enhance the landscape character and special qualities of the Cairngorms National Park including wildness, and in particular, the setting of the proposed development.

Proposed development that does not complement and enhance the landscape character of the Park and the setting of the proposed development will be permitted only where:

- a) any significant adverse effects on the landscape character of the Park are clearly outweighed by social or economic benefits of national importance; and
- b) all the adverse effects on the setting of the proposed development have been minimised and mitigated through appropriate siting, layout, scale, design and construction to the satisfaction of the planning authority.

Paragraphs 7.9 to 7.12 then explain how the policy will be applied. The repeated references to ‘wildness’ and ‘remoteness’ provide a strong indication that it is development sites in such areas that are the real concern of the policy.

The application site is an eyesore. It currently detracts from the setting of Aviemore. The existence of the current unmanaged woodland hardly compensates for the poor appearance. To suggest that the proposed development fails when assessed against the purpose and meaning of the policy is use the policy in a way which was not intended.

“the development is close to the road and gives a city vista and no good impression of the rural aspects of the village / small town that Aviemore is. A city streetscape is not apt in Aviemore”

We respectfully disagree with this comment/observation. The proposed development will not create a “city vista”. The opposite side of Grampian Road from the proposed development will never have any buildings built on this land as the main railway line runs through this site at a lower level than the road. The proposed site has unobstructed views to the Cairngorm mountains several miles distant. This section of Grampian Road will never feel like an urban area for this reason.

In terms of street scape again we would suggest that Aviemore has great variety in the way that the buildings on Grampian Road relate to the road and the public pavement. Some buildings are built directly onto the back edge of the pavement, others are set back a short distance while others such as the Cairngorm and Premier Inn Hotels are well set back sufficient to have parking in front of the buildings.

Our client was recently developing another site on Grampian Road and was given clear guidance from the Planning authority that the buildings should address the main road (creating a strong sense of street) and the car parking should be located behind the buildings away from the main street.

We have adopted this basic design philosophy for this development as we firmly believe this creates a better street scape that (t) n having significant areas of car parking fronting onto the main road through Aviemore.

“the buildings in the development are disproportionate to all other buildings in Aviemore”

Clearly the building is not disproportionate to all other buildings in Aviemore. There are several buildings within the MacDonald Resort that are a far bigger in scale than these proposals. We have already mentioned that one of the hotels within the resort which can be clearly seen from Grampian Road is 9 storeys in height. There are at least two other hotels within the resort that are 4 (storeys) storeys in height with a full pitch roof above. The scale and mass of these buildings are significantly bigger than the proposed development on Grampian Road.

“no affordable housing”

This is acknowledged, but the Community Council must understand that the appropriate proportion of affordable housing would have been only 7 units. The developer has, in agreement with The Highland Council as housing authority, translocated these units to Sluggan Drive and **doubled the required provision to 14 units**. Given the length of time taken to date in processing this proposed development from its original submission , the affordable provision has been built out and is now fully occupied, easing the burden of shortage of provision much earlier than might have been possible otherwise.

We are unable to comment on the issues raised by the Community Council in relation the Highland Council and CNPA within their submission

Ecology Adviser dated 21st January 2019

We are pleased note that the Ecology Adviser confirms:

A Heritage Regulations Appraisal concludes “no likely significant effect on capercaillie or to the Spey SAC”.

The significance of impact on bats is “negligible”.

The significance of impact on squirrels is “slight”, in so far as only evidence of feeding was noted and that no dreys exist.

The significance of impact on breeding birds is “negligible”.

In summary therefore, we may establish that the ecology of the site, such as it is, remains unaffected by the proposed development.

Our submissions to date include substantial soft landscape proposals wherein our landscape consultant clearly demonstrates an enhancement to the site’s bio-diversity opportunities with a ‘native only’ species selection of 84 trees, 1476 shrubs and sowing grassed areas with grass / wildflower seed mix (10 grass species and 18 wildflower species) offering a wonderful opportunity to enhance the ecology and bio-diversity within the site, which will be unrecognisable from the present brownfield .

The ecology adviser would proceed to offer comment, beyond ecology matters, on the landscape proposals and would duplicate statements from the landscape adviser and forestry officer with regard to tree removal and replacements. These will be dealt with under the appropriate consultation response. We have taken professional advice and guidance from our consultants and do not accept the reservations expressed by the ecology adviser regarding suitability of species selected, soil stability for planting, or the opinion that further trees are at any risk during the construction process.

Our SUDS proposals, as have been engineer designed, do not require further open ponds and the suggestion of swales is not appropriate for this site.

We firmly believe that our submissions, as presented, to transform this brownfield site and take it to the level of enhancement proposed is more than worthy of favourable consideration.

Landscape Adviser dated the 15th January 2019

“There is replacement of the sedum roof to grass mix”

The change from a sedum roof to a grass mix roof is a direct response to a suggestion from the planning officer. This change allows the roof area to be considered as additional external amenity space for the residents. We have allowed for external staircases to access this area of roof. Our clients would be content to revert back to a sedum roof if this has more “landscape value”.

“The existing trees on the site are a visual continuum of the adjoining Ancient Woodland and act as a visual frame to the “soft” entrance to Aviemore”

The current woodland is indeed in poor condition. It has clearly been unmanaged for a number of years and this is reflected in the poor condition of the woodland as a whole. The ancient and protected woodland on the neighbouring land is also unmanaged and showing signs of this lack of management. This was observed at the site meeting with the forestry officer in September 2018.

The current site (woodland) is also attracting numbers of wild campers and on the visit in September 2018 there was clear evidence of human waste within the wooded area and also signs of camp fires and large amounts of rubbish being left in the general vicinity.

“The development does not respond sensitively to the existing topography or tree cover. The resultant loss of trees will impact on the visual and landscape character”

The site is relatively flat in cross section from Grampian road to the base of the hill and then sloped upwards towards the ancient and protected woodland on the neighbouring property. Given this topography it is clear that the buildings should be located on the flat sections of ground minimising the disturbance of the bank to the rear of the site. This accords with the planning departments previous guidance with having the buildings to the front of the site and the car parking to the rear.

We recognise that there is a need to build into the bank with resultant tree loss, but this has been kept to a minimum by accommodating the car parking to the rear and not the buildings. The method of constructing the retaining wall has also been altered to minimise disruption to the bank.

As stated in the design brief the trees on the neighbouring ground which is a protected woodland, will always be a back drop to the proposed development. Due to the rising topography the tree canopy is still 7.5m higher than the highest roof line within the development. Along the majority of the development the tree canopy of upwards of 10m higher than the roof lines.

“The recently approved Premier Inn provides a useful benchmark for development along this part of Grampian Road”

It is interesting that the Landscape Officer suggests that the recently consented Premier Inn should be considered a **benchmark for development in this part of Grampian Road**. This development for a 60 bedroomed hotel places the building to the rear of the site with the car parking placed to the front between the hotel building and Grampian Road. All the parking 50 spaces (except the 3 no. Disabled spaces) are located on either side of a single access road running parallel to Grampian Road. The approved landscape drawing shows only 10 trees planted within the car parking zone and this will in no way break up the visual impact of a car park. The 18m setback for the building is wasted with the siting of such a large car park on the public side of the hotel. This car park with little new landscaping provides the “southern gateway” to Aviemore.

“Over development of the site is resulting in a visually solid and dominant built form that would dominate the immediate townscape and sense of arrival in Aviemore”

The landscape Officer makes reference to overdevelopment throughout his consultation response. The density and the scale of development is a matter for the planning officer and not the landscape officer.

The landscape officer’s view of the development stems from his opinion that the current trees on the site are of significant quality and that they contribute to the character of this part of Aviemore. We fundamentally disagree with this starting point and indeed the officer contradicts his stance by stating “In principle development of the site is accepted and needed, as it is currently in poor condition.”

If the woodland is in poor condition it therefore does not merit the value that is being attributed to it.

In terms of the proposed development being visually solid and dominant build form, we would again disagree with this opinion expressed by the Landscape Adviser. The apartments have been split into 4no blocks within the site creating space and visual links to the woodland at the back of the site between each of the blocks. The blocks themselves have been articulated to break down the mass of the buildings avoiding large regular shaped blocks, like the Premier Inn example raised . The flats have cut away balconies that accentuate the corners of the buildings and the vertical circulation element is set back from the main building mass and finished in a different material to further articulate this element and again breaking down the mass of the building.

This is a different approach from the recently consented Premier Inn, with this building being a single rectangular box with only minimal façade detail around the top floor windows/roof junction.

As previously stated, the planning authority had previously encouraged our client on recent developments on Grampian Road to have the building towards the front “public” side of the site and have the car parking “out of sight” to the rear of the site. Indeed, these proposals have gone further in terms of integrating the car parking by building a roof over the majority of the car parking and covering this roof with a “green roof”.



DESIGN STATEMENT

October 2016
Updated May 2017
Updated Nov 2017
Updated Jan 2018
Updated April 2018
Updated Nov 2018
Updated Nov 2018

CONTENTS

1.0 Background Information

- 1.1 Name of Scheme
- 1.2 Applicant
- 1.3 Architect/developer/agents/advisers, etc.
- 1.4 Description of client brief
- 1.5 Date

2.0 Site Details

- 2.1 Location and Site Plan
- 2.2 Site Description- physical/environmental characteristics
- 2.3 Site History
- 2.4 Ownership
- 2.5 Surrounding uses
- 2.6 Site Investigations
- 2.7 Infrastructure/services

3.0 Site and Area Appraisal

- 3.1 Context
- 3.2 Identity
- 3.3 Connections

4.0 Design Principles

- 4.1 National Guidance
- 4.2 National Park Development Plan Design Policies
 - 4.2.1 Policy 1 – New Housing Development
 - 4.2.2 Policy 3 – Sustainable Design
 - 4.2.3 Policy 10 – Resources
 - 4.2.4 Policy 11 – Developer Contributions
- 4.3 Supplementary planning guidance
- 4.4 Site Specific Development Briefs
- 4.5 Consultations

5.0 Design Solutions

- 5.1 Layout
- 5.2 Context
- 5.3 Streets and Spaces
- 5.4 Accessibility
- 5.5 Safety and Security
- 5.6 Sustainability
- 5.7 Landscape
- 5.8 Scale and Mix
- 5.9 Details and Materials
- 5.10 Maintenance



1.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1 Name of the Scheme

28no. New Build Apartments, Grampian Road (B9152), Aviemore.

1.2 Applicant

Cairngorm Residential Ltd

1.3 Architect/developer/agents/advisers, etc.

Kearney Donald Partnership - Architects and Principal designers. Cameron and Ross, Consulting Engineers – roads engineering, surface water and foul drainage. Rumroy Limited – for squirrel survey, tree survey and tree constraints plan, Ryden - Planning Consultant

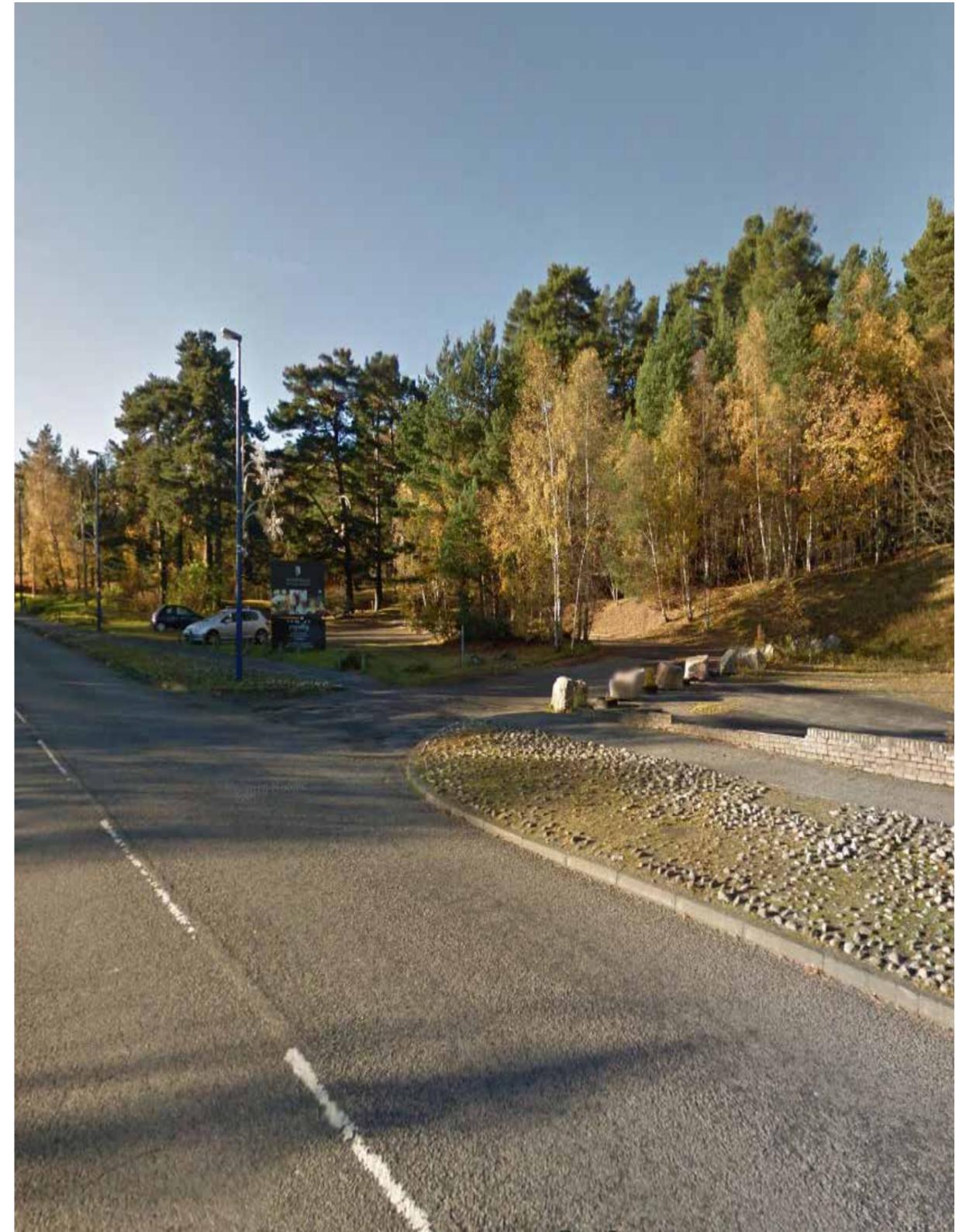
1.4 Description of client brief

The client's brief was to develop the vacant land adjacent to Grampian Road (B9152), the main road into Aviemore from the South. The land also includes the site of the current Active Outdoor Pursuits shop (now demolished).

The brief was to design high quality residential units for sale and also to include the 25% allocation for affordable homes. The affordable housing element was later omitted from the scheme and the whole of the site was to accommodate private apartments for sale. There is a separate document outlining the background and agreements reached regarding the trans-location of the affordable housing element to another site within Aviemore.

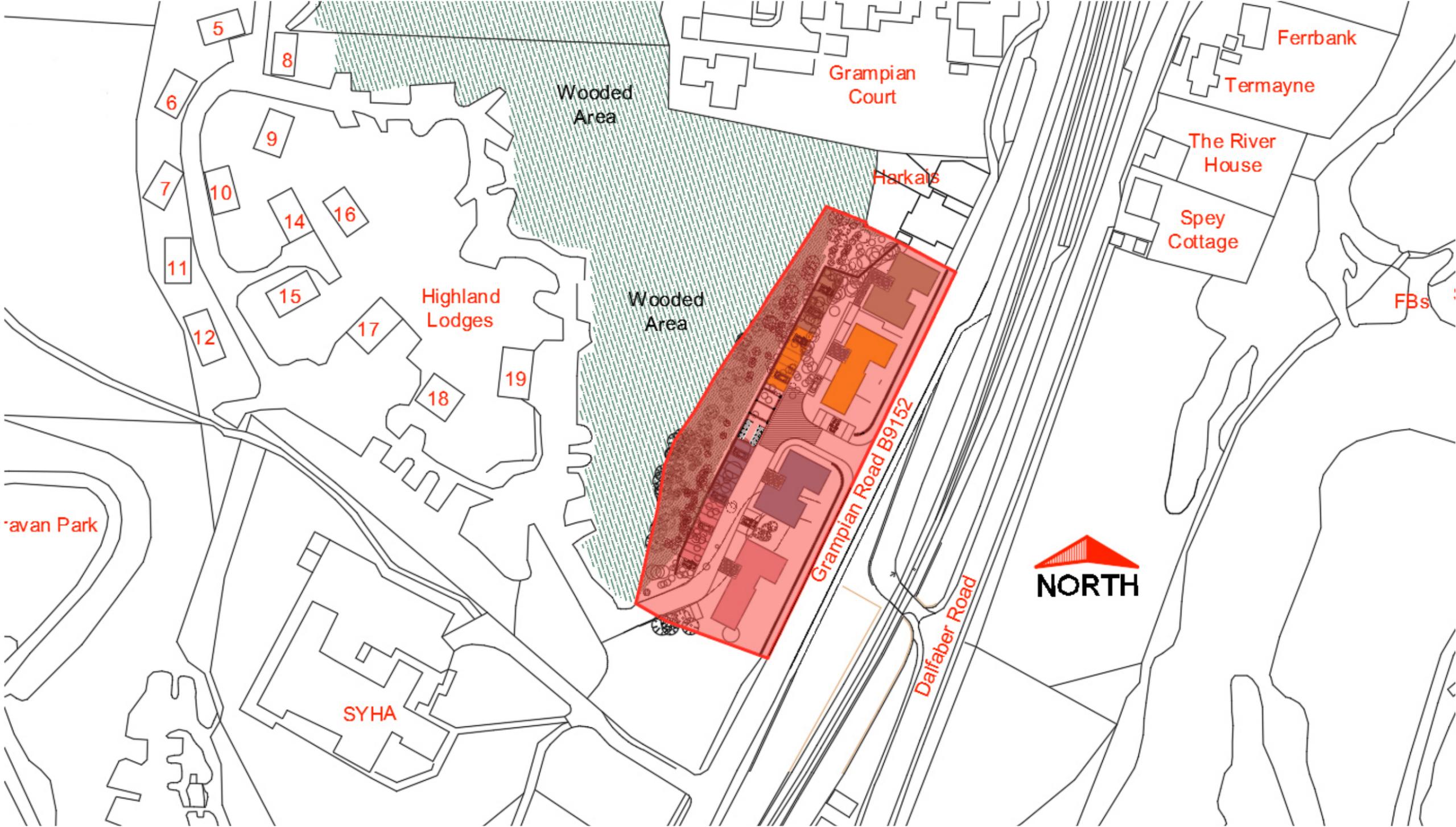
1.5 Date

This report was prepared October 2016 and then further updated in May 2017, November 2017, January 2018 and again in April 2018. There is a further update November 2018



2.0 SITE DETAILS

2.1 Location and Site



2.2 Description – physical/environmental characteristics

The site is located within Aviemore town centre and runs parallel to Grampian Road (B9152), which is the main road running North South through Aviemore.

The site is largely vacant ground since the closure of a petrol filling station in 1999. There was however one building on the site being used as an outdoor sports goods retailer. This tenant however indicated that they were not renewing their lease and moved to other premises within the Badenoch Area. This building has recently been demolished.

Adjacent to the road and running parallel to the road the ground is relatively flat for an average distance of some 30m before the land rises in elevation to the rear of the site. There is a fall of some 3.5m along the length of the site falling northwards.

This bank running the full length of the site is heavily wooded with predominately Scots Pine and Birch trees. Beyond the site boundary the woodland continues to the northwest with a substantial woodland area that is currently protected with Tree Preservation Order no HRC 42.

2.3 Site History

The site is currently disused with the Active Outdoor Pursuits shop previously located in the Northern Section of the site having vacated their premises earlier this year. The site was previously occupied by a petrol filling station. This was closed in 1999.

A section of the site had planning permission for a mixed use development of 8no apartments and retail units. The reference number for this application was 04/00283/OUTBS.

2.4 Ownership

The site is currently owned by the applicant, Cairngorm Residential Ltd.

2.5 Surrounding Uses

The immediate surrounding area contains a number of different uses including a food take-away, restaurant, residential, church and tourism uses.

The railway runs parallel to Grampian road on the other side of the road.

There has also been a recent Planning consent given for a new hotel on the site of a former petrol filling station on the opposite side of Grampian Road a short distance to the south-east of this site. (Planning Ref 16/04669/FUL)

2.6 Site Investigations

To date a number of surveys and site investigations have taken place. A full topographical survey of the site has been completed including the detailed positioning of all the trees on the site.

A full tree survey has been completed and this survey will be submitted with the detailed planning application. A survey for red squirrels has also been carried out and will be submitted as part of the detailed planning application. Nesting bird and bat surveys have also been carried out and reports submitted with the planning application.

An earlier Soil Gas Survey Report prepared by DG Environmental will also be included.



2.7 Infrastructure and Services

Water mains and power are located within the site. Connections to the foul drainage and the road network are available at the edge of the site.

Roads

A new access to the site will be formed off Grampian Road (B9152). This is the main access road through Aviemore. The new junction to this road will be formed to current Highland Council, Roads and Transport Guidelines for New Developments. Visibility splays commensurate with the 30 miles per hour speed limit can be achieved.

Initial consultations with Scottish Water have indicated that there is capacity within the local water supply and waste water network to allow the apartments to be connected.

A Drainage Assessment will be carried out by Cameron & Ross, Consulting Engineers. SUD's or a Surface Water Drainage Statement will be provided.

Local Public Services

Aviemore is recognised internationally as a mountain sports resort which offers an increasingly large number and variety of sports and activities. It plays a vital part in the Scottish tourist industry and is the economic driver for the National Park. Along with its focus as a tourism centre, it has also seen a rise in residential numbers. Local services are focused on Aviemore town centre and therefore most of these services are within walking distance of the proposed site.



3.0 SITE AND AREA APPRAISAL



3.1 Context

The site is set adjacent to Grampian Road (B9152) some 700 metres South of the town centre. This section of Grampian Road is characterised with development to the west side of the road only. The land on the East side of the road falls away sharply down towards the main railway line through Aviemore.

The land to the South of the site is currently unused. The site itself is relatively flat from the road edge westward for approximately 25-30 metres and then rises steeply towards the western boundary. The slope within the site is populated with a variety of trees including Scots Pine and Birch with varying maturity. Most of the trees now on the site are self seeding.

The land beyond the Western boundary is populated by a significant woodland of mature trees that are protected by Tree Preservation Order no HRC42

The land immediately to the North is occupied by a Fish & Chip takeaway and restaurant. Beyond this property is the residential development of Grampian Court.

Protected woodland to west of application site.



3.2 Identity

There is little consistency within the immediate context, with vacant land, commercial premises and nearby residential properties. The existing building within site is effectively a 2 storey building with the upper floor built into a Mansard roof. The existing building on the site has recently been demolished.

The proposed site is readily identified as a flat area of ground running parallel to Grampian Road with a wooded slope backdrop running the full length of the site.

3.3 Connections

The site is within Aviemore town centre. It is in easy reach of all local amenities by foot or bike. The train station and main supermarket together with shopping facilities are within the town centre.



4.0 DESIGN PRINCIPLES

4.1 National Guidance

Reference has been made to a number of guidance documents including:

- Pan 68 Design Statements
- Pan 78 Inclusive Design
- Pan 59 Improving Town Centres
- Pan 61 Planning and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems
- Pan 75 Planning for Transport

4.2 National Park Development Plan Design Policies

Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2015

4.2.1 Policy 1 – New Housing Development

Currently our proposed site is predominately located on disused land, previously occupied by a former filling station. Within the perimeter of the Aviemore settlement boundary, it serves to provide an active use for the site situated along Grampian Road towards the southern entrance of Aviemore Settlement (CNPA Policy 1.1, a), while bringing 28 new apartments to the community and the positive effects to local industry this entails. As mentioned, this development is to revitalise a disused, derelict site (CNPA POLICY 1.1, b). Reacting to the existing context, following a linear pattern initialised by the existing settlement (CNPA Policy 3.1, b). This development creates a sympathetic relationship due to its alignment along the main route approximately 5-7 metres offset; forming a non-obtrusive elevation along the Westerly side of the main route through Aviemore settlement, while remaining in scale with the natural landscape. The proposal also serves to retain a connection to the natural wooded banking to the rear, with retention through to the road side, enhancing the influence of the natural context.

4.2.2 Policy 2 Supporting Economic Growth

As stated previously there was a petrol filling station located on part of the site. This closed in the 1990's. Thereafter a single business unit was built on the site. This building has had a succession of previous business uses, including a Tourist Office and an Outdoor Pursuits shop, all of which have ultimately proved unsuccessful.

The site did have a consent for a mixed-use development which included residential and business use 06/00062/REMBS. This consent was never developed because of lack of interest in the commercial/business units. The existing building has only been able to attract tenants at below market rents and even at these reduced rent levels business has not been successful on this site..

The site while being close to Aviemore town centre is located out with the main commercial and retail centre. The recent consent for an additional 6,000sq.ft of Business units on top of the 44,500 sq.ft of retail space further marginalises the commercial attractiveness of the proposed site.



4.2.3 Policy 3 – Sustainable Design

This layout arrangement provides a visual connectivity between the wooded bank at the rear, with variation in mass, spacing and scale to allow the retention of visibility to the woodland, from Grampian Road, particularly the sector between block A and B (CNPA Policy 3.1, c) and Blocks B & C. The Development requires the removal of a number of trees, however in response more trees will be planted, and the development will always be set against the protected mature woodland behind the site.

The orientation with main facade facing a South Easterly direction also serves to provide an appropriate internal layout to maximise passive solar gains and take advantage of the natural landscape views on display. While the site does require the removal of an existing commercial property, we believe the siting of 28 apartments is site appropriate. The local vicinity being of mix use, this development will prove beneficial to local businesses, including a takeaway and restaurant on the neighbouring site boundary (CNPA Policy 2.4). The site is located within easy reach along Grampian Road to the town centre, and all local facilities, including shops, supermarkets and the train stations are accessible by foot or bike. This development also allows for close access to Aviemore's core paths already established in the area, with the LBS30, LBS31, LBS35, LBS36, LBS36, LBS38, LBS40, LBS145 all running in close proximity. Increasing the support for responsible, outdoor access (CNPA Policy 3.1, h).

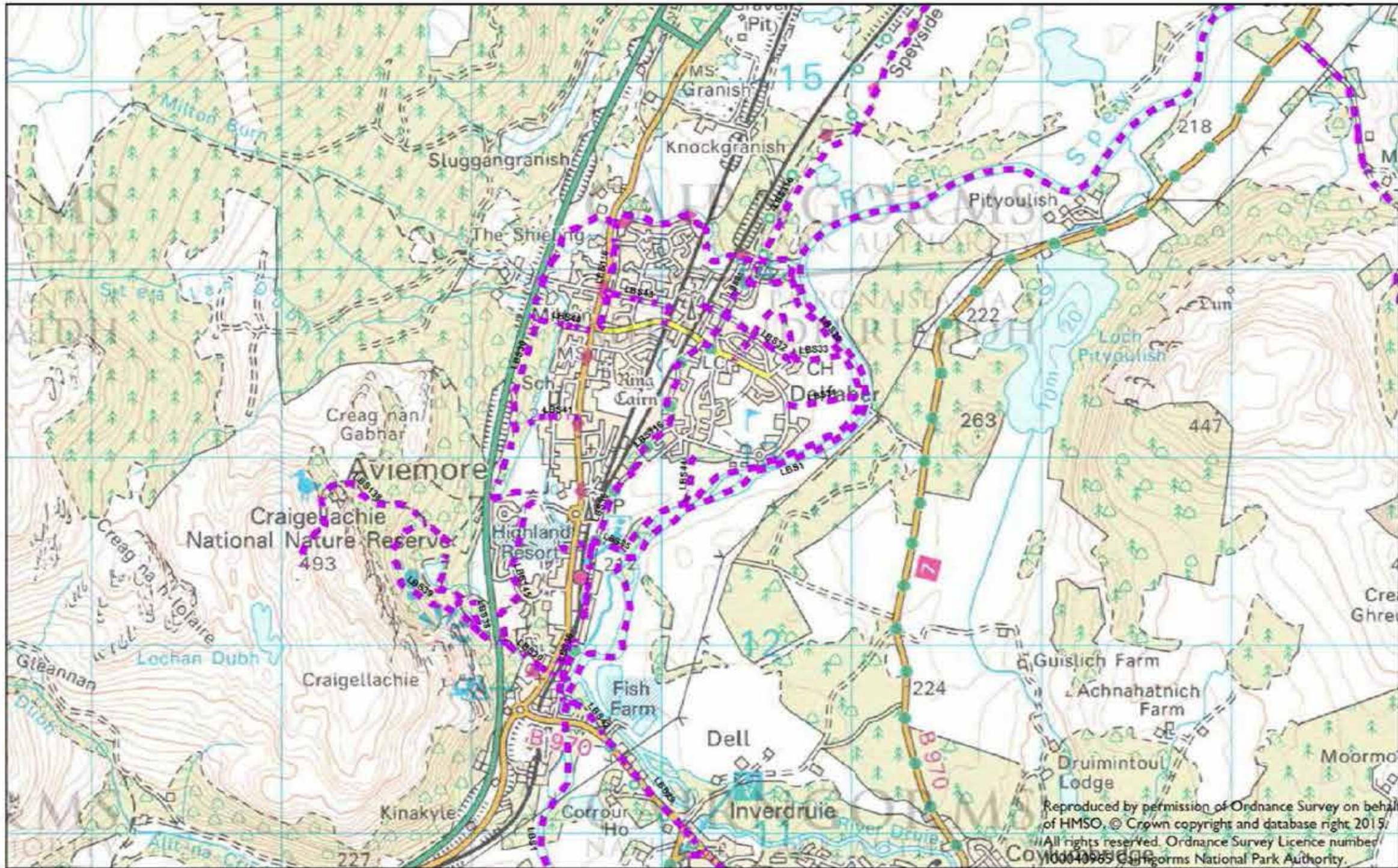
The apartments will be heated by means of modern Dimplex Quantum electric heating system with electric immersion heating for hot water. All apartments will have individual SAP calculations done at building warrant stage, should this application be granted.

The materiality allocated to this proposal serves to be aesthetically in keeping with the existing context and nature of Aviemore (CNPA Policy 3.1, c). While conforming to BRE Green Guide where possible, to achieve the current standards of insulation and energy performance (CNPA Policy 3.1, d).

The provision of a turfed roof over the proposed parking accommodation, recessed into the existing bank, provides a natural transition between the internal access road and the wooded bank to the rear. The turfed roof allows for the potential to bring ecological benefits (CNPA Policy 3.1, k). With the allocation of appropriate species this will provide an interactive boundary from the developed scheme and the natural wooded bank. Access to the "carpool" style parking is between blocks B and C onto Grampian Road with 43 car park spaces (CNPA Policy 3.1, j).

Maintenance arrangements played a part in the design development, while matching the client's wishes of producing a development with limited maintenance required, through materiality to allow the preservation of its appearance without deterioration overtime. All blocks are separated with adequate space to ensure the access of maintenance vehicles if necessary, Roof cleaning, gutter cleaning, etc.

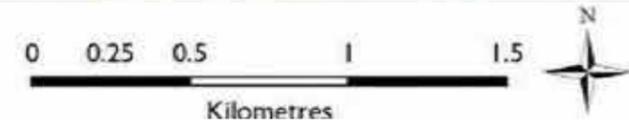




Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO. © Crown copyright and database right 2015. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100049850. Cairngorms National Park Authority.

Map 15 - Aviemore

Core Paths Plan Map 15
Aviemore



4.2.4 Policy 10 – Resources

Water Resources

The draw on the water resources for construction purposes will be kept to a minimum. The retaining wall to the rear of the car ports will be prefabricated offsite. The main superstructure of the buildings will be timber frame construction with timber separating floors and walls. The external walls will be finished in a modern silicone based pre-mixed render system applied to a render board construction.

The roof finishes will not require any water during construction. All of the above construction elements will limit the use of water resources during construction.

Surface Water

A Drainage Assessment will be carried out by Cameron & Ross, Consulting Engineers. SUD's or a Surface Water Drainage Statement will be provided. Refer to drg no A/170084-902

Flooding

The site is located out with a flood risk area, with no water courses close to the site. Connection to Sewage

The 32no apartments will be connected to the public sewage system. Applications for connection to the public system will be made by the civil engineer if planning consent is forthcoming.

Minerals

The proposed development does not affect any mineral resources.

Carbon Sinks and Stores

The proposed development site is not a carbon sink or store.

Contaminated Land

Part of the site was previously the site of a petrol filling station. This however was decommissioned after its closure and part of the site subsequently developed with the construction of a single storey building. Refer to Appendix no1 for Soil and Gas report prepared by DG Environmental Ltd

Landfill

There will be no landfill on any part of the development site.

4.2.5 Policy 11 – Developer Contributions

The development consists of 28no apartments for private sale. The development would normally require an allocation of 7no affordable units. Agreement was reached with The Highland Council to Translocate the 7no Affordable units from Grampian Road site to Sluggan, Aviemore.

A separate document outlining the background and agreements reached regarding the translocation of the affordable housing element to another site within Aviemore will be submitted as part of this planning application.

The development proposals also include significant landscape/ streetscape improvements adjacent to the main road.

The materials and design will reference the quality landscaping already introduced to the south of the site around the roundabout at the junction with the B970, to Cairngorm Mountains.

The Continuation of this quality streetscape will enhance the image of Aviemore on its southern edges.



4.3 Supplementary planning guidance

Reference has been made to a number of documents including:

- Sustainable Design Guide Supplementary Guidance
- Physical Constraints Supplementary Guidance
- HC Road and Transport Guidance for New Developments

4.4 Site Specific Development Briefs

The site itself is not subject to any site-specific development brief.

4.5 Consultations

The developer and ourselves met with planners from the National Park on the 25th February 2016. We met with Mr Gavin Miles (CNPA Head of Planning) and Mr Matthew Taylor (CNPA Planning Officer), planners for the Cairngorm National Park.

The scheme presented was for 5 blocks of apartments totally 35no apartments and 48 car parking spaces. The site layout was along the same principals as the current scheme. The feedback was very positive in terms of the principal of residential development on this site and also to the general design of the proposed apartments. We were asked to look at creating greater definition between the different roof elements particularly around the central stair section. The retention of the trees on the bank to the rear of the site was stated as being important, retaining as much of the wooded backdrop as possible.

The scheme has had further design development since this feedback:

The number of blocks and apartments has been reduced to 4 blocks and 32 apartments. A lift has been introduced to the central vertical circulation zone, making this element wider in plan and elevation. The roof line of the accommodation wings has been raised to create better definition between the roof elements.

A further meeting took place with the planning officer and Forestry officer on the 5th September. Further to this meeting the client has reduced the number of apartments again and the scheme now consists of 28no units with blocks A and C reduced to 3 storeys.



The development uses 2no blocks of apartments, an “H” and “T” shaped blocks. The previously submitted scheme had block D the most northerly block as a “H” shaped block. This meant a 14m deep elevation to the boundary with the neighbouring fast food shop. We have since moved the blocks within the site with a “T” shaped block now being the most northerly block. The gable is now less than 8m deep on the northerly boundary. This will substantially reduce the mass of the new building adjacent to the smaller neighbouring buildings. We have also amended the design of the top floor apartment within Block D, cutting back the developed attic roof area. This results in being able to step the roof construction immediately adjacent to the neighboring Chip Shop. This effectively steps Block D down to 3 storeys on the Northerly gable. This is a direct response to a further meeting with the Planning Department on 23rd November 2017.

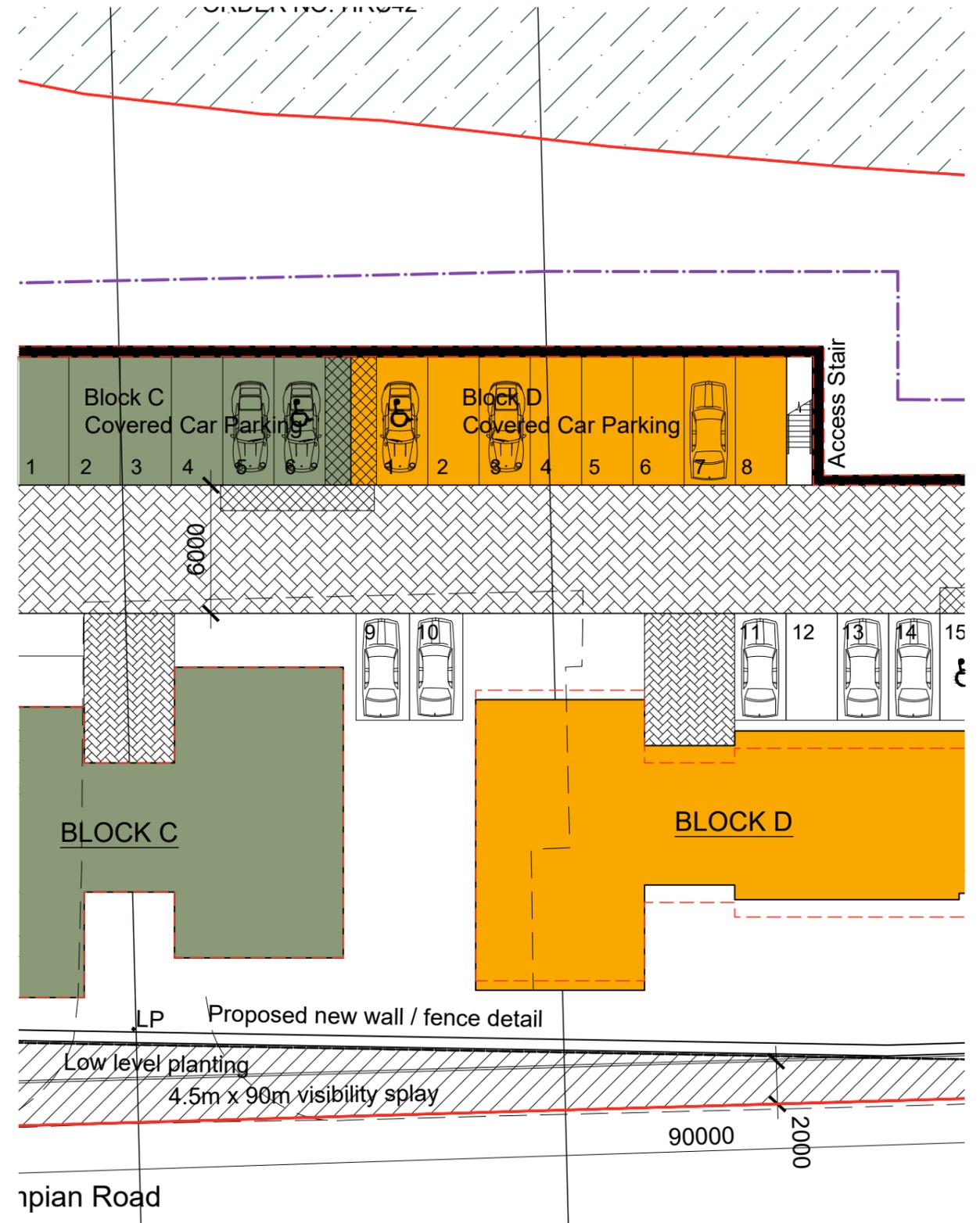
This consultation with Gavin Miles and Katherine Donachie also resulted in a change from a “Sedum roof” over the car ports to a “turfed roof” creating 2no. Pedestrian accesses onto the roof area and so creating more amenity space for the residents. We also introduced 2no small water features between blocks A and B, and C and D. This size and location between the blocks means that they cannot contribute to the SUDS within the development and have therefore been omitted from our proposals. This space will be integrated into the overall landscape design proposals.

The response from the Planning Department to the first application requested that we review the elevational treatment and particularly the window fenestration and proportions. We have amended the design to introduce Caithness stone cladding to the ground floor. Window proportions have also been altered to give the windows a more vertical proportion.

The overall colour scheme has also been amended following the introduction of the Caithness Stone Cladding. The colour of the fibre cement boards have been changed to reflect the blue/grey colour of the Caithness Stone.

In the most recent design development and the decision to reduce the number of units to 32 to 28, reducing the height of blocks A & C a further decision was taken to remove the Caithness stone cladding to the ground floor external walls.

The site has been carefully surveyed including the trees on the site. The tops of the trees on the bank has been surveyed and we now have an accurate tree line to the top of the bank. As one can see from the street elevation the ridge line of the roofs is still significantly lower than the tree line. This helps set the new development into the site and the wooded bank to the rear. By reducing the number of blocks within the site, there is now sufficient space to see between the blocks to the wooded bank behind.



5.0 DESIGN SOLUTIONS

5.1 Layout

As stated the site is a long narrow area of ground running parallel to Grampian Road. The site is approximately 130 metres long North East to South West and on average 45m deep. This site lends itself to a linear development and we have arranged 4no detached blocks of apartments along the length of the site. This gives every apartment within the development a South Easterly aspect and also spectacular views across to the Cairngorm Mountains.

A new vehicular access to the site is proposed to replace the 2no existing accesses. A new service road will be built running the length of the site at the bottom of the existing bank. This road will give access to the 43no car parking spaces.

Many of the parking spaces are being built into the base of the bank and a majority of these spaces will be covered with a roof structure. This roof structure will be finished as a turfed roof to merge into the higher section of the bank. The covered car stores are nearly 7m deep with an external store provided for each apartment to the rear of the "carport". This external store will provide secure private cycle storage for each apartment. Aviemore is a centre for outdoor sport pursuits with many people using very expensive bicycles. Communal bicycle storage is not appropriate in this case. The communal storage will not be used by those owning expensive bicycles and they would most likely store in the central stairwell or in individual flats. Neither option is satisfactory. The external store can also be used for storing ski's and snowboards as well as climbing equipment.

There is also 4no bicycle storage spaces for visitors to the apartments. This communal storage area is centrally located adjacent to the communal refuse storage area. Individual visitor bicycle storage 1no for each block would create clutter in terms of street furniture.

The common facilities will be built behind a rendered parapet wall.. Refer to drg no KDP 0602016/A400 B for detailed proposals of this building.

The refuse storage building has capacity for 8no 1100litre commercial refuse bins. This allows for 1no bin for both normal rubbish and recycle rubbish for each block of apartments. The developer confirms that both the recyclable and waste refuse will be collected by a private company on a weekly basis, therefore negating the need for 16no 1100 litre refuse bins.

5.2 Context

As described in the site and area appraisal section, the context is dominated by development on the West side of Grampian Road only. The land on the east falls away sharply towards the railway line.

However, we are aware that Planning Permission has recently been granted for a Hotel development on the former Petrol Station Site on the East side of Grampian Road.

Our proposed development aims to reinforce the development pattern by creating a linear development. The four blocks however are not the same in design. Two of the blocks are "T" shaped in plan, creating a wing with the roof running parallel to the main road and the other wing rotated ninety degrees creating a gable onto the main road. The other two blocks are "H" shaped in plan with 2no gables facing onto Grampian Road.

5.3 Streets and Spaces

The four buildings are set back 5-7m from the road. This will create a strong edge to the road and signify the start of the built up area of Aviemore when approaching from the South.

The buildings are spaced apart with the new access road between Blocks B and C. The total building frontage accounts for only 38% of the total site frontage.

The gap between the buildings allow for views through to the wooded bank behind the buildings, therefore maintains and reinforces the idea of the new buildings being set into a woodland backdrop.

The site arrangement means that all traffic and parking within the site is to the rear of the buildings, minimising the visual intrusion of accommodating for 43 parking spaces.



5.4 Accessibility and Transport

Level access will be provided to all of the apartments with each block having a lift access to all principle floors.

Drg no 0602016/A002H Site Plan shows that the Grampian Road “edge” will be reinforced with a new pavement and low-level planting built in front of the new site boundary wall. A single new vehicular access will be built instead of the 2no accesses that currently serve the site. Pedestrian access to all the apartments is via the new pavement along the street frontage. The new access has 2.0m wide pavements on both sides leading pedestrians into the site and beyond the “turning Head”. Thereafter pedestrians will use the same shared access as vehicles with all apartment blocks being accessed from the common access road and parking.

The development provides 43 no car parking spaces, a ratio of 153% overall. This car parking would be split with 34 spaces for residents (1.2 spaces per flat) and 9 visitor spaces. There are also 4no designated disabled parking spaces with 1no bay located near each apartment block entrance.

The turning head in front of the refuse storage building has been sized to accommodate biomass delivery and refuse collection vehicles. Refer to Engineers drawing A/170084/904 for the swept path analysis of the turning head.

5.5 Safety and Security

The buildings have been designed to minimise areas of security risk through simple built forms which permits passive observation of external areas.

The grounds of the buildings are overlooked by occupied rooms on all sides.

The landscaping will be designed to discourage pedestrian access close to bedroom windows.

Each of the buildings will have secure door entry systems. Secure cycle storage will be provided to the rear of each covered car parking space. A communal refuse storage area is located adjacent to the district heating system plant room centrally sited at the end of the entrance to the site.

5.6 Sustainability

The building will be designed to meet current standards of insulation and energy performance. Where possible materials specified will be A rated as per the BRE Green Guide to Specification. The structure will be a timber frame construction with timber separating floors and walls.

5.7 Landscape

There will be a requirement to fell some of the existing trees on the site. However, this will be kept to a minimum and will be reinforced with additional tree planting. A full tree survey has been carried out by Rumroy Ltd. A tree protection plan will form part of the application along with proposals for new tree planting where it is necessary to fell trees to facilitate the construction of the development. None of the trees that are to be felled are covered by a Tree Preservation Order. TPO no HRC 42 covers the woodland behind the development site. The northwest boundary of the development site forms the edge of the Tree Preservation Order area.

At the meeting on site in September 2018 the forestry officer highlighted the need to retain as many trees as possible and particularly pointed out 3no mature Scots Pines at the southern end of the bank. The reduction in apartment numbers from 32 to 28 and the omission of the biomass facility has allowed the design team to reduce the amount of car parking required and also to move the covered carparking northwards within the site. This has meant that the 3no mature Scots Pines can now be retained.

Considerable work has also gone into the construction methodology of the retaining wall to form the car parking spaces. Trials have been carried out on the stability of the bank and also various options on the type of retaining wall and its construction. It has been decided that using temporary sheet piling located 2.0m behind the line of the retaining wall will minimise the extent of excavations. The plan for installing the sheet piling will access the embankment from the low (Grampian Road) side of the wall. The retaining wall will be built in short sections to minimise disruption to the bank and the trees thereon. The bank behind the new sections of wall will be backfilled and compacted to finish levels and then the temporary sheet piles will be removed.

This will result in any trees and roots behind the 2.0m sheet pile will be able to be retained. This will now be reflected in the revised Reports and drawings from our tree consultant.

As previously stated, the ‘carport’ style parking at the base of the bank will have a turfed roof to integrate the car parking into the bank, while creating further external amenity space for the residents.

Around the buildings, landscaping will mostly be laid grass with feature areas of planting to enhance the overall security within the development. The latest landscape plan also details the proposed additional tree planting that will be planted at the top of the retaining structure replacing the trees lost to facilitate the construction of the wall. Refer to Landscaped Drawing HLD GR 01E

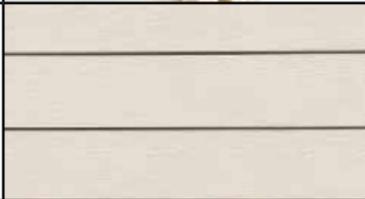
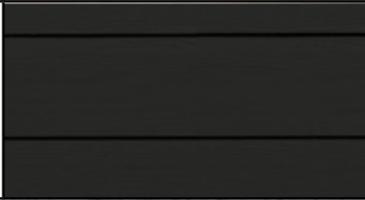


5.8 Scale and Mix

In reducing the number of apartments proposed to 28 in total we have reduced the heights of Blocks A and C. Reducing block A to 3 storeys will give more prominence to the mature trees at the southern end of the site including the 3no Scots Pines that are being retained after changes to the car parking. Reducing Block C will also lessen the impact of this block when viewed from the north. The variation in ridge levels from block to block will also create better views to the trees behind and create a more interesting street scape frontage. All four buildings are 4 storeys in height and have rooms built into the attic space with sections of roof cutback to allow for full height windows to the attic level master bedroom.

We note that several of the consultees and some members of the public are referring to the scheme as being five storey's in height. This is incorrect. Robert J Naismith's book Buildings of the Scottish Countryside clearly sets out Storey height and built-form. Our proposals are four and half storey with the eaves level only 550mm above the topmost window lintel.

The top floor apartments are 3 bedroomed, 6 person apartments with the whole of the attic area designed as a master bedroom suite. These apartments have 2 bedrooms a bathroom and open plan living, dining and kitchen on the third floor. There is one exception to this layout and this is the most northerly apartment within Block D. This flat has been made smaller with less of the attic roof space developed and one bedroom omitted. This allows the roof line to be reduced by a storey height, reducing the impact on the neighbouring single storey chip shop. All the remaining private apartments are two bedroomed, 4 person apartments with 2 bathrooms, also with open plan living, dining and kitchen areas.

<p>Marley Modern interlocking Roof Tiles Colour - Smooth Grey</p>	
<p>Steadmans Single Skin Metal Sheet Roofing Colour - Merlin Grey 18B25</p>	
<p>Lindab Galvanised Steel Rain Water Goods</p>	
<p>Aluclad External Windows and Doors</p>	
<p>JamesHardie HardiePlank Cladding Cedar finish Colour - Sail Cloth</p>	
<p>JamesHardie HardiePlank Cladding Cedar finish Colour - Iron Grey</p>	
<p>K Rend Colour - White</p>	

5.9 Details and Materials

A simple Pallet of materials is proposed. The materials chosen are reflective of materials found in the locales without creating a pastiche.

The external walls are finished in a mixture of 2no materials. The main finish to the external walls is a textured render finish (K-Rend or similar, coloured white). The upper section of the top floor walls and the areas where the roof is cut back are also clad in HardiePlan Cladding, Cedar finish, colours as per the external finishes schedule. The vertical circulation areas are clad in a contrasting vertical fibre cement timber cladding board.

The main roofs are finished in smooth grey concrete roof tile with flat profile Marley Modern or similar with the roof over the vertical circulation link finished in a profile metal sheeting, colour grey.

All external windows, glazed screens, patio doors and doors will be an Aluclad Specification. The balconies have a low level render wall to the outer edge with a timber handrail and glass balustrading.

All external detailing of the building will be appropriated to the local conditions. Simple and well considered junctions with appropriate weatherproofing will ensure that the building maintains its appearance in the harsh environment

The pitched roof profile has been designed to incorporate broad gutters beyond the line of the wall head to minimise the risk of water ingress. Wall penetrations are being considered and kept to a minimum to avoid the risk of staining and appropriate drip flashing will be used where necessary.

5.10 Maintenance

The clients brief required future maintenance should be limited as far as possible. Materials and details respect this and have been chosen to assist the building in keeping its appearance without deterioration over time.

The positioning of the buildings within the site will allow for future access all-round the building. Space has been left all around the blocks to ensure access for maintenance vehicles for roof cleaning, gutter cleaning, etc.

APPENDIX 1 - Letter of Support for the Site Separation of Private Apartments and Affordable Housing within Aviemore



Gavin Miles
Cairngorm National Park
14 The Square
Grantown on Spey
PH26 3HG

Please Ask For: John McHardy
E-mail: [REDACTED]
Direct Line: [REDACTED]
Our Ref: A/SD
Date: 10 March 2017

Dear Gavin

I write to advise of an agreement that has been reached with Davall Developments regarding their affordable housing provision on Grampian Road, Aviemore which is subject to a recently lodged planning application.

We, The Highland Council have agreed that the proposed 8 affordable units allocated to Grampian Road, Aviemore can be re-allocated on to a different site located at Sluggan Drive, Aviemore, subject to Davall Developments entering into a Design and Build contract with Albyn Housing Society. The development at Sluggan Drive, Aviemore will provide a total of 14 units for affordable housing.

If you have any further queries, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely,

John McHardy
Housing Development Manager

Director of Development & Infrastructure: J Stuart Black, MA (Hons), PhD
Housing Development, Development & Infrastructure Service, Glenurquhart Road, Inverness IV3 5NX
Tel: 01349 886606 e-mail: service.point@highland.gov.uk website: www.highland.gov.uk



kearney donald partnership
chartered architects & principal designer