



Committee report

Development proposed:

Change of house type (on Plot 17 of planning permission 2022/0305/DET) at Nethybridge Station Yard, Station Road, Nethy Bridge

Reference: 2026/0095/DET

Applicant: AW Laing

Date called-in: 16 March 2026

Recommendation: Approve

Case officer: Emma Bryce, Planning Manager



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Site description, proposal and history

Site description

1. The application site lies on the western edge of Nethy Bridge and covers an area of approximately 0.8 hectares. The brownfield site was a former railway station and associated yard and is bounded by agricultural land to the north and west, residential properties to the east and Station Road to the south, with the River Nethy (which is part of the River Spey Special Area of Conservation (SAC)) flowing beyond, parallel to the road. The Speyside Way runs along the eastern boundary of the site.

Proposal

2. The drawings and documents associated with this application are listed below and are available on the Cairngorms National Park Authority website unless noted otherwise:
[2026/0095/DET | Change of house type \(Plot 17\) | Nethybridge Station Yard Station Road Nethy Bridge Highland](#)

Title	Drawing number	Date on plan*	Date received
Plan – Location Plan	002(2)	1/02/2026	12/03/2026
Plan – Site Plan	Rt14_E_90_104(2) Option 14E (22 Units)	1/02/2026	12/03/2026
Plan – Floor Plans and Elevations	BT2_00_100	Aug '22	

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

3. The application proposes to change the house type on Plot 17 on the development site granted consent under 2022/0305/DET, which is for the erection of 21 dwellings. A condition on the 2022/0305/DET permission requires the delivery of a minimum of 25% affordable housing on the wider development site. However, subsequently it has been agreed with the developer that this site will also provide the affordable housing required for an additional development of 35 houses at Lettoch Road in Nethy Bridge (reference 2025/0034/DET). Consequently, a legal



agreement has been concluded that will ensure all the houses on this site are to be delivered as affordable units.

4. The existing consented scheme proposes a three-bedroom detached house on this plot, while this application seeks consent for a semi-detached block consisting of a two-bedroom house to one side and a three-bedroom house to the other side. The proposed unit will be on the same footprint of the consented detached house and there will be no changes to site levels or the overall hardstanding area already approved.

History

5. 2022/0305/DET – Erection of 21 dwellings – planning permission was granted by Scottish Ministers on 5/11/2024. The application was referred to Scottish Ministers for decision given there was an outstanding objection from Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) on flood risk grounds.
6. 14/01529/S42 – Application under Section 42 to vary time on application 07/00231/FULLBS for a further year – planning permission granted 19/05/2014.
7. 07/00231/FULBS – Erection of bunkhouse – planning permission granted 17/04/2009.
8. 04/318/CP and 10/380/CP – Erection of Visitor Centre (including craft workshops, retail, and cafeteria), 6 no. dwellinghouses and garages and associated access road and parking areas – planning permissions granted 17/11/2005 and 14/01/2011. The second permission was started in 2011 and remains a live consent.

Habitats Regulations Appraisal

9. It is not considered that the proposed development is likely to have a significant impact upon a designated European Site. As such, a Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) is not required in this case.



Development plan context

Policies

National policy	National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) Scotland 2045 (Policies relevant to the assessment of this application are marked with a cross (x))	
Policy 1	Tackling the climate and nature crises	X
Policy 2	Climate mitigation and adaptation	X
Policy 3	Biodiversity	X
Policy 4	Natural places	X
Policy 5	Soils	
Policy 6	Forestry, woodland and trees	
Policy 7	Historic assets and places	
Policy 8	Green belts	
Policy 9	Brownfield, vacant and derelict land, and empty buildings	X
Policy 11	Energy	
Policy 12	Zero waste	
Policy 13	Sustainable transport	
Policy 14	Design, quality and place	X
Policy 15	Local living and 20 minute neighbourhoods	
Policy 16	Quality homes	X
Policy 17	Rural homes	
Policy 18	Infrastructure first	
Policy 19	Heating and cooling	
Policy 20	Blue and green infrastructure	
Policy 21	Play, recreation and sport	
Policy 22	Flood risk and water management	X
Policy 23	Health and safety	
Policy 24	Digital infrastructure	
Policy 25	Community wealth building	
Policy 26	Business and industry	
Policy 27	City, town, local and commercial centres	
Policy 28	Retail	



Policy 29	Rural development	
Policy 30	Tourism	
Policy 31	Culture and creativity	
Policy 32	Aquaculture	
Policy 33	Minerals	

Strategic policy	Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2022 – 2027	
Local plan policy	Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan (2021) (Policies relevant to the assessment of this application are marked with a cross (x))	
Policy 1	New housing development	X
Policy 2	Supporting economic growth	
Policy 3	Design and placemaking	X
Policy 4	Natural heritage	X
Policy 5	Landscape	X
Policy 6	The siting and design of digital communications equipment	
Policy 7	Renewable energy	
Policy 8	Open space, sport and recreation	
Policy 9	Cultural heritage	
Policy 10	Resources	X
Policy 11	Developer obligations	X

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

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

and at:

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



Planning guidance

11. Supplementary guidance also supports the Local Development Plan and provides more details about how to comply with the policies. Guidance that is relevant to this application is marked with a cross (x).

Policy 1	Housing supplementary guidance	X
Policy 2	Supporting economic growth non-statutory guidance	
Policy 3	Design and placemaking non-statutory guidance	X
Policy 4	Natural heritage non-statutory guidance	X
Policy 5	Landscape non-statutory guidance	X
Policy 7	Renewable energy non-statutory guidance	
Policy 8	Open space, sport and recreation non-statutory guidance	
Policy 9	Cultural heritage non-statutory guidance	
Policy 10	Resources non-statutory guidance	X
Policy 11	Developer obligations supplementary guidance	X

Consultations

12. A summary of the main issues raised by consultees now follows:
13. **SEPA** state that given the Park Authority consider that the proposed development complies with NPF4 Policy 22 a iii) and the works do not involve any land raising, it appears the development falls below the threshold for which SEPA provides site specific advice. They therefore refer the Park Authority to their Flood Risk Standing Advice.
14. **The Highland Council's Flood Risk Management team** state that the changes to Plot 17 do not appear to make a material difference to anything within their remit and therefore have no objections.
15. **The Highland Council's Transport Planning team** states the proposed amendment is modest in nature and does not raise concerns in respect of the public road network, road safety, parking provision, servicing arrangements or pedestrian movement and remains consistent with the principles established under



the extant planning permission. They therefore have no objection to the application.

16. **Nethy Bridge Community Council** was consulted and had not provided a response at the time this report was written.

Representations

17. A letter of support has been received, and a copy is included in **Appendix 2**. The respondent expressed support for the original application for 21 houses, attending both the committee meeting and subsequent hearing. They welcome the current application which will increase the number of affordable units, and which will improve the overall viability of the development.

Appraisal

18. Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) requires applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan. This comprises National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021 (LDP). Where there is conflict between policies, NPF4 policies take precedence.
19. The main planning considerations are: the principle of development; layout, amenity and design; landscape issues; environmental issues; access and servicing; flooding and surface water drainage; infrastructure and developer contributions. These are considered in detail below.

Principle

20. **NPF4 Policy 9: Brownfield, vacant and derelict land, and empty buildings**, encourages the sustainable reuse of brownfield land, while **Policy 16: Quality homes** supports development proposals that improve affordability and choice and provide high quality, affordable homes in locations where there is an identified local need. **LDP Policy 1: New housing development** supports new housing within identified settlement boundaries. Policy 1, paragraph 1.4 seeks a mix of dwelling types and sizes to help secure a balanced housing stock with an emphasis on smaller dwellings.



21. The site is an unallocated, brownfield site within the settlement boundary of Nethy Bridge and has planning permission for 21 homes. This proposal will provide two modest (2 and 3 bedroom) homes which will assist in providing the type of housing that addresses the local community's needs and demand.
22. The principle of housing on this site has already been established under the extant consent, and as such the current proposal is acceptable in principle subject to compliance with other relevant development plan policies.

Design, Layout and Amenity

23. **NPF4 Policy 14: Design, quality and place** supports development where it is consistent with the six qualities of successful places: healthy; pleasant; connected; distinctive; sustainable; and adaptable. **LDP Policy 1: New housing development** and **LDP Policy 3: Design and placemaking** seek to reinforce and enhance the character of the existing settlement and encourage new development to be sympathetic to the traditional pattern and character of the area, whilst encouraging innovative design and finishes.
24. The proposed semi-detached house type has already been approved on other plots within the wider site. It will cover the same footprint as the consented detached house it replaces and in terms of amenity will be orientated to ensure there will be no overlooking and loss of privacy or amenity to adjacent properties.
25. The proposal is therefore considered acceptable in terms of NPF4 Policy 14: Design, quality and place and LDP Policy 1: New housing development and Policy 3: Design and placemaking.

Landscape Issues

26. **LDP Policy 5: Landscape** presumes against development which does not conserve and enhance the landscape character and special qualities of the National Park and, in particular, the setting of the proposed development. This is reinforced by **LDP Policy 3: Design and placemaking**, which seeks to ensure that all new development is sympathetic to the traditional pattern and character of the surrounding area, local vernacular and local distinctiveness.



27. The proposal will have no impact on the approved landscaping plan or the long-term maintenance and management of this wider residential scheme and thus will not detract from the wider landscape character or setting of the development, in accordance with both LDP Policy 5: Landscape and Policy 3: Design and placemaking.

Environmental Issues

28. **NPF4 Policy 1: Tackling the climate and nature crises** requires that significant weight is given to the global climate and nature crises when consideration is given to new development. **NPF4 Policy 3: Biodiversity** seeks to ensure that development will conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity. **NPF4 Policy 4: Natural places** seeks to protect, restore and enhance natural assets including protected areas.
29. **LDP Policy 4: Natural heritage** seeks to restrict development that would have a significant adverse impact on protected species.
30. Issues relating to ecology and the natural environment have been addressed through the determination and subsequent approval of the development of 21 houses over the wider site. Given the nature and scale of the current proposal there will be no detrimental impact on the environment or natural heritage. Biodiversity enhancements are to be delivered through the development of the wider site and further enhancements are not considered necessary for this minor change of house type substitution.
31. The proposal therefore complies with NPF4 Policy 1: Tackling the climate and nature crises, NPF4 Policy 3: Biodiversity, NPF4 Policy 4: Natural places and LDP Policy 4: Natural heritage.

Access and Servicing

32. **NPF4 Policy 13: Sustainable transport** supports developments that provide direct, easy, segregated and safe links to local facilities via walking, wheeling and cycling networks before occupation. **NPF4 Policy 15: Local Living and 20-minute neighbourhoods** supports development which contributes to local living and the Place Principle and where, among other things, there is the opportunity for



sustainable modes of transport including high quality walking, wheeling and cycling networks.

33. **LDP Policy 3: Design and Placemaking** seeks to promote sustainable transport methods and active travel and maximise opportunities for responsible outdoor access.
34. The proposal will provide two dwellings with separate driveways and adequate off-street parking in line with adopted standards. There will be no change to the site's access onto the public road, and the approved internal road hierarchy remains unaltered. The proposal will not adversely affect vehicle movement, parking provision, servicing arrangements, or pedestrian safety. There will be no material increase in traffic impact beyond that already accepted through the extant consent.
35. The development is considered to comply with relevant NPF4 and LDP policies in relation to access and servicing.

Flooding and surface water drainage

36. **NPF4 Policy 2: Climate mitigation and adaptation** requires that development is sited and designed to adapt to current and future risks from climate change. **NPF4 Policy 22: Flood risk and water management** promotes avoidance as a first principle and reducing the vulnerability of existing and future development to flooding. Development at risk of flooding or in a flood risk area will only be supported if the proposal is for the redevelopment of previously used sites and where long-term safety and resilience can be secured in accordance with relevant SEPA advice.
37. **LDP Policy 10: Resources** requires that all development should be free from medium to high risk flooding, not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere, not add to the area of land requiring flood prevention measures and not affect the ability of the functional flood plain to store or move flood waters.
38. At the time the application for the wider development of 21 houses was considered, SEPA objected to the proposal on the grounds that the proposed



development would place people or property at risk of flooding contrary to both NPF4 Policy 22 and LDP Policy 10. The application was recommended for refusal but the Committee, after visiting the site and giving due consideration to the application, unanimously agreed to support the proposed development. Consequently, given the outstanding objection from SEPA, the application was referred to Scottish Ministers who subsequently called it in for determination. Following lengthy consideration, Scottish Ministers approved the proposed development of 21 homes. In justifying their decision, they gave significant weight to the redevelopment of this brown field site and recognised that the development would ensure finished floor levels of the houses would be designed above the 1 in 200 year plus climate change flood level. Additionally, the further flood modelling undertaken by the applicants demonstrated that there would be a significant reduction in flood risk to the majority of existing adjacent properties.

39. In terms of the current proposal and its assessment against NPF4 Policy 22, it is considered that this proposal for a minor change in house type, given the terms of the extant planning permission for housing development on the wider site, can be considered to comply with NPF4 Policy 22 a) part iii) - redevelopment of an existing building or site for an equal or less vulnerable use. SEPA has been consulted and given the above, and as there is no land raising proposed, have stated that the development falls below the threshold for them to provide site specific advice and therefore recommend reference to their Standing Advice. This provides guidance for local authorities in these circumstances to consider the appropriateness of a development and any measures to address any identified flood risk.
40. In this case, the proposal will not change any of the approved site levels, overall building footprint area or overall hardstanding area under the planning permission reference 2022/0305/DET, which was approved by Scottish Ministers. It is considered that the proposal will not introduce any further flood risk and as such complies with NPF4 Policy 2: Climate mitigation and adaptation, NPF4 Policy 22: Flood risk and water management, and LDP Policy 10: Resources.

Infrastructure and Developer Contributions

41. **LDP Policy 11: Developer Obligations** states that where development creates a need to increase or improve public services, facilities or infrastructure, or mitigate



adverse effects, the developer will be required to make a fair and reasonable contribution in cash or in kind towards additional costs or requirements.

42. No further improvements to existing education, services and facilities were identified for the wider site and therefore there is no requirement for the applicants to make any contributions in relation to this application.
43. Given the agreement for the wider site to be the affordable housing provision for the consented housing development at the other site at Lettoch Road (2025/0034/DET), affordable housing provision has been satisfactorily addressed.

Conclusion

44. This proposal introduces two houses on a plot where there is consent for a single detached house within a wider approved residential development. Their design, finishes and layout are in keeping with the wider scheme and the character of the area. There will be no landscape or environmental impacts and no road safety implications. There will be no changes in already approved site levels and the overall footprint of development on this plot and as such no further flood risk.
45. The proposed development therefore complies with the relevant NPF4 and LDP policies and there are no other material considerations which outweigh this conclusion. It is therefore recommended that the application be approved.

Recommendation

That members of the committee support a recommendation to APPROVE permission for the change of house type (on Plot 17 of planning permission 2022/0305/DET) at Nethybridge Station Yard, Station Road, Nethy Bridge subject to the following conditions:

Conditions

Those conditions listed below in bold text are suspensive conditions, which require to be discharged prior to implementation of the development.



1. The development to which this permission relates must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date on which the permission is granted.

Reason: The time limit condition is imposed in order to comply with the requirements of section 58 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 as amended.

2. The houses hereby approved shall be delivered and shall remain as affordable housing units in perpetuity.

Reason: To ensure the delivery of affordable homes in accordance with Policy 16: Quality Homes of the National Planning Framework 4 and Policy 1: New Housing Development of the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2021.

Informatives

1. The person undertaking the development is required to give the Planning Authority prior written notification of the date which it is intended to commence the development. Attached to this decision notice is a Notice of Initiation of Development for completion and submission. Submission of this information assists the Cairngorms National Park Authority Monitoring and Enforcement Officer in monitoring active work within the area to ensure compliance with the approved details and to identify and correct any potential problems, as they arise, rather than later when it may be more difficult and more costly to rectify. Failure to give notice would constitute a breach of planning control which may result in enforcement action being taken.
2. Following completion of the development, a notification of completion shall, as soon as practicable, be given to the Planning Authority. Attached to this decision notice is a Notice of Completion of Development for completion and submission. Submission of this form will assist the Cairngorms National Park Authority Monitoring and Enforcement Officer in making a final inspection and checking compliance with the approved drawings and conditions. If the development hereby approved is to be carried out in phases, then a notice of completion should be submitted at the completion of each phase.