



22nd February 2019

Dear Sirs,

Cairngorms National Park Proposed Development Plan - H1 and H4 housing allocations, Braemar

I wish to object to the proposal in the Proposed Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan to set aside sites H1 and H4 on Chapel Brae, Braemar for housing develop with indicative numbers of 6 dwellings at each.

I am a permanent resident of Chapel Brae, having lived there since 1990 so I know the character and use of the Brae, living lower down the Brae than H1 and H4. I am not a direct neighbour to the sites so have no direct neighbour bias.

I wish to object on the basis that the proposals change the character and setting of the Brae, adversely affect the amenity and environment, raise road and pedestrian safety concerns and have access issues.

The Brae is largely a traditional mix of dwelling houses most directly abutting the road with no pavement. Other than a small number of very recent examples which are overdeveloped and out of scale and character the usual scale, design and setting of the houses are vernacular with a mix of individual houses set within plots with large gardens and open space. Traditionally the Brae was a mix of houses and open spaces providing views to the hills and giving the Brae a quiet, rural feel rather than an urban one. Sadly, this character has been damaged by individual infill dwellings meaning that the two sites under discussion represent the only substantial open spaces that maintain the rural character and setting of the Brae. The addition of nominally 12 dwellings in two groups would significantly affect the character and setting of the Brae due to the contrast with the structure, style and setting of the existing development in the Brae.

The Brae is frequently used at all times of year by locals and tourists accessing the duck pond, the indicator, the Birchwood and Morrone and beyond, as well as walks within the village including to the Games Park and the Old Manse route to the Golf Course road. The H1 and H4 sites provide significant amenity for these people walking the Brae with a quiet and peaceful route with fantastic landscape-scale views towards the Dee valley and the mountains beyond. These would be lost with development of H1 and H4.

Developing the two sites will also adversely affect the natural environment with the sites currently providing a haven for wildlife, trees and wild flowers and helping connect the outstanding biodiversity in this part of the village.

I am especially concerned about the impact of the proposed developments on road and pedestrian safety. As a resident I already see numerous near misses because of the mix of people (often with young children and animals) and cars, delivery vans and lorries sharing the same narrow road space with no pavements and no room for pavements. This has not been helped by the introduction of a building of multiple occupancy on the Brae causing additional traffic. Additional traffic both during construction and due to an increased number of residents at H1 and H4 will only add to this

problem. Also of road safety concern, is the impact of additional traffic on the safety of those such as me egressing our traditional properties which have perpendicular accesses, often directly onto the road with no line of sight. In addition, the Brae is very narrow and even now it is difficult for two cars to pass, let alone bin lorries, delivery vans and oil tankers. This problem is exacerbated in the summer with numerous cars parking in the Brae due to insufficient parking at holiday homes and in winter, when the Brae reduces to one vehicle width because of the piles of snow on either side of the road due to snowploughing. These access problems can only get worse with additional vehicles (whether resident or delivery) from the proposed developments. This congestion will add to the pedestrian safety issues already discussed above.

Whilst talking of winter, it is not unusual, even in these milder temperatures of recent winters, for the sections of the Brae where H1 and H4 are located to be inaccessible and / or dangerous due to snow drifts and ice lower in the Brae.

I am very supportive of the need for more affordable housing in the village, but these two sites are not suitable for development as set out above. I would be further concerned if these sites were to be allocated as open market housing. We already have far too many holiday homes in the village restricting access to affordable housing, especially for young people who have grown up here.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs. Susan Walker