

PROPOSED INTERNAL RECONFIGURATION, AND EXTERNAL ALTERATIONS, TO 'DUNROAMIN' BED & BREAKFAST, CRAIG-NA-GOWER AVENUE, AVIEMORE, PH22 1RW

SUPPORTING PLANNING STATEMENT

On behalf of **Sweeney Apartments & Rooms**

G H Johnston Planning & Design

1. INTRODUCTION & PROPOSAL

- 1.1 The following statement is prepared in support of the internal and external alterations to an existing Bed & Breakfast to provide tourist accommodation. The resultant accommodation is to be 11 stylish, modern, and serviced apartments for use all year round.
- 1.2 Dunroamin, located off Aviemore's Grampian Road on Craig-Na-Gower Avenue currently comprises of double, twin, triple, and family rooms and has operated as a Bed & Breakfast for many years. Upon completion of the upgrading to serviced apartments, Dunroamin will cease to operate as a B&B.
- 1.3 The applicant is acquiring the property with a view of creating modern, stylish, and appealing serviced apartments for visitors wishing to stay in the heart of Aviemore. It forms part of an extensive programme of remodelling and renovation to Dunroamin and its adjacent property Vermont, the latter of which was granted planning permission for "*Change of use from owners accommodation to Class 7 (hotels and hostels), alterations and extensions*" 22/01256/FUL in May 2022.
- 1.4 The proposed upgrading of Dunroamin, will not only support the capacity of serviced tourist apartments available within the settlement but will enhance the character of the surrounding context with its sympathetic external renovations.
- 1.5 Our clients have also independently produced a brief economic/business case statement which accompanies the proposal, and this has been made available for the planning authority to review indicating the clear requirement for additional and alternative accommodation propositions such as this within the Cairngorm national park area.

2. LOCATION & SITE CONTEXT

- 2.1 Dunroamin is located 48m west of Grampian Road, along Craig-Na-Gower Avenue, Aviemore, and sits adjacent to Vermont Guest House.
- 2.2 The application site offers a strategic central location within Aviemore, with shops, restaurants, and bars located within an approximate 5-minute walk. Public transport is also found nearby, with bus stops and the train station situated within a 10-minute walk.

- 2.3 Within the Cairngorm National Park Local Development Plan (CNPLDP), Aviemore is identified as a main settlement and key economic driver for the National Park thus playing a major role in bolstering the Scottish tourism industry. By virtue of the site's proximity to public transport links, it benefits from excellent connectivity to significant tourist infrastructure within the National Park.
- 2.4 The property currently has on-site parking associated with the existing use, amenity/garden ground to the front and rear, and a boundary wall fronting Craig-Na-Gower Avenue where vehicular access is situated.

3. DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICY

- 3.1 The relevant development plan consists of the Highland-wide Local Development Plan (HwLDP) 2012 and the Cairngorm National Park Local Development Plan (CNPLDP) 2021. The CNPLDP enables the right kind of development to occur in the right place to help deliver the aims of the National Park. All planning applications in the National Park are assessed against the HwLDP and CNPLDP.
- 3.2 The proposed internal reconfiguration and external alterations to Dunroamin B&B are to create 11 serviced apartments upon completion. Similarly, to the upgrading of Vermont in 22/01256/FUL, the applicant is proposing a change of use from owners' accommodation to class 7 (hotels and hostels) as well as the internal and external alterations. As such, it is understood that the proposal complies with the following policies promoting the creation of tourist facilities and wider economic growth.

Highland-wide Local Development Plan

3.3 Policy 28 Sustainable Design

"The Council will support developments which promote and enhance the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the people of Highland."

Proposed developments will be assessed on the extent to which they:

- are compatible with public service provision (water and sewerage, drainage, roads, schools, electricity);*
- are accessible by public transport, cycling and walking as well as car;*
- maximise energy efficiency in terms of location, layout and design, including the utilisation of renewable sources of energy and heat;*
- are affected by physical constraints described in Physical Constraints on Development: Supplementary Guidance;*
- make use of brownfield sites, existing buildings and recycled materials;*
- demonstrate that they have sought to minimise the generation of waste during the construction and operational phases. (This can be submitted through a Site Waste Management Plan);*
- impact on individual and community residential amenity;*
- impact on non-renewable resources such as mineral deposits of potential commercial value, prime quality agricultural land, or approved routes for road and rail links;*
- impact on the following resources, including pollution and discharges, particularly within designated areas:*
 - o habitats*
 - o freshwater systems*
 - o species*
 - o marine systems*

- o landscape*
 - o cultural heritage*
 - o scenery*
 - o air quality;*
- *demonstrate sensitive siting and high quality design in keeping with local character and historic and natural environment and in making use of appropriate materials;*
- *promote varied, lively and well-used environments which will enhance community safety and security and reduce any fear of crime;*
- *accommodate the needs of all sectors of the community, including people with disabilities or other special needs and disadvantaged groups; and*
- *contribute to the economic and social development of the community.*

Developments which are judged to be significantly detrimental in terms of the above criteria will not accord with this Local Development Plan. All development proposals must demonstrate compatibility with the Sustainable Design Guide: Supplementary Guidance, which requires that all developments should:

- *conserve and enhance the character of the Highland area;*
- *use resources efficiently;*
- *minimise the environmental impact of development;*
- *enhance the viability of Highland communities.*

Compatibility should be demonstrated through the submission of a Sustainable Design Statement where required to do so by the Guidance.

All developments must comply with the greenhouse gas emissions requirements of the Sustainable Design Guide.

In the relatively rare situation of assessing development proposals where the potential impacts are uncertain, but where there are scientific grounds for believing that severe damage could occur either to the environment or the wellbeing of communities, the Council will apply the precautionary principle.

Where environmental and/or socio-economic impacts of a proposed development are likely to be significant by virtue of nature, size or location, The Council will require the preparation by developers of appropriate impact assessments. Developments that will have significant adverse effects will only be supported if no reasonable alternatives exist, if there is demonstrable over-riding strategic benefit or if satisfactory overall mitigating measures are incorporated.”

3.4 **Policy 43 Tourism**

“Proposals for tourist facilities will be assessed as to whether:

- *The scale of the proposal is proportionate to its location/settlement;*
- *The site is within a settlement boundary and whether it will complement existing/allocated tourist facilities within that settlement;*
- *The proposal will increase the length of peoples stay, increase visitor spending or promote a wider spread of visitors;*
- *The proposal will safeguard, promote responsible access, interpretation and effective management or enhancement of natural, built and cultural heritage features.*

Area local development plans will identify more specific opportunities for enhancement of existing tourism facilities and areas where a co-ordinated approach to tourism is needed.

If we wish to support proposals for increasing tourism development throughout Highland then we will need places for tourists to stay. In Highland we have a number of options for where peoples can stay. Ones of the fastest growing sectors for tourist accommodation is self-catering. While we need to ensure that this type of accommodation is delivered, we also need to ensure that development of this accommodation does not adversely affect the availability of land for permanent housing.

Tourist accommodation can comprise of paid overnight accommodation in chalets, bed and breakfasts, hotels, hostels, guesthouses, holiday homes, caravans and camp sites but does not include second homes.”

3.5 **Policy 44 Tourist Accommodation**

“Proposals for tourist accommodation within settlement boundaries will be supported if the Council is satisfied that the proposal can be accommodated without adverse impacts upon neighbouring uses, complies with Policy 28: Sustainable Design and will not prejudice housing land supply.”

3.6 **Policy 56 Travel**

“Development proposals that involve travel generation must include sufficient information with the application to enable the Council to consider any likely on- and off-site transport implications of the development and should:

- be well served by the most sustainable modes of travel available in the locality from the outset, providing opportunity for modal shift from private car to more sustainable transport modes wherever possible, having regard to key travel desire lines;*
- in particular, the Council will seek to ensure that opportunities for encouraging walking and cycling are maximised;*
- be designed for the safety and convenience of all potential users;*
- incorporate appropriate mitigation on site and/or off site, provided through developer contributions where necessary, which might include improvements and enhancements to the walking/cycling network and public transport services, road improvements and new roads; and*
- incorporate an appropriate level of parking provision, having regard to the travel modes and services which will be available and key travel desire lines and to the maximum parking standards laid out in Scottish Planning Policy or those set by the Council.*

When development proposals are under consideration, the Council’s Local Development Strategy will be treated as a material consideration.

The Council will seek to ensure that locations with potential for introducing bus priority measures are protected from development.

The Council will seek the implementation and monitoring of Green Travel Plans in support of significant travel generating developments.

Development proposals that are likely to affect the operation of any level crossing will be considered in accordance with the relevant part of the supplementary guidance associated with Policy 30: Physical Constraints.

Where site masterplans are prepared, they should include consideration of the impact of proposals on the local and strategic transport network. In assessing development proposals, the Council will also have regard to any implications arising from the relevant Core Paths Plan and will apply the terms of Policy 77: Public Access.”

3.7 Policy 66 Surface Water Drainage

“All proposed development must be drained by Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) designed in accordance with The SuDS Manual (CIRIA C697) and, where appropriate, the Sewers for Scotland Manual 2nd Edition. Planning applications should be submitted with information in accordance with Planning Advice Note 69: Planning and Building Standards Advice on Flooding paragraphs 23 and 24. Each drainage scheme design must be accompanied by particulars of proposals for ensuring long-term maintenance of the scheme.”

Cairngorm National Park Local Development Plan

3.8 Policy 2 Supporting Economic Growth

“2.2 Tourist Accommodation

Proposals for tourist related accommodation, other than dwellings built to residential standards, will be supported where they:

- a) have no adverse environmental or amenity impacts on the site or neighbouring areas; and*
- b) contribute to/support the provision of a wide range of visitor accommodation options including low cost accommodation; and*
- c) support or contribute to a year-round economy”*

2.3 Other Tourism and Leisure Developments

Development which enhances formal and informal recreation and leisure facilities; tourism and leisure-based business activities and attractions; and improved opportunities for responsible outdoor access will be supported where:

- a) it has no adverse environmental or amenity impacts on the site or neighbouring areas; and*
- b) it makes a positive contribution to the experience of visitors; and*
- c) it supports or contributes to a year-round economy.”*

4. SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1 Policy 2: Supporting Economic Growth clearly supports development that enhances tourism and leisure related infrastructure including accommodation where it has no adverse environmental impacts, makes a positive contribution to the visitor experience, and adds to or enhances the core tourist season.
- 4.2 In acquiring this somewhat dated B&B and having recently been granted planning permission to upgrade the adjacent Vermont Guest House, our clients are investing in the future of tourist accommodation within the Park.

- 4.3 By providing the type of accommodation they are proposing they will be assisting in extending the season which is crucial to the Park as the climate changes and the nature of activities alters thus the proposed serviced accommodation provides flexibility and choice for those looking to stay throughout the year.
- 4.4 There is clear support in both the HwLDP and the CNPLDP for providing quality tourist accommodation and in this particular case the applicant is creating additional accommodation in a more sustainable manner with access to the town centre and to multiple travel choices, both in travelling to the area and when moving around it. The applicants' business model and attention to high-quality detail will be a great addition to the accommodation mix in Aviemore and the wider Cairngorm National Park.
- 4.5 It is thus understood that the proposal complies with the relevant policies within the Highland-wide Local Development Plan and Cairngorm National Park Local Development Plan and as such it is respectfully requested that the planning authority **grant planning permission** for a development of this type.