

PLANNING AND ACCESS COMMITTEE

MEETING: Monday 27th July 2015

SUBMITTED BY:	Head of Planning & Rural Development
APPLICATION NUMBER:	2015/0134/DET
APPLICANT:	Mr Jasen Burke
LOCATION:	Stronachlachar Cottage, Stronachlachar
PROPOSAL:	Conversion of outbuilding and cottage to form 7No. dwellinghouses; Erection of 4No. holiday accommodation units

NATIONAL PARK WARD:	Ward 2
COMMUNITY COUNCIL AREA:	Strathard Community Council
CASE OFFICER:	Name: Erin Goldie Tel: 01389 722137 E-mail: erin.goldie@lochlomond-trossachs.org

1 SUMMARY AND REASON FOR PRESENTATION

- 1.1 The application is for the conversion of a former Scottish Water outbuilding (used as workshop/office space and later as stables) and associated cottage to form 7 dwellings and the construction of 4 holiday let units.
- 1.2 This application is being presented to the Planning and Access Committee as a result of a formal objection submitted by Strathard Community Council. The Scheme of Delegation relative to planning requires all such applications to be referred to the Committee for determination.

2 RECOMMENDATION

That Members:

1. **APPROVE** the application subject to the imposition of the conditions set out in Appendix 1 of the report.

3 BACKGROUND

Site Description:

- 3.1 The application site is within Stronachlachar and comprises a 1 ½ storey building with a footprint of approximately 765 square metres, formerly owned by Scottish Water and used as workshop/office and accommodation space and later as stables. Constructed in stone and brick, the building is rectangular in form with timber trussed, slate finish pitched roof with central ridge line. Several asymmetrical, pitched roof projections extend from the ridge on both the front and rear elevations providing this building with a unique character.
- 3.2 To the west of the principal building, as described above, is a former cottage with a footprint of approximately 43 square metres, constructed in stone with slated pitched roof. To the north is a grassed/hardstanding area surrounded by estate fencing and established hedging. To the east, and outwith the application site, is a small stone building understood to be an office which continues to be occupied by Scottish Water.
- 3.3 The site can be accessed from the south via the road leading to Stronachlachar Pier from the B829 or from the north east by the private road that extends north round Loch Katrine.

3.4

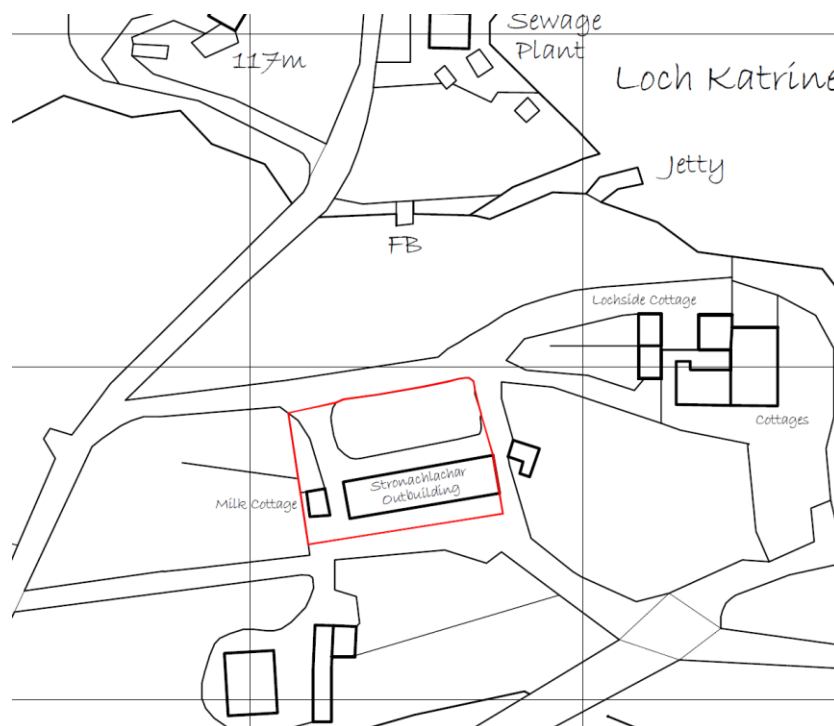


Fig. 1. Location Plan. Site outlined in red.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA):

- 3.4 For the purposes of the Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 2011 the National Park is identified as a 'Sensitive Area'. As a 'Competent Body' the National Park Authority has a statutory duty to consider whether proposals for development should be subject to the EIA process. In this particular instance it has been determined that an EIA is not required as there would be unlikely 'significant' environmental effects as a result of the proposed development.

Description of Proposal:

- 3.5 There are two aspects to this proposal. The first being for the conversion of the existing buildings on the site to form seven dwellings in the form of five, two bedroom units and a single three bedroom unit and the conversion and extension of the cottage to form a single two bedroom unit. These buildings are of historic and architectural quality and are located centrally within Stronachlachar, a small dispersed rural building group of distinctive character.
- 3.6 The other aspect of the proposal is the construction of four, two bedroom holiday let units (each 200 metres squared) forming semi-detached properties, both to be sited to the north of the principal building (see figure 2 below) thereby forming a 'U' shape courtyard arrangement with a central area of communal open space.
- 3.7 A small 'pump house' proposed to be sited close to the northern boundary of the site in the area of communal open space would contain an air source heat pump* to service the 7 dwellings and 4 holiday units.
- * absorbs heat from outside air and releases it inside the building for radiator heating, underfloor heating and domestic hot water supply.*
- 3.8 There are no proposals to alter either of the vehicular accesses to the site as described in section 3.3 above. 26 parking spaces are proposed to be provided within the site to serve the 11 units.

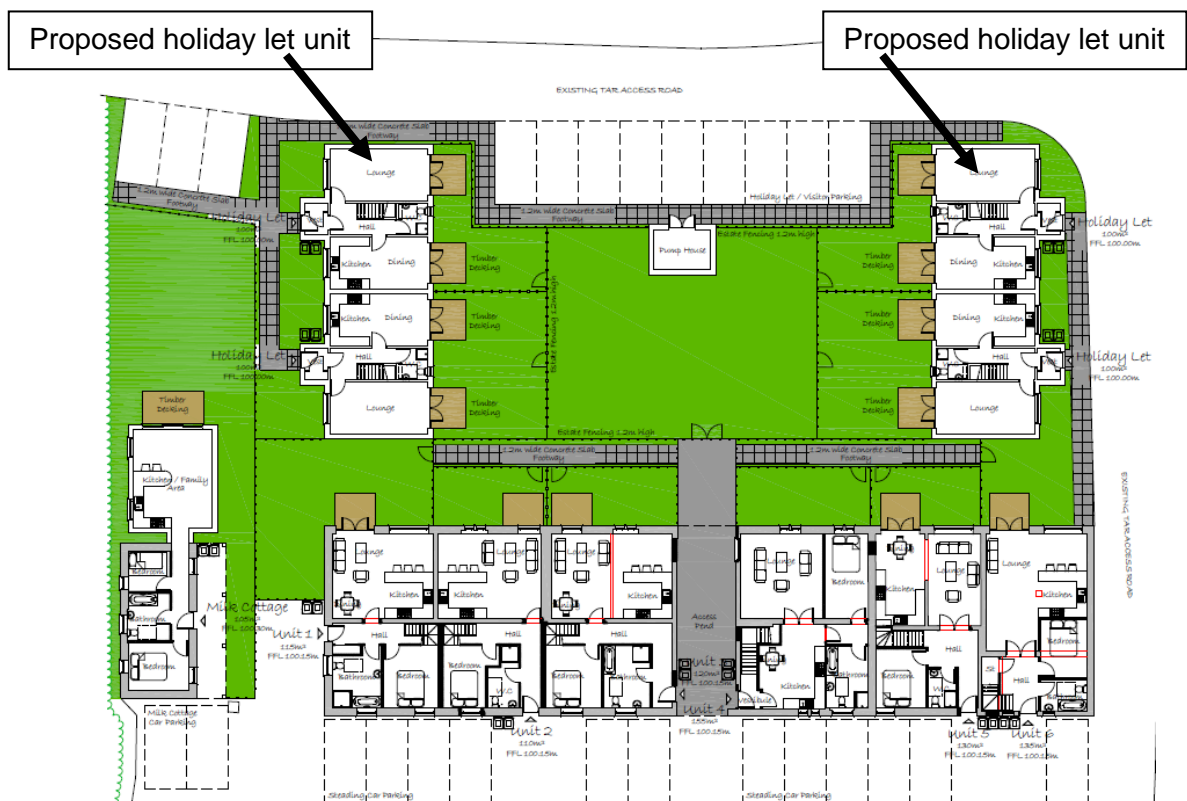


Fig.2. Proposed ground floor site plan

Planning History:

- 3.9 No record of planning history.

4 CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

Summary of Responses to Consultations:

- 4.1 Stirling Council Roads
No objection.

- 4.2 Stirling Council Flood Officer
No objection.

Stirling Council holds no information which would suggest that there is a history of flooding at this site.

- 4.3 Scottish Water
No objection.

An application will require to be submitted to Scottish Water for a connection to their infrastructure and would be expected to include details of any septic tanks for foul drainage, and public water mains connection. The Developer would be required to fund works to mitigate any effect of the development on existing customers.

A totally separate drainage system will be required with the surface water discharging to a suitable outlet. Scottish Water requires a sustainable urban drainage system (SUDS), to the design criteria as detailed in Sewers for Scotland 2 if the system is to be considered for adoption.

- 4.4 Stirling Council Environmental Health
No objection.

It is recommended that conditions are imposed if permission is granted addressing the following:

- in the event that previously unsuspected contamination of land is found then works shall cease, advice shall be sought from the Planning Authority and a comprehensive contaminated land investigation be carried out if considered necessary.
- A restriction of operational working hours to protect residential amenity
- A planning condition to ensure the building is designed to prevent excess noise being heard from the outside.

- 4.5 Strathard Community Council
Object to the proposals.

The points of objection have been captured below under section 'summary of representations received' which contains the officers' response.

- 4.6 ***Summary of Representations Received:***

At the time of writing this report, 12 letters of objection have been received in relation to this application.

4.7 **Points of Objection and planning response:**

- The planning supporting statement refers to initial proposals to demolish the principal building when they would have been told from the outset this would not be acceptable.

Response: *The buildings are not listed or in a conservation area so consent is not required for their demolition. It was nevertheless made clear to the application from an early stage in the process that the buildings had built heritage value and it was therefore the objective of the Planning Authority for the buildings to be retained.*

- The proposed holiday lets are out of keeping with the principal building proposed for conversion and will compromise the immediate environment of this important local building and its historical context.

Response: *See section 'holiday lets,' Planning Assessment paragraph 7.26 for a detailed assessment of this issue.*

- The proposal represents overdevelopment of the site, doubling the size of Stronachlachar and would dominate a remarkable landscape and setting

Response: *It is accepted that the proposed conversions and new build holiday lets will significantly increase the number of properties within Stronachlachar, however the increase in development footprint is not considered be significant. The primary part of the development proposal involves the re-use of a currently vacant and deteriorating building. A central area of communal open space would remain within the site and there is adequate space between the proposed holiday lets and existing properties so the development is not considered to be over dominant. The assessment of the holiday lets is in section 7 'holiday lets design and layout' of this report.*

- The holiday lets are not consistent with the local vernacular of Stronachlachar and could set a precedent for the future that could alter the special nature of Stronachlachar.

Response: *The buildings are of traditional design and are proposed to be finished with quality materials to match the principal building. There are examples of similar design/materials in the Stronachlachar area. Granting this application would not set a precedent. Any future application for development in Stronachlachar would be considered on its own merits. Section 7 'holiday lets' in the planning assessment of this report provides a detailed assessment of the design considerations.*

- The Community Council "would encourage a visit by the Planning Committee to see the unique setting of Stronachlachar, and to evaluate the high impact that this significant development would make on the small community"

Response: *This is a consideration for the members of the Planning and Access Committee. A site visit is not being proposed as part of this recommendation.*

- The redevelopment of the existing building into seven homes does not pass the National Park's policy HOUS4 test for affordable homes per the Local Plan. According to the developer's published pricing structure these properties will not be afforded by local first time buyers and those with young families.

Response: *See section 'housing policy considerations' in the Planning Assessment*

paragraph 7.9 below.

- Policy HOUS5 (Housing in the Countryside) of the local plan is contravened

Response: *Policy HOUS5 is not applicable in this case. Policy HOUS4 is the relevant policy and the assessment around this can be found in Planning Assessment section 7.9 below.*

- The proposal is contrary to two of the aims of the National Park. To conserve and enhance and to promote economic and social development of the areas communities.

Response: *See section 5.1 of this report for the 4 aims of the National Park. The policies of the local plan are based on the 4 overarching aims and it has been concluded through the detailed assessment in part 7 of this report that the proposals are in accordance with the relevant policies. Therefore the proposal achieves the balance of the aims and there is no conflict.*

- The houses will become second homes or holiday lets and eleven additional second homes or holiday lets will saturate the community which has already suffered from an excessively high proportion of accommodation used only on a temporary basis.

Response: *The Planning Authority cannot reasonably control the sub-letting of houses to preclude short term rent. In terms of the Use Class Order 1992, there would be no change of use from house to holiday let.*

- The development would impact on existing provision of holiday lets in Stronachlachar

Response: *Commercial competition cannot be taken into account as a material planning consideration and should not be given any weight in the assessment of this application.*

- The National Park must take some responsibility for the decline of Stronachlachar as a vibrant popular community in recent years leaving this community almost entirely without a permanent local population.

Response: *It is unclear what the basis of this comment is, but if explained, a response can be provided separately if requested but it does not form part of the consideration of this application for planning permission.*

- The majority of properties in Stronachlachar are now second homes or holiday lets with a declining occupancy rate, and addition of even more units will lead to a disproportionately high proportion of such premises.

Response: *The development would increase the number of holiday lets in Stronachlachar by 4 and this type of development is supported by policy TOUR1 of the local plan-refer to section 7.26 of the Planning Assessment. There is sufficient open space proposed within the development site.*

- Insufficient evidence has been submitted to support the development of the 4 new built units. Allowing them because the conversion on its own is unviable is not good reason for approval.

Response: *See section 'viability/enabling case' in Planning Assessment section 7.13 below.*

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- There is limited basic infrastructure in the settlement to support a development of this scale. The site is remote, there are no local shops and the proposals would put pressure on the public and private road serving the proposed development.

Response: See sections 'access, parking and 'infrastructure' in Planning Assessment section 7.39 below.

- The proposals present road, pedestrian, cyclist safety, visibility issues and there is insufficient parking.

Response: Stirling Council as Roads Authority has no objections to the proposal.

- There have been drainage problems causing local flooding in the past and there is risk of polluting the Loch if sewage is not addressed.

Response: Stirling Council's Flood Officer holds no information that would suggest flooding is an issue at this site. See sections 'access, parking and infrastructure' in Planning Assessment section 7.39 below and Scottish Waters' consultation response under Consultations and Representations in section 4.3 above.

- Electricity, sewage, and telecommunications capacity are all limited and could have an adverse impact on existing infrastructure.

Response: See sections 'access, parking and 'infrastructure' in Planning Assessment section 7.39 below.

- The air source heat pump will create adverse noise impacts

Response: See section 'pump house' in Planning Assessment section 7.38 below and note the requirement by Stirling Council Environmental Health for a condition relative to noise and protecting residential amenity.

- There are chimneys proposed on the new builds but no provision has been made for log stores in the plans or bin provision.

Response: See section Planning Assessment 'refuse provision/log store' in section 7.39 below.

- The planning statement notes that the development will bring economic benefit to Stronachlachar but there is no evidence to support this.

Response: The management plan as noted in section 6 of this report notes that there would be a requirement for a caretaker, cleaners and grounds maintenance staff. The proposal would also result in the reuse of a derelict site.

- The planning supporting statement refers to consultation with local residents but this is not the case.

Response: The application did not require the applicant to undertake formal public consultation event.

- The planning case officers' pre-application response to Scottish Water at the time they were marketing the building for sale stated that development would only be

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supported on land that had been previously developed.

Response: *This particular comment refers to previous advice on the prospect of redevelopment of the area of ground, outwith the application site, to the south west of the site comprising other Scottish Water buildings.*

5 POLICY CONTEXT

National Park Aims:

5.1 The four statutory aims of the National Park are a material planning consideration. These are set out in Section 1 of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 and are:

- (a) to conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area;
- (b) to promote sustainable use of the natural resources of the area;
- (c) to promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public; and
- (d) to promote sustainable economic and social development of the area's communities.

5.2 Section 9 of the Act then states that these aims should be achieved collectively. However, if in relation to any matter it appears to the National Park Authority that there is a conflict between the first aim, and the other National Park aims, greater weight must be given to the conservation and enhancement of the natural and cultural heritage of the area.

Development Plan:

5.3 National Park Local Plan (Adopted 2011)

Relevant Policies:

- ENV28- Conservation and Re-Use of Redundant Buildings
- HOUS4- New Housing in the Small Rural Communities and Building Groups in the Countryside
- TOUR1- New Tourism Development
- TRAN6- Parking Provision
- TRAN3- Impact of New Development on the Road Network
- D1- Design Quality
- L1- Conserving and Enhancing the Diversity and Quality of the Park's Landscapes
- ENV4- Legally Protected Species
- ENV11- Connection to Sewerage and Water Supply
- SUSDEV1- Sustainable Development

Full details of the policies can be viewed at:

<http://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/planning/adopted-local-plan/menu-id-904.html>

National Park Proposed Local Development Plan

The 'Proposed Local Development Plan' (LDP) was approved by the National Park Board on 27th April 2015. The 'Proposed Plan' has since been through a six-week period of public consultation which is now closed. At this time the 'Proposed Plan' is afforded limited weight as a material consideration in the assessment of planning applications. The balance of

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weighting increases as it progresses through its preparation.

The proposed Plan provides an indication of likely changes in current planning policy. In this respect, the following policies are relevant:

- Overarching Policy 1: OP1 – Strategic Principles
- Overarching Policy 2: OP2 – Development Requirements
- Housing Policy 1: HP1 – Providing a diverse range of housing
- Housing Policy 2: HP2 - Location and types of new housing required
- Transport Policy 3: TP3 - Impact Assessment and Design Standards of New Development
- Natural Environment Policy 4: NEP4 - Legally Protected Species
- Historic Environment Policy 5: HEP5 - Conversion and Re-use of Redundant Buildings
- Visitor Experience Policy 1: VEP1 - Location and Scale of new development
- Visitor Experience Policy 2: VEP2 - Delivering a World Class Visitor Experience
- Natural Environment Policy 1: NEP1 - National Park Landscapes, seascape and visual impact

The above do not raise any new policy considerations relative to the proposed development.

Other Material Considerations:

5.4 National Park Partnership Plan (2012-2017)

Relevant Policies:

RD Policy 3 : Rural Economy

- 5.5
- Housing Development Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) adopted 2012
 - Draft Housing SPG dated May 2015.

It should be noted that the current housing SPG has been reviewed as part of the proposed Local Development Plan process. A draft SG (Supplementary Guidance) has been published and approved by the Board for consultation. Together with the Proposed Plan, the draft SG went through the six-week public consultation phase as noted in section 5.3 above, which is now closed. Similarly to the Proposed Plan, the draft SG is afforded limited weight as a material consideration in the assessment of planning applications at this time. (The balance of weighting increases at each stage of the process.)

6 SUMMARY OF SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 6.1 The applicant submitted the following supporting information which accompanied the submission of the planning application:

- **Structural Survey by McGregor McMahon & Associated Consulting Engineers dated November 2014** outlines the details of the structural inspection of the principal

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building and cottage. It concludes that the buildings are suitable for redevelopment and the following recommendations are made:

- The roof coverings, particularly valley gutters have failed and been overwhelmed allowing extensive water ingress to the roof and upper levels of the principal building. The inspection of the roof revealed extensive areas of rot and timber infestation causing structural failure.
- Removal of timber lintels, roof structures removed including trusses, beam supports and timber posts
- A timber infestation and damp report to be carried out
- Drainage lines checked for free flow and leakages
- Timber overlay to original concrete floor lifted and replaced
- Service pits opened and debris removed. To be infilled with material compacted in layers and a new concrete floor recast
- The minor settlement crack on the north elevation of the principal building should be checked by excavation of the foundations to check for any deficiency in the foundation or subsoil

- **Woodworm and rot report by Peter Cox dated December 2014** identified rising damp and dry rot and recommends measures such as replacing timber lintels and treating stone/brick work with fungicidal fluid and installation of damp proof courses.
- **Bat Report by Strathearn Pest Control dated January 2015** concludes that following an assessment of the buildings proposed for conversion, there was no evidence of bat presence.
- **Viability report by Neil Burke received June 2015** contains the applicants' personal account details relative the proposals and details the abnormal costs associated with the proposed conversion and makes a case for enabling development to make the project viable.
- **Revised Planning Supporting Statement by Draft4Design dated June 2015** explains the history of the site, the proposals/design considerations and the proposed phasing of the development.
- **Management plan by Neil Burke dated June 2015** detailing the anticipated staffing management and maintenance of communal areas.
- **Welcome Landlords and maintenance list by Neil Burke dated June 2015** - This document provides the considerations when setting up a holiday let business from a landlord perspective.
- **STEP (Stirling Enterprise Park) by Jason Clark, Tourism Executive, dated June 2015** welcomes the proposals and notes the requirements for capital investment to develop tourism and grow the supply of visitor accommodation is highlighted in the Stirling Council Tourism Accommodation Audit and the Tourism Scotland to 2020 strategy.
- **House price comparison by Allen and Harris Estate Agency** of residential properties for sale within 5 miles of the FK8 3TY postcode within the last 60 days from date of submission.

7 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

7.1 This application is for the conversion of two former Scottish Water buildings to form 7 dwellings and the construction of 4 holiday let units. The considerations are as follows and will be assessed in turn:

- Principle of conversions
- Housing policy considerations
- Viability/enabling case
- Holiday lets design and layout
- Pump house
- Refuse provision/log store
- Access and parking
- Infrastructure
- Representations

Principle of Conversion

7.2 Policy ENV28 of the local plan supports proposals for the conversion and re-use of redundant outbuildings of vernacular and local/historic and/or architectural quality where this will stop the building from falling into disrepair and where the building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without significant degrees of rebuilding or new building elements.

7.3 Both the principal building and cottage, previously occupied by Scottish Water, contribute to the history of Stronachlachar and Loch Katrine as the primary water reservoir for much of the city of Glasgow and its surrounding areas. Both buildings are of architectural merit, as can be appreciated from figures 3 and 4 below, particularly the principal building with its distinctive roof form and variety of windows and door openings. The structural survey concludes that whilst the roofs of the buildings have suffered significant deterioration, due to rotting timber trusses caused by prolonged water ingress and require to be replaced, the walls are structurally sound and therefore capable of conversion. No evidence of bats was identified in the survey report in accordance with policy ENV4 of the local plan.



Fig.3. *Principal building*



Fig.4. *Cottage*

- 7.4 A genuine conversion of the principal building is proposed, retaining the majority of openings and their proportions including the central pend and a replacement roof to replicate the original. No significant degrees of rebuilding or new building elements are proposed.
- 7.5 Similarly to the principal building, the original window and door openings of the cottage and their proportions are proposed to be retained. The replacement roof would match the existing

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and include the projecting shelter feature with supporting timber beams to the front of the building. The cottage is, however, proposed to be extended to provide a more functional living environment.

- 7.6 The cottage has a footprint of approximately 43 square metres with the proposed extension being 35 square metres. Whilst this would be a sizable extension to a small building, it would remain subordinate in scale. Attached only by a short linked corridor and to be finished in larch cladding, the extension has been designed to respect the integrity of the original structure and to read as 'detached' from the cottage.
- 7.7 Natural slate and timber window frames are proposed for both buildings. If an adequate amount of the existing slates are salvaged as usable then they will be used to re-slate the cottage. The walls of the principal building would be finished in smooth render whilst the exposed stone work of the cottage would be preserved as such.
- 7.8 Considering the above assessment, the proposals for conversion of the principal building and cottage accord with policy ENV28 of the local plan.

Housing policy considerations

- 7.9 The proposals are for open market housing to be accommodated within the conversions (6, 2 bedroom units and 1, 3 bed unit).
- 7.10 Policy HOUS4 of the local plan, applicable to small building groups in the countryside such as Stronachlachar, requires new build housing to meet 'affordable' housing needs.
- 7.11 Referring to the National Parks (NP) adopted Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) for affordable housing considerations in the case of conversions; it notes that in the case of a conversion into more than one residential unit, a contribution to affordable housing targets might be required. This is unless it can be demonstrated that the conversion will not be viable. Proposals are expected to be assessed on a case-by-case basis.
- 7.12 As noted under 'Other Material Considerations' in section 5.5 of this report, the current SPG has been reviewed as part of the proposed local development plan process and a draft version has been published with the Proposed Plan and has recently undergone a 6 week period of public consultation. The draft SG is afforded limited weight as a material consideration in the assessment of planning applications at this time. (The balance of weighting increases at each stage of the process.)

The applicant is proposing open market housing so, to satisfy the current housing guidance relative to conversions as described in 7.11 above, it should be demonstrated that:

- a) the conversion will not be viable if a contribution to affordable housing is required
- b) the buildings and/ or location are not suitable for affordable housing

Both of these matters are considered in the following sections.

Viability/enabling case

- 7.13 Relative to a) above, during the early stages of the planning process, the applicant advised that delivering affordable housing on the site would not be financially viable at this site. The applicant was therefore asked to produce a viability report, an evidence based exercise, to support the claim.
- 7.14 The applicant has made a case through the submission of a viability report that the conversions

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as a single proposal would not be cost-effective and that enabling development is required to make the conversions financially viable. Due to the sensitive nature of the personal information contained within the report, it has not been made available for public viewing. It is a document for the consideration of the Planning Authority to help in the assessment of the enabling development case and the affordable housing considerations.

- 7.15 The document notes that the greatest cost associated with the conversion project derives from the principal building and the works, required by the Planning Authority, to deliver a genuine conversion and comply with policy ENV28 of the local plan. Costs include a replacement timber trussed roof finished with slate and designed to fully replicate the existing and the retention of the variety of window openings thereby requiring bespoke window fittings throughout. The structural engineer has indicated that there is a probability that the foundations of the building will need replaced. Other abnormal costs relate to the location of the development site and the applicants requirement to provide accommodation for the workforce during the development phase. Furthermore, Scottish and Southern Energy have stipulated a requirement for a new transformer for the electric supply of which the cost would be met by the applicant. Several unknown costs remain a risk in a conversion project.
- 7.16 Considering the abnormal build costs and the indicative selling costs, the report concludes that the applicant would incur a loss therefore making the conversion project, as a single proposal, unviable and this is before factoring in an affordable housing contribution.
- 7.17 The applicant therefore proposes to construct 4 holiday let units (see section 7.26 'holiday lets design and layout' below) to make the project viable which is indicated would result in a profit of 16% above the total spend. It is recommended that the principle of the enabling aspect of this proposal be supported. It should be noted that a planning condition is recommended to ensure a phased approach to the development requiring that the works to deliver the conversions happen before the construction of the holiday lets.
- 7.18 It is considered that it has been reasonably demonstrated that an affordable housing contribution, even with the inclusion of 4 holiday units, would render the project unviable to the applicant.
- 7.19 It is therefore concluded that requiring an affordable housing element in this case, would compromise the opportunity to bring these buildings back into use. The result would be further deterioration of their fabric and eventual collapse.
- 7.20 The buildings are not listed and are not in a Conservation Area so consent is not required for their demolition. Despite this, their architectural and heritage value are such that the balance of saving these buildings is considered in this case, to outweigh the delivery of affordable housing on this particular site.
- 7.21 It should be noted that the applicant could have applied to convert the buildings to tourist units thereby avoiding the consideration of affordable housing at this site.

Affordable housing need

- 7.22 In terms of assessing part b) from paragraph 7.12, Rural Stirling Housing Association (RSHA) was contacted by the case officer in attempt to determine if there was a demand for affordable housing in Stronachlachar. The applicant also made contact independently and met with an officer of RSHA on site. Written correspondence from RSHA is as follows:

'After careful consideration, I can advise that the Association would not be interested in pursuing affordable housing at this location. As I indicated, analysis of demand for this area confirms that affordable housing would not be viable. It would therefore be a considerable risk to the Association to develop assets in an area where there is likely to be no demand in

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the future.'

It is understood that the Housing Association aspire to deliver affordable housing in sustainable locations where there is access to public transport and amenities.

- 7.23 In the event that planning permission is granted, the applicant has indicated the intention to market the 6, 2 bed properties at between £120,000 and £150,000 and the 3 bed property at £160,000. Loch Lomond and the Trossachs Housing Market Analysis, produced by Craigforth, Newhaven Research Scotland and University of Stirling in November 2013, produced to inform the NP Local Development Plan, informs that the median house price across the Callander/Aberfoyle area is £163,000 (the lower quartile being £115,000 and the upper quartile £249,725). In comparison to the outcomes of the study, the proposed house units would be advertised at below market value.
- 7.24 The applicant was asked to provide a cost comparison analysis of the asking prices of properties within the more immediate locale. The exercise included a radius of 5 miles from the site postcode advertised within the last 60 days. The average asking price for a terraced property within the immediate postcode area is £152,916 and £176,007 in the wider FK8 postcode area. Terraced house prices are highlighted in this report since 6 of the 7 house units would be contained within the principal building and would therefore be considered terraced properties. This exercise concludes that the figures that the applicant intends to market the properties at, if planning permission is granted, are below market value.
- 7.25 A marketing strategy produced by an estate agency has been submitted and proposes to give local people the first opportunity to purchase the 7 house units. It would involve local marketing and information events prior to open market sale. Furthermore, the applicant proposes to cover the cost of the estate agency fees for any local purchaser with a house to sell. It is accepted that there could be a local benefit to this and so it is recommended that the principle be accepted subject to the marketing details and the definition of 'local' being agreed via the imposition of a planning condition. Considering the above assessments, the proposals satisfy the considerations of policy HOUS4 of the local plan and the NP Housing SPG.

Holiday lets design and layout

- 7.26 New tourism development should be assessed against policy TOUR1 of the local plan. Stronachlachar is a Schedule 5 site (Sub destination: Callander, Aberfoyle, Queen Elizabeth Forest Park and the Trossachs) where there is support for visitor infrastructure and small scale self-catering proposals such as is the case with this proposal but subject to encouraging sustainable travel and transport alternatives to the private car. Loch Katrine has opportunities for sustainable transportation such as the steam ship and there are cycle routes linking Stronachlachar with Inversnaid, the Trossachs Pier and the new track constructed by the Forestry Commission to Loch Ard. Considering the above, the principle of the holiday lets at this location is supported by policy TOUR1 of the local plan.
- 7.27 Section 7.17 of this report recommends that the principle of an enabling development be supported. The following sections provide a detailed assessment of the holiday let proposals.
- 7.28 The principal building proposed for conversion has a 'double frontage' as both the north and south elevations are of architectural interest and face a road with public views. Nevertheless, the north facing elevation has symmetry, benefits from more detailing and openings and faces an open aspect so, for the purposes of the following parts of this report, the north facing elevation will be referred to as the 'front elevation.'

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- 7.29 To the front of the principal building and within the site boundary is a grassed/hardstanding area, surrounded by estate fencing and an established rhododendron hedge (see figure 5 below). The 4 holiday let units, comprising two buildings in the form of semi-detached properties, are proposed to be sited within the grassed/hardstanding area thereby forming a 'U' shape courtyard arrangement with the principal building. A communal grass area would remain in the centre of the proposed development.



Fig.5. front elevation of principal building and former bowling green.

- 7.30 It is acknowledged that there is a general presumption in planning terms against building to the front of a property because the risk of creating 'backland development' and the potential impact on streetscape, however, this more often than not applies to urban settings. Stronachlachar has a quite different character, comprising a small irregularly sited building group in the countryside and the principal building benefits from a road to both the front and back.
- 7.31 The front elevation of the principal building would be partly obscured by the holiday lets on approach from the north west and north east, however this would be limited with the majority of the front elevation remaining visible and would be the central and predominant feature overlooking the communal open area. Furthermore, the holiday lets are proposed to be sited towards the northern boundary of the site creating a clear separation between the new build and the principal building.
- 7.32 The two buildings containing the 4, 2 bed holiday let units would be subordinate in scale to the principal building. They are proposed to have a combined footprint of approximately 400 square metres in comparison to 765 square metres and the ridge line would not exceed the principal building.
- 7.33 The holiday lets do not attempt to imitate or compete with the distinctive character of the principal building but instead are of traditional, rural character with white render walls, gable eaves dormers, slate roof and chimney features. There are examples of similar house designs in the area. The slate roof and ender walls would match the principal building to create coherence throughout the development.
- 7.34 The holiday lets would not create any adverse amenity issues in terms of overlooking or overshadowing of neighbouring properties. The closest residential property is a distance of approximately 43 metres from the development site.
- 7.35 Having considered the merits of the holiday let units in the context of the established building group, it is determined that the proposals can be accommodated within the site without

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resulting in overdevelopment or impacting significantly on the character of the existing buildings. A cohesive new grouping could be created. The proposals are therefore consistent with policies D1 and L1 of the local plan.

- 7.36 It is acknowledged that the addition of 11 units (7 house units in the conversion and 4 new build holiday lets) is a significant increase in the number of properties in Stronachlachar. That said; the increase in new build (400 square metres) is not considered to be significant. It should be noted that the issue of competition with existing holiday lets or houses for sale is not a material planning consideration.

Representations

- 7.37 The issue of increase in properties and commercial competition as noted in 7.36 was recorded in the letters of objection. Other key points of objection include impact on the road network and road safety, over development of the site, impact on established character of Stronachlachar, noise from the air source heat pump and infrastructure connections. All points of objection are summarised and responded to in section 4.7 of this report and also throughout section 7 - Planning Assessment.

Pump house

- 7.38 The pump house is a small building proposed to be clad in timber and sited close to the central northern boundary within the communal grassed area. It would house the air source heat pump; a sustainable incentive proposed to supply the 11 units with energy efficient hot water and heating. The generation of noise as a result of the heat pump is a concern for local residents. Stirling Council (SC) Environmental Health recommend a condition be imposed if permission is to be granted, stipulating the noise generated from the heat pump shall not exceed 'neutral' which means it should not be heard outside the pump house. The condition requires the design of the building to be agreed by the Planning Authority through consultation with SC Environmental Health as it is through attenuation measures built into the design that will mitigate against adverse noise being audible from outside the building. The imposition of this condition is to protect the amenity of both existing and future residents (if planning permission is granted) of Stronachlachar. SC Environmental Health has advised that the condition can be achieved.

Refuse provision/log store

- 7.39 Bin areas have been identified on the revised site plan however it is recommended that bin stores or sheds are provided to contain them. Further consideration is needed over the siting of these and so a condition is recommended that details are submitted for consideration. There is sufficient space within the site for bin provision. It is worth noting that there may also be a requirement for log stores as there is chimney detailing on the proposed holiday let buildings. There is also adequate space for outdoor log stores within the site.

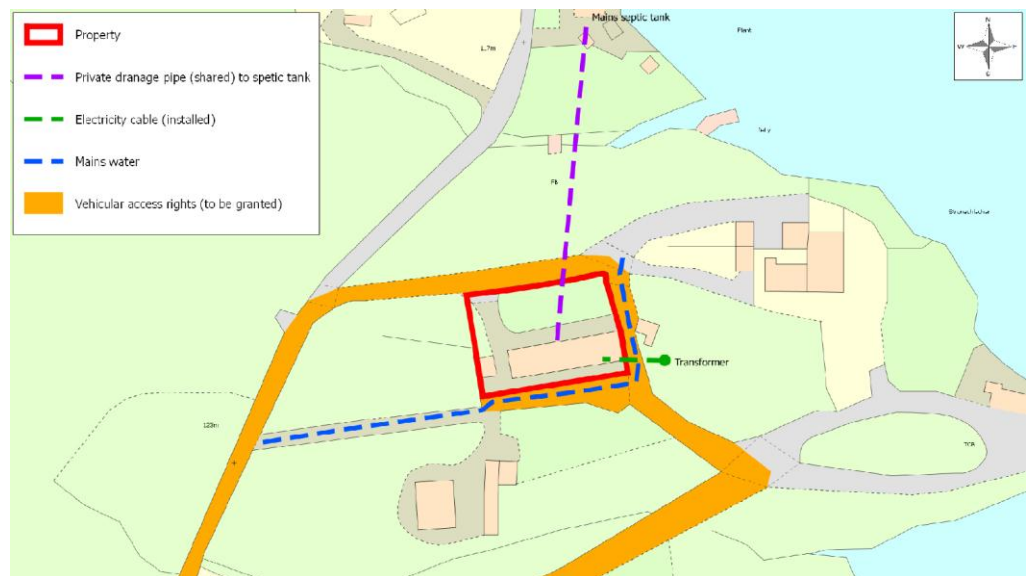
Access, parking and infrastructure

- 7.40 The two access roads to the site would be unaltered and 26 parking spaces are proposed to serve the 11 unit development. Stirling Council as Roads Authority considered the proposals and confirmed no objection. The proposals are therefore in accordance with policies TRAN3 and TRAN6 of the local plan.
- 7.41 As summarised in section 4.3 of this report, Scottish Water has no objection to the proposals but advise the applicant will have to address a number of points to provide services such as

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sewer and water supply connections. For awareness, the applicant claims that there is mains water and foul drainage connections in place and has recently met with a representative of Scottish Water on site who apparently acknowledged the presence of these connections. It is understood a revised consultation response is pending but it has not been received at the time of writing this report. It is worth noting figure 6 below- a plan that formed part of the marketing package for the sale of the site by Scottish Water. It is accompanied by the statement that *'mains water and electricity (includes 3 phase) and mains drainage. All on site.'* In any case, Scottish Water has no objection to the proposals.

Fig.6
*Plan from
the marketing
brochure
for the sale of
the site by
Scottish Water*



8 CONCLUSION

The proposal to convert the existing historical buildings and the new build 'enabling' holiday lets are in accordance with policies ENV28 and TOUR1 of the local plan. It has been demonstrated, in this case, that accepting enabling development without a contribution to affordable housing is acceptable. A contribution to affordable housing would compromise the viability of the proposal, risk the buildings not being converted and the further deterioration of their fabric. The viability report satisfies the expectations outlined in the National Park's Supplementary Planning Guidance. The applicant has offered to provide a period of 'priority access' to local purchasers which, although not in accordance with established or emerging policy, provides a worthwhile addition to the housing offer in the locality. The holiday lets are considered to accord with policies D1 and L1 of the local plan in that there would be no significant adverse impact on the setting or character of Stronachlachar. The technical consultation responses confirm that infrastructure requirements can be met and that there are no objections to proposals for access and parking. Potential noise issues can be addressed through the design of the 'pump house' and it is recommended that this be imposed as a condition of the permission to protect residential amenity. Considering the merits of this case, it is recommended that planning permission be granted subject to conditions.

Background Documents: <http://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/planning/>
Click on view applications, accept the terms and conditions then enter the search criteria as 2015/0134/DET

List of Appendices: **Appendix 1 Conditions and Informatives**

Appendix 1

Planning conditions

1. **Foul Drainage Connection:** No development shall commence prior to the submission of further details and the written confirmation that connection to the public network for foul drainage has been agreed with Scottish Water and will be provided. In the event that it is demonstrated that connection to the public network is not achievable, a separate private waste treatment system shall be detailed and submitted to the Planning Authority for approval. The approved method of foul drainage shall be implemented prior to first occupation of any building.

REASON: Insufficient detail is currently available regarding foul drainage treatment and these details are considered of importance in securing an environmentally sensitive standard of development and consistent with National Guidance and the first statutory aim of the National Park.

2. **Phased development:** Unless as may otherwise be agreed in writing by the Planning Authority, construction of the 4 holiday let units hereby approved shall not begin until the works to convert the existing buildings have been completed in accordance with the approved plans.

REASON: To ensure the existing buildings are converted in accordance with the approved plans and to prevent the 'enabling' holiday lets being constructed as a single project.

3. **Four short term holiday accommodation units:** The new-build units hereby approved shall be used solely for short-term holiday use and not for permanent residential use. The units shall not be occupied by any one individual or group for a period exceeding 90 days in any one calendar year. A register of occupant's details (names and dates of stay) shall be kept and shall be made available to the National Park Authority on request.

Note: This condition does not prohibit the letting of the units by a management company or other management arrangement on behalf of the owner.

REASON: The proposal has been assessed as a tourism development and the approval of permanent residence(s) would be contrary to the policies contained in the adopted development plan.

4. **Site Management Plan for holiday lets:** Before the development hereby permitted starts, a Site Management Plan, documenting on-going proposals for the long term maintenance of the common amenity areas of the site shall be submitted for the approval in writing of the Planning Authority. Thereafter, the proprietor shall maintain the setting of the development as a single common entity in accordance with the approved Site Management Plan.

REASON: The Planning Authority require to be satisfied that arrangements for the long-term management of communal features such as open space, landscaping, parking areas and drainage will be put in place to ensure that the site is properly maintained.

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5. **Marketing Plan:** Before the occupation of any of the 7 dwellings hereby permitted, a detailed marketing strategy for the 7 dwellings shall be submitted for the approval in writing of the Planning Authority and shall include details of local marketing strategies and information events pertaining to the sale of the properties. For the avoidance of doubt, details shall include the definition of 'local,' the method and location of local advertisement and information events, associated timings and shall include confirmation that the applicant will cover the cost of estate agency fees for any prospective purchaser with a house to sell.

REASON: In accordance with the details submitted to provide a period of 'priority access' to local purchasers.

6. **Noise attenuation:** Before the development hereby permitted starts, details of the noise attenuation measures to be built into the design of the building containing the air source heat pump shall be submitted for the approval in writing of the Planning Authority through consultation with Stirling Council Environmental Health. The attenuation measures will ensure that noise omission from outside the building is not greater than neutral, as defined in the Scottish Government's Technical Advice Note: Assessment of Noise, Table 3.5. Thereafter, noise monitoring and assessment shall be undertaken from agreed locations to demonstrate compliance with the above noted noise level/rating and submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority in consultation with Stirling Council Environmental Health. The noise level/rating shall be complied with in perpetuity, unless otherwise approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

REASON: To protect the occupants of nearby dwellings from noise/disturbance associated with the implementation of this permission.

7. **Agreement of Materials and Specifications:** Prior to the commencement of the development, a further detailed specification of the undernoted proposed external finishing materials to be utilised on the buildings, including samples as indicated shall be submitted to, and agreed in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the specification and materials as may be approved in accordance with this condition shall thereafter be undertaken and used respectively in the completion of the project, prior to the proposed development being brought into use.

- a) The natural slate to be used on all roof surfaces of the buildings (sample of slate and details relating to the sizes of slate proposed and laying method to be submitted);
- b) Render to be used on the walls and the method of application (sample required);
- c) Manufacturers details of the timber windows;
- d) The colour/treatment/finishes of all exposed timberwork and render; and
- e) The details of the material and colour of rainwater goods, barge boards and fascias.

REASON: To ensure that the external appearance of the development complements the rural character of the area and the appearance of the existing buildings and to ensure the implementation of the development in accordance with the further details as may be approved in compliance with the conditions attached to this permission.

8. **Details of Landscaping:** Prior to the commencement of construction works within the development site, a landscape scheme/plan shall be submitted to and approved

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in writing by the Planning Authority. The said scheme/plan (at a scale of 1:500 or greater) shall include:

- a) Existing and proposed site levels
- b) surfacing materials for car parking, and footpaths
- c) walls, fences, hedges, gates
- d) bin sheds and log storage sheds
- e) retained historic landscape features and proposals for restoration, where relevant
- f) planting plans and written specifications (including cultivation and other operations associated with plant and grass establishment), schedules of plants, noting species, plant sizes and proposed numbers/densities where appropriate
- g) Rhododendron management plan to remove it from site and prevent it spreading and
- h) a programme of implementation

Thereafter, the details as may be further approved shall be implemented in accordance with the approved programme.

REASON: The proposed development and its location requires landscaping to fully integrate the proposal with its surroundings. Without such landscaping the proposal would be considered contrary to the provisions of the development plan.

9. **Boundary Treatment:** Prior to the erection of any gate, boundary wall, fence or other means of enclosure their details including design, height and material specification shall have been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. Thereafter, the agreed boundary treatment shall be maintained as constructed.

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt and to safeguard the amenities of the area.

10. **Discovery of Contaminated Land:** The presence of any significant contamination found during the implementation of the development hereby permitted shall, within one week of discovery, be brought to the attention of the Planning Authority. No work shall proceed in the immediate vicinity of the area of contamination until a detailed site investigation has been carried out, in consultation with the relevant Environmental Health Officer, and a mitigation plan submitted to, and agreed in writing by, the Planning Authority. The aforementioned mitigation plan shall include a timetable for implementation of the work(s) required to address the contamination identified.

REASON: To ensure that any contamination within the site is dealt with timeously and in accordance with best practice.

11. **Parking:** The dwellings and holiday lets hereby permitted shall not be first occupied until vehicular parking has been constructed and delineated on site in accordance with the approved plan (Proposed site plan -drawing number D4D/129-100). The aforementioned parking spaces shall thereafter be retained and capable of use at all times and shall not be removed or altered without the prior written approval of the Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory provision of parking throughout the site.

12. **Restriction on Construction Hours:** No machinery shall be operated, no activity carried out and no deliveries received at, or dispatched from the site outwith the hours of 8.00am to 6.00pm Monday to Friday, and 9.00am to 1.00pm on Saturdays, nor at any time on Sundays, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning

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Authority. This limitation does not apply to internal works that are not audible at the boundaries of the site.

REASON: To protect the occupants of nearby housing from excessive noise/disturbance associated with the implementation of this permission.

13. **Flue details:** Before the development hereby permitted starts, details of any flues proposed to be installed on the buildings for conversion shall be submitted for the approval in writing of the Planning Authority. Thereafter, the flues shall be installed in accordance with the details approved under the terms of this condition.

REASON: To ensure the Planning Authority has the opportunity to properly consider the design, height and material finish of the flues in the interest of protecting the heritage and architectural character of the building.

Informatives:

1. Duration of permission - In accordance with section 58 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended), this permission lapses on the expiration of 3 years beginning from the date of this permission, unless the development to which this permission relates is begun before that expiration.
2. Notification of Initiation of Development - Under section 27A of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) the person undertaking the development is required to give the planning authority prior written notification of the date on which it is intended to commence the development. We recommend this is submitted 2 weeks prior to the start of work. A failure to submit the notice, included in the decision pack, would constitute a breach of planning control under section 123(1) of that Act, which may result in enforcement action being taken.
3. Notification of Completion of Development - As soon as practicable after the development is complete, the person who completes the development is required by section 27B of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) to give written notice to the planning authority of the completion of the building works. As before, there is notice for you to complete for this purpose included in the decision pack. In larger, phased developments, a notice of completion is to be submitted as soon as practicable after each phase is finished by the person carrying out the development.
4. Since the introduction of the Water Services (Scotland) Act 2005 in April 2008 the water industry in Scotland has opened up to market competition for non-domestic customers. Non-domestic Household customers now require a Licensed Provider to act on their behalf for new water and waste water connections. Further details can be obtained at www.scotlandontap.gov.uk.
5. Due to the size of this proposed development it is necessary for Scottish Water to assess the impact this new demand will have on their existing infrastructure. With Any development of 10 or more housing units, or equivalent, there is a requirement to submit a fully completed Development Impact Assessment form. Development Impact Assessment forms can be found at www.scottishwater.co.uk.
6. Scottish Water's current minimum level of service for water pressure is 1.0 bar or 10m head at the customer's boundary internal outlet. Any property which cannot be

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adequately serviced from the available pressure may require private pumping arrangements installed, subject to compliance with the current water byelaws. If the developer wishes to enquire about Scottish Water's procedure for checking the water pressure in the area then they should write to the Customer Connections department.

7. An appropriate water storage system Water storage equivalent to 24 hours usage is recommended for commercial premises. Details of such storage installations must be agreed by Scottish Water.
8. A totally separate drainage system will be required with the surface water discharging to a suitable outlet. Scottish Water requires a sustainable urban drainage system (SUDS) as detailed in Sewers for Scotland 2 if the system is to be considered for adoption.
9. If the connection to public sewer and/or water main requires to be laid through land out-with public ownership, the developer must provide evidence of formal approval from the affected landowner(s). This should be done through a deed of servitude.
10. It is possible this proposed development may involve building over or obstruct access to existing Scottish Water infrastructure. On receipt of an application Scottish Water will provide advice that advice that will require to be implemented by the developer to protect existing apparatus. Should the developer require information regarding the location of Scottish Water infrastructure they should contact our Property Searches Department, Bullion House, Dundee, DD2 5BB. Tel – 0845 601 8855.