



**PLANNING AND ACCESS COMMITTEE**

**MEETING: Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September 2015**

<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>	<b>Head of Planning &amp; Rural Development</b>
<b>APPLICATION NUMBER:</b>	<b>2015/0204/DET</b>
<b>APPLICANT:</b>	<b>David McCowan</b>
<b>LOCATION:</b>	<b>Auchendennan Farm, Arden</b>
<b>PROPOSAL:</b>	<b>Erection of storage shed and formation of turning area</b>

<b>NATIONAL PARK WARD:</b>	Ward 5 – south-west Loch Lomond
<b>COMMUNITY COUNCIL AREA:</b>	Luss and Arden Community Council
<b>CASE OFFICER:</b>	Name: Craig Jardine Tel: 01389 722020 E-mail: <a href="mailto:craig.jardine@lochlomond-trossachs.org">craig.jardine@lochlomond-trossachs.org</a>

**1 SUMMARY AND REASON FOR PRESENTATION**

- 1.1 This is an application for the erection of a storage building located on an undeveloped field at Auchendennan Farm.
- 1.2 In accordance with the agreed Scheme of Delegation, this application is being presented to the Committee as it is made by a Board Member on the Planning & Access Committee (David McCowan).

**2 RECOMMENDATION**

**That Members:**

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

### 3 BACKGROUND

#### **Site Description:**

- 3.1 Auchendennan Farm is situated 1 kilometre south-east of the Arden roundabout on the west side of the A82 Trunk Road as indicated by the red star in Figure 1 below.



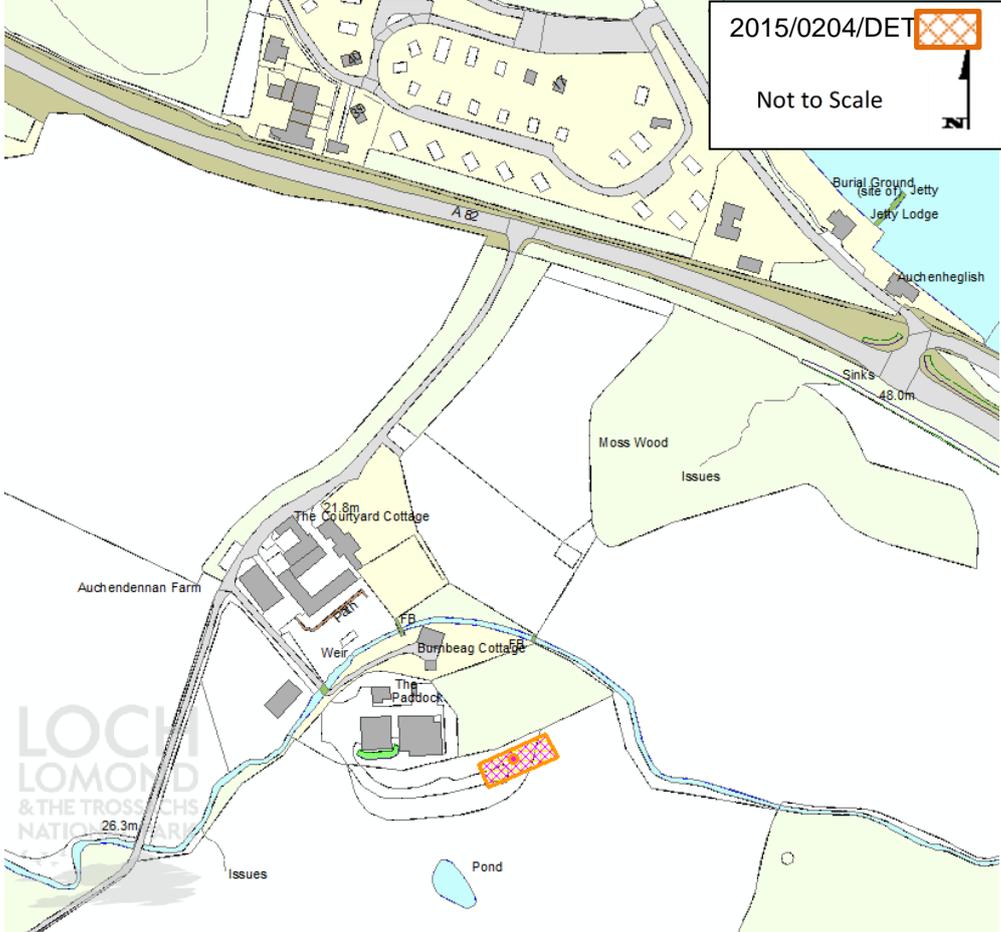
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**Figure 1. Location Plan. Auchendennan Farm**

- 3.2 Auchendennan Farm comprises of agricultural land and a collection of associated buildings. The central building grouping consists of a traditional farm courtyard which includes the main farmhouse, cottage (in holiday let use), former stables and stores (largely converted to holiday accommodation units – 6 units at present).
- 3.3 The applicant's ownership also extends to encompass the adjacent 'Paddock' workshops/stores (former Ministry of Defence buildings) and Burnbeag Cottage (in holiday let use). An agricultural/general store building and owner's house were approved by committee in June and November 2012 respectively and are now built. A biomass boiler is housed within the aforementioned store building and this boiler provides the heating source for the existing buildings and for the proposed buildings at Auchendennan Farm (with the exception of the workshop/stores).

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- 3.4 The abovementioned site and buildings are served by the existing private access road off the A82 which has been widened and surfaced to comply with the Roads Authority’s recommended conditions which were imposed on previous planning permissions for the site.
- 3.5 The application relates to a site situated in an undeveloped field to the south of the aforementioned workshop/stores which is accessed by an existing track.



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**Figure 2. Site Plan. Application site outlined in red.**

**Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA):**

- 3.6 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:**

- 3.7 The development proposed is for the erection of a storage building. The purpose of the storage building is to accommodate a woodchip drying floor, a dried woodchip storage area and a boiler room with hopper store (which will fuel the drying floor fans). This new facility would enable the

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processing and storing of woodchip to be carried out on-site. This would enable a constant supply of woodchip for Auchendennan Farm. It is intended to use this building solely in connection with servicing the site and not for any commercial purposes. No water or foul drainage services are required.

- 3.8 The site for the building is on a level area of ground which is adjacent to an existing track. The site has been chosen due to these characteristics and has also been governed by the presence of a high voltage underground electrical cable. The nearby electrical poles would, however, provide a connection point to power the boiler and fan switches within the building.



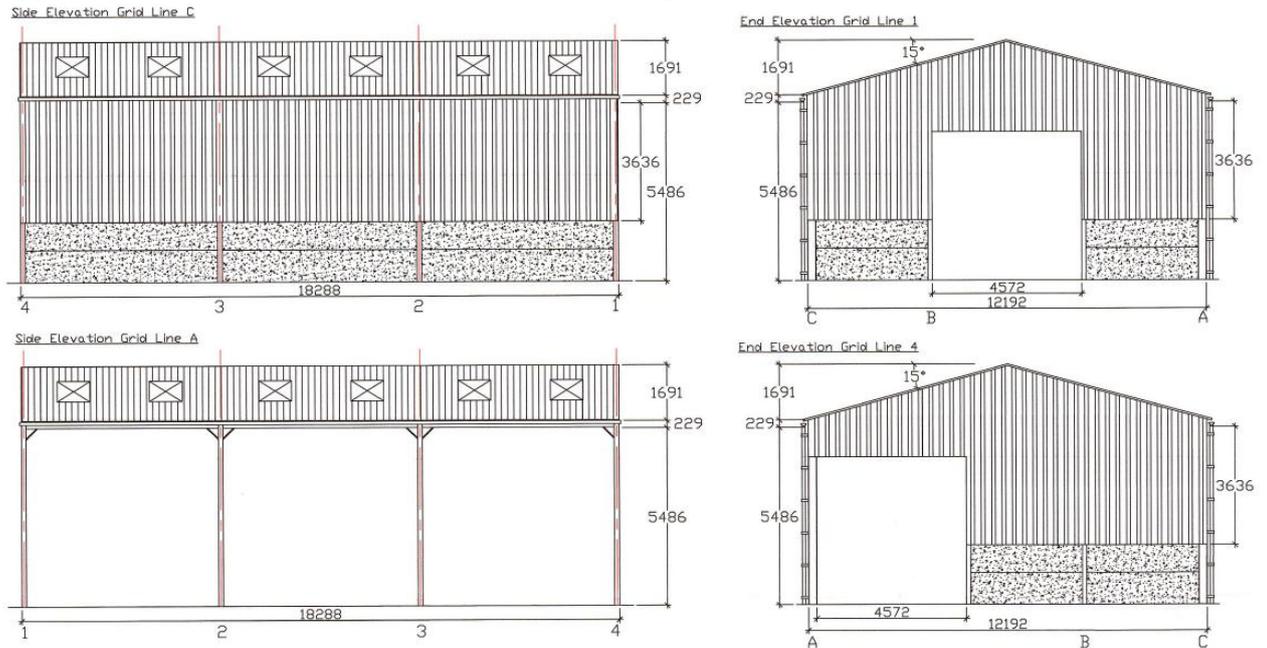
**Plate 1:** Photo of site – looking east



**Plate 2:** Photo of site – looking west

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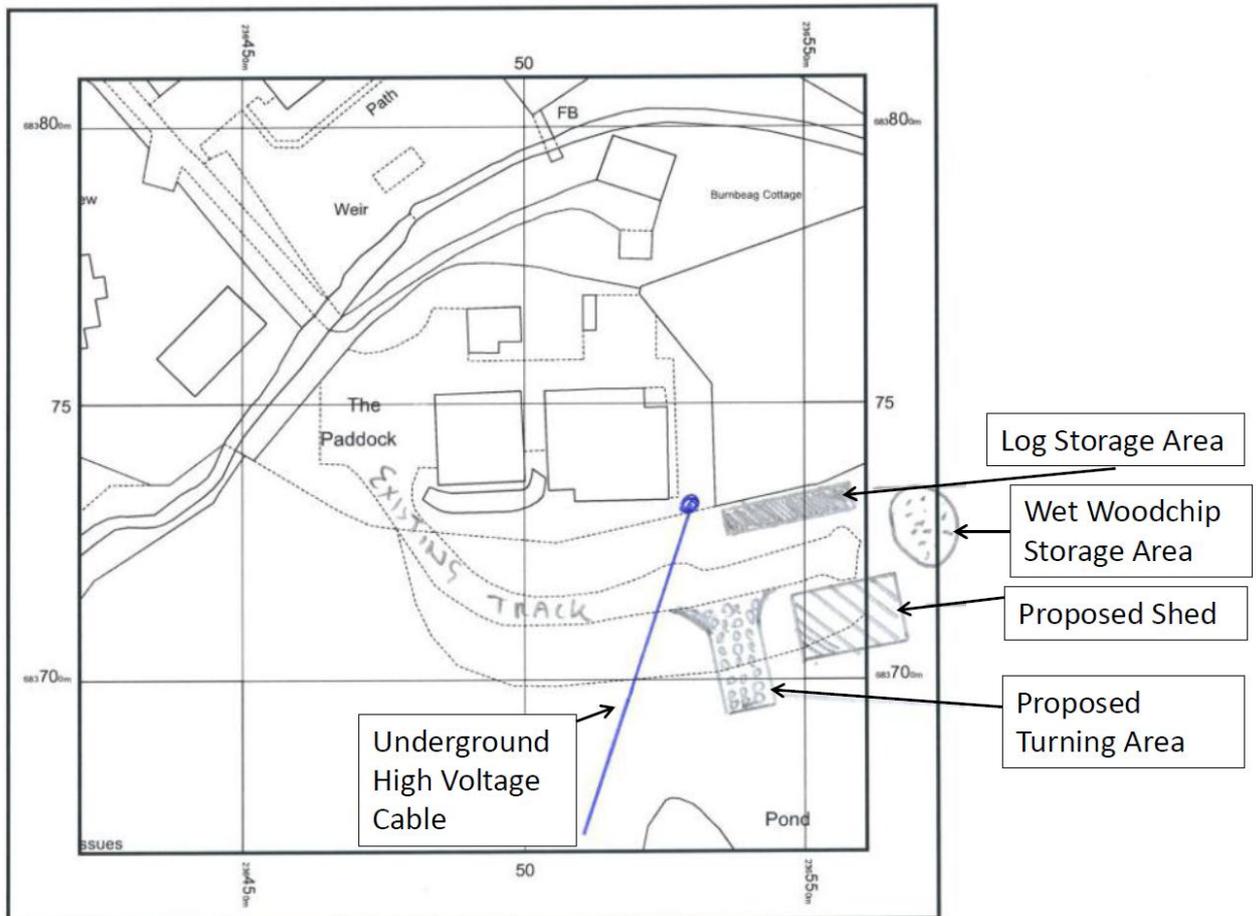
- 3.9 The applicant intends to remove the majority of the boats shown in the above photos. No permission is given or implied for the use of this area for informal boat storage.
- 3.10 The proposed steel framed building would be of a rectangular plan with a 15 degree pitched roof. It would measure 18 metres in length; 12 metres in width; have an eaves height of 5.5 metres; and a ridge height of 7.4 metres. The building would be open on the north elevation, with open doorways on each gable elevation. This open bay design would provide ventilation to assist with the woodchip drying process.
- 3.11 The lower walls of the building would be concrete panel (to resist damage from machinery) with upper walls boarded in timber. The roof would be grey profiled fibre cement sheets.



**Figure 3. Proposed Elevations**

- 3.12 Access to the site would be via an existing farm track and this track would be extended to provide a turning area to facilitate delivery and manoeuvre by a 25 tonne logging lorry and wood chipper lorry. The new turning area would be finished with gravel match the appearance of the existing track.
- 3.13 Timber logs would be stacked (in approx. 4 metre long sections) and wet woodchip would be stored adjacent to the track and proposed building as shown in Figure 4 below.

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**Figure 4.** Proposed Site Layout

### **Planning History:**

- 3.14 2014/0308/DET - Conversion of existing outbuilding to form 3No. holiday let units – Approved on 2012/0272/DET - Erection of dwellinghouse – Approved on 06/11/12
- 2012/0115/DET - Erection of agricultural/general storage building – Approved on 27/06/12
- 2011/0030/DET - Conversion of farm stables to form 4 holiday letting units – Approved on 16/06/2011
- 2010/0034/DET - Conversion of offices to form 2 No holiday letting units – Approved 20/04/2010
- 2006/0251/DET - Change of use and alterations to outbuilding to form extension to dwelling – Approved 05/02/2007
- 2006/0405/LAW - Use of outbuilding as a single dwelling house – Certificate of lawfulness issued 31/01/2007
- 2006/0407/DET - Conversion of storage outbuilding to form office – Approved 14/02/2007

#### 4 CONSULTATIONS AND REPRESENTATIONS

***Responses to Consultations:***

4.1 No consultations have been undertaken.

***Representations Received:***

4.2 No representations received.

#### 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:***

ED3 – Economic Development in the Countryside

REN3 – Energy Generation from Biomass and Biogas

D1 – Design Quality

L1 - Conserving and Enhancing the Diversity and Quality of the Park's Landscapes

Full details of the policies can be viewed at:

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

***Other Material Considerations:***

5.4 National Park Proposed Local Development Plan

The 'Proposed Local Development Plan' (LDP) was approved by the National Park Board on 27<sup>th</sup> April 2015. The 'Proposed Plan' has since been through a six-week period of public

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consultation which is now closed. At this time the 'Proposed Plan' is a material consideration in the assessment of planning applications, depending on the policies that would be applied and the proposal.

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
- Renewable Energy Policy 1: REP1 - Renewable Energy within the National Park
- Economic Development Policy 2: EDP2 - Economic Development in the countryside and small rural communities

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

### 5.5 National Park Partnership Plan (2012-2017)

All planning decisions within the National Park require to be guided by the policies of the Partnership Plan, where they are considered to be material, in order to ensure that they are consistent with the Park's statutory aims. In this respect the following policies are relevant:

Con Policy 3: Landscapes

RD Policy 7: Sustainable Design and Construction

### 5.6 Supplementary Guidance

- Sustainable Design Supplementary Planning Guidance (adopted Dec 2011)
- Design & Placemaking Draft Supplementary Guidance (dated May 2015)

It should be noted that the current Supplementary Planning Guidance has been reviewed as part of the proposed Local Development Plan process. A draft Design & Placemaking 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, which is now closed. The weight afforded to Supplementary Guidance is as noted in section 5.4 above.

## 6 **SUMMARY OF SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

6.1 The applicant has submitted a statement in support of the planning application which is summarised as follows:

### Background

- Auchendennan Farm installed a 200KW ETA woodchip boiler approximately 2 years ago in order to provide hot water and heating for all the properties on location.
- Dried woodchips are currently purchased from an external supplier and delivered onto site by a specially adapted lorry with a blower mechanism.
- Over 2 years of operation it has become apparent that the cost of transporting "bulky" woodchips over a long distance was not only adding to expense but also environmental impact and was subject to delays and interruption of service.
- This has led to investigations into the feasibility and benefits of purchasing recently sawn logs and processing them to woodchips of correct moisture content for use on site.

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### Proposal

- To purchase, in bulk, sawn logs from nearby (within 1 hour or 45 mile radius or thereabouts) which will be brought on-site and stacked next to the proposed drying shed.
- Logs would then be chipped to form a pile of wet woodchips.
- The woodchips would then be dried to the correct moisture content using the drying floor installed within the proposed shed. Dried piles of woodchips would be stored within the building.
- Some of the dried woodchips would be used to power the boiler to heat further woodchips. The remainder would be used to power the existing boiler that services the properties on location.

### Benefits

- The number of lorry log deliveries would be approx. 40 % less per annum than that of the current woodchip lorry – as more density of wood is being transported per lorry movement.
- The distances travelled by the lorries is less as it is easier to source sawn wood from nearby as opposed to the current woodchip lorry round trip of 4 hours.
- Woodchips will be processed at a reduced cost.
- This will sustain employment for the existing maintenance worker at Auchendennan.
- Will not be subject to delays/disruption to service that might occur with delivered woodchip energy from very limited distributors.

## **7 PLANNING ASSESSMENT**

7.1 The relevant issues to assess are:

- Policy assessment/ Principle of the development
- Siting and design
- Impact on amenity of neighbouring properties

### Policy assessment

7.2 The proposed use of the storage building would provide a sustainable source of fuel at the site, thus reducing the frequency and distance travelled by deliveries. This proposal therefore supports the existing business at Auchendennan Farm and also supports renewable energy generation from biomass. Therefore, the principle of development accords with the aims of National Park Local Plan Policies ED3 and REN3. The building would be used incidental to the existing use of the site and would be on land owned by the applicant. The storage building therefore does not introduce any new material changes of use to the area. Therefore, there are no policy implications regarding the principle of development. However, for the avoidance of doubt, it is recommended that a condition be imposed restricting the use as incidental to Auchendennan Farm.

7.3 An inspection of all of the existing buildings at Auchendennan Farm was carried out by the planning officer and it was confirmed that there was no other suitable building in which to house the proposed woodchip processing facility. These existing buildings are either fully occupied or too close to the houses and holiday let units. Regardless of this, the drying process requires an open bay building to provide adequate ventilation; hence, the proposal under consideration has taken account of these factors by positioning the building outwith the residential zone of the farm and in a building that is fit for its specific purpose.

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### Siting and Design

- 7.4 The design and appearance of the building is largely agricultural. Its form and scale would fit with the surrounding character and agricultural setting. The building is positioned close to, and below the ridgeline of, the existing workshop/store buildings. Furthermore, the extensive mature trees along the surrounding field boundaries will assist in screening the building from surrounding viewpoints. A limited and distanced view of the building may be possible from the A82, in the vicinity of Duck Bay Marina, but this is approx. 650 metres to the south-east and therefore of no significant concern. Overall, it is considered that the aforementioned characteristics of the proposed building and its site context will ensure that the building would not appear isolated and there would be no adverse landscape or visual impact as a result of the development
- 7.5 The proposed materials are acceptable and consistent with the rural buildings in the area. However, for the avoidance of doubt, it is recommended that conditions be imposed requiring that a sample of the proposed timber wall and roof sheeting and further details of the proposed formation and surfacing of the turning area be submitted for further approval.
- 7.6 In conclusion, the proposed design, siting and external appearance of the proposed building is considered to be acceptable and consistent with the National Park Local Plan Policies D1 and L1.

### Impact on amenity of neighbouring properties

- 7.7 The surrounding site and buildings are all owned by the applicant. However, regardless of the current ownership arrangements, it is considered that the siting and usage of this storage building would not result in any adverse impact on the amenity of neighbouring occupants at Auchendennan Farm. The nearest independent neighbouring properties are located approx. 250 metres to the south-east (Auchendennan Clock House & Stables) and are therefore sufficiently distanced to not be adversely impacted upon by any noise generated by the proposed activity.

## **8 CONCLUSION**

- 8.1 In conclusion, the incidental use of the building, which is to provide a sustainable source of biomass fuel to support the economic activity at Auchendennan Farm, is supported by Policies ED3 and REN3 of the National Park Local Plan. The proposal complies with the relevant Local Plan policies D1 and L1, as the siting and design of the building would be in keeping with the rural character, setting and built context of the site (having as it does, the appearance of an agricultural building); and the proposed use would not result in any adverse impact on the amenity of neighbours. The application raises no issues with respect to the National Park Aims. Therefore, it is recommended that planning permission be approved, subject to the conditions contained in Appendix 1.

**Background** <http://www.lochlomond-trossachs.org/planning/>

**Documents:** *Click on view applications, accept the terms and conditions then enter the search criteria as '2015/0204/DET'*

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

**Appendix 1**

**Planning Conditions**

1. **Restriction on use:** The building hereby approved shall be used solely in connection with, and incidental to, the farm, holiday let and business let management businesses based at Auchendennan Farm. No permission is given or implied for an alternative use of the building, access, or site unless a planning application is submitted to, and subsequently approved by, the Planning Authority. In the event that the building hereby approved is no longer required, the building shall, within four months of cessation of use, be demolished or removed and all down-takings removed from the site.

REASON: The proposal has been assessed as an incidental building to support the business at Auchendennan Farm and the approval of an alternative use would require to be assessed separately. In the wider landscape interests the building shall be removed if no longer required for the purposes applied for.

2. **Formation of New Turning Area:** Prior to commencing construction of the development hereby approved, details of how the new turning head access track to the storage building will be formed and a sample of the proposed surface finish material, shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. Thereafter, all works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure the track is formed and finished to an acceptable standard and to ensure that the appearance of the track is in keeping with the rural character of the surroundings.

3. **Wall and Roof materials:** Prior to the commencement of construction of the development hereby approved, a sample of the proposed timber boarding to be utilised on the walls and the roof sheeting of the building shall be submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Planning Authority. Thereafter, all works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the new building has an acceptable standard of appearance that is in keeping with the rural character of the surroundings.

**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.

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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. **Surface Water** - Disposal of surface water from the site should comply with General Binding Rules (GBRs) 10 and 11 of The Water Environment (Controlled Activities) (Scotland) Regulations 2005 (as amended). Details of the requirements of these GBRs can be found on SEPAs website or from your local SEPA office at: Balloch Office, Carrochan, Carrochan Road, Balloch G83 8EG (tel no. 01389 727770).