

Planning and Access Committee

Meeting: 24 February 2025

Agenda Item: 4

SUBMITTED BY: Director of Place APPLICATION NUMBER: 2024/0323/DET APPLICANT: Bluebell Ices Ltd LOCATION: Luss Car Park, Luss PROPOSAL: Change of use of land for the siting of a mobile snack van **NATIONAL PARK WARD:** Ward 5 - West Loch Lomond and Balloch **COMMUNITY COUNCIL** Luss and Arden AREA **CASE OFFICER:** Name: Alison Williamson Tel: 01389 722 610 E-mail: alison.williamson@lochlomondtrossachs.org

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1. Summary and reason for presentation

- 1.1. This report relates to a planning application for the change of use of land for the siting of a mobile snack van within Luss Car Park. It is proposed to site an ice cream van within a single car parking space at the southern end of the car park, adjacent to the public toilets.
- 1.2. The application is being presented to Committee, in accordance with the Scheme of Delegation, because an objection has been received from Luss and Arden Community Council.

2. Recommendation

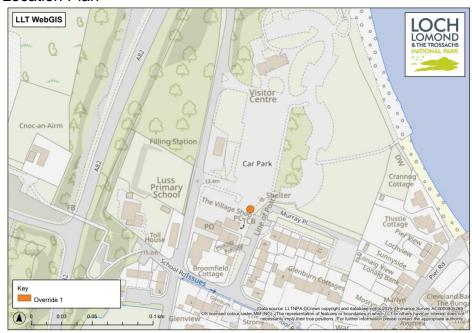
2.1. That Members:

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

3. Background

Site Description

- 3.1. The application site is a car parking space within Luss Car Park in Luss village. The car parking space is the first space adjacent to the public toilets and an area of extended pavement. There are also established (small scale) food and retail outlets at this location.
- 3.2. Location Plan



Site Description

3.3. Image of the application site (arrow indicates the car parking space)



Description of Proposal

- 3.4. The proposed development is the change of use of one parking space within Luss car park for the siting of a mobile snack van (ice cream van).
- 3.5. It is intended that the ice cream van would park in the car parking space identified and customers could access the vendor's window from the pavement area adjacent.

Planning History and background

- 3.6. The application site has no relevant planning history and has been used as a car parking space within the public car park for many years.
- 3.7. By way of background ice cream vans have been trading in Luss village for a number of years, located at the pier and car park. These ice cream vans did not benefit from the required planning permission.
- 3.8. Planning permission is required for the change of use of land and would include the siting of a mobile snack van, unless it is only for a short period of time. This is considered on a fact and degree basis and in the National Park is reasonably considered to be anything up to 30 minutes in the same spot. Under Class 15 of the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) temporary uses of land (for up to 28 days in any year) are

Planning History and background		
	permitted without the requirement to obtain planning permission. Luss however, is an area where the permitted development rights for all temporary uses of land under Class 15 have been removed by an Article 4 Direction. This means that planning control does apply to such temporary uses.	
3.9.	Ice cream vans are known to have been trading for periods of time longer than 30 minutes at Luss Pier and the car park which, as above, triggers the requirement for planning permission. This operator was advised by the National Park Authority that planning permission would be required.	
3.10.	The National Park Planning Authority was consulted on an application for a Street Traders Licence for an ice cream van at Luss Pier, by Argyll and Bute Council Licensing Authority in 2021. The National Park Planning Authority objected to the licence application due to the impacts on visitor enjoyment at this prominent site and iconic viewpoint on the loch shore. Nevertheless, a licence was granted by the Council.	
3.11.		
3.12.		

4. Environmental impact and habitat regulations assessment

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) 4.1. The National Park is identified as a 'Sensitive Area' within the Environmental Impact Assessment (Scotland) Regulations 2017. 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. 4.2. In this instance it has been determined that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is not required as the proposal is not within Schedule 1 or 2 of the Regulations.

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

4.3. The Habitats Regulations require that where an authority concludes that a development proposal is likely to have a significant effect on a European site (SPA or SAC) it must undertake an Appropriate Assessment (AA) of its implications for the European site in view of the site's conservation objectives.

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

4.4. In this instance an AA is not required as the proposed development would not impact upon any European protected species or designated sites.

5. Consultations and representations

Responses to Consultations

5.1. Argyll and Bute Council Roads Authority

It is recognised that following the implementation of the Restricted Parking Zone (RPZ) within the main village of Luss, only residents and business permit holders can park within the RPZ. As a result, ice cream van operators, such as this, are no longer legally permitted to operate from the location at the bottom of Pier Road, as was commonly the case.

The location proposed offers a substantial footway alongside the vehicle to permit pedestrians to gather or wait safely, away from the hazard of moving vehicles, whilst affording significant footway provision to ensure the safe access for all is retained.

Argyll and Bute Council Roads support the proposed location on the basis of a trial for 1 year, after which a review of the operation and any operational concerns and/or hazards will be undertaken.

Argyll and Bute Council Roads Authority have no objection to the proposed development, subject to a number of conditions including the 1 year trial period and the use of a "drop bollard" for the parking bay identified.

Argyll and Bute Council Environmental Health

No objections subject to a condition on the applicant completing an application for registration of a food business establishment and applying for a street trader licence. Environmental Health also recommended that design measures are used to inhibit the roosting and nesting of gulls.

Environmental Health recommended a condition requiring the operator to apply for a registration for a food business establishment and a street trader licence. This has been included as an informative.

Argyll and Bute Council Flood Authority

No response received.

Luss and Arden Community Council

Luss and Arden Community Council objected to the proposed development. The response from the community council outlined

Responses to Consultations

historical problems with the ice cream van when it was sited in the previous location, including running engines, fumes, excessive visitors, litter and inconsiderate parking. The community council commented that the proposed development would be contrary to the Local Place Plan Priority One to better balance the needs of locals and visitors to create a stronger community. The community council also raised concerns with regard to the appearance of the village, queuing customers and road safety, the increase to commercial activity in the village, the detrimental impact on residents and the businesses already providing this service in the village. The community council view is that the application would be detrimental to residents and visitors, the natural and historic environment and to the Park's net zero ambitions. The community council believe the proposed development is contrary to the National Park aims and is not supported by Overarching policies 1 and 2, Visitor Experience policies 1 and 2, Natural Environment Policy 1, Historic Environment policies 2 and 6.

Representations Receieved

- 5.2. In total 7 representations were received in objection to the application, including one from Luss and Arden Community Council.
- 5.3. In summary the matters raised in **objection** are:

Impact on local businesses:

- There are businesses that already sell ice cream in the village that pay rent and provide local jobs
- Competition with local businesses threatens local businesses by undercutting prices
- Proposal would provide no local jobs would not benefit the local economy
- The ice cream van will only trade in the busy summer months and will not contribute employment in the "off season"

Amenity affects:

- The vans are an eye sore in the village, conflicting with the villages historic character
- The vans are anti-social
- Pollution- constant loud noise and diesel fumes
- Visual eyesore and impact on traditional architectural and natural beauty of the area
- Negative impacts on residents of Murray Place
- Impact on the conservation area
- Potential damage to the tourism appeal of the scenic village

Representations Receieved

Road and pedestrian safety concerns:

- Safety concerns as the location is a bottleneck and queuing will force people onto the road and will restrict local elderly residents accessing the village shops
- Children will be at risk of being hit by vehicles

Other matters:

- Pier closure history- the kiosk on the pier has been closed for 3 years, largely due to illegal activities by previous ice cream vendors
- Querying why this proposal would be supported when the previous location of the ice cream van was not supported by the National Park
- 5.4. The agent provided a response to the objections received, including the following information:
 - The ice cream van will not require a diesel engine or external generator, all equipment in the van is electrically operated from internal batteries, which will be charged offsite overnight
 - The serving hatch will be at an expansive milling space and the location was selected in consultation with the Roads Authority, to ensure that there is ample space for queuing and other pedestrians
 - The applicant will be paying rent and employing staff
 - Disagree that that ice cream van will be an eyesore, it is to be located in a large public car park alongside other cars, vans and buses.
- 5.5. The points raised in objection are addressed within the planning assessment below.
- 5.6. The full content of the representations is available to view on the <u>National Park Authority's Public Access website</u>. Click on view applications, accept the terms and conditions then enter the search criteria as '2024/0323/DET'.

6. Policy context

The Development Plan

6.1. Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 states that planning applications are to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless other material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan comprises National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and the Loch Lomond & The Trossachs National Park Local Development Plan (LDP) (adopted 2017) along with Supplementary Guidance.

The Development Plan

6.2. National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4)

NPF4 is the fourth National Planning Framework for Scotland. It sets out the Scottish Governments priorities and policies for the planning system up to 2045 and how the approach to planning and development will help to achieve a net zero, sustainable Scotland by 2045. NPF4 supports the achievement of six overarching spatial principles (just transition, conserving and recycling assets, local living, compact urban growth, rebalanced development, and rural revitalisation) through the planning and delivery of sustainable, liveable and productive places. NPF4 contains 33 policies to guide development management decisions. The following NPF4 policies are relevant to this proposal:

Policy 1 - Tackling the climate and nature crises

Policy 4 - Natural places

Policy 14 - Design, quality and place

Policy 22 - Flood risk and water management

Policy 26 - Business and industry

Policy 28 - Retail

Policy 29 - Rural development

6.3. Local Development Plan (2017-2022)

The LDP outlines the vision for how the National Park should change over the next 20 years, including the strategy for development and the policy approach for key topics. There remains broad alignment between the LDP and NPF4 policies however, where any incompatibility does arise, then NPF4 prevails as the more recent policy. The following LDP policies are relevant to this proposal:

The following LDP Policies are relevant to the determination of this application:

- Overarching Policy 1: Strategic Principles
- Overarching Policy 2: Development Requirements
- Economic Development Policy 1: Economic Development in Towns and Villages
- Transport Policy 3: Impact Assessment and Design Standards of New Development
- Natural Environment Policy 1: National Park Landscapes, seascape and visual impact
- Natural Environment Policy 13: Flood Risk
- Retail Policy 1: Development in Towns and Villages

6.4. Supplementary Guidance

The adopted Supplementary Guidance provides support to the policies of the LDP and carries the same weight in the determination of applications. The Supplementary Guidance of relevance to this application comprises:

- Design and Placemaking
- West Loch Lomondside Rural Development Framework

Other Material Considerations

6.5. National Park Aims

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:

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

Section 9 of the Act 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.

6.6. National Park Partnership Plan (2024-2029)

All planning decisions within the National Park require to be guided by the National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP), where they are considered to be material, in order to ensure that they are consistent with the Park's statutory aims.

By 2045 the NPPP aims to deliver nine outcomes by focussing on 31 objectives from 2024-2029 which are listed under three themes: Restoring Nature, Creating a Low Carbon Place and Designing a Greener Way of Living. The following outcomes and objectives are relevant to this proposal:

Section 2.2: Improving Popular Places and Routes - 2045 Outcome: High quality visitor infrastructure and facilities.

Section 3.3: Developing and Investing in the National Park - 2045 Outcome: A responsive approach to new development.

3. Make the best use of land and assets

6.7. Local Place Plan

Luss and Arden Local Place Plan (2022-2030)

7. Summary of supporting information

Supporting Information

- 7.1. A supporting statement was submitted with the planning application which details the following:
 - The applicant has been selling ice cream, soft drinks and confectionary from a van parked adjacent to the pier in Luss, for many years
 - The Various Streets, Luss, Traffic Management Order 2023
 prohibits driving and parking vehicles within the controlled zone
 meaning that the applicant can no longer trade from the location at
 the pier
 - The applicant has agreed with Argyll and Bute Council, who own and operate the car park, that the ice cream could park and trade from the car park
 - The parking space selected (the application site) was chosen due
 to its proximity to other facilities used by visitors i.e. the car park,
 public toilets, shops and litter bins and the location of the
 application site adjacent to an area of pavement means that the
 applicant could trade from the side window of the ice cream van
 safely.
- 7.2. A Sustainability checklist was also completed for the planning application, which provided the following information:
 - The proposed development will provide a facility for local residents and visitors in a safer manner than before
 - The proposal will enhance the visitor experience with no negative impact on local residents
 - Adjacent businesses may be impacted by competition for trade, however this would be minimal as the ice cream van restricts its trade to a specialised corner of the market
 - The application site is within the Loch Lomond National Scenic Area
 - The application site is a car park for approximately 200 cars and 6 coaches

8. Planning assessment

Key Issues

- 8.1. The key issues for consideration in the determination of this application are:
 - Principle of development
 - Roads/car parking
 - Flood risk
 - Design
 - Impacts on amenity

Principle of Development

- 8.2. Mobile snack vans are generally considered under retail planning policies. Retail Policy 1 of the Local Development Plan (Development in Towns and Villages) supports new retail development within towns or villages where they:
 - (a) demonstrate a sequential test has been applied to the choice of location; favouring town and village central areas, and
 - (b) create no significant adverse impact on vitality and viability of the overall centre, and
 - (c) supports sustainable transport access by a range of transport modes.

NPF4 Policy 28 Retail also supports the 'town centre first' principle and supports new retail proposals in existing local centres. The policy supports proposals for retail that are of an appropriate scale for the location, will have an acceptable impact on the character and amenity of the area and are located to best channel footfall and activity, to benefit the place as a whole.

The proposal is for a small-scale retail use which would be within Luss village boundary, the preferred location for retail development. The proposal would therefore meet part (a) of Retail Policy 1.

With regard to the impact on the vitality and viability of the overall village centre, the mobile snack van would not affect the supply or use of existing retail units within the village and would therefore not adversely impact on its viability and vitality. Commercial competition is not a matter which can be taken into account.

The proposal would not have a significant adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the centre of Luss and would therefore comply with part (b) of Retail Policy 1.

The snack van would be accessible by a range of transport modes, as it would be centrally located in the main Luss car park where there is a bus stop and access from nearby footpaths and cycling and walking routes. The proposal would therefore support sustainable transport as required by part (c) of Retail Policy 1.

In terms of NPF4 Policy 28 a mobile snack van is of an appropriate scale for Luss Village with its small retail offering, the van would be located in an area of high footfall at the car park visitor hub area and would not have an unacceptable impact on the character and amenity of the area, given it is an established visitor hub.

8.3. Economic Development Policy 1 (Economic Development in Towns and Villages) provides support for new businesses where they are located in identified sites or appropriate gap sites within town or village maps. The

Principle of Development			
	proposed mobile snack van would be located at an appropriate site within the village, in accordance with Economic Development Policy 1. NPF4 Policy 26 Business and Industry supports proposals for business uses where they are compatible with the primary business function of the area. The mobile snack van is compatible with the car park area which is a busy visitor hub where the primary business function is visitor orientated.		
8.4.	The proposed development accords with the retail and economic development policies of the Local Development Plan and NPF4 and can therefore be supported in principle.		

Roads	
8.5.	Transport Policy 3 of the Local Development Plan requires all development proposals to be of a design and specification that are sensitive to the special qualities of the Park and to be in conformity with the design standards required by the Roads Authority. Argyll and Bute Council Roads Authority have advised that they have no objection to the proposed development subject to a number of conditions including any planning permission being for a 1-year trial period and the use of a "drop bollard" for the parking bay identified.
8.6.	Concerns were raised by individuals who have submitted representations in objection to the proposal with regard to the safety of the car park and the pedestrian area. The Roads Authority advised that the location proposed offers a substantial footway alongside the mobile snack van to permit pedestrians to gather or wait safely, away from the hazard of moving vehicles, whilst affording significant footway provision to ensure the safe access for all is retained.
8.7.	Given the small scale of the proposal and that it would occupy one car parking space within Luss Car Park, there would be minimal impacts on the car park capacity, given the number of other car parking spaces available. The West Loch Lomondside Rural Development Framework suggests that the gathering of refreshment and other facilities should be adjacent to the car park and the proposed development would support this.
8.8.	The proposal does not raise any concerns with regard to car parking, access and road safety and subject to the conditions recommended by the Roads Authority would meet the required specifications, in accordance with Transport Policy 3 of the Local Development Plan.
8.9.	The Roads Authority support the proposal on the basis of a one year trial period, after which time the potential operational concerns and hazards can be reviewed. A condition has therefore been recommended that a temporary planning permission is appropriate for that reason.

Flood Risk

8.10. The application site is an area identified to be at risk of surface water flooding. Argyll and Bute Council Flood Authority were consulted, however no response was received. Given the nature of the development proposed, there are no significant concerns with regard to flooding. The development is not considered to exacerbate surface water flooding as it would be located on an existing area of hardstanding. In addition, the parking of an ice cream van in the car parking space would be no different to a car or van which could ordinarily park in the parking space. The proposal would not impact on flood risk and would therefore comply with the Overarching Policies of the Local Development Plan, Natural Environment Policy 13 of the LDP and Policy 22 of NPF4.

Design

8.11. The policies of the Local Development Plan and NPF4 support high quality design which is appropriate to the sense of place. No specific details have been provided of the design and appearance of the ice cream van, however these details are not considered to be required or necessary. Modern ice cream vans are generally of a similar design and appearance and tend to be fairly colourful. In the context of the location, within a busy car park and commercial/retail area in the centre of Luss village, a generic, modern ice cream van would not adversely affect the visual amenity of the area. The ice cream van would be parked amongst other vehicles which could also be a range of colours and designs and amongst retail outlets, toilets, a phone box, water syphon, visitor information signage and parking signage, all of which would normally be expected to be present within such a visitor hub area.

Amenity

- 8.12. Concerns have been raised with regard to the potential impacts on the amenity of the area and nearby residents. Overarching Policy 2 of the Local Development Plan requires development proposals to avoid significant adverse amenity and environmental effects including noise and air emissions/odour/fumes. The agent has confirmed that the van would not require a diesel engine or a generator to be running. Argyll and Bute Council Environmental Health were consulted and have not raised any concerns with regard to noise or fumes.
- 8.13. The application site is a busy car park which is a visitor hub, with public toilets, retail outlets, bus stops and other visitor infrastructure. The location is suited to the proposed mobile retail use with the associated comings and goings. Litter bins are located very closeby to the application site and any litter associated with the mobile snack van can be disposed of easily.

Amenity

- 8.14. Objections refer to potential impacts on the Luss Conservation Area. The application site is not located within the conservation area but is close to the boundary. It is not unusual to see parked vehicles in a conservation area and given the context of the application site being a busy car park, there are no concerns with regard to the impact in this instance.
- 8.15. The proposed mobile snack van would not have significant adverse effects on the amenity of the area and would comply with Overarching Policy 2 of the Local Development Plan. As above, it is recommended that planning permission is granted for a one-year temporary period to enable review of the operation after this time.

Local Place Plan

- 8.16. The Luss Local Place Plan (2023) identifies community issues including excessive tourism with over commercialisation referenced, including ice cream vans. Aspirations include better management of visitors, parking and traffic and removing ice cream vans. Actions identified include improving visitor behaviour in Luss village- no further ice cream vans and street trading in the village core.
- 8.17. Whilst the Local Place Plan is a material consideration, the mobile snack van is supported in principle by the policies of the Local Development Plan. The Restricted Parking Zone in Luss was introduced to better manage visitors, parking and traffic, and has had the consequence that it is no longer possible for mobile snack vans to park within this area. The application site (the public car park) is however, considered a more appropriate location within the village for a mobile snack van than was the previous location down by the pier-head. This would not be an additional van but an alternative location which is considered much better suited to this proposed use.

9. Conclusion

In conclusion, the proposed mobile snack van accords with the retail and economic development policies of the Local Development Plan and NPF4 as it would be at an appropriate site, centrally located within Luss village, amongst other retail outlets and would support economic activity. The mobile snack van would not have significant adverse impacts on the amenity of the area and subject to the conditions recommended would accord with the requirements of the Road Authority, in compliance with Transport Policy 3 of the Local Development Plan.

It is recognised that the Local Place Plan references the removal of ice cream vans, however an ice cream van is not an inappropriate element within a tourism focused location, indeed it might be expected. There were particular issues with the van that operated at the previous pierhead location, and this proposal would not be an additional van, but an alternative location which is much more appropriate.

There are no concerns with regard to flood risk or design and given that the Roads Authority support the proposal on the basis of a one-year trial, it is recommended that planning permission is approved subject to the conditions as set out in appendix 1 – which includes a trial period by means of a temporary consent period of one year.

Appendix 1 Conditions

1. **Duration of Permission:** 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.

Reason: In accordance with section 58 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended).

2. Temporary Planning Permission: Unless prior permission is sought and obtained for its continued use for a further period the use of the land for the siting of a mobile snack van shall be discontinued one year from the date of implementation and the land shall be restored in accordance with a scheme of work that has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason: In order that a review of the operation can be undertaken by the Roads Authority, including operational concerns and hazards and any future application can be decided on the basis of this assessment.

3. Parking Bollard: The parking bay identified must be secured using a "drop bollard" or similar means. Details of the proposals for securing the parking bay must be submitted for the approval of the Planning Authority, in consultation with the Roads Authority, prior to installation.

Reason: To ensure the parking bay is suitably identified and the development meets with the standards of the Roads Authority, in accordance with Transport Policy 3 of the Local Development Plan.

Informatives:

- 1. 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.
- 2. 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.

- 3. **Other Consents**: The applicant is advised that an application for registration of a food business establishment is required as well as an application for a street trader licence. Contact should be made with Argyll and Bute Council in relation to these consents.
- Design Gulls: It is very strongly recommended that appropriate measures be taken in the design/location to inhibit the roosting and nesting of gulls. Such measures are intended to reduce nuisance to, and intimidation of, persons living, working and visiting.