

'Monymusk Triangle' Plan - Committee Agree To Site Visit On Bennachie

GORDON District Councillors are to take a trip up Bennachie next month to get a better idea of the effects implicated in the latest plans for the "Monymusk Triangle".

Councillor Raymond Bisset appealed to his fellow members at a recent planning meeting to agree to the jaunt as he felt that it would demonstrate the problems of altering the footpath and he said that the best views were gained from the "Monymusk Triangle", the only open side left on Bennachie.

Director of Planning Mr Bob Tinch told the planning committee that the latest application had cut back substantially the area to be planted with trees, but that problems still existed. He said: "A forward move on the issue was more likely if negotiations continued."

The Bailies of Bennachie maintain their original objections even though they accept that substantial changes have been made. They added that an access to cross country skiers would be lost, as would the view from the Heather Brig to the Mither Tap, and that the proposed electric fence is not appropriate on Bennachie. The North East Mountain Trust agree with the Bailies adding that the area is used extensively by the public including children. The Bailies have offered to maintain the Triangle path free of charge. "It seems unnecessary and undesirable to spend public money creating a new path," their letter stated.

Grampian Regional Council do not agree with many of the statements in the Bailies letter to the District Council, but feel that on balance the scheme should be accepted subject to the inclusion of native hardwoods in the upper level. At the moment proposals are for Douglas Fir which, according to the Bailies, seem inappropriate as the tree is prone to windblown in shallow soils and rocky locations.

The Countryside Commission for Scotland feel that although there are recreational advantages in keeping the Triangle free, the compromise is

a reasonable balance of interests and can be supported.

Mr Tinch recommended that the District Council retain its objection to the scheme as a whole, but accept the principle of planting in the reduced area. The Councillors decided to defer their decision until they have had a site visit.

EXTENSION

Pittodrie House Hotel, Pitcaple, "which has done a lot for Gordon District," according to chairman of the planning and development committee, Councillor Norman Donald, has been granted full planning permission delegated to the Director of Planning Mr Bob Tinch, for an extension to the hotel to form additional bedrooms and banqueting facilities.

The existing hotel is based on a complex house of several dates, the original section being an L-plan tower dating to the first half of the 17th Century. However, it is thought that the earliest part of it, a wheel stair, may be considerably older, possibly about 1490.

It is proposed to add a new extension to house a new banqueting hall with seats for 160-180 people and ancillary facilities, and sixteen bedrooms on the two upper floors. The design would include a balustrade terrace, two round towers and a square tower.

Some of the trees at the back of the hotel would be removed to allow for the extension itself and more would be removed to form

a new lawn with only a few trees remaining. A new carpark would also be formed within the wooded area for 67 cars. This parking area and new vehicle turning area would be provided with a separate access from the main hotel approach road.

According to Mr Tinch the Director of Planning: "This is an attractively designed and well thought out scheme."

TAKE AWAY

The Smithy Bar at Daviot has been granted full planning permission for the introduction of a fast food take away facility.

Mr A. Campbell of the Smithy Bar is proposing to make a small extension behind the main frontage of the Smithy Bar, in order to provide an adequate kitchen area and a small new waiting area for take away purposes.

Full planning permission was granted on the condition that litter bins are provided at the entrance and that the fast food facility will not be open outwith the hours of 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. any day of the week. Finally, the Director of Planning Mr Tinch stipulated that no vending or games machines shall be installed on the premises without his prior written consent.

HOME

Dunnydeer House at Insch was granted delegated powers for the change of its use and alterations to form a residential home for the elderly.

It is proposed to convert this large granite built house and nearby domestic garage/store into a residential home for the elderly, with nine bedrooms and two private bedrooms for staff.

