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# Design Statement

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**Project:**

Application for Planning Approval for New Dwelling House

**Address:**

Site East of The Old Schoolhouse  
Gairnsheil  
Ballater  
AB35 5UR

**Client:**

Invercauld Estate

**Job Number:**

2022-126

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**architectural design services**

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## Introduction

This is a design statement in accompaniment to the planning in application. It endeavours to demonstrate the suitability of the layout, siting, and design of a proposed new dwelling house.

## Site Analysis

Observations and a desktop study have been used as an indicator to inform the site analysis. The identified site is approximately 0.66 acres and is accessed off the A939 via an unnamed private track.

The site is located approximately 7 miles North-West of Ballater and consists of an open area of grass land. The North and East boundaries are defined by post and wire fencing, the West by the stone boundary wall of *Old Schoolhouse* and, the South by an existing gravel access track.

There is a gradual slope from West to East, with North to South being relatively level.

There is power nearby.

Using the Scotland's Environment web map, the surrounding area has been reviewed for points of interest highlighted below:

- Ancient Woodland inventory,
- Canmore points terrestrial,
- Conservation areas,
- Listed buildings,
- Sites of special scientific interest,
- Special areas of conservation

The site is not located in a conservation area. It is in the Cairngorm National Park.

Glengairn Parish Church located approximately 60m West of the proposed new house is 'B' listed [ref: LB9300].

Site Location



## **Cairngorm National Park Local Development Plan**

The proposal will be assessed against *Policy 1.2: Housing development in existing rural groups* and *Policy 3: Design & Placemaking*.

### **Policy 1.2**

Policy 1.2 notes that proposals must connect to, reinforce, and enhance the character of the group, and not add more than one third to the existing number of buildings.

The current grouping consists of two dwellinghouses – *The Old School* and, *Gairnshiel School House* – and *Glengairn Parish Church* plus ancillary buildings. The proposed application is for one dwelling, meeting the requirement of the grouping policy.

To allow the proposed dwelling to connect with the surrounding properties, it was decided to use materials and design details that complemented the existing buildings.

### **Policy 3.1 - Placemaking**

The LDP requires that proposals consider and address the six qualities of successful places. It should be noted that several of the qualities are aimed towards developments of multiple houses or units, that have a greater impact on public perception, and use, when compared to single dwelling proposals. When proposing single domestic dwellings, it is understood that these qualities are met as far as is reasonably practical, recognising the scale of the development being proposed.

#### **- Distinctive:**

Distinctive can be broken down into several key factors, including Building Line, Settlement Pattern, Boundary Treatments, Detailing, Form and Materials. Together these elements come together to create distinctive developments.

The existing properties have a defined build line and pattern where the further East the plot is from the A939, the further North the property is located. The proposal continues this established pattern.

Traditional roof pitches with natural slate finishes are proposed alongside dormer windows, inspired by the detailing and form of the existing properties.

#### **- Welcoming:**

The requirement to provide a welcoming development is predominately aimed towards larger proposals where it is expected that there would be greater numbers of public coming and going. This is evident in the requirement to '*favour an informal building layout*' and '*Integrated communal or shared spaces.*'

For single property proposals welcoming can be met as far as is reasonably practicable by using appropriate boundary treatments and landscaping to assist in settling the development into the area. There are existing post and wire fencing to the north and east boundaries. It is proposed to continue this type of fencing to the south boundary.

#### **- Adaptive:**

This quality is again aimed towards larger developments where future needs can be met through a balanced provision of land uses, building types, density, sizes, and tenures. In terms of single dwelling developments adaptable can be encompassed by the provision of a building that adapts to the needs of the occupants.

The design allows for changing circumstances of the occupants by providing ample space within the site for the provision of alterations and extensions in the future should the need arise.

- Safe and Pleasant:

Safe and pleasant for individual properties can take the form of protecting privacy and amenity of existing neighbouring properties while ensuring the proposal has adequate private garden grounds for the occupants. The proposed development provides this.

- Resource Efficient:

With current high energy prices, material prices and the importance applied to reducing carbon footprint, it is necessary for new developments to be conscientious of resource efficiency. Improving resource efficiency can be done in a variety of ways.

- Space heating and hot water –

A high-performance air source heat pump is proposed as a renewable energy source for space and water heating. These systems can be up to 300% efficient in summer, while less so in winter months due to colder air temperatures. However, this is offset through the provision of a highly insulated home which requires far lower heating demand compared to older properties.

- Solar PV –

Solar panels producing renewable electricity aid in reducing the properties reliance on the national grid and can aid in offsetting the electricity demand of the air source unit. Solar water heating is not proposed as the heat pump will be designed to provide 100% of the property's heating and hot water requirements. 4kw of solar panels are included in the proposed development.

- Materials –

Whilst it is not possible to eliminate transporting of materials to a building site, it is possible to reduce excessive travel by sourcing materials appropriately. One of the main items in the building is timber, for both structural framing and cladding. A timber frame reduces on-site wastage by being made to order in a factory and delivered to site ready to erect. Depending on manufacturer, windows, doors, and insulation can all be factory fitted. Reducing overall travel requirements.

- Easy to Move Around and Beyond:

For a single dwellinghouse outside of a settlement boundary, there are limitations to the provision of active travel due to being located away from established public transport routes. While the site is within cycling distance of Ballater, the predominant mode of transport will be vehicular.

Though the negative association with combustion vehicles is set to diminish as electric vehicles become the predominant/ only choice available in the future. To allow for this, EV charging has been provided as part of the development - located in the garage - to encourage the use of electric vehicles.

**Policy 3.3 - Sustainable Design**

There are several aspects relating to Sustainable Design. The following are the most onerous.

- Minimise the effect of the development on climate change (in terms of siting and construction),
- Be sympathetic to the traditional pattern and character of the surrounding area,
- Use materials and landscaping that will complement the setting of the development and,
- Respects the design, massing, proportions, materials, and general visual appearance of the area.

In addition to providing a property that is well insulated to meet the current building regulations, the proposal will benefit from two sources of renewable energy production. A high-performance air-source heat pump will provide all the space heating and hot water

demand annually, whilst a 4kW solar PV array will provide electricity generation to help lower overall energy demand from the main grid.

EV car charging point is also proposed within the garage.

-General Arrangement and siting of development:

*Access*

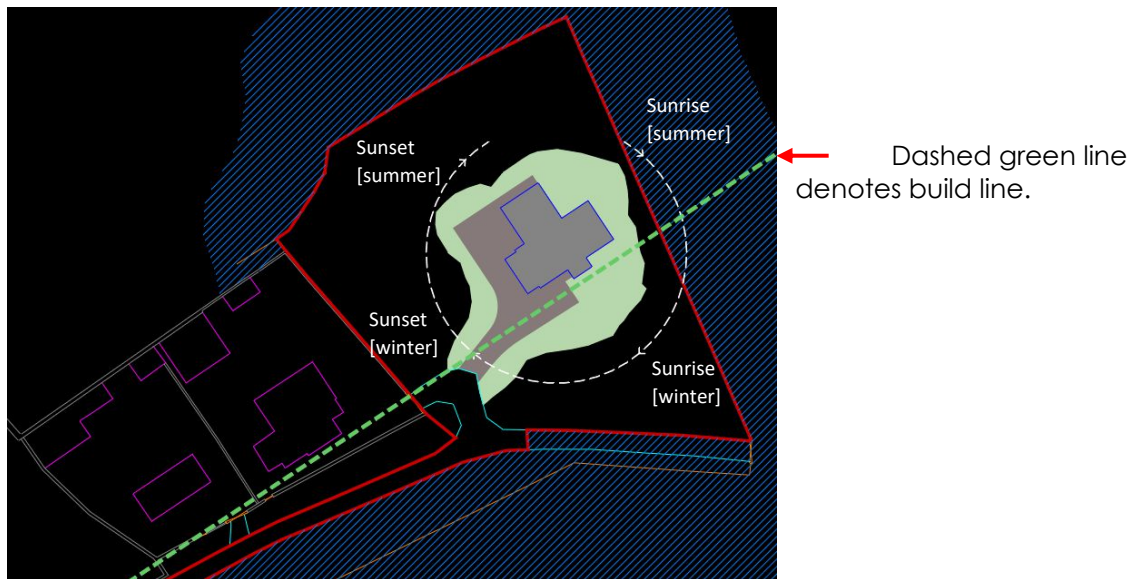
The site is accessed via an un-named gravel track off the A939 with arrival to the site in the South-West corner. The driveway has been kept small to maximise the garden ground around the property.

*Form*

The proposed dwelling is a rectangular footprint 1½ storey form with a traditional roof pitch. A square element to the rear of similar proportions allows for an integral double garage with master bedroom over.

*Position and Orientation*

The proposed dwelling is orientated south-east to match the neighbouring properties and is positioned central on the site. The positioning allows the proposed dwelling the match the established build line of the existing properties – noted previously, the further East the plot, the further north the dwelling is located.



Positioning of the property has the benefit of allowing a small solar array to take advantage of direct sunlight afforded to the southern aspect. Located high up on the roof between the dormer windows to limit overshadowing, a solar array integrated with the slate finish will provide a supply of renewable electricity generation to assist in offsetting the cost to run the ASHP. An additional solar array can be located on the South-West elevation.

*Design Details*

The properties adjacent the proposal are natural granite constructions with slate roofs, with one property including dormer windows. The outbuildings are finished with timber cladding and metal profile roofing.

Further West, Glengairn church features a white harling finish with natural slate roof finish.

The proposal takes inspiration from the local vernacular and features a predominately rendered wall finish with elements of vertical treated timber cladding, complete with a

natural slate roof. Dormer windows and a central entrance porch create a traditional symmetrical aesthetic that is common throughout the wider surrounding areas.