

**Report Title:** Aviemore Centre Masterplan  
**Issue Date:** 28<sup>th</sup> November 2007  
**Client/Developer:** Aviemore Highland Resorts Ltd  
**Lead Designer:** GH Johnston Building Consultants Ltd  
**Local Authority:** Cairngorms National Park Authority  
**Location:** Aviemore  
**Planning Ref:** 07/445/CP  
**Details:** Proposals for an indicative masterplan for mixed use development for the Aviemore Centre, in the Cairngorms National Park



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## INTRODUCTION

This report relates to an indicative masterplan for mixed use development for the Aviemore Centre that has been submitted as part of an outline application. The masterplan was discussed at a Design Review meeting in Aviemore on 15 November 2007.

The project was presented by a representative of G. H. Johnston Building Consultants.

The meeting was also attended by representatives of Cairngorms National Park Authority.

## A+DS VIEWS

### 1. Masterplan

1.1 We welcome the commitment from the project team to produce a masterplan; however, the information presented cannot be described as such. There is an absence of any 3D illustrative material, and nothing to describe the spatial sequence or the quality of the spaces that are intended.

1.2 We understand that a masterplan is being prepared for the wider Aviemore area and we urge the project team, and everyone associated with this proposal, to collaborate with the appointed masterplanners and neighbouring land owners to ensure this project is integrated with both its local and wider context.

1.3 We suggest that the Aviemore masterplan, prepared in the late 1990's and adopted as supplementary planning guidance, should form a basis for an updated proposal. This presents a more structured and bolder approach to place making; where buildings shape space, rather than being objects surrounded by space. It also promotes an approach which unites the resort with the town, rather than treating them as separate entities.

1.4 The project is located in a stunning landscape setting, yet there is no indication of how this has informed and reinforced the design. We encourage the appointment of a recognised landscape architect to develop a detailed landscape proposal and establish a structured framework to guide the development.

### 2. Distribution road

2.1 We consider that the road solution being proposed is not acceptable or appropriate in this environment, and every effort should be made to subjugate the car and promote what the resort offers to visitors on foot and bike.

2.2 We question the location and necessity for a new distribution road. It is being dictated by traffic engineering requirements rather than place-making considerations that recognise the

benefits of making streets framed by buildings. Being conceived for traffic rather than people movement it will be a barrier to integration, thereby limiting future possibilities.

2.3 We suggest that better use be made of the existing road network to distribute traffic movement through and around the village. The existing infrastructure is closer to the heart of the community, and the incorporation of shared surface areas would assist in reclaiming public space for pedestrians whilst offering the opportunity to provide cross cutting connections directly to the town centre.

### **3. Land uses**

3.1 We welcome and support the intention to create a mixed use development; however, the design promotes a zoned approach that separates and disperses uses, rather than integrating them.

3.2 We are concerned at the proposal to disperse retail uses, which will be detrimental to and weaken the existing high street. A denser more compact proposal should be adopted that concentrates and intensifies retailing activity closer to the existing town centre and the paths that connect directly to it.

3.3 From the information available we have concerns about the proposals for the residential layout. There is poor definition of public / private space, an inconsistent approach to front and back relationships, large areas of unbroken car parking, and a layout that relies heavily on boundary screening treatments. The designs should take account of National Planning Policy and guidance, in particular Designing Places, and PANs 67, 72 and 76. The applicants should be encouraged to consider the introduction of home zones.

3.4 We are uncertain about what is proposed for the large area of green space in front of the Four Seasons Hotel. We caution against the loss of this amenity space which is a defining feature and contributes to Aviemore's unique character.

### **4. General**

4.1 We suggest that greater investment in design could result in economic benefits for the resort, and are concerned that more commercially viable possibilities are being overlooked. A more considered approach might reveal opportunities for a denser form of development, which considers its relationship to Aviemore as a whole rather than as an isolated and remote element.

### **CONCLUSION**

We thank those attending for their presentation. We welcome the intention to create a high quality masterplan but do not support the proposal in its current form. There is little, if any, quality in what is being proposed and the design fails to make a positive contribution to the landscape character or meet the aspirations contained in the national planning policy document 'Designing Places'.

We urge everyone associated with this project to collaborate with the newly appointed masterplanners for the wider Aviemore area to ensure that the spatial and design quality is integrated with the wider area, and is of a standard appropriate for a gateway entry to the National Park.

Much further design work is required and we wish to be consulted on any amended proposal, and to be informed at the earliest possible opportunity should the planning authority be minded to recommend approval of this 'masterplan' as a supporting document to any outline planning application.

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