

Agenda Item	6.4
Report No	PLS/31/26

HIGHLAND COUNCIL

Committee: South Planning Applications Committee

Date: 13 May 2026

Report Title: 26/00402/FUL: Aviemore Gin Society Limited
Guest Accommodation, The Old Minister's House, Inverdrue,
Aviemore
PH22 1QH

Report By: Area Planning Manager South

Purpose/Executive Summary

Description: Change of use of guest house to short term let

Ward: 20 - Badenoch and Strathspey

Development category: Local

Reason referred to Committee: Objection from Aviemore and Vicinity Community Council

All relevant matters have been taken into account when appraising this application. It is considered that the proposal accords with the principles and policies contained within the Development Plan and is acceptable in terms of all other applicable material considerations.

Recommendation

Members are asked to agree the recommendation to **GRANT** the application as set out in section 11 of the report

1. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 1.1 The proposal seeks a change of use from guest house (Class 7) to short-term let (sui generis). No external alterations to the building are proposed as part of this application.
- 1.2 Pre Application Consultation: None
- 1.3 Supporting Information:
- Supporting statement
 - Policy assessment
- 1.4 Variations: None

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The Old Minister's House is a large, detached 6-bedroom stone villa, approximately 1.3km to the southeast of Aviemore. It is to the north of, and accessed directly from the B970, and has a mix of neighbouring commercial and residential uses.
- 2.2 To the northwest lies TreeZone, a commercial outdoor activity provider. To the southeast is River Cottage built within the grounds of The Old Minister's House (18/03562/FUL). Further to the southeast are The Barn at Rothiemurchus, which operates as a café and gallery, and the Rothiemurchus Farm Shop, which provides retail services. Aside from River Cottage, all neighbouring premises are commercial in nature and operate primarily during daytime hours.
- 2.3 The B970 bounds the site to the west, while the River Druie forms the eastern boundary. There is a hot tub / BBQ area located in the North of the site and parking to the West.
- 2.4 The property has operated as a guest house since 1999, following the granting of planning permission (99/00274/FULBS); and since 2019 as a short-term holiday let. As this later use constituted a material change of use that required planning permission, the current application seeks to regularise that use retrospectively.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

- | | | | |
|-----|--------------|--|---------|
| 3.1 | 18/03562/FUL | Erection of house | Granted |
| 3.2 | 17/05027/FUL | Alterations and extensions | Granted |
| 3.3 | 12/01498/FUL | Extension to house | Granted |
| 3.4 | 10/04697/FUL | Erection of 3 No. self catering units within garden ground together with associated parking and paths. | Granted |
| 3.5 | 10/04738/FUL | Extension to form Study and En-Suite Bathroom to Owner's Accommodation | Granted |

		including formation of new window and decking	
3.6	04/00339/OUTBS	Erection of chalet comprising 2 flatted units for holiday let	Granted
3.7	04/00340/FULBS	Conservatory Extension	Granted
3.8	02/00360/FULBS	Extension to guest house and erection of new garage/log store	Granted
3.9	99/00274/FULBS	Change of use to guest house	Granted

4. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

4.1 Advertised: Strathspey and Badenoch Herald

Date Advertised: 12.03.2026

Representation deadline: 02.04.2026

Timeous representations: 0

Late representations: 0

4.2 Material considerations raised are summarised as follows:

N/A

4.3 All letters of representation are available for inspection via the Council's eplanning portal which can be accessed through the internet

<https://www.highland.gov.uk/planning/view-comment-planning-applications>.

5. CONSULTATIONS

5.1 Aviemore & Vicinity Community Council – Object. In May 2024 Aviemore & Vicinity Community Council agreed we would object to all new applications for short term lets within the community council boundary in line with our support for the short term let control zone. We feel that the need for accommodation for people to live and work permanently in our community greatly outstrips the need for further holiday accommodation, which the local economy cannot currently adequately support.

5.2 Cairngorms Notification of Application – No call in

6. DEVELOPMENT PLAN POLICY

The following policies are relevant to the assessment of the application

6.1 **National Planning Framework 4 (2023) (NPF4)**

Policy 1 - Tackling the Climate and Nature Crises

Policy 2 - Climate Mitigation and Adaptation

Policy 3 - Biodiversity

Policy 14 - Design Quality and Place
Policy 29 - Rural Development
Policy 30 – Tourism

6.2 **Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan (CNPLDP) (2021)**

2 - Supporting Economic Growth

3 - Design and Placemaking

Cairngorm National Park Guidance

2 - Supporting Economic Growth, Non-statutory Guidance

3 - Sustainable Design, Non-statutory Guidance

7. **OTHER MATERIAL POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

7.1 **Scottish Government Planning Policy and Guidance**

Planning Circular 1/2023: short-term lets and planning

7.2 **Highland Council guidance and advice**

Highland Council Non-Statutory Short-Term Let Control Area Planning Policy

8. **PLANNING APPRAISAL**

8.1 Section 25 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Determining Issues

8.2 This means that the application requires to be assessed against all policies of the Development Plan relevant to the application, all national and local policy guidance and all other material considerations relevant to the application.

Planning Considerations

8.3 The key considerations in this case are:

- a) compliance with the development plan and other planning policy;
- b) impact of loss of residential use;
- c) impact on amenity and character of the area;
- d) impact on infrastructure and services; and
- e) other material considerations

Development plan/other planning policy

8.4 Planning permission is sought for the change of use from a guest house (Class 7) to a short-term holiday let (sui generis). The property operated as a guest house between 1999 and 2019. Since 2019, it has been used as a self-catering holiday

let. The change of use from a guest house to a short-term let is considered to be a material change; therefore, planning permission is required.

- 8.5 The Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan (CNPLDP) has policies that support tourism development, including provision of tourist accommodation, but does not have a specific policy on the change of existing buildings to short term lets. The principal policy that this proposal must be considered against is therefore NPF4 Policy 30 (Tourism).
- 8.6 NPF4 Policy 30 e) Tourism sets out that the reuse of existing buildings for short term holiday letting will not be supported where the proposal will result in:
- i. An unacceptable impact on local amenity or the character of a neighbourhood or area; or
 - ii. The loss of residential accommodation where such loss is not outweighed by demonstrable local economic benefits.
- 8.7 NPF4 policy 29 (Rural development) supports proposals that contribute to the viability, sustainability and diversity of rural communities and local rural economy will be supported, including diversification of existing businesses - such as this guest house (99/00274/FULBS)).
- 8.8 Additionally, the proposal would accord with CNPLDP Policy 3 (Design and Placemaking) which notes (at 3.5) that converting existing building stock will be considered favourably where: a) the building is redundant for its original use, and is unlikely to have a commercial or economic future in its current form; b) the conversion works maintain the style and character of the original building in terms of form, scale, materials and detailing, where they contribute positively to the context and setting of the area; and c) it does not introduce a more vulnerable use in terms of flood risk.
- 8.9 Accordingly, providing that the loss of the guest house to short term let can be justified on the grounds that it would not lead to an unacceptable impact on local amenity or the character of the neighbourhood or area, support the local economy and contribute to the viability, sustainability and diversity of rural communities by diversification of (an existing) rural businesses, then it would accord with the Development Plan.

Impact of loss of residential use

- 8.10 The proposed change of use does not result in the loss of a residential dwelling, as the property was converted to a guest house (Class 7) under permission 99/00274/FULBS and has not functioned as a private residence since its conversion in 1999. Consequently, the site does not form part of the active housing stock available for permanent residential occupation.
- 8.11 Furthermore, the scale and nature of the property, comprising six bedrooms and multiple communal rooms, places it beyond the affordability range of most local households, including key workers and families. In this context, the continued use of the property for short-term holiday letting is not considered to have a detrimental impact on the availability of residential accommodation in the area.

Impact on amenity and character of the area

- 8.12 The site sits to the southeast of Aviemore within an area mainly characterised by a mix of commercial/outdoor/tourism uses, including accommodation provision. The property has been used for tourism accommodation – as a guest house – since 1999.
- 8.13 The previous use involved multiple guests staying and using the building and garden independently. The current short term let use, which has taken place since 2019, and which the current application seeks to regularise, would typically accommodate a single family or associated group, representing a lower and more contained intensity of use to a guest house.
- 8.14 Accordingly, it is considered that the proposal would not generate amenity impacts beyond those historically associated and accepted with the use of the site as a guest house.
- 8.15 Additionally, this short term let use would maintain continuity of this tourism accommodation use and therefore would be consistent with, and maintain, the established amenity and character of the area.
- 8.16 The neighbouring TreeZone, The Barn at Rothiemurchus, and the Rothiemurchus Farm Shop are all daytime or visitor-focused activities that are likely to be used by the proposed development's guests. The only neighbouring residential property is River Cottage, 15m to the southeast. It is separated from the site by a well-established garden with mature planting and hedging.
- 8.17 Given this separation distance, the garden, planting and boundary treatments, and long-established guest house use of the property, it is not considered that the proposed use as a short term let would result in any significant, or additional adverse impacts on the amenity of River Cottage through noise, overlooking, or loss of privacy.

Impact on infrastructure and services

- 8.18 A parking area for 5 cars is available within the curtilage of the site, accessed from long-established access points to the public road.
- 8.19 The developer has advised that refuse is stored in bins on-site and transferred by guests or cleaners to the roadside waste storage area; and general waste is sorted for recyclables by operators; glass recycling is not available at the property, and visitors are instructed to take bottles and glass to the nearest recycling point. Private service management arrangements are in place from Aviemore based companies at the property.

Other material considerations

8.20 There are no other material considerations.

Non-material considerations

8.21 None

Matters to be secured by Legal Agreement / Upfront Payment

8.22 None

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 The proposed change of use of The Old Minister's House from a guest house (Class 7) to a short-term holiday let (sui generis) seeks to regularise an existing use that has been operating since 2019. The property has historically accommodated visitors to the area and is well suited to short-term letting, given its scale, layout, and location.

9.2 The proposal does not reduce local housing stock, as the property has operated as a guest house since 1999 and has not been used as a private residence during that time. Its size and layout also make it unsuitable and unaffordable for typical local households. Therefore, its continued use as a short-term holiday let is not considered to adversely affect the supply of permanent residential accommodation within the area.

9.3 Furthermore, it is not considered to have an unacceptable impact on either the character or the amenity of the area and would therefore meet with the requirements of NPF4 Policy 30 e) part (i); and NPF4 Policy 29 (Rural development) as the proposal would support and contribute to the viability, sustainability and diversity of rural communities and the local rural economy, including the diversification of rural businesses (such as this existing guest house).

9.4 All relevant matters have been taken into account when appraising this application. It is considered that the proposal accords with the principles and policies contained within the Development Plan and is acceptable in terms of all other applicable material considerations.

10. IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Resource: Not applicable

10.2 Legal: Not applicable

10.3 Community (Equality, Poverty and Rural): Not applicable

10.4 Climate Change/Carbon Clever: Not applicable

10.5 Risk: Not applicable

10.6 Gaelic: Not applicable

11. RECOMMENDATION

Action required before decision issued N

Notification to Scottish Ministers N

Conclusion of Section 75 Obligation N

Revocation of previous permission N

Subject to the above actions, it is recommended to **GRANT** the application subject to the following conditions and reasons:

None.




REASON FOR DECISION

All relevant matters have been taken into account when appraising this application. It is considered that the proposal accords with the principles and policies contained within the Development Plan and is acceptable in terms of all other applicable material considerations.

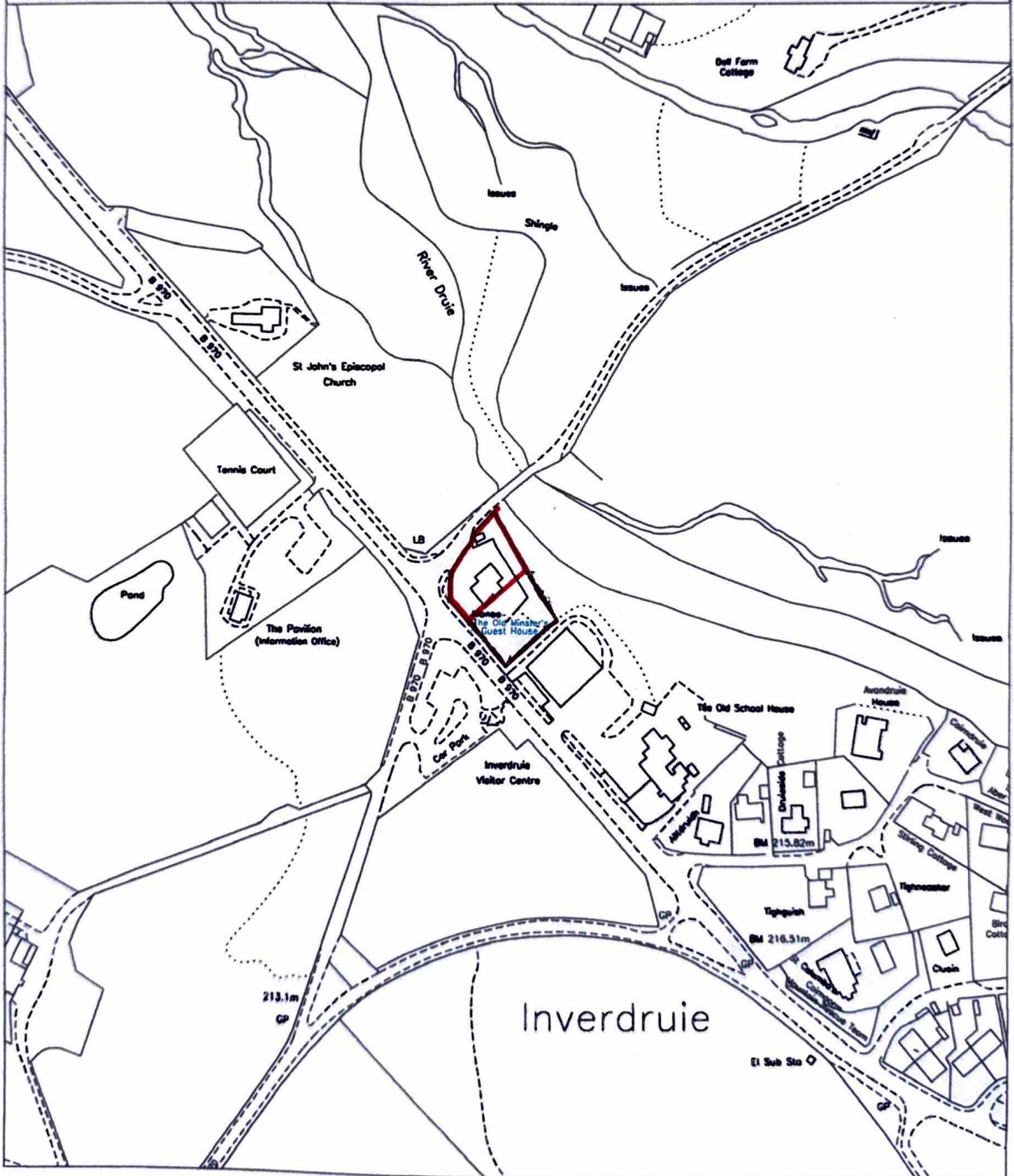
INFORMATIVES

None.

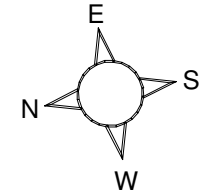
Signature: Bob Robertson
Designation: (Acting) Planning Manager South
Author: Ross Cubey
Background Papers: Documents referred to in report and in case file.
Relevant Plans: Plan 1 INV15225 – Location Plan
Plan 2 DIG/8514778/GBR – Floor Plan
Plan 3 100 – Site Layout Plan

 LAND REGISTER OF SCOTLAND	Officer's ID / Date	TITLE NUMBER
	9995 4/8/2009	INV15225
 ORDNANCE SURVEY NATIONAL GRID REFERENCE	 140m	
	Survey Scale 1/2500	
NH8910 NH9010 NH8911 NH9011		

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The Old Ministers House, Inverdrue
 Internal area 3,481 sq ft (323 sq m)



Boot Room
 2.63 x 2.48
 8'8" x 8'2"
 (Maximum)

Kitchen
 4.84 x 4.07
 15'11" x 13'4"
 (Maximum)

Kitchen
 3.88 x 2.18
 12'9" x 7'2"

Laundry
 3.85 x 2.20
 12'8" x 7'3"
 (Maximum)

Living Room 2
 4.67 x 3.30
 15'4" x 10'10"
 (Maximum)

Principal
 Bedroom
 4.67 x 3.22
 15'4" x 10'7"

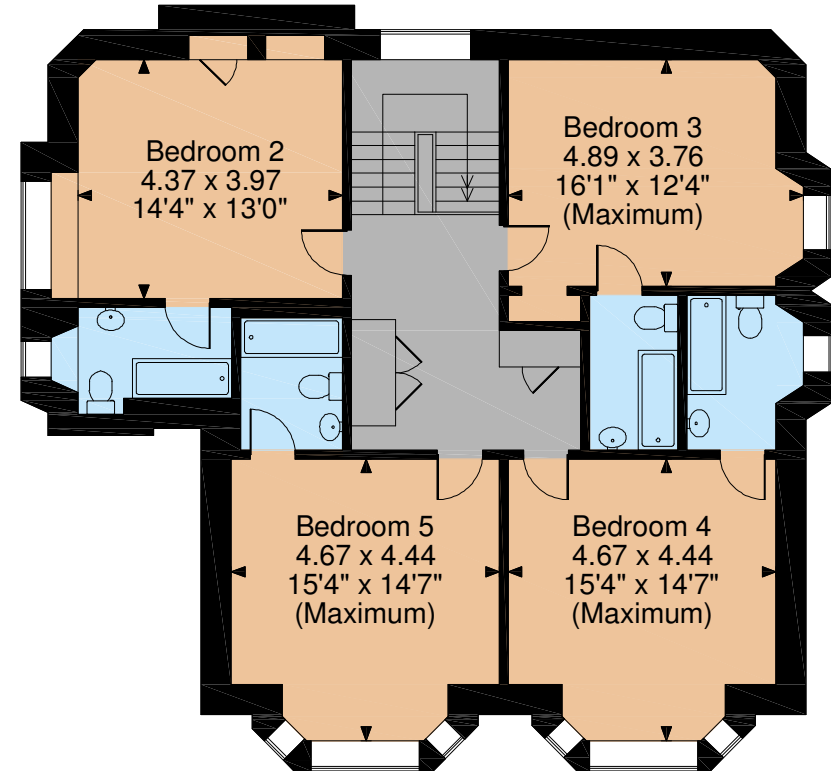
3.65 x 2.97
 12'0" x 9'9"
 (Maximum)

Dining Room
 5.74 x 4.88 F/P
 18'10" x 16'0"
 (Maximum)

Living Room 1
 5.91 x 4.88
 19'5" x 16'0"
 (Maximum)

Bedroom 6
 4.51 x 4.45
 14'10" x 14'7"
 (Maximum)

Ground Floor

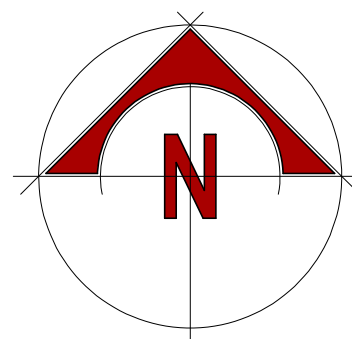


First Floor

FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY - NOT TO SCALE

The position & size of doors, windows, appliances and other features are approximate only.

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ACTIVITY CENTRE

Cycle Path

LB

HOT TUB / BBQ AREA

THE OLD
MINISTERS HOUSE

B 970

B 970

Car Park

THE OLD SCHOOL HOUSE

Note
The contractor will be held to have checked all dimensions before commencing with any works and, in the event of discrepancies, is to refer them directly to this office for clarification prior to commencement of work.
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project
THE OLD MINISTERS HOUSE, AT AVIEMORE

client
GREAT NORTH LODGES

detail
SITE PLAN



D KELLY DESIGN
Architectural Consultant

Queen Anne House • 111 High Street
Fort William • PH33 6DG
Tel: 01397 700999 • Fax: 01397 700888

scale 1: 250 date 24: 02: 26

job no. 26/013 drg no. 100 drawn D. KELLY

