

KEMNAY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Chair: Dr Sheila A Simpson FRCP
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**Sunnyvale
Kemnay
Inverurie
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Cc: Garioch Area Committee

16th October 2015

Ms Lindsey Geddes
Planning Officer
Infrastructure Services
Planning & Building Standards
Gordon House
Blackhall Road
INVERURIE
AB51 3WA

Dear Ms Geddes

APP/2015/3072 Erect 8 Town Houses at Bennachie Lodge Hotel, Kemnay

Having now considered this planning application, Kemnay Community Council would comment as follows:

1. We are generally pleased to see proposals for one bedroom properties in Kemnay, which obviously have potential for conversion of the family room to a second bedroom. In this respect, we would suggest that the bathroom / wc should not be en-suite but accessed from the hallway, which in any case would provide a more convenient wc access if the family room were retained.
2. We are pleased to note that all trees will be retained, but great care should be taken to ensure that the roots and canopies of the trees along Victoria Terrace are not damaged.
3. It seems odd that the balconies will face Bennachie Lodge Hotel to the southwest instead of Place Of Origin to the northeast. We feel this would be a more aesthetically pleasing feature for residents.
4. We are disappointed with the lack of detail regarding building materials. Whilst the proposed design is contemporary and out of keeping with the design of surrounding residential properties, it is not displeasing. Given the lack of information in this respect, we would suggest that the visual impact could be mitigated by using materials that are sympathetic to the surrounding residential properties, in particular Bennachie Lodge Hotel, which is the dominant building and provides the setting for this development. There are particularly attractive and suitable granite stones which are presently incorporated into the gable of the ancillary building which is due to be demolished. We suggest that these stones be recycled and used in the proposed development.
5. There is a lack of information about dimensions in the proposal, but it would appear that No. 1 and 8 do not comply with the 1:2 plot ratio standard, which require 1 part garden ground to 2 parts built house footprint. Properties 6 and 7 only meet that requirement with additional garden ground to the front.
6. Parking and access / egress problems along the Parkhill road are an acute concern regarding this development. Daily movement of 16 cars per day through the proposed access / egress on to Parkhill Road may interfere significantly with the operation of the neighbouring and long established Kirkstyle Land

Rover Garage. Customer cars regularly are parked on a daily basis along Parkhill Road, either waiting to be serviced or having been serviced. This will make access / egress considerably more difficult for residents of the proposed development.

7. (a) The parking requirement of 16 spaces has been achieved by providing 8 covered car ports on the ground floor level. Looking at recent nearby developments, garages are generally too small for average family cars, which can be driven into the garage but car doors cannot be opened in order to allow drivers to leave the car. This often results in garages being used for storage and cars are left parked in the driveway. It is important that the car ports in this development are of a practical useable size so that residents are able to conveniently use the space for parking and will not have to resort to parking outside their properties where there is insufficient room. The other alternative of parking in Parkhill Road will only exacerbate the problems outlined in paragraph 6 above. A further alternative of using the Bennachie Lodge Hotel car park will inevitably lead to disputes with the hotel owner.

(b) The 8 car ports indicate that the car will be parked flush to the right hand side of the car port; this would mean that the driver could not open the car door unless they reversed into the car port, which would be difficult and would not be the preferred option. In this respect it would be better to park on the left hand side of the car port and relocate the bin store door from the car port to the external north east wall.

8. The applicant has not indicated that any sustainability support systems will be utilised. For example, there are no solar thermal panels included for water heating.

9. Finally, it is regrettable that the proposed development will not be suitable for residents or visitors in wheelchairs, given that the only access will be by stairs. If the number of town houses could be reduced to 6 units, it may be possible to dispense with the contrived ground floor car ports and create equal opportunity houses that can be purchased and visited by wheelchair users. An entrance at ground floor level without stairs would also make the houses suitable for elderly people, contemplating downsizing.

We look forward to reading of the outcome of this proposal.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Sheila A Simpson FRCP
Chair, Kemnay Community Council

David Evans
Kemnay Community Council