

Grounds of Review

1. We respectfully request a review of Moray Council's decision to refuse planning permission for application 25/00549/APP (erection of modular outbuilding for cat boarding facility at Stewart Place, Garmouth).
2. The refusal rests on two grounds: (1) alleged adverse impact on residential amenity due to activity/traffic/noise, and (2) alleged poor design harming the Conservation Area, Special Landscape Area, and listed building setting. I submit that both grounds are unsupported by the evidence before the Council.

Residential Amenity

3. The Council's own consultees – Transportation Manager and Environmental Health – raised *no objections*. Transportation confirmed sufficient parking, safe access, and minimal traffic impacts subject to conditions.
4. Environmental Health did not require a Noise Impact Assessment and raised no concerns about noise or odour
5. The cattery is strictly limited to 8 suites, run solely by the resident, with no staff, no Sunday/bank holiday operation, and pre-booked appointments only. Average visiting traffic is one vehicle per day, far below many home-based businesses.
6. The building is sound-insulated and all cats are kept indoors; there are no external runs, no dogs, and no amplified noise. Waste is stored securely and collected by a licensed carrier.
7. Objections about noise, smell, and traffic are speculative and not supported by consultee evidence. The Longcroft model has operated nationally for 14 years in over 30 residential locations, including Conservation Areas, with no history of amenity complaints.

Design / Heritage / Landscape

8. The proposed modular unit is to be timber-clad with integrated planting and biodiversity measures (bird and bat boxes, hedging, bee hotels). This ensures the building integrates into the garden setting and softens its appearance.
9. The building is modest in scale (2.4m high) and positioned discreetly in the rear garden, screened by mature planting.
10. Precedent shows Longcroft cat hotels have been approved in sensitive areas (Conservation Areas, AONBs, National Parks), with design adaptations such as timber cladding accepted as appropriate mitigation

11. The Conservation Area and listed building setting will not be adversely affected; the outbuilding is clearly subordinate to the host dwelling and not publicly prominent.

Technical Matters Resolved

12. The initial Flood Risk Management objection has been withdrawn following updated drainage calculations using the 37% climate change allowance. Drainage is therefore acceptable.

Policy Compliance

13. The proposal accords with NPF4 Policies 14, 26, 27 (placemaking, support for micro-businesses and rural home-working), NPF4 Policy 3 (biodiversity enhancement), and MLDP DP1, PP1, EP2, EP5.
14. Refusal is inconsistent with consultee evidence, national precedent, and the positive economic and community benefits of small-scale, low-impact home-based businesses.

Conclusion

15. The refusal reasons are not supported by technical evidence and rely on generalised assumptions. The proposal is low-impact, proportionate, and policy-compliant. With drainage resolved, biodiversity enhancements committed, and consultee support on amenity and transport, there is no material basis to sustain refusal.
16. I therefore respectfully request that the Local Review Body overturn the refusal and grant planning permission, subject to conditions if considered necessary.