



RESPONSE FROM BRAEMAR COMMUNITY COUNCIL

1. Have we identified the right issues for Braemar?

The plan is not ambitious enough for the village nor does it go far enough. The affordable housing issue needs to be understood. There is a severe shortage of small housing to rent or buy - for staff accommodation, for young folk moving out of their parent's homes, for estate workers leaving tied houses and for older folk wanting to downsize. Large new builds are generally unaffordable to locals therefore we end up with homes purchased by people wishing to retire here or own a holiday home.

In addition the village has negative unemployment and businesses cannot attract prospective employees to re-locate to Braemar as there is virtually no accommodation available to either rent or buy. We need to be able to attract a wider skills base and grow the economy at all levels including business enterprises not directly related to tourism.

An ageing population means there is a Care Issue that will worsen. The only Care residence is full with a growing wait list and there is little care provision in the Village. The Braemar Care initiative is trying to address this but needs funds.

Some sites for work units and additional car-parking would help Braemar's development.

2. Do you agree with the settlement objectives?

Overall, yes

3. Do you agree with the preferred site options?

Comments :

If the 2 current Development sites with planning permission **EP2 and EP3** don't go ahead (41 houses total) then Braemar needs more houses on another site, or these sites to be sold on. There is a need to establish whether these developments will or will not go ahead. These sites are seen as key to our growth in the CNP plan for Braemar. If they

do go ahead they may be the wrong kind of houses (mainly 4 bed) The 2014 Housing survey identified our main need is for smaller and rental homes.

Preferred site **AB023** would be a good site for a possible Community project for a low cost housing development.

Non-preferable sites **AB022, AB019** would be good options for a mixed housing development. The former would have to be carefully planned to minimise the visual impact on entering the village.

AB002, AB005, AB007, AB023 - Some appropriate development would be possible at these sites perhaps scaled back due to nature conservation interest or landscape value or to avoid flood risk.

AB021 could become a carpark to ease the burden of additional traffic in the village arising as a result of the Highland Hospitality developments.

It is preferable that some small greenfield sites within the village be maintained and a larger development go ahead to meet more of the housing needs. Sites should be developed with the least impact on nature conservation and landscape.

We would like to see an audit of the number of existing derelict buildings/houses in the Braemar area with potential to be brought into the future housing market. The CNPA should be assessing these opportunities around settlements and also facilitating or grant aiding this process specifically if it will provide affordable housing opportunities.

4. Do you agree with the protected open spaces?

Yes overall.

5. Do you agree with the proposed settlement boundary?

No. Some careful consideration should be given to extending the boundary to include one or more of the currently non-preferred alternative sites that actually may be suitable for some form of development perhaps only on part of the site.

OTHER COMMENTS

The report is too general and does not go far enough in making Braemar a sustainable community. We cannot maintain a "strong local economy based entirely on Visitor attractions and services" we need a complete infrastructure.

More needs to be done to turn approved planning sites into a reality as it appears that as soon as planning is approved it then becomes a statistic. The CNPA needs to scrutinize why many of the planned housing developments reported in 2015 have not been

converted to actual houses and investigate what the likelihood is of these previously planned developments actually happening

The CNPA are predicting an overall population decrease in the Park of 4% over the next 25 years and in particular with regard to children under 16 falling by 21% and working age people by 10%. Across Scotland the figure is just 1% decrease across these age groups. It is assumed they have compiled their MIR based on these figures which would explain why in their site assessments they have repeatedly queried the need for any substantial housing in Braemar. We would argue that the reason the population of working aged adults and children is predicted to fall so dramatically is that this age group cannot afford to live in Braemar and there is lack of opportunity for small business development due to there being no business units available. The report states around 12% of the houses in CNP are second homes. We think in Braemar this figure is much higher and obviously has an effect on the supply and values of homes. Can CNPA lobby the Scottish Government to find ways to discourage second homes?

On the whole the report covers all the main issues which should be considered for local developments plans within a National Park context. With respect to the section on Nature designations the report should not have focussed so heavily on capercaillie. There are many other natural features which are also relevant to local development and capercaillie is perhaps not the one most relevant to Deeside or Braemar. There should have been a broader section on nature conservation interests more relevant to all communities within the CNP and particularly the many nature conservation reasons why areas are not preferred for development in the site assessment reports - woodland interest, waders, fungi etc. This may help with communities having a better understanding of development with respect to nature conservation.

[REDACTED]

Chair, Braemar Community Council

[REDACTED]

(I confirm that I am happy to receive any correspondence from CNPA at the above email address)