

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

FOR DECISION

Title: Adoption of Affordable Housing
Supplementary Planning Guidance

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Purpose:

This paper seeks the Board's agreement to adopt the Supplementary Planning Guidance on Affordable Housing to accompany the Cairngorms National Park Local Plan

Recommendation:

That the Board adopt the Supplementary Planning Guidance on Affordable Housing.

Executive Summary

The Cairngorms National Park Authority has a duty to prepare a Local Plan for the Park and has recently adopted its first Local Plan. In order to provide further detail on a variety of topics, a suite of Supplementary Planning Guidance is also being prepared. This guidance assists applicants in understanding the requirements for the planning applications, and adds a level of detail not appropriate for the Local Plan itself. The guidance supports the adopted Local Plan, and forms a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, and at appeals.

A range of topics will be covered by Supplementary Planning Guidance. Members will be aware that the first batch of guidance was adopted at the Board meeting in October 2010.

The SPG on Affordable Housing that was consulted on during the summer of 2010, along with the rest of the first batch of guidance, is now ready for consideration and approval.

Work is ongoing on additional pieces of guidance, and these will be available for public consultation in March 2011.

ADOPTION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE – FOR DECISION

Background

1. Members will be aware of the 4 month consultation undertaken on this document from 24 May to 24 September 2010. During this time, the Affordable Housing SPG, along with other pieces of SPG were made available on the CNPA website, and were also sent to all key stakeholder and partners, along with anyone who had been involved in the Local Plan process relating to the specific topics. Comments in support of the documents, criticising the approaches being proposed and suggesting changes were received from various individuals and organisation.
2. Since the end of the consultation, all of the comments received have been fully considered, and decisions made by staff on how to address the issues raised, and whether or not to make the changes suggested, it is unsurprising that some of the comments received were contradictory, and so a judgement has had to be made on which approach to take.
3. The quality of the responses received was very high, and it is good to see so many individuals and organisations taking an interest in the guidance and putting forward their views and suggestions as to how the documents could be improved.
4. This SPG sets out how policy 19 of the Local Plan, adopted in October 2010, will be implemented in practice. The policy sets out a requirement for all developments of open market houses to make a contribution towards affordable housing.

Progress since Planning Committee Meeting on 4th February 2011

4. Members will be aware of the discussions that took place about this guidance on 4th February in Aviemore which led to the decision to defer.5. Work has progressed since then on improving the explanation within the Supplementary Planning Guidance of the financial contributions towards affordable housing.
6. The guidance now clearly sets out what levels of financial contributions will be sought in a variety of different circumstances.

Implementation of the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance

7. Once adopted the Supplementary Planning Guidance will become a material consideration in the determination of applications. CNPA staff will work with the planning officers in the Local Authorities to ensure the guidance is applied consistently in decisions.

Conclusion

8. In conclusion, the adoption today of this SPG on Affordable Housing completes the first batch of SPG, an important step closely related to the adoption of the Local Plan itself. It means that applicants now have additional information specifically relating to Housing developments, in addition to the suite of SPG adopted in October 2010. It is hoped this guidance will help to lead to a better understanding of what is expected of Housing proposals in the National Park, and how those applications will be assessed.

Recommendation

9. That the Board adopt the Supplementary Planning Guidance on Affordable Housing.

Implications

10. The budget for the publication of the Supplementary Planning Guidance in planned for in the agreed Operational Plan, as is the ongoing monitoring and updating of the economic model. The staff resources required to undertake this work will fit within existing work programmes.

Implications for Stakeholders

11. The constituent Local Authorities will use the adopted Local Plan, and all of the associated SPG, including this on Affordable Housing, in determining those applications submitted in the Park, but not called in the CNPA. Developers, key agencies, infrastructure undertakers and providers, community groups and residents will also use the Local Plan and SPG to guide and inform further development work in the Park. It will be necessary to continue to work closely with all involved to ensure a clear and widespread understanding of the Local Plan and associated SPGH and how it is to be used once adopted.

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