

Local Development Plan Background Evidence

4. Other information



21/07/11

This is one of five Background Evidence Reports that have informed the Cairngorms National Park Main Issues Report. These reports look at:

1. Housing and population – sets out the rationale for the new housing requirements identified in the Main Issues Report. It looks at how the population of the Park is expected to change and considers the impact this may have on the future number and types of households in the Park. It also summarises the Housing Need Demand Assessments produced by the Local Housing Authorities and identifies the housing land supply
2. The economy - sets out the rationale for the new employment land identified in the LDP. It looks at the evidence which exists, the demand information gathered as part of a study commissioned to support the LDP and any available information published by the Local Authorities.
3. Monitoring report – an assessment of progress on the implementation of the adopted Local Plan (October 2010)
4. Other information – summary of other information which has informed the development of the Main Issues Report
5. Site analysis – an assessment of potential development sites submitted by landowners, developers and agents as part of the CNPA ‘Call for Sites’ process.

These reports set out the rationale for the approach taken in the Main Issues Report on the various topics. They provide detail not contained within the Main Issues Report, and should be read together with the MIR Report to get a full picture.

Any comments or responses to the content of these reports should be included within your response on that part of the Main Issues Report and should not form a separate comment or response.

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I. Introduction

- 1.1 Local Development Plans (LDPs) and their Main Issues Reports (MIRs) are influenced by a wide variety of information, some produced by CNPA, some by external partners and organisations. All feed into the process of developing the MIR, and it is important that the MIR and the LDP properly integrate with all other relevant plans and strategies affecting the development and use of land.
- 1.2 We are directed by legislation to ensure the LDP is properly integrated with:
- The National Planning framework
 - The relevant Strategic Development Plan (Tayplan in our case)
 - Any neighbouring Local Development Plans and Strategic Development Plans
 - Any regional or local transport strategy, river basin management plan, or local housing strategy relating to the plan area
 - The national waste management plan
 - Issues arising out of the European directive on the control of major accident hazards involving hazardous substances
- 1.3 We must take account of the plans and strategies produced by the constituent Local Authorities. Topics cover housing, transport, waste, forestry, community, environment, countryside, economic development, access, tourism.
- 1.4 We must also ensure we take account of those plans and strategies produced by key stakeholders and agencies. Of primary importance is the strategic direction provided by SNH, SEPA, Historic Scotland, Scottish Water, Transport Scotland, the regional transport partnerships, the Crofters Commission, the relevant enterprise agencies, the relevant Health Boards, the Forestry Commission, and Sport Scotland.
- 1.5 Direction from central government is also relevant. Topics cover design and architecture, the national planning framework, transport, forestry, biodiversity, climate change, and energy.
- 1.6 We have our own strategic guidance provided by the National Park Plan, Core Paths Plan, Community engagement standards, Forestry and woodland framework, outdoor access strategy, local biodiversity action plan and Strategy and action plan for Sustainable tourism.
- 1.7 We have carried out detailed work looking at housing, the economy and communities, all of which forms part of the evidence to support the MIR. We also have detailed information relating to a number of development sites which is influential (see sections 3 and 4).

2. Community visions

- 2.1 In October 2010, as part of the review of the National Park Plan, communities in the Park developed a 'Community Vision' of where they want to be in the future. These visions will also help inform the Local Development Plan.

Living in the Angus Glens

- 2.2 The Angus area of the Cairngorm National Park covers the isolated upper parts of the Angus Glens. While the 'Angus Glens' are a distinct community, have a thriving website and a sense of cohesion, the Park boundary cuts this identified area in half. Only 50 people live in the CNP area, but while the responses in this research include comments about the CNP boundaries or feel it does not affect them, many people in the Glens feel ownership of the Park and want to engage with it. Some suggestions for this include strengthening links with Angus Council and relevant community councils.
- 2.3 Respondents value their landscape and its vistas of high hills, glens and forests both as a special feature of life here and as a resource for tourism, creative employment, and active forestry and estate activities. People want the landscape to remain open to local people, farmers and leisure users and some worry that not all local estates are willing to work with communities to achieve this.
- 2.4 People value traditional building styles and their community buildings such as the Retreat at Glen Esk. However, affordable housing for people living and working in the Glens is in short supply and is needed to bring people in/retain young people to support

community groups and local employment and business initiatives. New homes should be energy efficient so as to be affordable. Local services, infrastructure and facilities are needed to support life in the Glens, with the local schools and community buildings seen as key centres of community life.

- 2.5 The Angus Glens have forward-looking community groups working to maximise the use of broadband, websites and mobile phone signal improvements to connect and market this rural community. The improved connectivity could be used "to allow people to work, study and receive health care" in the Glens. Opportunities for employment such as training in rural skills, development of existing businesses and creation of innovative new ones would all benefit, as could community involvement.

Living in Aviemore and Vicinity

- 2.6 Aviemore is recognised internationally as a ski resort which now offers an increasingly large number and variety of sports and activities. Open for 52 weeks of the year, it is a village for all seasons with a year round programme of festivals and events. It has a strong record of conservation in terms of the care for the countryside and indeed has made a business out of conservation. Aviemore plays a vital part in the Scottish tourist industry and is the economic driver for the National Park.
- 2.7 The residents feel strongly that for a community of around 5000 people, Aviemore and Vicinity punches well above its weight, attracting more than a million visitors per year. Aviemore itself has come a long way since its

beginnings as a railway junction in the 19th century and with the redevelopment of the resort over the last decade especially, it has seen residential and visitor numbers rising considerably with growth in both tourism and conservation activity.

- 2.8 The area is easily accessible by air, rail and road and due to the wide choice of accommodation provision, it plays host to an increasing number of international and high status conferences and events throughout the year.
- 2.9 Residents feel that there is a lack of appreciation by public agencies of the economic growth rate of the area and that an urgent review of the community infrastructure in the way of services, amenities and public facilities is now required, as it is struggling to keep pace.
- 2.10 Aviemore and Vicinity needs to continue to develop its tourist industry whilst recognising and understanding the requirements, wants and expectations of its visitors and residents. The Aviemore brand needs to be safeguarded and this requires recognition by public agencies. The community too must remain ambitious concerning the development of future projects. These new developments have been identified as a state of the art indoor sports centre, the new community primary school, the riverside park, a new Tesco and the An Camas Mòr housing development together with a fully integrated transport system and responsible open access on Cairngorm mountain.
- 2.11 A resolute effort is required to improve the look of the village, particularly by putting 'nature' back into

its existing and new housing developments, through the use of green screening and planting as well as the more intelligent positioning of street lighting. The above developments and environmental enhancements will significantly improve the quality of life for residents and enhance the experience for visitors to the area. These factors are inextricably bound together and future employment, with increased value placed on service industry jobs will particularly encourage Aviemore's young people to make a life in the area as lifestyle and opportunities continue to improve.

Living in Ballater

2.12 Ballater and Crathie Community

Council undertook a consultation with their communities and people in the surrounding areas in September 2010. The consultation received a high number of responses and many residents took the opportunity to elaborate on the questions asked, providing the Community council with a valuable insight into the views of local people about living in their communities and their hopes for the future.

2.13 The Ballater and Crathie

Communities are proud of their community spirit, their quality of life and their exceptional, unspoilt environment. The communities want to ensure that the same advantages they enjoy are passed on to future generations.

2.14 To make sure this happens, quality and affordable housing to meet local needs will be supported. This should be done using existing real estate and redevelopment where possible, to avoid harm to the visual and natural environment.

2.15 New varied and sustainable employment opportunities for all ages will be created, primarily the development of small business and tourism related employment, avoiding over development, which could undermine the attraction of the area to visitors.

2.16 Young people must be encouraged and given the help to take a more active part in their local community and local decision making; improvements to learning, leisure and employment

opportunities must be provided with their involvement.

2.17 Ballater and Crathie local businesses will be supported to continue to provide quality services to residents and visitors. At the same time careful consideration must be given to the needs of local people for competitive prices and wider choice. This tension will be actively managed.

2.18 Road safety and delayed access to emergency medical treatment require attention and improvement through dialogue with relevant local agencies

2.19 The relationships between the communities and the organisations which serve them, such as the CNPA, Aberdeenshire Council and Ballater and Crathie Community Council will be strengthened to ensure the views of the communities are prioritised, their hopes for the future are realised, and their unique identities are preserved.

Living in Blair Atholl

2.20 Blair Atholl incorporating Struan, Calvine and Bruar is unique in the National Park as here the countryside, economy and community are greatly influenced by Blair Castle and its related activities. This ancient seat of the Dukes and Earls of Atholl with its private army, is probably one of the best known of the Scottish castles and the magnificent building is an iconic centrepiece in the landscape. The characterful village of Blair Atholl sits in a traditional rural setting where hill farming is an ongoing occupation and this is echoed in its visitor attractions and architecture. The proximity of the acclaimed House of Bruar retail

outlet, provides the area with a second major employer as well as an additional draw for tourists who are the cornerstone of the community's economy.

- 2.21 The river Garry flows through the heart of the area, linking the communities together and it is clear that this area has a rich military history, much of it central to Scotland's history. The community is keen to maintain its traditional character, evident in the look and layout of the main street, the village hall, the working mill and the Atholl Arms Hotel.
- 2.22 Blair Atholl residents and in particular those involved in tourist sector businesses, also recognise the need however for ongoing growth in housing, job opportunities for younger people and the strengthening of the trade sector involving service and tourist industries. These needs present a particular challenge due to the bounding nature of the local geography (River Tilt), the conservation status the whole village enjoys and the bounding nature of the Atholl Estate walls. The A9, Inverness to Perth railway line and the flood plane of the River Garry also restrict the availability of land for development.
- 2.23 Residents describe themselves as self reliant with a strong sense of community and a 'do it yourself' attitude, in no small part due to their feeling of being distant from other settlement.
- 2.24 To continue to prosper, the estate recognises that it needs to diversify and strengthen its commercial activity as land based employment undergoes change over the next 10-15 years.

Local business people are eager to promote Blair Atholl through the development of a gateway centre to the National Park which they feel will increase its tourism potential significantly and they seek outside support to enable them to realise this.

- 2.25 In looking to the future, the residents wish to enjoy a balanced community life with an adequate number of families and facilities retained in the village. They would hope that their brand of tourism meets the needs and expectations of a competitive market, keeping the local economy buoyant and well maintained. This together with a continued strong connection with the land will in turn ensure that Blair Atholl continues to thrive as a viable community

Living in Boat of Garten

2.26 Boat of Garten takes its name from the former ferry over the river Spey and is usually referred to as 'the Boat' by locals. It is also well known as 'the Osprey Village' due to the nearby RSPB Osprey Centre and the fact that these amazing birds can be spotted flying over the village regularly during the summer months.

2.27 Boat of Garten came into being with the arrival of the Highland Railway in the 19th century and still boasts a busy station with the Strathspey Steam Railway attracting large numbers of tourists throughout the year. Although the village is small in size, it is lucky to have a good range of facilities in its two shops, post office, fabulous restaurant, Victorian hotel, James Braid designed golf course, Milton Loch, primary school, church, newly built community hall with an excellent reputation throughout the area, large central village green, community garden, bike hire shop as well as the RSPB Osprey Centre and a sawmill on the edge of the village which employs a significant number of local people. As well as by farmland, the community is surrounded by heather moorland and stunning pine forests that house a wide variety of wildlife including capercaillie. There are lots of routes (signed and unsigned) for walking and cycling around Boat and on to neighbouring villages, all of which show how important tourism is for the wellbeing of this small community.

2.28 The residents of Boat are very active which is borne out by the large number of community groups and organisations that exist within the village, covering a wide range of

activities from bowling to badminton, Showboaters and Virtually Famous (youth) drama groups, Mum & Tots to the weekly lunch club, all of which take place in the well used new community hall and are attended by all ages within the village.

2.29 Given this level of activity, the main concern therefore to residents is twofold - any potential loss of tourist business in the village and the inability to encourage young people and families in particular to stay and keep the village thriving.

2.30 Locals are very aware of how fortunate they are to have such facilities but equally understand how fragile this situation is, especially in the face of economic downturn. They would like to see business expand even further with the opportunity for small units to be available to encourage local crafts people and entrepreneurs - the old public hall has been suggested as one possible site for this. The maintenance of the railway station and its square as a means of encouraging visitors to leave the train and explore what the village has to offer is seen also as a great opportunity for Boat to retain its tourist activity.

2.31 Secondly the fabric of the community in its people, is seen to be fragile if young people and families are not able to settle here due to lack of appropriate sized housing in an affordable price bracket. The 'success' of the village in recent years has led to many houses being taken up as 2nd homes with the resulting loss to the upcoming community members to buy their own places. This in turn has already started to affect the social aspects of life here as well as

threatening the loss of the primary school. As a consequence, there is a strong feeling in the village that such housing development is an absolute priority and would therefore be welcomed for Boat of Garten if all of the above positive aspects are still to be in place by the end of the next National Park Plan.

Living in Braemar

2.32 Braemar is a tight knit and vibrant community, of around 500 residents, that serves a wide area with small outlying settlements and a huge tract of wild and beautiful landscape that forms the heart of the Cairngorms National Park area. The village itself is steeped in tradition, with a history reaching back into the mists of time – from the ancient King of Scotland Malcolm Canmore who built his Hunting Lodge within the curtilage of the village and provided the first bridge across the Cluny, to the raising of the standard for the 1715 Jacobite rising. It has been thriving community for centuries and people are proud of their heritage and environment.

2.33 The desire within this community is to maintain itself as a vibrant viable community, into the future, which maintains its heritage within the context of the modern world.

2.34 The local economy relies almost entirely on tourism in its many forms and therefore visitors, and the servicing thereof, are the lifeblood of the community. In order to support this vision and ensure the future of the community it will be imperative to address a range of interdependent factors. Critical elements identified include; housing for local people, support for local businesses,

communications, and maintenance of local services. These issues, and their impact on the future, need to be understood by the statutory agencies (the CNPA, Aberdeenshire Council, the NHS and others) and addressed by working closely with the community. This will require a continuing dialogue and joint working to find, in some cases, new ways of delivering existing services to ensure sustainability. Indeed, it is clear that the sustainable economic and social development of communities in the Park is essential to achievement of its other statutory aims.

2.35 Housing for people to be able to live and work in the community is paramount to sustainability. This needs to be a mix of improved rented sector availability and more houses for sale that are genuinely affordable to attract and retain people working in the services of the village and the surrounding areas.

2.36 Communications are vital, as for all remote communities. Telecommunications, especially broadband, transport, fuel costs and even roads management (snow clearing) will need to be addressed and developed. All these not only support tourism, but allow employment to be developed, spread the local economic base and provide more opportunities to attract and retain local talent, families and young people.

2.37 Overall, a coordinated and community focussed approach to planning needs to be further developed; with the agencies listening to, and working with the community and supporting community groups to ensure a positive future for Braemar.

Living in Carr-Bridge

2.38 Carr-Bridge is situated at the north-west entrance to the Cairngorms National Park, and has several defining landmarks and events that make it a special place for residents and visitors alike. As the first of the Scottish ski villages, the history of this small but lively community dates back over many hundreds of years with its past reflected in the arches of its ancient packhorse bridge - the oldest stone bridge in the Highlands. It is home to a number of activities enjoyed by both tourists and locals, such as pony trekking, golf, bowling, cycling and walking but most notably, Carr-Bridge is also the location for two international annual competitions: The Golden Spurtle™ World Porridge Making Championships and Carve Carr-Bridge, the Scottish Open Chainsaw Carving Competition. Both of these prestigious events are driven by extremely active and dedicated members of Carr-Bridge community organisations, and the numbers who flock to watch these events annually from all over the area not to mention the world, serve to show what energetic and committed residents can be found in this small traditional highland village.

2.39 Another attraction which has helped to put Carr-Bridge on the map is the highly acclaimed Landmark Forest Adventure Theme Park with its wild water slides, rollercoaster, steam powered saw mill and tree top trail set in an ancient pine forest. The fact that Carr-Bridge is also known for both its traditional and contemporary Celtic music and song, serves to underline that this is a very vibrant

and outward looking community, who take pride in their achievements and also value their local facilities such as the Carr-Bridge Hotel, the local shop and garage, village pub and the primary school which are all well supported by locals.

2.40 Residents are keen to hold on to the community's strong identity which they feel could be at risk if the village grew much larger through the granting of inappropriate levels of housing development. Good neighbours and healthy businesses are recognised as essential for Carr-bridge to continue to prosper but it must be balanced very carefully against the feel of becoming 'suburban' where the community doesn't know itself any more, so natural and organic growth is seen as the way forward here. Concern has been raised that Carr-Bridge could easily become a 'natural old folks home' in the future, as the population will predominantly be made up of older people, so steps must be taken to support the younger generation to remain in the village.

2.41 Young people are at the heart of their concerns and play a big role in the future of the community. Residents recognise there are limited opportunities for its younger generation, primarily due to the limited employment options and affordable housing in the area. They have highlighted a wish to support growth in the number of local enterprises through provision of small business units, improve the current communication systems (more efficient broad band and improved and integrated transport network) and address the serious housing/2nd home situation that currently makes it

virtually impossible for young people to buy or rent their own homes. If Carr-Bridge is to encourage its young people to remain in or return to the village, more housing will need to be built. However, residents are looking for sympathetic design on a small scale, with specifically no residential buildings taken above tree height - local housing for local people. They have also identified a need for increased and improved access to leisure and sports amenities within the village which will also enhance the quality of life for residents.

- 2.42 By addressing the displacement of young people, it is hoped Carr-Bridge will not change too much but instead will see a younger generation coming through to take over the community's successes.

Living in Cromdale and Advie

- 2.43 The village of Cromdale and the hamlet of Advie are located just over five miles apart in the north of Badenoch & Strathspey between Grantown-on-Spey and Aberlour. Being once part of Inverness-shire then Morayshire, there is a long history of alliance with both the Highland and Grampian regions, but the villages are now served by the Highland Council with Cromdale situated within the Cairngorms National Park boundary and Advie lying just outside it
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/County_of_Moray.
- 2.44 Linked by one Community Council, Cromdale spans the A95 road where it crosses the Cromdale Burn with Advie to the north east. The area is known historically for the Battle of Cromdale, which took place at the Haugh of Cromdale about two miles east of the village in 1690 - a piece of history that has left a legacy up to the present day in attracting visitors to the area. To the south of Cromdale is the Balmenach Distillery and both Cromdale and Advie have their own well maintained traditional village halls which play host to a variety of clubs and well supported community events throughout the year.
- 2.45 Despite the small population, there is currently a strong network of locals who work hard to keep both of the villages socially active and attractive places, both to live in and welcome their visitors to. This sense of pride in the community is evident during the summer and winter seasons, with their planted barrels of flowers and Christmas lights making both Cromdale and Advie look inviting. The two halls are undoubtedly the main assets that the villages have in keeping the community together, so the upkeep and maintenance of them is high on the residents' agenda. The Speyside Way passes through the village and the Haugh Hotel situated in the middle of Cromdale is an opportunity for visitors to linger and explore the area further.
- 2.46 The residents consider that Cromdale and Advie are both quite fragile communities in terms of their social cohesion and fear that a future lack of involvement or interest by newer or younger members of the community, would lead to a loss of activity and slow decline in the quality of life here. People are now more mobile and are already looking to Grantown and further afield for their needs. This combined with a lack of availability of local village housing that the younger generation coming up can afford, means that although residents would

not like to see too much change in Cromdale and Advie, they do want the area to progress in a positive direction and affordable housing for local young people to encourage and support them to stay in the area is top of their list of priorities.

2.47 They would also like to see new businesses opportunities established, attracting people to come and trade or work from home, with improvements in communication links, better integrated public transport, more activities that will attract visitors to the area e.g. a camp site on the Speyside Way and on the A95, create an opportunity for a stop-off/rest place for lorries. Sheltered housing for older residents who do not wish to move away from the villages and a local shop are also among the facilities which would enable these communities to continue to keep their sense of identity as special places.

Living in Dalwhinnie

2.48 Dalwhinnie is a small village situated at the southern end of Badenoch, at an altitude of 351m, near the foot of Ben Alder. It lies in a glen with the Monadhliath Mountains on one side and the Forest of Atholl, the Cairngorms and the Grampians on the other. Its wide, open wilderness provides a healthy environment that residents value highly and also encourages many visitors to return to the area year after year. Dalwhinnie is recognised as one of the coldest villages in the UK, having an average annual temperature of 6.5°C, which makes it ideally suited to winter walking and mountaineering. This special natural environment also allows for a wide variety of other recreational

activities such as mountain biking, fishing and white water kayaking which serve to attract the many tourists that pass through the village.

2.49 Distinguished as having the highest working distillery in Scotland and the only one in the Cairngorms National Park, Dalwhinnie is steeped in a rich history created over many generations. The population of this settlement is small, yet actively committed to community life, maintaining a strong sense of independence partly owing to their 'bracing' geographic location.

2.50 Dalwhinnie enjoys close links with the surrounding estates who provide a mainstay of employment for the area and the estates. sustainable approach to managing the surrounding landscape is highly regarded by the local population. The primary school plays a strong and vitally cohesive role in community life, although its declining school roll is a source of much concern. Equally residents are aware that their local amenities are limited and vulnerable and in response to these particular issues, Dalwhinnie would like to see new housing initiatives introduced, which will allow young families to move into and remain in the area long term. Better transport links to other communities both north and south of the village, are seen as additionally necessary to improve Dalwhinnie's chances of remaining a viable 'lived in' community, providing work and leisure opportunities to help it thrive as a location of choice.

2.51 New initiatives are continually being taken forward by committed community members, such as the provision of village interpretative

plans, the publication of books such as 'Dalwhinnie Past and Present' and the creation of nature walks and trails. These are just some of the ways in which the residents themselves feel they can help to support the fragile tourist trade and consequently the ongoing future wellbeing of the village.

Living in Dulnain Bridge

2.52 Dulnain Bridge and vicinity is a friendly, quiet village situated to the west of Grantown on Spey and north of the busy A95. Although small in population it has a post office, shop, garage, well used village hall and particular well equipped play park. Proud of their heritage, the crofting community stretches just over a mile to the south terminating at the famous Speyside Heather Centre. Curr Wood on the south and east of the village has the country's largest population of Twinflower known by the botanical name of linnea borealis which shares the forest floor with a tiny orchid called Creeping Ladies Tresses. Dulnain Bridge and vicinity with a population of just less than 500 has a strong sense of community, where people really know and support each other in their day to day lives. Filled with local characters and familiar faces, Dulnain Bridge is proudly known by residents as having a real „do it ourselves. attitude to community living.

2.53 The village currently contains buildings of diverse design, which blend well into the surrounding landscape. Residents are keen to ensure that any future development evolves sympathetically, so allowing for the growth necessary to sustain the village whilst guarding against intrusive or extreme

architecture. Residents appreciate the visitor attractions the community boasts, particularly the unique glaciated rocks known as 'Roches Moutonnes' and the wide selection of restored crofting machinery which is displayed at the northern end of the village. Access to the nearby forest, open spaces and the quiet pace of life partly due to the limited traffic volume and pollution are greatly valued and considered important to retain. Whilst residents appreciate of the value of their community assets they are aware of the lack of public facilities in the village. There are no public toilets and residents realise the absolute necessity to address this issue.

2.54 Notably within Dulnain Bridge and vicinity, crofting continues as a distinct way of life for a number of people. Residents are proud of this heritage and would like to see this traditional way of life preserved in an increasingly changing time in agriculture. Complimenting this unique way of life, residents in Dulnain Bridge & vicinity have enjoyed the creation of allotments in Skye of Curr. This successful initiative has approximately 20 allotment spaces and sees people travel from throughout the valley to plant and harvest their own fruit and vegetable. The village hall also boasts success indicated by the number and variety of community groups using it throughout the year. Residents are aware the hall is in need to some refurbishment which is a priority for the sustainability of this pivotal resource in the community.

2.55 Whilst Dulnain Bridge would like to keep hold of its safe „country feel. by not changing greatly in the coming years, residents recognise they would

benefit from having better links with other communities such as creating a permanent cycle path to local villages.

- 2.56 It is recognised that young people, especially of school age need to be given the opportunity to travel safely to and from other nearby communities to visit friends, cycle to school and to access local amenities. The creation of a new cycle path to Grantown would provide a safe route for Dulnain's youth, subsequently enhancing their quality of life and encouraging independence and fostering a sense of belonging. Residents would also value this link for their overall health and personal wellbeing.

Living in Glenlivet

- 2.57 Glenlivet is a scattered, traditional, rural community providing „a low level introduction to the Cairngorms. with community halls and a thriving community association. An e-mail bulletin 'Thistledown' keeps residents informed and in touch with one another. A major community event is the Glenlivet Tea in the Park during August. There are a variety of other community groups and community spirit is strong and recognised.

- 2.58 Glenlivet residents value their traditional community, its beautiful scenery and wildlife, its history and culture and its remote feel: "Despite its scattered nature there is a real sense of belonging to a community". They realise the challenges of maintaining this lifestyle and way of life into the future: keeping young people in the glen, accessing public services and the challenges of dealing with winter weather. Some mentioned the employment possibilities of home working and

rural skills, but are concerned about how poor transport links and increased mechanisation of traditional industries like farming and distilling may impact.

- 2.59 While there is a feeling of wanting to be left to get on with life and self-sufficiency within the community, respondents want support to maintain and improve services and infrastructure. There will be an increasing need for dialogue between agencies and Glenlivet after the proposed local authority cuts to services (announced two weeks after this consultation). Glenlivet doctor's surgery/health services, library services and school are greatly valued, as is the local shop at Tomnavoulin (people would like it to be even bigger). The Dial-a-bus service needs improving as do broadband services and mobile phone signals.

- 2.60 Transport links and services, road maintenance and snow clearing are vital. As well as delivery of services, employment and tourism opportunities, road infrastructure and bus services connect Glenlivet with the rest of Moray and present lack of links into the Cairngorms National Park area, make residents here feel more isolated from the National Park. Reliance on personal transport is also threatened by rising petrol costs, and some respondents suggest a rural fuel subsidy.

Living in Glenshee

- 2.61 Glenshee is situated in a remote and expansive landscape, yet it is still very accessible to other regions of Scotland. Its community is proud of its strategic location at one of the southern entrances to the

Cairngorms National Park, forming as it does a gateway to the Highlands, Royal Deeside, the largest ski area in the UK and the Grampian and Cairngorm mountain ranges. The dwellings are largely scattered along the Glen, and community gatherings are often centred on the Spittal of Glenshee Hotel, which provides a much needed focal point.

2.62 Owing to Glenshee's remoteness, residents are acutely aware of the fragility of their local economy and the consequent need to improve communication infrastructures such as transport and broadband internet access. The community's main economy is based around tourism and therefore residents fully appreciate the importance of providing better facilities, information and opportunities to encourage visitors to stay and enjoy the beauty that Glenshee offers. If the area is to thrive and continue to welcome visitors, there is a recognisable need for the working estates in particular, to support any local and tourism developments that may take place in the coming years, particularly with regard to any small-scale housing development.

2.63 The Glenshee community is aware of the potential positive and negative effects of change, and the conflict that could arise from this. An aging population, combined with limited employment and housing opportunities for young people in the area, are real issues that are likely to become more acute if Glenshee is to thrive, prosper and grow in the years to come.

2.64 Despite not having a central focal hub, Glenshee has a strongly-felt

sense of community, commitment and enthusiasm permeating through it. The brooding, remote landscape steeped in history, makes this a special place to its residents, which they are eager to attract visitors into, by having an impressive and welcoming presence at the entrance to the National Park.

Living in Granttown-on-Spey

2.65 Granttown-on-Spey was designed as a planned town with a distinctive layout, resulting in a wide, central square with leafy avenues leading off it and a traditional Victorian feel to the architecture of the high street and the main roads and houses surrounding it. The town lies on the river Spey and is approached in all directions by scenic woodland roads, which residents feel add to the impression of entering a special place. It has a strong association for 'GRANTS' from all over the world, who often visit to investigate their family links with the area.

2.66 The flat, easily accessed high street is unusual in that it contains many small individual shops selling a wide range of goods, which visitors and locals appreciate. The town is considered by residents to be a good place in which to bring up a family, as it has a good primary and secondary school, is clean and well kept with a strong sense of civic pride. Its busy hotels, sports centre with swimming pool, cottage hospital, care home, dental suite and health centre, museum with its bell tower, Strathspey Thistle football club and well run caravan park are just some of the many facilities which the community enjoys. The community-owned Anagach Woods which come right into the residential area of the

town provide a wonderful resource for recreation and conservation as does the Spey with its opportunities for fishing and wildlife watching.

- 2.67 Grantown has three industrial estates which are full of small and medium businesses providing a much needed source of employment for the local population. There is a good mix of business and community in the town, creating a positive ambience and resulting in a large number of active local organisations which support a wide range of interests and age groups, including notably many younger members.
- 2.68 Being a town with a relatively large population, Grantown residents are aware that a thriving high street is the key to its future prosperity and its ability to take advantage of the number of visitors to nearby Aviemore, by drawing them on to visit Grantown and its tourist facilities as well. The successful extension of the Strathspey Steam Railway from Broomhill to Grantown on Spey is seen as playing an essential part as it too will fulfil a vital role in attracting visitors and providing locals with a further transport link so hopefully enabling more people to live in Grantown and access job opportunities in other parts of the area such as Aviemore. The factor causing the greatest concern however is the continuing rise in the number of empty shops and the potential for the resulting decline in the footfall on the high street. The need for a robust marketing plan is considered to be crucial by the Business Association, to reinforce the message regarding Grantown's special character – the relaunch of the town's major retail outlet in the

spring of 2011 is seen as a vital component in this.

- 2.69 The other serious threat to the town's future wellbeing is if Grantown's young people move away through reduced work and housing prospects. Whereas the town is unwilling to accept a large scale housing development, the residents do feel that a compromise needs to be reached, so that youngsters are not leaving because they can't get accommodation. This would result in a detrimental imbalance in the population, turning Grantown into a 'retirement town', with a loss of vitality of young people in schools and community organisations. A low impact, small scale mix of accommodation is therefore called for.
- 2.70 Grantown residents are hopeful that the next 10 to 15 years will see a town that continues to be busy, safe and confident in its ability to provide a special place for locals and visitors. It will have retained its attractive appearance, with all of its current assets intact, well maintained and supporting the community. It is hoped that during this period, there will be a new community centre built, more top quality hotels and restaurants established, full schools with a balanced population, lots of successful businesses and that Grantown will still be recognised as a wildlife capital.

Living in Killiecrankie

- 2.71 Killiecrankie is a small village in Highland Perthshire lying on the river Garry at the Pass of Killiecrankie and marking the southernmost entrance to the Cairngorms National Park. It is well known for several reasons: the famous Battle of Killiecrankie fought

at the northern end of the village during the Jacobite Rebellion of 1689; for its historical connections with Robert the Bruce and Mary Queen of Scots; as well as for its natural beauty and breathtaking landscape.

2.72 The Pass of Killiecrankie which is dominated by the Garry and ancient mixed woodland, is owned and managed by the National Trust for Scotland and has one of the best loved views in Perthshire, looking northwards through the Pass from the Garry Bridge. Surrounded by such beautiful countryside which supports an abundance of wildlife, Killiecrankie attracts visitors throughout the year for walking, cycling and horse riding, but particularly in autumn when the hillsides are ablaze with spectacular colour.

2.73 Killiecrankie residents place great value on the tremendous community spirit within their village, with annual events such as Burns Night and Hogmanay celebrations well attended by locals and people from the surrounding vicinity. These events are held in their well used village hall that is integral to the community way of life and a focal point for a wide variety of activities.

2.74 The unique beauty of the area and the increasing numbers of visitors that it attracts potentially comes with a price however. Residents are particularly concerned about the continuing rise in wild camping in the area and the impact it has on the environment and would like to see this issue better managed. Similarly whilst welcoming new tourist developments and activities such as bungee jumping (Highland Fling) and other events, they are aware that

such introductions need to be managed carefully, so as not to create an imbalance in the locals' interests. There is a well understood need for maintaining a vital and thriving tourist trade, but this needs to be balanced with local housing being available not only for the valued holiday letting businesses but for young people and families who wish to stay and work in the area. With this in mind, any opportunity for future housing developments must be targeted for residential use primarily, sympathetic in design, to redress the imbalance of a small but significant 2nd home population that currently exists.

2.75 The inevitable continuing rise in oil prices will underline the requirement for the introduction of a local infrastructure that supports energy efficient sources as well as leading to the pressing need for a properly integrated transport system for both locals and visitors to access the area satisfactorily whilst reducing the carbon footprint. The NTS Visitor Centre to the south of the village is a valuable resource to the community but is not easily accessed from the village. A link to the Visitor Centre through provision of better signage and installation of an off-road path is therefore also a high priority for the community.

2.76 Finally, the community hopes to gain support for the building and promotion of an indoor equestrian centre, in particular to help develop their vaulting training for local youngsters. They have achieved notable success in this field to date, despite having to travel significant distances to practice and compete. For this small community this is a big

wish but one they are determined to pursue.

stay here and therefore these too must be protected.

Living in Kincaig and Vicinity

2.77 The community of Kincaig is located approximately halfway between Aviemore and Kingussie and, as well as the village itself, the outlying hamlets of Drumguish, Insh, Lynchat, Lynwilg, Alvie, Feshiebridge and Dalnavert are also sited within the community council area.

2.78 In spite of this geographical spread, a strong connection exists between all of these settlements and Kincaig village. Although residents of the outlying areas often look to their larger neighbours, Aviemore and Kingussie for amenities and services, they remain connected with the village due to the strong bonds with the land and the presence of the local primary school, shop, church, village hall and pub which play a pivotal role in the social cohesion of this scattered community.

2.79 Working the land is still a major way of life and source of employment in this part of the National Park and therefore needs to be supported, although tourism is the major driver in the local economy. Kincaig's location lends itself very well to drawing visitors to the area. For a small sized community, it offers high-end tourist attractions, specifically the Highland Wildlife Park and Loch Insh Watersports which bring in visitors all year round. Residents acknowledge that the magnificent views in addition to the numerous and varied recreational and sporting opportunities, are an important reason why people come to visit and

2.80 For the future, 'connections' are regarded as the essential key to the continued prosperity of this community: through social cohesion (retained amenities, appropriate scale and affordability of housing in keeping with local needs and character), excellent communications (broadband) and an effective, well maintained transport system (bus, rail and road).

2.81 The livelihood of many local people is dependent on visitors who support the local economy and the employment opportunities which are created through the service industry. However this area also attracts a lot of 2nd home owners whose properties are often left lying empty for a good proportion of the year and which it is felt make only a limited contribution to village life or the area but has the undesirable consequence of helping to raise house prices beyond the reach of local people. Although tourism is vital, diversification of the local economy is now considered essential, with farming, forestry, renewables such as a wind farm and local home working suggested as examples of furthering possible enterprise.

2.82 Whilst accepting that this will bring change, residents would like such developments to be organic in their growth, with planned housing still allowing Kincaig village in particular to retain its rural feel with design in keeping with the area's aesthetic appearance and small housing developments which do not impact on the views, or dominate the traditional heart of the village which they are determined to preserve for the future.

2.83 Regarding the 'Vicinity' element, the Park Plan needs to give greater attention to the importance of the land-based industries, in particular seeking to protect the limited arable (ploughable) areas from development as these will be needed for food production in the not too distant future.

Living in Kingussie

2.84 The oldest settlement in Badenoch, Kingussie is a traditional Highland town situated by the River Spey, 3 miles north of Newtonmore and 15 miles south of Aviemore. Located across the river, is the iconic Ruthven Barracks, a significant landmark as you approach the town. Served well by public transport, Kingussie is a popular destination for visitors who find it a friendly, attractive, well kept town with a welcoming atmosphere and thriving High Street set in an unbeatable and unspoilt mountain landscape and adjacent to the internationally Insh Marshes National Nature reserve 2.85 renowned for its special wildlife.

2.85 Kingussie has a number of important assets that make it special: a very successful shinty team; St Vincent's community hospital; Am Fasgadh site; the Iona Art Gallery (the only public art gallery in the Cairngorms National Park and now run by a community based art society); the Court House; several independently owned shops on the high street as well as a mainline railway station.

2.86 The unique backbone to Kingussie is its shinty team, which is vitally important to the social fabric of the town, its achievement being well known throughout the strath and beyond.

Proudly valued by the community is St Vincent's Hospital – an important facility providing care for the elderly throughout the strath, which needs to be maintained and enhanced as the average age of the area's population increases.

2.87 Residents appreciate the way the town has not changed significantly over time and would like to protect its physical appearance and atmosphere. Kingussie is an attractive destination for visitors that provides high quality hotels, B&B and guest houses, although there are a limited number of visitor attractions that currently remain to keep tourists in the town.

2.88 However aspirations are high and the proposed community buyout of the Am Fasgadh site for tourist development is an ambitious and exciting project that will meet this need, create space for local artisans, generate local employment, and provide an archive of genealogy. This significant project will potentially transform the community, provide visitors with a 'high end' experience and create an artistic hub at the southern end of the strath. In order to increase tourism numbers, this is a real opportunity to be harnessed and one that residents are ready to embrace.

2.89 Whilst this initiative is very exciting, residents are however increasingly disturbed and frustrated about what they perceive as the allowing of 'over development' particularly with regard to the impact a proposed new housing development will have on the community. Of particular concern are the issues around inadequate infrastructure provision, limited

employment opportunities and a population increase which will have an irreversible affect on the physical appearance and sense of this traditional highland town that provides the core appeal to locals and visitors alike.

Living in Laggan

2.90 Laggan lies in the most western part of the Cairngorms National Park, surrounded by the Monadhliath and Grampian mountain ranges. It is notably the second-largest parish in Scotland with nearly the smallest a population, yet it welcomes over 30,000 visitors a year. The community enjoys the legacy of the hit BBC drama series 'Monarch of the Glen' much of which was filmed in and around the village and this together with Wolftrax - the all year round, 18km mountain bike trail, the Laggan Community Forest, the Corrieyairack Pass and a rich cultural heritage going right back to Pictish times, makes you realise why this is such a popular place to visit.

2.91 Laggan has a long history and a recognised reputation for community activism. Over the years, dynamic and forward looking residents have formed groundbreaking community organisations which have resulted in the community ownership of a number of local assets: 5 community houses for local residents; the village hall; and one of the first Community Forests in Scotland. The village also has its own village store, primary school, active church, resource centre and doctor's surgery and nothing seems too big for this aspirational community to take on.

2.92 Laggan has bred many generations of farming/crofting families and now is home to others who have moved into the area wishing to make it their way of life too, resulting in a significant increase in the population over the last decade. This mix is regarded as an important asset to the community, as it combines the rich knowledge of a crofting and farming tradition together with a wealth of new ideas and energy, creating a community which is greatly strengthened by these qualities.

2.93 Consequently any significant reversal of this trend with people moving away, would impact severely on the ability of the community organisations to pursue their desired aims with the energy and success they have had up to now. It could lead to a one-teacher or even closure of the primary school, doctors surgery, village stores and create a community that is no longer able to attract inward investment. Laggan is a very nice place to live, but residents are aware that they are on the edge of many boundaries, such as the National Park and public service agencies, and even over the edge in the case of public transport. An appreciation of this by decision-makers is vital to the future wellbeing of the community

2.94 The landscape and way of life in Laggan has not changed much over time, and although the community doesn't want to see any dramatic change in the landscape, they are acutely aware they have some responsibility for the future social and economic development of the area. Local businesses feel there are a number of constraints currently preventing them from being able to expand, and these issues must be

urgently addressed. Trunk road restrictions, planning legislation and affordable accommodation for seasonal employees amongst others are some examples of where future challenges lie.

2.95 A strong broadband connection, all year round tourist trade, an appropriate public transport system, the maximisation of benefits from community assets (eg its forest; tourism) and a variety of profitable businesses including farming and community businesses, are seen as the important priorities to ensure the future livelihoods of Laggan residents. This it is hoped, will encourage the community's young people to stay or return to the area, where they have a reasonable prospect of getting a job and somewhere affordable to live, maybe in housing that is sympathetic and innovative to match Laggan's outlook.

Living in Nethy Bridge

2.96 Situated in the heart of Strathspey, the village of Nethy Bridge often affectionately referred to simply as "Nethy" has been a holiday destination since Victorian times, yet it remains unspoilt with the majority of its buildings hidden away in quiet locations next to the ancient Caledonian pine forest of Abernethy. Set against the backdrop of the Cairngorm mountains and hundreds of acres of Abernethy Forest (RSPB owned), the village spans the lower reaches of the River Nethy.

2.97 Nethy Bridge also known as the 'Forest Village' has many historical landmarks and qualities making it an attractive place for residents and visitors. Abernethy Old Kirk, Castle

Roy, four Thomas Telford bridges and industrial archaeology sites, all complement the farming landscape, iconic wildlife, Speyside Way and stunning forest environment. In addition the village has a shop and post office, busy community centre, primary school, Abernethy Outdoor Centre, an active parish Church (Church of Scotland), local butcher and a ranger service (Explore Abernethy), in addition to the river Nethy which is easily accessed via the community created riverside walks.

2.98 A great asset to the surrounding area is the iconic wildlife in the area, namely the Ospreys at Loch Garten. These birds of prey have been a magnet for attracting wildlife tourism for decades. With this in mind, Nethy Bridge residents would like to explore ways of creating greater communication and consultation links with the RSPB as there are several mutual benefits to be gained from an enhanced relationship.

2.99 At the heart of the village is a resourceful community who are committed to improving the quality of life and opportunities for the current and future generations of Nethy residents. This is reflected in the number and variety of community groups that exist, which look to work together and are well supported. The community's website (Nethybridge.com) and quarterly newsletter (The Nethy) help to keep residents informed of events, activities and village news, whilst also encouraging visitors to stay. The Abernethy Games are a good example of this community's successful cooperation, as the annual event goes from strength to strength

attracting thousands of spectators each year from home and abroad.

2.100 Nethy Bridge's concern for the future lies in what it sees as the risk of unsympathetic housing developments in scale and design. Residents are keen for any building development that does occur, to be done using local trade and skills and in keeping with the existing dwellings, - scattered within woodland and avoiding the hard landscaping that seems to be packaged in with new development today, eg soft verges not hard edges next to the roadside.

2.101 The continuation of traditional businesses such as farming, building and landscaping will hopefully all continue to provide employment opportunities for the younger generation, but this can't happen if there is an accommodation shortage due to lack of access to land for building, low wages, high cost of living and an affordable housing shortage due to the current level of 2nd homes being taken up in the community. The ability to expand small business opportunities to support local tradesmen is also one of the key factors that will determine the future sustainability of the village.

2.102 Nethy Bridge Community Development Company are hopeful that within the next decade, they will have realised their ambition of getting a successful wind energy scheme going in the community, supporting local amenities including the community centre.

2.103 Residents would not like Nethy Bridge to be very different from the peaceful yet attractive, socially active village it currently is. It is hoped that in

future, people will still enjoy fishing on the Spey, the forest area will be well managed, it may be darker due to less street lighting, the stunning views will still be appreciated and it may even have a tea room for all to enjoy.

Living in Newtonmore

2.104 Newtonmore, situated above the flood plain of the River Spey, is at the heart of the Scottish Highlands set against the backdrop of the Monadhliath Mountains. Larch, pine, birch and alder woodlands, which are a feature of this rural environment, provide a glorious tapestry of colour during the autumn. The area is one of the last strongholds of the native red squirrel and is home to the elusive Scottish wildcat. The Newtonmore Wildcat Centre, on the main street, provides a fund of information on local outdoor activities.

2.105 Lying close to its neighbour Kingussie, with whom it enjoys a fierce rivalry on the shinty pitch, Newtonmore and surrounding area is popular with outdoor and field sports enthusiasts. With easy access to hills and rivers, the area is perfect for walkers, climbers, ornithologists, cyclists, anglers and pony-trekking. Outdoor highlights include the "Wildcat Trail" which is a 10km orbital walk around the edge of the village, taking in the River Spey and its tributary the Calder and local archaeological sites. In addition, nearby 'Munros', the Calder Falls, the scenic 18 hole Newtonmore golf course, fishing on the Spey and beautiful Glen Banchor provide something for everyone.

2.106 Popular attractions in Newtonmore are the highly acclaimed Highland Folk

Museum, the Wildcat Experience, Waltzing Waters Light and Water Theatre and, for those hunting their Highland ancestry, the Clan MacPherson Museum. Numerous locations in and around Newtonmore were part of the fictional 'Glenbogle' which featured in the hit BBC TV series Monarch of the Glen. Visitors to Newtonmore continue to find delight in spotting sites made familiar by the series.

2.107 A healthy tourist trade is a major source of employment for the village and the community works hard to promote this aspect of village life. Residents, the Newtonmore & Vicinity Community Council and the Newtonmore Business Association are united in their recognition that over development of the built environment or further losses of amenities and services, will impact negatively on the community's ability to encourage visitors to remain in the village for an extended period of time. All share deep concerns that the current unspoilt nature of the place, with its balance of tourism and traditional working environment, is at risk.

2.108 There is anxiety, too, over the continued movement of young people away from the area and the trend towards an aging population. This drift of younger people from the area stems from limited employment opportunities and an inability to access local housing because of high cost, lack of rental properties and increasing numbers of second homes. Keeping young people in Newtonmore is regarded as a priority, as they are vital to the sustainability of the quality of community life that characterises this traditional village. Retention of the

individual character and appeal of Newtonmore will depend on appropriate housing development. Sensitive location of small groupings of mixed size dwellings and less insistence on a standard 1.5 storey house are essential. The proposed „estate.-type block developments are out of character and will, ultimately, undermine the attractiveness and appeal of Newtonmore.

2.109 The residents are clear in their determination to retain and enhance the features that make Newtonmore distinct. Important amongst these are:

- Development and expansion of the award winning Folk Museum
- Refurbishment of the village hall with its fine façade
- Protection of native wildlife
- Creation of opportunities for small businesses to thrive, including streamlining of strong communication links
- Continuation and promotion of the Newtonmore Games
- Reinforcement of the sense of strong community spirit

Living in Strath Don

2.110 The area of Upper Donside within the National Park includes all the small communities of Strathdon up to Corgarff and the Lecht. The total population is around 500 and widely dispersed over more than 15 miles of Donside plus adjoining small glens.

2.111 The River Don and the cultural influence of the Lonach heritage are common links between these mainly agricultural settlements and glens where people value the rural way of life, natural beauty and abundance of wildlife and rare species. Farming,

sporting estates and increasingly small businesses, including tourism, play an important part economically. The remoteness and dispersal of residences has created self-reliance but also a dependency on transport, energy supplies, communication, and the services that are available. Apart from that, the friendly and supportive social network plays an important part, especially when dealing with problems.

2.112 Financial cuts that affect services and community groups would seriously threaten the welfare and wellbeing of people here. The increasing cost of fuel, energy and therefore, transport and heating, is hitting people here harder than in more populated areas. A shortage of houses to rent or buy and a lack of services and jobs can cause younger people to move away and elderly locals to become increasingly isolated. Without a more focused approach or plan, tourism in Upper Donside will remain underdeveloped compared to Speyside and Royal Deeside.

2.113 In an ideal future, Upper Donside will still have the rural, unspoilt, unpolluted, crime-free character that it has today but estates, residents, farmers, businesses, services and community groups will work more closely together to share resources and find creative ways to exploit the area's natural resources and beauty, and enable it to remain a great place to live.

2.114 This will involve an overall improvement with regard to housing, employment, community and recreational activities, outdoor access and creative solutions to transport needs. Success will mean even better relations between all parties involved,

and strengthen the social fabric and willingness to co-ordinate and enable new initiatives.

2.115 Better broadband available throughout all the glens would have a huge positive effect for: business opportunities for even the remotest locations, the ability to work from home, facilitating easier and quicker ways of working together in general, providing more information, access to online resources and enabling distance-learning, preventing social isolation of vulnerable groups and promoting the area much more effectively as a tourist destination.

Living in Tomintoul

- 2.116 Tomintoul village sees itself as the gateway to the Cairngorms in the North, but can also feel isolated – ‘out on a limb’. - both from the Aviemore corridor (Cairngorm National Park) and Elgin (The Moray Council area). Tomintoul itself is a centre for outlying settlements the Braes of Glenlivet, Tomnavoulin, Chapelton of Glenlivet and other isolated settlements, though these areas also look to Grantown, Elgin and other Speyside towns for services and facilities. It has a good sense of community, with lively community groups.
- 2.117 Tomintoul values its beautiful scenery and wildlife and sees this as a privilege for people living here, but also as an asset for tourism. However, people are worried about the threats to tourism from unoccupied or derelict buildings in the village. Particularly, a closed hotel and some shop closures raise concerns about accommodation and facilities to offer tourists. Two weeks after this consultation, the Moray Council budget proposals included plans to close some services including Tomintoul Museum and Tourist Information Centre which had a footfall of 12,000 this year which would reduce the incentive for tourists to stop in Tomintoul even further. New facilities using existing buildings such as a gym/ leisure facilities and a campsite are among suggested solutions, as well as making the most of assets such as local walks.
- 2.118 Isolation and distance from main centres concerns people in Tomintoul. Rising fuel costs and drive times to shops and facilities like swimming pools & training facilities for young people, plus limited

employment opportunities could mean an increase in the ageing of the population. There are concerns about the affordability of housing for young people and families and a desire to see the council points system for housing allocation including a method for targeting local people. New affordable housing could utilise derelict buildings and/or be in keeping with traditional styles

- 2.119 Tomintoul greatly values the services it currently has itself. The doctor’s surgery, library, primary school, emergency services, Dial-a-Bus, village shop and museum are all mentioned in the consultation. The proposed council cuts could impact very heavily on these services. 78% of people consulted about the effects of public service cuts thought that these would be severe. in Tomintoul, and there is great concern in the village about the effects that closure of the library, museum and car share scheme would have on the village. The many comments about the minimal bus services available must raise concerns about how local people could get to hospital appointments, how children and locals unable to drive or with limited access to a car could access library services etc. Some expressed a wish for the community to work with agencies such as the Crown Estate, Moray Council and the Park to improve things in Tomintoul in the future.

3. Development Principles for An Camas Mòr

3.1 These are the principles that the Cairngorms National Park Authority expects to see reflected in any masterplan and planning application for the new sustainable community of An Camas Mòr. There is an expectation that the submitted proposals will describe how the principles can be delivered. There would then be a requirement that they would be fully worked up within subsequent detailed applications. It is appreciated that certain aspects of the principles will depend on the way the development is promoted and used once it is in place, but the layout, design and embodied culture can influence this to a significant extent. The way in which the principles are addressed in the documents supporting any planning application will be central to consideration of the application by CNPA acting as planning authority.

3.2 Fit for a National Park

An Camas Mòr will have the distinction of being the only new community planned for a National Park. It will make a significant contribution to the delivery of the National Park aims and set an outstanding example of what is possible in a National Park context. It will help to deliver the Cairngorms National Park Plan and emerging Local Plan. It will reflect the special qualities of the National Park and incorporate a wide range of sustainability measures in its design, layout and function. An Camas Mòr will be internationally acclaimed as an exemplar of sustainable development and building design in a very sensitive location. It will be an inspiration and a delight.

3.3 A Real Cairngorms Community

An Camas Mòr will be an inclusive and vibrant community with a demographically

balanced resident population. It will embrace diversity and provide for all abilities. It will be recognisably “Cairngorms”. It will be a real community, not a holiday village or second home enclave, and will provide the range of facilities commensurate with that status. It will be a healthy community with access to the full range of recreation and sports facilities. It will have a distinct cultural identity that takes account of existing traditions and way of life in the surrounding area.

3.4 Climate Change

An Camas Mòr offers an opportunity for a real community-wide contribution to the challenge of climate change. It will offer an exemplar of living with the weather: coping with exposure and maximising solar gain, capturing higher rainfall and dealing with longer dry spells. It will offer an opportunity to maximise use of existing technology and test new solutions to climate change issues including energy efficiency, use of a range of renewable sources for heat and power, water and waste minimisation/recycling.

3.5 Relationship With Aviemore

An Camas Mòr will be a community in its own right, but by virtue of its location it will have a special relationship with Aviemore. Many of the services used by residents of the community will be in Aviemore and over time this will be reciprocated. There is a longstanding expectation locally, that the land on either side of the River Spey should be made available as a resource for the Aviemore and An Camas Mòr communities for recreation and leisure with potential, inter alia, for sports facilities, playing fields, paths, woodland, and allotments. Various parties are currently active in pursuing the realisation of this aspiration. Fundamental to its delivery is a new foot/cycle bridge across the River Spey with a path directly linking central

Aviemore and An Camas Mòr to ensure that the communities are true partners. The masterplan for An Camas Mòr will be expected to acknowledge this objective and demonstrate how An Camas Mòr, with other parties, will directly contribute to its delivery.

3.6 Landscape Context

An Camas Mòr will take account of and respond to the wider landscape context. The development will incorporate a sequence of spaces that integrate it effectively with its surroundings. There will be a strategy for long term management of shared space and landscape. There will be a strategy of pre-planting from the outset both within and outside the site to ensure full integration with the landscape from an early stage.

3.7 Delivery

An Camas Mòr will show how private and public investment and a range of small and large developers will consistently work together when the land is no longer in one ownership, over all phases of the development, to create a new community with a distinct and cohesive identity and sense of place. It will demonstrate how the scale of growth is linked to social development of the new community.

3.8 Movement

An Camas Mòr will seek to actively discourage the use of private cars through detailed design, early provision of regular and affordable public transport links, and provision of a network of paths for walkers and cyclists giving effective links within the community and with the surrounding area. Roads within the development will safely give priority to walkers/cyclists of all abilities and will seek to establish new standards for informal layout and design

which The Highland Council will accept for adoption.

3.9 Biodiversity

An Camas Mòr will be expected to demonstrate how a development of this size and quality can both conserve and enhance the biodiversity of the site and surrounding area. This will include a comprehensive range of mitigation measures integrated at every level within the development and enhancement of habitat networks throughout the area within and surrounding the development. Where mitigation is not possible within the site boundary, enhancement works beyond the site will be expected to ensure a net enhancement to the natural heritage of the Park.

3.10 The Built Environment & Public Realm

An Camas Mòr will reflect consistently high standards of design at all levels in terms of both quality and sustainability in its widest sense. It will have regard to the building traditions of the area in terms of form and materials, but will reflect its time. It will maximise use of locally sourced materials, particularly timber. It will create an An Camas Mòr distinctiveness that reflects its location in the Cairngorms. It will show how higher density is compatible with the landscape context, the provision of good quality housing and a place where folk will enjoy living and working. The design and location of spaces will be as important as the buildings. It will include landmark buildings and structures to contribute to its distinctiveness. Lighting on roads, paths and throughout the development will be designed to minimise impact on the night sky, to conserve energy and to provide for people's actual needs.

3.11 Affordable Housing

An Camas Mòr will make a significant contribution throughout its development to the provision of the full range of affordable housing to meet local needs within the National Park. It will demonstrate how both the public and private sectors will work together to deliver affordable housing. It will show how such housing will remain affordable and available for local people.

3.12 A Place to Work

An Camas Mòr will be designed and promoted to actively encourage the provision of jobs within the community and seek to minimise levels of commuting. It will incorporate space that is designed for or can be easily adapted for employment uses. It will facilitate home working. It will have a strategy for attracting and stimulating a wide range of business opportunities that complement the ethos of the community.

4. Development Principles for Ballater

- 4.1 The area allocated is intended to provide for a range of needs for the community, including housing, business and recreation. There will be scope for the provision of services for residents, day visitors and tourists. An innovative approach to design and layout including access and movement within the site will be encouraged; and a variety of densities and designs and pockets of mixed uses will be supported.
- 4.2 The masterplan approach to detailed implementation will facilitate the achievement of a high quality layout and consistent design. It will respect the historic quality of the existing built environment including the conservation area. Listed buildings, including the B listed Monaltrie House, and their settings will also be protected.
- 4.3 Monaltrie Park will form a core part of the new development. The area identified as open space will allow for provision of sports pitches and parking for events including the Ballater Games.
- 4.4 There will be a network of pedestrian and cycle paths throughout the development. Particular attention will be paid to linking the park with the historic core of the village; and there will be links to the primary school and to the Deeside Way.
- 4.5 The masterplan will incorporate a full range of sustainability measures. The provision for biodiversity throughout the development will include special attention to relevant habitats and wildlife networks.
- 4.6 The masterplan will incorporate a comprehensive landscaping strategy which will include structure planting on the edges of the site and within the development to integrate it with the existing landscape and ensure that there is no hard edge when viewed from the east.
- 4.7 The development of the site will present an excellent opportunity for large and small scale developers and builders to work together to bring forward the delivery of the masterplan.

5. Pre consultation exercise

- 5.1 The first phase of preparing a Local Development Plan is to prepare and consult on a Main Issues Report. This document is intended to inform the Development Plan itself. It must set out the general proposals for development in the area, and must look at the main issues affecting the plan area. In doing so it must set out reasonable alternatives. To help draw this MIR together it felt that early engagement with key stakeholders was essential to help inform our thinking and ensure we were taking the right approach.

- 5.2 A short report, below, was sent to key agencies, Scottish ministers and adjoining planning authorities. Parties were asked to give comment on a number of posed questions and a list of issues which are considered important. A summary of their responses is as follows.

CONSULTATION

What is the purpose of the pre consultation?

The Cairngorms National Park Authority has started work to review the recently adopted Local Plan. As part of this, we are thinking about the issues to bring into the next Local Development Plan, learning from our recent experiences on the Local Plan, and taking into account the new direction from the Scottish Government in regard to land use planning. We are keen to hear your thoughts on our initial work, which will then be refined to produce the Main Issues Report, which is due to be published for full consultation in May/June next year.

We are therefore asking key stakeholders for their thoughts on the issues they would like to see addressed in the Main Issues Report and the subsequent Local Development Plan.

How will it feed into the Main Issues Report Timetable?

Although we have only recently adopted the Cairngorms Local Plan (Oct 2010) we are keen to bring our plan in line with Governments direction for plans to be succinct and ambitious in their long term visioning for the area. We will publish a new draft National Park Plan for the period 2012-17 for consultation in May/June 2011 with the aim of adopting a revised National Park Plan by Spring 2012. It seems logical, bearing in mind the close relationship between the National park Plan and the Local Development Plan that we produce our Main Issues Report at the same time as the draft National Park Plan. This will allow consultees to consider the strategic direction and long term vision together with the specific issues through which the Local Development Plan will help deliver the aims of the National Park. Consultation on both documents will run throughout next summer, and the results will feed into a finalised National Park Plan and draft Local Development Plan.



Do you agree with our intention to consult on the draft National Park Plan and the Main Issues Report at the same time?

THE MAIN ISSUES REPORT AND THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

What we have learned from the Local Plan process.

Our recent experience as a result of the Reporters Report into the Inquiry on the Local Plan has given us significant clarity on the role of the National Park Plan. The National Park Plan sets the strategic direction and context within which the Local Development Plan sets out how development can contribute to the aims of the National Park. This requires the National Park to contain a sufficiently explicit strategic direction for settlement strategy and development.

It has also clarified the role of the aims of the Park and the wording contained within them. We have a duty to ensure that what happens across the Park conserves AND enhances the natural and cultural heritage, and that a neutral effect will not be sufficient.

We have identified the need for a step change in the quality of design in the Park

We are also clear that we need to revisit some of our thinking on the way we engage with people, and the new process of delivering the Local Plan will allow us to review our methods of engagements.

Evidence base to support the Main Issues Report

We have been monitoring the use of the Local Plan policies and land allocations since July 2010. We have also been compiling a variety of evidence and research to support the Local Development Plan and the National Park Plan. We will produce a comprehensive set of evidence to accompany the MIR and allow the reader to understand what information has been used to refine our thinking.

THE EVIDENCE

- the monitoring of policies and land allocations
- land audits for housing and employment land
- research on the options to deliver housing to meet local needs
- population information principally from GRO
- housing need and demand assessments compiled by the local housing authorities which will feed into a park wide assessment of the need for new housing development
- information on house completions to allow an assessment of future needs
- research on the need and demand for land for employment development
- town centre health checks to provide a baseline set of data on the state of our town centres
- community discussions and assessments to clarify where they see themselves in the future

Do you think we need to compile any additional evidence or information to help us draw up the Local Development Plan?

How will we shape the policies?

The new approach to development planning places a focus of attention on a framework for development which is spatial rather than topic based. It should be map based and focus on the main proposals for up to 10 years in the future, with a look also to the following 10 years beyond that. There is a clear move away from text heavy documents. The policies and the Plan itself therefore need to be expressed spatially.

How will we use Supplementary Guidance?

Supplementary guidance can be used to support the development plan, dealing with minor proposals and detailed policies, particularly where there is to be little change from the adopted plan.

Our current raft of supplementary guidance covers a wide range of topics. We must revisit all the guidance and ensure that it is fit for purpose to support the development plan. We will also introduce additional guidance where necessary to cover detail currently contained within the adopted plan. All this guidance will also be subject to full consultation and will hold greater weight in the decision making process in the future.

THE VISION

The role of the NPP and its strategic objectives

Outside Strategic Development Plan areas it is part of the role of the Development Plan to set a vision for the area for the future. Although the legislation does not clarify the position of National Park Plans it is clear that they provide equivalent strategic context as SDPs. They are intended to be management plans covering all relevant aspects of the National Park, including development and wider land use planning, setting a clear strategic direction. The National Park Plan is an opportunity to ensure that development planning is an integral part of the wider management approach to deliver the aims of the Park.

We intend to set out the vision in the draft National Park Plan, where we will also set out how the principles of the Scottish Government's Land Use Strategy will be applied in the National Park. The LDP will then take the spatial aspects of this and clarify how the vision can be achieved on the ground. To influence this vision, a comprehensive programme of engagement has taken place during the autumn of 2010 with every community in the Park. This work focused on helping each community think about where they see themselves in the next 25 years, and draw up a community vision. The National Park Plan and the LDP will show how aspects of these visions can be achieved.

Do you agree that the right place to set out the vision for the National park, its settlement strategy and its lands use strategy is the National Park Plan?

CALL FOR SITES

To start the ball rolling, we asked land owners, developers etc to suggest sites for development in the future. These sites have all been surveyed for their suitability and will form part of the Main Issues Report. We intend to clarify in the Main Issues Report our preferred sites for the development in the next 10 years, and an indication for the following 10 years after that. In line with the current guidance we will include options to our preferred sites. We will not however include all the sites that were suggested to us. Some were for minor developments which would be dealt with through general policies, and some for sites which, following initial survey work are considered inappropriate for the proposed nature of development, non starters as it were, which we intend to make public but not as a formal part of the Main Issues Report.

Do you agree that we include realistic options for development sites in the MIR, but exclude ‘non starters’?

HOW WE HAVE ORGANISED THE ISSUES

The issues to be contained within the MIR will fall into 4 broad headings which reflect the 4 aims of the Park.

- To conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area;
- To promote sustainable use of natural resources of the area;
- To promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public;
- To promote sustainable economic and social development of the area’s communities.

The National Parks (Scotland) Act requires that these aims be delivered collectively and in a co-ordinated way. The National Park Plan will set out how they can be achieved collectively, but taken individually the form a useful framework in which to consider the issues. This pre-consultation phase will help inform the final approach taken in the Main Issues Report.

Do you agree that we use the 4 aims of the Park to form the basis of the Main Issues Report?

The Key Questions we need to answer

1. How do we achieve development that conserves AND enhances the natural and cultural heritage of the Park?
2. How can we better conserve AND enhance cultural heritage in particular through the planning system?
3. How do we balance development against our duty of care to the biodiversity of the Park?

Natural and Cultural Heritage

1. How do we promote sustainable patterns of development?
2. How do we meet our duty of care to make the best use of finite resources?
3. What impact will development have on water, carbon and air?
4. To what extent should we seek to generate energy in the Park?
5. How do we reduce energy use?

Sustainable use of resources

1. How can we enhance the understanding of the special qualities and the nature of the National Park designation?
2. How can spatial planning help deliver the principles of the highest standards of tourism, access and recreation set out in the Europarc Charter?

Understand and Enjoy

Sustainable development of communities

1. How do we achieve sustainable and thriving communities?
2. What levels of growth are needed to maintain active and vibrant communities?
3. Where should be put this development?
4. How do we respond to wider regional and national pressures and aspirations?

6. Summary of responses to Pre consultation

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Scottish Water	No issues with running both in parallel	No specific requirements for evidence	Since the NPP & LDP will function in parallel, as long as there is clear referencing and links between the 2 docs, SW have no preference as to which doc contains the strategy as long as its easily comprehensive	Reasonable to focus on sites with a robust prospect of being delivered. However clarification on why sites did not meet this standard would be helpful. SW would not consider water or waste water constraints to put sites into the 'non-starter' bracket. SW would prefer all sites would be contained along with their prospective viability.	Yes	
Aberdeenshire Council	This matches the twin tracking of	no	The vision should be in the NPP, and	The preference is to show all sites and mark	Yes	Believe it would be useful to have a

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	LDPs and SDPs. With the reporters clarity on the role of the NPP this would be reasonable (assuming that moving forward the LDP used the NPP as an SDP and was amended to reflect it, and that the draft LDP was not published until the NPP was finalised. (para 33 of cir 1/09)		should set the context for the settlement and land use strategy. Concerned that if the settlement and land use strategies are in the NPP there will be limited opportunity to consider alternatives.	those 'non starters' as not preferred. This allowed clarity and debate on why they were not preferred options.		similar affordable housing policy in both authorities. Differences put pressure on settlements closest to the boundary of the area with the more lenient approach.
Historic Scotland	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Additional information supplied to assist in baseline info for SEA and in

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TAYplan						<p>supporting evidence for LDP</p> <p>Consultation on TAYplan due to end 1 aug 2011.</p> <p>Sustainable use of resources should also pose question on quality of development, beyond patterns of development.</p>
Nestrans	Allows strategic direction and long term vision to be considered at same time as LDP issues thus giving a clear link between the 2 docs. However the	Consider the impact of development on the transport network and the implications of accessibility and encouraging use of	NPP should set strategic vision, taking on the role of a SDP. Preparation of both docs must allow for the NPP to influence and guide the development of the	Acceptable as long as the reasons for not including sites is included somewhere	Yes as long as the aims of the plan are not likely to alter	

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	clear hierarchy of the 2 docs must be maintained.	public transport, cycling, walking. Evidence on travel patterns and needs of residents and visitors to the park would be helpful to understand opps for improvement.	LDP.			
Transport Scotland	Parallel consultations can cause confusion therefore it must be clear what people are being consulted on.	Info on the strategic transport network should be compiled to properly assess the potential impact on the performance and safety of the strategic transport network. Also should include programmed transport projects –	Refer to previous comments on need for clarity on the way consultations are handled and the role of each document.	Evidence to explain why sites are omitted is needed for clarity.	yes	

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		list provided including info on 20 year investment projects.				
Tactran	yes	Information on accessibility of existing settlements and services together with development locations should be considered. Model is available.	yes	Approach is reasonable but should allow flexibility	yes	<p>Questions posed:</p> <p>Natural heritage – key is to promote sustainable development. Development should be located where the need to travel is reduced and where there are alternatives to the private car.</p> <p>Sustainable resources – as above. Suggest use</p>

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						<p>of model to help with this. Issue also regarding rural filling stations and ensuring sufficient local provision.</p> <p>Understanding etc – visitors must be aware of non-car options for travel</p> <p>Sustainable development – development should be focused where car use is minimised.</p>
SNH	Yes	Cumulative effects of development on water supply and quality; map	Yes but as the NPP is not under the planning act, the weight accorded to	Yes but need to explain why sites have been excluded. The SEA should also be	Yes but it must also be shaped by the vision and spatial	Questions posed: answers to the questions given rather than

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	<p>peatland and carbon rich soils; update landscape capacity work previously done; outputs of landscape scenario project; special landscape qualities report; joint working on mapping wildness; green networks</p>	<p>the LDP must not be diminished by the absence of material setting this out. perhaps simply dealt with by cross referencing.</p>	<p>informed by this consideration of options.</p>	<p>strategy.</p>	<p>alternatives.</p> <p>Additional suggestions - Natural heritage – farm steadings, species loss, and invasive species.</p> <p>Sustainable resources – multifunctional spaces; green networks; list of things for spg; proper use of the SEA to address issues on water, soil etc; better information as basis</p>

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						<p>for decision making</p> <p>Understanding etc – use special qualities of the park report</p> <p>Sustainable communities – national tree targets shown by preferred areas for planting</p>
SEPA	yes	<p>List of SEPA info that should be referred to regarding flooding, RBMPs and waste.</p> <p>Map carbon rich soils</p>	LDP must set out how the vision and settlement strategy will be delivered	Support the promotion of sites that can be developed.	yes	<p>Additional things to be addressed – protection of people, property and infrastructure from risk of flooding; protection of the water environment;</p>

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						climate change and energy; promotion of sustainable waste management. Waste should be covered in the sustainable use of resources section.
Perth and Kinross Council	Yes, good to avoid consultation fatigue in communities. But needs care to avoid confusion	Yes. Need to also include SEA and any strategic FRA	This would be a key part of the National Park Plan. However the legislation directs this element to be in the LDP.	Yes in order to manage expectations	Yes, the aims of the Park should reflect the vision in the MIR.	
Scottish Government	Yes. The MIR should include spatial and site specific information and alternatives which is meaningful to	You should also consider information regarding transport appraisals, strategic Flood risk assessment, heat	Yes although the settlement strategy should also be in the MIR. The vision and spatial strategy also need to be expressed in the proposed LDP.	Yes. The MIR should set out reasonable alternatives	Yes, but the MIR needs to think more about policy than the aims of the Park.	The key questions are excellent, although the MIR should consider issues beyond the role of the NPA.

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stakeholders and communities.	mapping, SEA, Zero waste plan				