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CAIRNGORMS LOCAL OUTDOOR ACCESS FORUM

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**Title:** PARK PLAN – DRAFT STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES – JULY 2005

**Prepared by:** taken from a paper by Hamish Trench, Park Plan Officer

**Purpose:** To brief the Forum on the progress of the Park Plan

### **Background**

1. Below are the draft objectives for the Park Plan, informed by discussions to date. These remain open to amendments as discussions continue towards the Draft Park Plan. The objectives set the long-term direction for the management of the Park, and the Plan will set out a series of shorter-term actions that will start to deliver these.
2. The period of informal discussions on the objectives and actions will continue until the end of September, when the Draft Plan is drawn together. The full Draft Plan will then be open for a formal public consultation for 3 months from March 2006.

The objectives and actions are set out in 3 broad themes:

- Conserving and enhancing the Park
- Communities living and working in the Park
- Understanding and enjoying the Park

### **THEME 1 - CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE PARK**

#### **Integrated Land Management**

- To maintain and enhance a viable land management sector that delivers private and public objectives and enhances the special qualities of the Park;
- To integrate support for all land and water management activities to deliver public benefits that enhance the special qualities of the Park;
- To develop and promote best practice in land management and its interactions with people and other land uses;
- To develop collaboration and communication between statutory agencies, land managers, non-governmental organisations, voluntary groups, communities and other interests.
- To develop local supply chains and markets for local produce;
- To reduce pollution from all land management activities.

#### **Agriculture & Crofting**

- To maintain a productive and viable agricultural sector;
- To encourage the continued development of crofting;
- To make available land for those who wish to farm, particularly new-entrants.

## Deer Management

- To manage deer populations at densities consistent with enhancing the special natural heritage qualities of the Cairngorms, particularly native woodland, montane and moorland habitats;
- To co-ordinate deer management across the Park;
- To maintain and enhance the economic sustainability of the deer resource;
- To research, make accessible and use the best available data on habitat impacts, population models and good practice to inform deer management planning;
- To minimise the use of deer fencing and its recreation, landscape and natural heritage impacts.

## Forestry

- To expand native woodland cover in areas that develop habitat networks and complement the landscape character of the Cairngorms;
- To reinstate a natural treeline where possible;
- To support a multi-objective forest sector that includes timber production, recreation, nature conservation and an appropriate mix of tree species and ages;
- To promote community involvement in woodland management and understanding of local woodland characteristics and distinctiveness.

## Moorland

- To maintain and enhance the economic and environmental sustainability of moorland sporting and agricultural interests, primarily through appropriate grazing and muirburn regimes;
- To demonstrate and develop the links between sustainable moorland management and biodiversity;
- To manage the interaction of moorlands with surrounding land-uses to maintain the integrity of the moorland landscape, ecosystems and hydrology;
- To increase awareness of the international significance of moorlands in the Cairngorms.

## Water

- To maintain and enhance the high water quality generally present in the Park;
- To adopt a catchment-scale approach to management that integrates land-use, nature conservation and flood management;
- To minimise adverse impacts resulting from the introduction of non-native species;
- To encourage co-ordination of fishery management in the Park.

## Landscape

- To maintain and enhance the distinctive landscape character of the Cairngorms;
- To minimise the adverse impact of development and infrastructure on the landscape;
- To conserve and enhance the wild characteristics of areas within the Park.
- To raise awareness of the influences of land uses and culture on the landscape; and recognise its importance to the character and economy of the area;
- To engage communities in understanding and managing landscape.

### **Nature Conservation**

- To conserve and enhance the diversity of habitats and species present in the Cairngorms;
- To adopt a landscape-scale approach to enhancing habitat networks and minimising habitat loss or fragmentation;
- To ensure all designated nature conservation sites are in good condition
- To engage all sectors in implementing the Local Biodiversity Action Plan;
- To promote access to appropriate policy and funding mechanisms to support nature conservation;
- To actively consider potential future impacts of new and reintroduced species;
- To develop understanding of the interactions of land-uses and nature conservation.

### **Air Quality**

- To maintain and, where possible, improve current air quality;

### **Minerals**

- To ensure mineral workings do not compromise the special qualities of the Park;
- To promote local community benefit from mineral workings;
- To encourage reworking of mineral waste deposits and recycling where appropriate.

### **The Built Environment & Historic Landscapes**

- To develop a sound knowledge and understanding of the archaeological, historic and built environment resources;
- To promote awareness and interpretation of the value of the archaeological, historic and built environment;
- To conserve and enhance the resources of the archaeological, historic and built environment.

### **Cultural Traditions**

- To support and promote the diverse cultural traditions of communities within the Park;
- To identify and record the cultural traditions within the Park.

## **THEME 2 - COMMUNITIES LIVING AND WORKING IN THE PARK**

### **Economy**

- To create conditions conducive to business growth and investment that are consistent with the special qualities of the Park;
- To promote diversity and equality of employment opportunities across all areas of the Park;
- To address barriers to employment uptake;
- To encourage entrepreneurship, especially in young people and in sectors which complement the Park aims;
- To promote 'green business' opportunities;
- To raise the profile and excellence of local produce and services;
- To encourage a population level and mix in the Park that meets the present and future needs of its communities and businesses.

### **Education and Training**

- To promote access to education and vocational training at all levels across the Park;
- To develop educational resources that draw on the special qualities of the Park;
- To ensure a match between training provision and current/future skills needs;
- To develop and support opportunities for volunteering.

### **Sustainable Tourism**

- To ensure effective involvement by all stakeholders in the planning, development and management of tourism in the Cairngorms, and to maintain good communication between them;
- To raise awareness of the Cairngorms as a premier, year round rural tourism destination in the UK, recognising its outstanding natural heritage and its National Park status;
- To strengthen and maintain the viability of the tourism industry in the Cairngorms and the contribution that it makes to the local economy.
- To improve and maintain the quality of experience in the Cairngorms for all visitors, communities and those working within the tourism industry;

### **Transport and Communications**

- To encourage and support improvements to public transport quality and accessibility to better meet demand and increase use;
- To improve access to and encourage use of Broadband, so creating opportunities for businesses and individuals to stay in, or locate to, the Park.

### **Housing**

- To increase the accessibility of rented and owned housing to meet the needs of communities throughout the Park;
- To promote effective co-ordination and co-operation between all public and private organisations involved in housing provision in the Park and the communities living there;
- To improve the physical quality, energy-efficiency and sustainable design of housing in all tenures;
- To ensure there is sufficient effective land and investment for market and affordable housing to meet the economic and social needs of communities throughout the Park.

### **Renewable Energy**

- To help achieve national targets for greater renewable production through community and domestic scale schemes;
- To support research and employment in renewable energies in the Park.

### **Waste Disposal/Minimisation**

- To increase awareness of the benefits of effective waste management through reducing, re-using and re-cycling;
- To encourage provision of waste management infrastructure at domestic and commercial scale.

### **Strengthening Communities**

- To strengthen the capacity of local communities and encourage community development;
- To support provision of local services that meet the needs of communities;
- To promote community involvement in the management of the Park.

### **THEME 3 - UNDERSTANDING AND ENJOYING THE PARK**

#### **Outdoor Access**

- To enable people of all ages and abilities to enjoy and experience the outdoor environment of the Cairngorms;
- To encourage responsible enjoyment of the National Park so that its special qualities are understood and appreciated, and safeguarded for future generations to enjoy;
- To co-ordinate the effort of key public, private and voluntary sector interests in the sustainable management and delivery of outdoor access throughout the National Park;
- To support and encourage local community involvement in management of outdoor access throughout the National Park;
- To encourage responsible management of outdoor access and develop a common understanding of the needs of managers and users;
- To protect the more fragile areas, habitats and species of the National Park from pressures arising from outdoor access and recreation;

#### **Visitor Management**

- To maintain a high quality environment in the Cairngorms, encouraging sound environmental management practices and support for conservation by all those involved in tourism;
- To ensure that visitors to the Cairngorms are aware of the range of places to visit and things to do throughout the Park, and appreciate and respect its special qualities;
- To develop and maintain a wide range of opportunities for visitors to experience and enjoy the special qualities, distinctiveness and natural and cultural heritage of the Cairngorms;
- To encourage an optimum flow and spread of visitors across the Cairngorms and minimise social and environmental impact and congestion from visitors and traffic generated by tourism;
- To ensure that visitor information encourages resource protection and promotes responsible access and health gain;
- To ensure a cohesive Cairngorms National Park-wide approach to ranger services, which meets the needs of visitors, communities and land managers.

#### **Learning and understanding**

- To encourage learning about sustainable development in ways that are meaningful to people's everyday lives and focus learning on the special character and distinctive identity of the Park;
- To encourage people of all ages to get outdoors as frequently as possible and experience the special natural and cultural qualities of the area at first hand;
- To capture knowledge and factual information about the National Park in a range of appropriate ways so that it is easily available to anyone who wants to use it and can be passed on to future generations;
- To ensure that the Park is a place where both scientific and traditional forms of knowledge about the land and its management are valued and put to good use in the long-term management of the area;
- To increase mutual understanding and trust amongst people interested in the Park through exchange of ideas, perspectives and knowledge;

- To seek and share experience and knowledge from the management of other areas in Scotland and the world;
- To ensure that people across Scotland are aware of the Cairngorms National Park and understand why it is worth investing in.

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