
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

FOR DISCUSSION

Title: Local Development Plan – Main Issues Report

Prepared by: Karen Major, Development Plan Officer
Hamish Trench, Strategic Land Use Director

Purpose

To allow the Board to consider and discuss the scope and content of the final draft of the Main Issues Report prior to formal decision. The discussion is intended to:

- a) Highlight the key changes to the main issues and options following changes as a result of the Boards comments in May 2011;
- b) Clarify the settlement maps which show the approach to allocations for development in settlements across the Park;
- c) Provide the Board with an initial view of the evidence supporting the Main Issues Report for consideration.

The annex containing the evidence base is intended to inform the discussion and due to size is provided on CD. If you would prefer a hard copy of some or all of this information please contact Karen Major.

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN – MAIN ISSUES REPORT FOR DISCUSSION

The Main Issues Report – the key changes since the last discussion

1. The issues have now been refined into 7 key areas. At the meeting in May we discussed cumulative impact as a separate issue. This has now been incorporated into the 1st issue – The Special Qualities of the Park. The other broad topic areas remain the same. Along with the options, the map sets out information on the special qualities. This map will be interactive when placed on our web site. It will allow the reader to zoom into their chosen area and see what qualities affect them and their possible development site. The consultation process will be clear in directing the reader to the on line facility for more information.
2. Having further discussed the issue of housing, affordable housing and overall housing numbers, a change has been made to Issue 4 – Affordable Housing. Paragraphs 8.10 – 8.14 set out the background. Bearing in mind the current consents it appears difficult to justify a figure for additional affordable provision on that basis alone (para 8.4 and 8.5 give the figures). However the issue of affordable housing provision remains an important one for many communities despite overall numbers. The options have therefore been amended to include one which requires a benchmark provision of 25% from all developments. The previous options to identify 100% affordable sites and to retain our current approach of 25-40% are retained. These three options give a good mix of reasonable options and it is hoped this issue will generate a good level of debate through the consultation process.
3. The settlement maps have been amended from those previously discussed in May. They now include only those sites we think are reasonable. The remainder are included in background evidence report 5 to give transparency on the process of site selection. In some settlements where there seem no reasonable options, no alternatives are suggested. These generally maintain the status quo from the current local plan. However some settlements do have options suggested and these are set out for discussion.
4. Key changes from current Local Plan allocations:
 - a) Ballater – the site has been reduced in total size to remove the area affected by flooding
 - b) Newtonmore – options are suggested to reduce the amount of land allocated from that in the current local plan
 - c) Blair Atholl – options are suggested to remove the sites in the current local plan (affected by flooding) and replace with land to the south east
 - d) Boat of Garten – options are suggested and alternative phases for release are included to generate debate
 - e) Braemar – one additional site is suggested for long term provision
 - f) Cromdale – additional land is suggested to meet medium and long term provision.

The Evidence Base

5. The Annexes on CD contain the range of papers which comprise the evidence base for the Main Issues Report. This evidence sets out our position in terms of
 - a) Housing and population
 - b) The economy
 - c) Monitoring of the current Local Plan
 - d) Other information used
 - e) Site analysis

The Next Steps

6. Work is progressing on completing the necessary assessments which must accompany the Main Issues Report (Habitats Regulations Assessment, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Equalities Impact Assessment. These will form part of the formal paper for decision on 5th August. At this meeting the Main Issues Report and the evidence base will also be complete, including refinement of maps and plain English amendments. Final design and typesetting will remain as the final task following that meeting.
7. All documents will then pass to the designer and printers for completion. The Main Issues Report and maps will be placed on line to allow for interactive assessment of the text and maps. The consultation process will then start on the revised date of 19th September.
8. **Discussion points**
 - a) *Are members content with the issues and options as now presented? Do these cover all the MAIN issues, and are the options realistic and reasonable?*
 - b) *Are members content with the spatial information presented for each settlement? Is this information sufficiently clear in explaining to the reader what has permission, what options for future development are reasonable within the context of the evidence base.*
 - c) *Are members content that the evidence base is sufficiently robust and comprehensive to give the necessary direction on which to base decisions on the Main Issues Report*
9. These are the key discussion points to focus on. If there are other issues or points you would like to discuss it would be helpful if you flag these up prior to the meeting so we can leave sufficient time to cover everything. This is the final discussion session on the MIR before the formal decision in August, so by the end of the meeting members should be comfortable with the options and possible solutions being put forward.

Karen Major
karenmajor@cairngorms.co.uk
21st June 2011