

## CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

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### FOR DISCUSSION

**Title:**                    **The CNPA's Role in Cultural Heritage**

**Prepared by:**       **Andrew Harper, Head of Economic and Social  
Development**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this paper is to prompt an initial Board discussion upon the CNPA's role in relation to cultural heritage issues, with a view to informing a more detailed Board decision paper in October.

### **Recommendations**

- That the Board consider and discuss the questions set out in paragraph 6 of this paper.
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## The CNPA's Role in Cultural Heritage - For Discussion

### Background

1. The cultural heritage of the Cairngorms National Park is an inherent part of the qualities that make the area special and, given the history of human interaction with the land, is very much interlinked with its natural heritage.
2. Cultural heritage has a key role to play in relation to the Park aims, and indeed is specifically referenced in the first aim '*to conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage*'. It also has particular significance for the third and fourth aims as it forms part of the special qualities that we wish to promote the *understanding and enjoyment* of, and as it is an asset which can help underpin *sustainable economic and social development*.
3. The term 'cultural heritage' can mean different things to different people but has been defined in the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 as including '*structures and other remains resulting from human activity of all periods, language, traditions, ways of life and the historic, artistic and literary associations of people, places and landscapes*'.
4. To date, the CNPA's focus on cultural heritage issues has focused upon:
  - a) Supporting community-based cultural heritage projects, for example the Deeside River Festival, Dannsa – Strathspey Away Festival, refurbishment of the Glen Esk Retreat and Strathmashie archaeological survey. The Cultural Heritage, Marketing and Events, Interpretation and Investing in Communities grant schemes within the Authority's Integrated Grant Programme will all be able to assist different types of cultural heritage activities in line with the Park aims;
  - b) The Interpretive Framework has been developed in a way that links to cultural heritage, particularly through the themes celebrating the cultural diversity of the area. Early interpretive actions have included support for upgrading the Highland Folk Museum interpretive film and the commissioning of a Cairngorms Place Names leaflet;
  - c) Draft Local Plan policies have been developed relating to the protection of built heritage and other physical forms of cultural heritage. Our development control function has also taken full account of cultural heritage issues, as appropriate.
5. More recently, in June, two cultural heritage events were held to gauge the views of external stakeholders regarding the CNPA's role in cultural heritage and to obtain input on strategic objectives and actions for the Park Plan. Drawing upon this, it is intended that a decision paper be presented at the October Board meeting with clear recommendations about the CNPA's role in cultural heritage and setting out those actions where it would be appropriate for the Authority to take a lead.

## Issues for Discussion

6. As well as drawing upon the material generated from the stakeholder workshops, it would be helpful to have some initial input from Board members to ensure that the recommendations in the October decision paper are broadly in line with their expectations. This discussion paper deliberately does not set out the material from the stakeholder workshops, so as not to influence or constrain the Board members' thinking at this stage. Thus several questions are posed below to prompt discussion and hopefully help shape the direction of the subsequent Board decision paper. These are broad ranging in nature but, again, should be seen as helping to initiate rather than constrain Board discussion.
- a) *To what extent should we embed cultural heritage activity as a cross-cutting theme across a broad range of CNPA activity and to what extent does there need to be a separate cultural heritage focus?*
  - b) *Are Board members content with the definition of cultural heritage contained in the National Parks (Scotland) 2000 Act or is there a feeling that the focus should be broader or narrower than this?*
  - c) *To what extent should the focus be upon 'cultural heritage' issues and to what extent do we need to consider cultural activity in a broader context?*
  - d) *Should we adopt a community-based approach to supporting cultural heritage activity, a more centrally planned strategic approach, or a mix of the two?*
  - e) *Are there specific aspects of the CNPA's potential role in cultural heritage, or actions that might be progressed, that Board members feel are a particular priority?*

## Next Steps

7. As previously explained a decision paper will be presented at the October Board meeting setting out clear recommendations about the CNPA's role in cultural heritage and setting out those actions where it would be appropriate for the Authority to take a lead. This paper will be developed by the Park Authority's Cultural Heritage Officer, Rita Callander.

**Andrew Harper**  
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**andrewharper@cairngorms.co.uk**