

Cairngorms National Park  
Supplementary Planning Guidance

## **Housing development in rural building groups**

**Consultation Draft  
May 2010**

### **Planning in the Cairngorms National Park**

The Cairngorms National Park is the largest National Park in the UK, encompassing areas of Highland, Aberdeenshire, Moray and Angus. A Scottish Government consultation is taking place for extending the boundary into Perthshire, towards the end of 2010.

Planning in the Cairngorms National Park is unique. It involves the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) working alongside the Local Authorities, who continue to deal with many of the planning applications within their respective areas. All planning applications submitted must comply with all the policies in the Cairngorms National Park Local Plan (once adopted) and any relevant Supplementary Guidance.

Any planning application should be submitted to the relevant Local Authority in the normal manner. The Local Authority checks to ensure all the necessary information is supplied and registers receipt of the application. The CNPA is informed by the Local Authority and then has 21 days to decide whether to call-in the application. Only applications which are of general significance to the aims of the Park are called-in. Thereafter the CNPA determines the application. In instances when planning applications are not called-in, the Local Authority continues to act as the planning authority.

This supplementary guidance sets out detailed advice to help you meet the requirements of the policies in the Cairngorms National Park Local Plan. It is recommended that it is read in conjunction with other relevant guidance, such as the Sustainable Design Guide.

## **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 This guidance provides additional information relating to Housing Development in Rural Building Groups, as outlines in Policy 21 in the Cairngorms National Park Local Plan.

### **Policy 21 Housing Development in Rural Building Groups**

Proposals for new housing development as part of an existing rural building group which comprises three or more occupied dwellings will be permitted where the proposal reinforces and enhances the character of the group, does not detract from the landscape setting, and does not add more than one third to the existing size of the group within the plan period (based on the size of the group on the date the policy is implemented).

- 1.2 This policy allows for development of new housing within existing rural building groups in appropriate locations in the Cairngorms National Park. The opportunity for additional housing in these small cohesive groups is recognised as an important means of sustaining reinforcing and rural communities.

## **2.0 Introduction**

- 2.1 Policy 21 aims to support appropriate housing development in existing rural building groups, recognising the benefits of reinforcing and enhancing dispersed small settlements and housing groups in aiding sustainable and prosperous rural communities.
- 2.2 The policy will be used to allow for the development of new housing within existing rural building groups where the proposal is an appropriate contribution to the nature, character and amenity of the group. Any new development proposed must demonstrate that it is connected to the existing group through integration with existing built form, settlement pattern and landscape features.
- 2.3 This guidance provides criteria, general principles and good practice advice, clearly recognising the need to safeguard the character and amenity of rural building groups, their landscape setting and ensure the highest standards of siting and design. Proposals which do not meet the specific criteria will be determined using other Local Plan policies. The conversion of any non residential building into a dwelling will be considered under Policy 22 of the Local Plan and not this policy. Early pre-application discussions are advised.

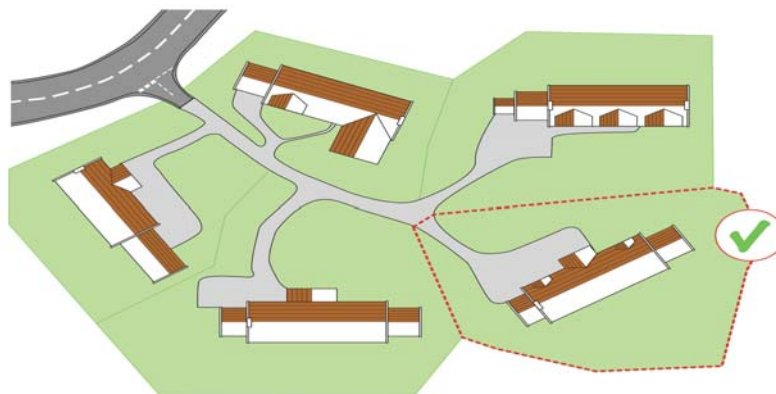
## **3.0 What is an existing Rural Building Group?**

- 3.1 An existing rural building group is a group of at least three dwellinghouses (other structures are not applicable) which are already completed and occupied. It is demonstrable that a clear and recognised relationship exists between the dwellings. The group must be well-connected and cohesive, through built form or landscape features, in its pattern of development. This may require validation by site inspection.

## **4.0 General site principles:**

- 4.1 Any proposal must demonstrate satisfactory integration into the existing building group in terms of pattern and layout within appropriate and clearly definable sites (see Figure 1 below). They must:

- 4.1.1 Not add more than a third to both the cumulative area and number of dwellinghouses within the group over the Local Plan period. (extant permissions must be included in this calculation);
- 4.1.2 Positively contribute, reinforce and enhance the layout and pattern of the existing rural building group. They are expected to be well-connected and cohesive;
- 4.1.3 Be an appropriate addition to the building group, not detract from any landscape setting or features and the general character and amenity;
- 4.1.4 Recognise and respond to the existing nature, siting and design of the group including traditional features, the scale and proportions of neighbouring plots and buildings;



1:  
cohesive, well-connected building group

Figure  
Example of

- 4.2 Linear or ‘ribbon’ development along a roadside or landscape feature will not be supported unless it is clearly reflects the traditional building pattern of the area (see Figure 2 below). Appropriate infill development between existing houses may be considered. Proposals to extend such groups beyond the limits of existing groups will generally be discouraged.

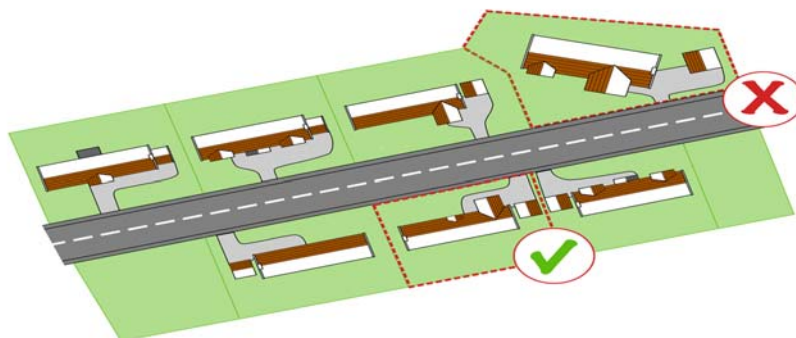


Figure 2: Example of inappropriate ribbon development

## **5.0 Other considerations**

- 5.1 Any application or enquiry should be accompanied by a supporting statement and information including: an Ordnance Survey based map highlighting the specific site, the existing and proposed grouping and any landscape features.
- 5.2 Any proposals must recognise local infrastructure and service requirements, whilst also accounting for impacts on rural character such as the requirement for access roads.

## **6.0 Further Information**

- 6.1 It is recommended that the following other sources of planning advice are read in conjunction with this guidance.

Scottish Government

**[www.scotland.gov.uk/planning](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/planning)**

Scottish Planning Policy

*<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/02/03132605/0>*

PAN 72: *Housing in the Countryside*

PAN 44: *Fitting Housing Development into the Landscape*

Cairngorms National Park Authority

**[www.cairngorms.co.uk](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk)**

*Supplementary Planning Guidance*

*Sustainable Design Guide*