

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

FOR DECISION

Title: Principles for An Camas Mòr

Prepared by: Don McKee Head of Planning

Purpose

This report is to formally seek the Planning Committee's agreement to a set of principles that Members would wish to see reflected in proposals for the new community at An Camas Mòr.

Recommendation

That Members of the Planning Committee accept the CNPA principles for An Camas Mòr as set out in Appendix 1 of this report.

Executive Summary

An Camas Mòr (formerly Cambusmore) has been formally identified as the location for a future new community since 1997. It is now included in the Deposit Cairngorms National Park Local Plan and is expected to meet some of the identified housing need over the Plan period. Rothiemurchus Estate has a project team in place preparing the various documents that will accompany a formal planning application. As part of this process the Estate has talked to a wide range of organisations and individuals including staff of the CNPA. To date CNPA Board Members have endorsed An Camas Mòr in terms of the Local Plan allocation and supporting text. It is now considered appropriate for Members to agree to a number of principles that the CNPA would wish to see underpinning An Camas Mòr and reflected in any proposals that come forward.

Background

1. The 1997 Badenoch and Strathspey Local Plan identified An Camas Mòr as a new community for 2005 and beyond. The 2001 Highland Structure Plan reinforced this position.
2. An Camas Mòr is identified in the Deposit Cairngorms National Park Local Plan as a new sustainable community with capacity for up to 1500 homes over time with a target of 100 for the Local Plan period. The Deposit Local Plan sets out a number of expectations regarding production of a detailed masterplan, effective delivery mechanisms, transport infrastructure, high sustainability standards in design, the range of development needed for a sustainable community, and protection for the integrity of the River Spey Special Area of Conservation and Cairngorm Mountains National Scenic Area.
3. Rothiemurchus Estate has a project team in place working on the preparation of a masterplan, environmental statement and other documents to accompany an application for outline planning permission. The indication is that this application will probably be lodged in 2009.
4. The Estate has submitted An Camas Mòr as a candidate for the Scottish Government's "Scottish Sustainable Communities Initiative".
5. The Estate's Project Team has held a series of themed workshops over the course of 2008 and invited a wide range of organisations and individuals depending on the particular topic. Staff from CNPA have been involved in these workshops as well as people from the Highland Council, HIE, SEPA, Scottish Water, BT, SSE, Forestry Commission, voluntary and private sectors. There has also been dialogue with Scottish Natural Heritage.
6. In engaging in this pre-application process CNPA staff have consistently advised that the emerging proposals have to reflect the Cairngorms National Park designation, contribute to delivery of the statutory aims, and, in strategic terms, fit with the National Park Plan and the emerging Cairngorms National Park Local Plan.
7. Given the unique status of An Camas Mòr within the National Park and the fact that an application is currently being prepared, it is considered that it would be appropriate for the CNPA Planning Committee to formally consider and agree a set of principles that Members expect to see reflected in a formal submission. There would then be an expectation that they would be fully worked up within subsequent detailed applications. They reflect input from CNPA staff in the process to date.

8. The overarching principle is focussed on the fact that An Camas Mòr will be a new community in a National Park. This status is accompanied by high expectations that will have to be met in an application and then in delivery. Other principles relate to the need for An Camas Mòr to be a real community; acknowledgement of the relationship with Aviemore and use of the area in between; standards of design and sustainability; integration with its landscape context; focus on public transport/walking/cycling; provision for biodiversity; effective delivery over a long period; affordable housing and employment provision.

Recommendation

That Members of the Planning Committee accept the CNPA principles for An Camas Mòr as set out in Appendix 1 of this report.

Don McKee
Head of Planning
4 November 2008

donmckee@cairngorms.co.uk

Appendix 1

Cairngorms National Park Authority Principles for An Camas Mòr

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 would then be an expectation 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 and design 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.

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.

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..

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. 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. Fundamental to this aspiration is a new foot/cycle bridge across the River Spey with a path directly linking central Aviemore and An Camas Mòr. The masterplan for An Camas Mòr will be expected to acknowledge this

objective and demonstrate how An Camas Mòr, with other parties, can directly contribute to its delivery.

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 of pre-planting from the outset both within and outside the site to ensure full integration with the landscape from an early stage.

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.

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 give priority to walkers/cyclists and will seek to establish new standards of adoptable informality.

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.

The Built Environment

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 be distinctively 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. 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.

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 need 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 housing will remain affordable.

Employment/Jobs

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 have a strategy for attracting and stimulating business.