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## CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

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### FOR INFORMATION

**Title: LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2 UPDATE**

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#### **Purpose of Report**

To provide the Planning Committee with a progress update on the evidence and information gathering work that is being undertaken to inform the second Local Development Plan for the Cairngorms National Park.

#### **Background**

1. All planning authorities in Scotland are required by law to publish a Local Development Plan (LDP) for their area. The LDP must be kept up to date and reviewed at least every five years.
2. The current LDP for the Cairngorms National Park was adopted in 2015. The timetable for preparing the next LDP, which was approved by the Planning Committee in April 2016, works towards having the new LDP adopted by 2020. This will ensure that the statutory requirement for reviewing the LDP every five years will be met. The timetable is also linked to the preparation of the new National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP3) in 2017, as this will set the strategic context for the next LDP.

#### **Supporting Evidence**

3. A range of evidence is required to support the plan-making process. This is necessary both to inform the content of the next LDP and to provide a baseline for later monitoring. In particular, a robust evidence base will be critical in order to justify the content of the LDP at any subsequent Examination.
4. An overview of the supporting evidence that is expected to be prepared in support of the next LDP was reported to Planning Committee in September 2016. An update on progress with some of the key evidence requirements is set out below:

##### Housing Evidence Report

The current and emerging Housing Need and Demand Assessments (HNDAs) that are produced by each of the five Local Authorities within the National Park have been reviewed, and additional evidence on housing market conditions within the National Park has been compiled. Together this information is being used to help consider both

the likely requirements for new housing development over the next LDP period and the implications this may have on the need for new development allocations.

A number of the Local Authority HNDAs are not yet finalised, so their findings may be subject to change, and revised household projections from National Records of Scotland (NRS) are also expected in early 2017. Any new information from these sources will need to be taken into account before the final version of the Housing Evidence Report is produced.

#### Infrastructure for Sites / Site Effectiveness Review

Contact has been made with Scottish Water, SEPA, and SSE to seek information that will enable a better understanding of the key infrastructure requirements, and potential development constraints, for each of the development allocations within the 2015 LDP. Information has now been received from all of these organisations. Their comments are being compiled and used alongside existing site knowledge to formulate an assessment of the effectiveness of the existing LDP allocations.

#### Town Centre Health Checks

Health checks of all the defined town centres within the National Park have been completed and a report of the results has been finalised. This is the first time that a comprehensive analysis of the status and vitality of town centres has been undertaken in this way, and this report will provide a baseline for monitoring future changes and trends. Town centre health checks will be undertaken at least every two years in the future, although we will aim to undertake interim reviews every year if possible.

#### Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

A draft Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared and will be forwarded to SEPA for early informal views. The document will continue to evolve in liaison with SEPA and the flood risk management teams within each of the Local Authorities covering the National Park.

#### Strategic Environmental Assessment

A Scoping Report has been produced and subjected to consultation with statutory bodies. This is the first formal stage of the SEA process, and positive comments have been received from the relevant consultation authorities. The document will continue to develop as the LDP progresses and will be subject to further consultation in line with statutory requirements.

### **Pre-MIR Engagement**

5. The Planning Committee are aware that, a “call for sites and ideas” is currently being undertaken to inform the next LDP. This allows anyone with an interest in the development of land to submit sites for possible inclusion in the next development plan.
6. We have written to major landowners, developers and agents within the National Park to explain the process and invite them to submit sites for potential consideration. Since new legislation gives communities greater powers to undertake development

themselves, and as the recent consultation on the next National Park Partnership Plan indicates an appetite for this, we have also written to all Community Councils within the Park to seek their views and invite community-led submissions.

7. The call for sites and ideas will run until 3 February 2017. All submitted sites will then be assessed for suitability, and these assessments will inform the development of the next LDP. Should there be a need for additional sites to be identified for development within the next LDP, the assessment process will enable preferred development sites to be identified.

### **Next Steps**

8. The supporting evidence reports and pre-MIR engagement activity will continue to develop over the coming months. Further reports will be presented to the Planning Committee for informal discussion as key issues begin to emerge, and these discussions will also guide the content of the LDP Main Issues Report (MIR). The MIR will be presented to Planning Committee for approval before being subject to a period of formal public consultation and engagement.
9. The Scottish Government are currently considering possible amendments to the planning system that could change the future requirements for LDPs and for MIRs. While it is unlikely that any changes will be made in the next few months, officers will be ready to adapt the process and make any changes in response to Scottish Government proposals. The Planning Committee will be kept informed of any likely changes and asked to approve any significant changes to the process.

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