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## CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

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### FOR INFORMATION

**Title: LOCAL PLAN MONITORING REPORT**

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#### **Purpose of Report**

This paper provides an overview of how the Cairngorms National Park Local Plan 2010 was used by both the National Park Authority and the Local Authorities whose area it covered. Although the information is historical, it is still relevant to the use of the current Local Development Plan as the key points and direction of policy within are similar.

#### **Background**

1. The Cairngorms National Park Local Plan was adopted on 27th October 2010 and was replaced by the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan (LDP) on 27 March 2015. The Plan was the first Local Plan for a National Park in Scotland. It was used by the Cairngorms National Park Authority and Angus, Aberdeenshire, Highland and Moray Councils for determining planning applications. The Local Plan did not cover the area of Perth and Kinross within the National Park as the Local Plan was adopted prior to the expansion of the Park's boundary to include this area.
2. The Planning Committee had regular monitoring reports during its first few years on how the plan was being implemented. A last monitoring report was programmed for October 2014, but a depleted staff team and the need to complete the Local Development Plan processes delayed it.

#### **Highlights**

3. Appendix I has a complete monitoring report for the Local Plan covering the use of every policy within it. The bullets below provide a summary of key points to draw from the policy analysis.
  - A. A total of 1,593 applications were determined within the National Park during the life of the Plan.
  - B. Of those applications, 240 (15%) were determined by the National Park Authority and 1,353 by the Local Authorities. We know that since clarifying the criteria for call-in of applications, the CNPA has been calling in less than 10% of applications over the past months.
  - C. Of those applications, 1,506 were approved and 87 refused, giving an approval rate of around 94% for the life of the Plan.

- D. A further 417 applications were registered but were not determined due to either being withdrawn or being found not to require planning permission (e.g. they were for proposals within the permitted development rights of the applicant).
  - E. 50 applications were made during the plan period but were determined after March 2015 using the Local Development Plan.
  - F. The most frequently used policy was 'Policy 16 Design Standards for Development'. This policy was also one of those used most frequently to refuse planning applications as was 'Policy 6 Landscape', demonstrating that both local authorities and the CNPA are prepared will refuse poorly designed or inappropriately sited development proposals when necessary.
  - G. The reasons for calling in applications are apparent from the use of some policies such as 'Policy 1 Natura 200 Sites', 'Policy 2 National Natural Heritage Designations' and 'Policy 5 Biodiversity' that were used more often by the CNPA determining its 15% of applications than by the local authorities in determining the majority of applications. The 'Policy 24 House Extensions and Alterations' was used in 422 applications determined by the local authorities and only 4 times by the CNPA.
  - H. There are some positive patterns to the use of policies and potential contribution to the economy of the National Park. The approval rate for applications where 'Policy 25 Business Development' was relevant was 97% and it was 100% where 'Policy 26 Retail Development was relevant. The 'Policy 33 Tourism-related Development' also has a high approval rate of 95%.
  - I. The 'Policy 18 Contributions to Affordable Housing' was used a total of 146 times and to approve applications on 128 occasions. This includes many single house development proposals where a small contribution to affordable housing was secured.
  - J. The Local Policies focused new housing development towards existing settlements and allocated sites, but 'Policy 21 Housing in Rural Groups' and 'Policy 22 Housing Development Outside Settlements' provide some other opportunities. Policy 21 was used in the approval of 38 and refusal of 11 applications. Policy 22 was used in the approval of 55 and refusal of 10 applications. Appendix 1 has maps showing the distribution of those applications;
4. Appendix 1 includes some information on the progress of allocated sites within the Local Plan. Some of those sites have been developed or taken forwards to the LDP. The LDP Action Programme has more up to date information and will be reviewed for June 2016 along with a monitoring report on the implementation of the LDP.

### **Next Steps**

5. This report concludes the work on the Local Plan 2010. The planning team are already collecting monitoring information on the use of the LDP and, more importantly, on the delivery of the LDP through the Action Programme. The Planning Committee will be asked to approve a revised Action Programme, supported by a monitoring report on the LDP in June 2016.

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