
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

FOR DECISION

**Title: FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT IN SCOTLAND –
SEPA CONSULTATION ON POTENTIALLY
VULNERABLE AREAS**

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Purpose of Report

To agree a response to a consultation on Potentially Vulnerable Areas (PVAs) that is currently being undertaken by the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA).

Recommendation

That Officers respond to the consultation, advising SEPA that the proposed amendments to PVAs in the National Park are considered appropriate

Background

1. The Flood Risk Management (Scotland) Act 2009 (the Act) promotes a risk-based, plan-led approach to managing flood risk. It requires SEPA to undertake a National Flood Risk Assessment (NFRA) every six years. This allows the identification of Potentially Vulnerable Areas (PVAs), which represent defined areas where the potential impact of flooding is most significant.
2. The PVAs are then used to inform a series of Flood Risk Management Strategies and Local Flood Risk Management Plans, which identify objectives and prioritised actions for tackling flood risk.
3. PVAs were initially defined in 2011, when SEPA published the first NFRA for Scotland. These formed the basis for the suite of Flood Risk Management Strategies and Local Flood Risk Management Plans which were subsequently published in December 2015 and June 2016. Members will recall that, as a designated responsible body under the terms of the Act, CNPA agreed the content of the five Local Flood Risk Management Plans that intersect the National Park boundary in May 2016.
4. SEPA are now in the process of reviewing the NFRA and updating the existing PVA designations. They are hosting a consultation on proposed changes to current PVAs. These proposed changes take account of new information which has become available since the current PVAs were defined in 2011. The consultation runs until 31 July 2018

and, as a responsible authority, CNPA are being asked to provide SEPA with advice and feedback on the revised PVA proposals within the National Park boundary.

Proposed Changes to Existing PVAs

5. There are currently nine PVAs within the National Park, as listed in Table 1. The location of these is shown in Appendix I.

Table 1: Existing PVAs within the Cairngorms National Park

Name	Existing PVA Ref.
Carr-Bridge	05/10
Aviemore and Boat of Garten	05/11
Kingussie	05/12
Newtonmore	05/13
Dalwhinnie	05/14
Heugh Head	06/14
Aboyne	06/20 – most of this PVA is outside the Park boundary
Ballater	06/22
Blair Atholl	08/01 – part of this PVA is outside the Park boundary

6. The consultation proposes a number of changes to existing PVAs. Some PVAs are proposed for de-designation whilst new PVAs are proposed in other areas. There are also boundary adjustments for a number of PVAs to better represent the distribution of flood risk within them. Many PVAs are proposed to remain unchanged.
7. The proposed changes to PVAs within the National Park are summarised in Table 2 and set out in more detail below.

Table 2: Summary of Proposed Changes to PVAs within the Cairngorms National Park

Name	SEPA Consultation Ref.	Existing PVA Ref.	Change Proposed
Carr-Bridge	01/05/10	05/10	PVA de-designation
Aviemore	01/05/11	Part of 05/11	PVA de-designation
Aviemore	02/05/10	Part of 05/11	PVA expansion
Kingussie	02/05/11	05/12	PVA expansion
Newtonmore	02/05/12	05/13	No change
Dalwhinnie	02/05/13	05/14	No change
Nethy Bridge	02/05/15	-	New PVA proposal
Heugh Head	01/06/14	06/14	PVA de-designation
Aboyne	01/06/20	Part of 06/20	PVA de-designation
Aboyne	02/06/20	Part of 06/20 – this part of the existing PVA lies outside the Park boundary	PVA expansion – this proposed expansion does not

Name	SEPA Consultation Ref.	Existing PVA Ref.	Change Proposed
			affect the Park
Ballater	02/06/22	06/22	No change
Blair Atholl	02/08/01	08/01	PVA expansion

Carr-Bridge

- 01/05/10 – SEPA assessment shows that flood risk in this area is limited and below the threshold required for PVA designation. Some risk to homes, businesses and transport routes may be present. However, there are no concentrated areas of risk. It is therefore proposed for de-designation as a PVA. Flood protection works on the A9, led by Transport Scotland, are still planned to go ahead.

Aviemore

- 01/05/11 – SEPA assessment shows that flood risk in this area is limited and below the threshold required for PVA designation. Some risk to homes, businesses and transport routes may be present. However, there are no concentrated areas of risk. It is therefore proposed to be removed from the Aviemore PVA.
- 02/05/10 – It is proposed that the existing PVA is expanded to the south and west because of flooding to homes, businesses and roads in December 2015. Aviemore is at risk of flooding from the River Spey, Aviemore Burn and from surface water. The Highland Council plans to investigate flood risk and potential solutions in the Dalfaber area of Aviemore from the River Spey and along the Aviemore Burn.

Kingussie

- 02/05/11 – It is proposed that the PVA is expanded to include the Gynack Burn and Loch Gynack. There is flood risk to homes, businesses and roads in Kingussie from the River Spey and its tributaries, including the Gynack Burn. A flood study is planned by The Highland Council to determine the most effective ways to manage flood risk in the town.

Newtonmore

- 02/05/12 – It is proposed that Newtonmore remains a PVA. Newtonmore has a known flooding issue linked to surface water and the sewerage network. The Highland Council and Scottish Water are actively seeking solutions to these issues.

Dalwhinnie

- 02/05/13 – It is proposed that this area remains a PVA. Homes and businesses in Dalwhinnie are at risk of river flooding. SEPA is planning to improve the flood maps in this area due to high uncertainties in the modelling.

Nethy Bridge

- 02/05/15 – This area is proposed as a new PVA. Homes and businesses are at risk of river and surface water flooding.

Heugh Head

- 01/06/14 – SEPA assessment shows that flood risk in this area is limited and below the threshold required for PVA designation. Some risk to homes, businesses and transport routes may be present. However, there are no concentrated areas of risk. It is therefore proposed for de-designation as a PVA.

Aboyne

- 01/06/20 – SEPA assessment shows that flood risk in this area is limited and below the threshold required for PVA designation. Some risk to homes, businesses and transport routes may be present. However, there are no concentrated areas of risk. It is therefore proposed to be removed from the Tarland and Aboyne PVA.
- 02/06/20 – (NB this part of the existing PVA lies outside the National Park Boundary) Tarland and Aboyne have been flooded by the Tarland Burn. Surface water flooding has also occurred in Aboyne. It is proposed that the PVA is extended to the south to include Aboyne Square and the lower reaches of the Tarland Burn. Logie Coldstone is removed from this PVA due to a relatively low number of homes and businesses assessed to be at risk.

Ballater

- 02/06/22 - It is proposed that this area remains a PVA. Ballater suffered devastating floods from the River Dee in December 2015. A large number of homes and businesses were affected with locally deep and fast flowing water. Aberdeenshire Council is currently working on a flood study to determine the best way of managing flood risk in the town.

Blair Atholl

- 02/08/01 - This area is proposed to remain a PVA due to flood risk to Blair Atholl. This PVA has been extended to include all areas at risk. There is risk to homes and businesses. The main source of flooding in Blair Atholl is river flooding from the Garry Burn and there is also risk from surface water. There is a history of flooding in this area including recent events. A modelling study is currently underway to clarify the extent of flood risk in this location.

8. Appendix 2 includes extracts from SEPA's consultation for each of the above areas.

Proposed CNPA Response to Consultation

9. The CNPA is a responsible authority for the purposes of the Act, on the basis that we act as a planning authority and undertake other work that can influence the use of land. As a responsible authority, the CNPA has a role in providing advice to SEPA on the proposed PVAs identified within their consultation.
10. Based on the information presented, the alterations to the PVAs are considered appropriate and the addition of a new PVA designation at Nethy Bridge is welcomed. Therefore, it is proposed that Officers issue a formal response to the consultation offering CNPA's support for the proposed PVA amendments.

Next Steps

11. With the agreement of planning committee, officers will respond to SEPA's consultation regarding PVAs, advising SEPA that the proposed PVA amendments within the Park boundary are considered acceptable.
12. Following the consultation, SEPA will submit the proposed PVAs to Scottish Ministers for approval. The final version of the NFRA and PVAs will be published in December 2018. This will then go on to inform the next series of Flood Risk Management Strategies and Local Flood Risk Management Plans, which are expected to be published in 2021 and 2022 respectively.

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Appendices

1. Existing PVAs in the Cairngorms National Park
2. Extracts from SEPA's consultation document for PVAs in the Cairngorms National Park