
**CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK
LOCAL PLAN INQUIRY**

**WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS
STATEMENT
DULNAIN BRIDGE**

APRIL 2009

On behalf of Seafield Estate



HALLIDAY | FRASER | MUNRO
PLANNING

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1 INTRODUCTION

This expanded Written Submissions Statement has been prepared by Halliday Fraser Munro Planning on behalf of our Client – Seafield Estate and supplements our original objection lodged in respect of Dulnain Bridge to the Deposit Local Plan.

2 OBJECTION SUMMARY

Settlement Title: Dulnain Bridge

Objection Reference: 455b

Summary Objection:

Our objection sought the further allocation of land within Dulnain Bridge for residential development.

alternative land suggested to ascertain its qualities in meeting the local housing need, and the impact it would have when assessed through the SEA.”

3.2 DEPOSIT LOCAL PLAN – FIRST & SECOND MODIFICATIONS (CORE DOCUMENTS CD6.12 AND CD6.13)

No further changes were proposed in either the Deposit Local Plan – First Modifications (**Core Document CD6.12**) or Deposit Local Plan – Second Modifications (**Core Document CD6.13**) in respect of additional allocations at Dulnain Bridge. The CNPA outlined that the position in relation to housing land allocations and supply remain the same, therefore, there is no requirement to modify the plan in respect of the objection received.

4 ASSESSMENT

SITES

There are two areas of land proposed for additional residential development.

Site 1

The first of these two sites is located to the east of the area zoned as H1. The site is bounded to the north by the playing fields and play area which front on to School Place. It extends to the east to meet with the main southern entrance road to the village from the A95. The site itself is largely wooded, however there are no known ecological or natural heritage interests in this area.

Site 2

The second of the two sites is located to the west of the main southern entrance road to the village from the A95. It extends along the road frontage from the edge of the settlement at the crossing over the River Dulnain down to a residential property identified as Craignay. There is an access track around

halfway along the site, which provides vehicular access to the sewage works. The site is relatively flat and is largely wooded.

These proposed sites act as a logical extension to the village. Furthermore, they are suitable for development as they are flat, can accommodate reasonable housing numbers and have good access to local amenities and the village centre. This offers an opportunity for residential development that will help to sustain existing rural services and offer new housing opportunities.

The CNPA's Statement of Case refers to the proposed sites as being inappropriate with respect to the woodland and river gorge landscape of Dulnain Bridge. However, the Adopted Badenoch and Strathspey Local Plan (1997) currently designates the proposed Site 1 as a residential allocation and states *"opening up land for future community and tourist uses will inevitably involve breaching such areas which presently hold the village tightly to the river edges"*. It makes sense to plan for growth properly and suggest that further areas of land should be released for housing and provide contributions to community facilities and appropriate infrastructure improvements.

The settlement boundary for Dulnain Bridge has been tightly drawn around the settlement against the wooded backdrop. There are therefore very few opportunities for future growth. By opening up some of these wooded areas, which are of little conservation value, provide additional development opportunities to help sustain this rural community, whilst still retaining much of its character and setting. These additional areas proposed are located close to the centre of the village and will be within walking distance of the main facilities.

ADDITIONAL RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Additional residential development will help to promote and sustain existing services and facilities within small villages such as Dulnain Bridge.

These rural settlements make an attractive location for family housing, retirement or new households. SPP3 (**Core Document CD2.4**) and PAN 38 (**Core Document CD4.2**) calls for local plans to designate housing land that creates a choice of housing in a variety of locations. Rural villages are one location that can offer a very high quality of life, support local services and should not be unduly restricted by inflexible planning policies or allocations.

Development in small villages can also generate economic and social benefits. The proximity of Dulnain Bridge to a wider range of services in Grantown, together with improved infrastructure arising from increased development, will increase the attractiveness of the village and be supported in the longer term.

ECOLOGICAL

The CNPA Statement of Case states that *“the currently proposed settlement boundary of this settlement, which accords with the southern boundary of the proposal site H1, is described as forming a settlement edge which is defined by woodland, with the woodland providing a distinctive backdrop and setting for development”*. Our proposed site extension will still provide a woodland backdrop and is in keeping with the residential designations in the Adopted Badenoch and Strathspey Local Plan. The proposal could accommodate housing development set against this woodland backdrop, reflecting the general character of Dulnain Bridge.

Furthermore, the CNPA Statement of Case comments that the natural heritage land lying to the east of the A938, which is allocated in our proposals map, is an important feature of the entrance to Dulnain Bridge. However, as stated previously, the Badenoch and Strathspey Local Plan 1997 (**Core Document CD6.6**) recognises the inevitability of development out-with the confines of the river gorge. Furthermore, with good design and layout the special qualities of the area and indeed the Park need not be compromised. The village can accept growth and maintain its natural landscape context and quality.

The CNPA also remark on the implications on red squirrel and bird populations. There has been no ecological study carried out on the site and therefore, no conclusive proof of the existence of species or habitats. Without a full ecological study, no presumptions can be made concerning the presence of these species.

5 CONCLUSION

In summary, therefore, we believe that the Dulnain Bridge proposals map should be modified to include additional land for long term housing allocations.