

Cairngorms National Park Local Plan Inquiry

**Land at Lettoch Road, Nethy Bridge
Objection Reference; 047**

Statement of Case on Behalf of Robertson Homes Ltd

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Objections to the Cairngorms National Park Local Plan (Finalised Draft) were lodged on behalf of the landowner, Mr D Black by Munro Chartered Surveyors. These objections were lodged during the deposit period and hence are "duly made" in terms of the existing Development Plan Regulations.
- 1.2 Munro Chartered Surveyors have confirmed to the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) that these objections have been transferred to Robertson Homes Limited for pursuit at the Local Plan Inquiry due to commence on 18th May 2009. This arrangement has been confirmed as being acceptable by CNPA.
- 1.3 The objectors have requested that the objections be heard at the Inquiry via an Informal Hearing and this was confirmed, in writing, to CNPA on 26th February 2009.
- 1.4 The following statement of case follows the format requested at the Pre Inquiry Meeting which is reflected in the notes of the meeting published on the CNPA website:-
 - Full details of the case to be made at the Hearing;
 - Details of representation at the Hearing;
 - Other objections where a joint submission may be appropriate;
 - Confirmation of co-operation with other objectors;
 - Date availability;
 - List of documents, case, shared or otherwise.

2.0 Issues to be Addressed by the Objector

- 2.1 At the outset it should be noted that prior to the preparation of the Topic Papers, it was extremely difficult to ascertain the position of CNPA in relation to this particular objection. Whilst the summary of the objections presented to elected Members is lengthy, the analysis is brief and gives no indication as to why the objection has been rejected. The CNPA analysis is as follows:-

"The allocated sites within Nethy Bridge will be analysed in light of the comments received. This analysis will be linked to the need for housing land within the area, and the effectiveness of the sites included in the deposit plan. The sites will also be judged against SEA findings, the physical constraints of these sites and the requirements for effectiveness as set out in national guidance. Having assessed these sites, a review will be undertaken of the alternative land suggested to ascertain its qualities in meeting local housing need and the impact it would have when assessed through the SEA. Confirm that effective 5 year supply and future growth areas have been identified in line with requirements. Therefore no land is required to meet the demand."

2.2 From the above, it seems that CNPA would undertake (and presumably publish) an assessment of:-

- The overall need for housing land in the area;
- The effectiveness of the currently allocated housing sites;
- Their performance against SEA objectives and their physical constraints and;
- A review of the objection site on the same basis.

2.3 Prior to the preparation of the Topic Papers it was clear that this assessment had not been undertaken. The objectors did not receive any such documentation which demonstrates this work has been completed. Yet, CNPA concluded that there is no need to identify additional land to meet the demand.

2.4 Conversely, this objection will address:-

- The housing land requirement for CNPA generally and for Nethy Bridge in particular;
- The effectiveness or otherwise of the currently allocated housing sites in Nethy Bridge;
- The suitability of the objection site for housing development with reference to its relationship to the built up area, its definable boundaries and the lack of any technical constraints to its development;
- The availability of the objection site in the short term and its potential contribution to the affordable housing requirements of CNPA;
- The conformity of the objection site with national guidance.

3.0 Details of Hearing Representations

3.1 The objections will be represented at the hearing by Bruce Walker, Land Director with Robertson Homes and a qualified Town Planner and Clive Meikle, Regional Managing Director (North), a qualified Chartered Surveyor and a Member of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors.

4.0 Other Objections/Joint Statements

4.1 At the Pre-Inquiry meeting a question was raised as to the use of Round Table Sessions for matters such as housing land supply. It is not clear from the minutes of the meeting as to whether this procedure is to be adopted.

4.2 The objections would support this approach and whilst it might not promote joint statement preparation it will save Inquiry time. The objector would expect an agenda to be prepared by the Reporters well in advance of the Round Table Session based on information contained with duly made objections/Statements of Case.

5.0 Confirmation of Co-operation with Other Objectors

5.1 The objectors are happy to co-operate with other objectors in relation to strategic issues such as housing land supply (see above). Of course, such co-operation may be less likely in relation to competing allocations within the same settlement.

6.0 Date Availability

- 6.1 It is noted that 26th May 2009 is reserved for the consideration of housing land supply 23rd June 2009 is reserved for the consideration of objections relating to Nethy Bridge. It is confirmed that both representatives are available on both of these dates. Availability is restricted on 19th/20th/21st May, 25th/27th/28th May, 3rd June, 16th June, 18th June and 25th/26th June 2009 should the Inquiry continue beyond the currently projected end date.

7.0 List of Documents

- 7.1 It is likely that most of the documentation to be referred to will be Core Documents prepared by CNPA.

1. Finalised Draft CNPA Local Plan
2. Pre Inquiry Changes to Finalised Draft Local Plan
3. Highland Structure Plan
4. Badenoch and Strathspey Local Plan
5. Scottish Planning Policy (October 2008)
6. SPP3
7. PAN74
8. Planning History relating to 07/00341/LP
9. Planning History relating to 02/00045/OUTBS
10. Planning History relating to 09/052/CP
11. Consultative Draft CNPA Local Plan
12. Desk Top Site Investigation prepared by Cameron and Ross (Consulting Engineers) dated April 2008.

8.0 Conclusions

- 8.1 This Statement of Case endeavours to enlarge upon objections submitted to the CNPA Local Plan (Finalised Draft). It is clear that there are fundamental shortcomings with the housing land supply within the area and in relation to the effectiveness of the existing housing allocations within Nethy Bridge.
- 8.2 The objection site is appropriate for housing development and represents a logical extension to the settlement. It is free of technical constraints and meets the tests of effectiveness in SPP3.