

<b>Date:</b>		
<b>Issue:</b>	<b>General – Economic Development</b>	
<b>Objector(s):</b>	Badenoch and Strathspey Conservation Group	<b>Objection ref(s):</b> 400I

<b>Reporter</b>	Mrs Jill Moody and Mr Hugh Begg
<b>Procedure</b>	Hearing

## 1.0 Overview

- 1.1 This statement sets out the Cairngorms National Park Authority response to the objections raised to the Deposit Local Plan as modified in respect of General content on Economic Development, and supplements the response made to those objections by the Cairngorms National Park Authority in its report to Committee (CD7.3-7.5). It suggests no further change be made to the policy

## 2.0 Provision of the Local Plan:

- 2.1 The Deposit Local Plan in paras 5.12-5.20 and Policy 20 clearly expressed the importance of economic development to the Park’s communities and gave scope for a range of business opportunities. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> modifications have expanded and clarified that position through the wider context in Section 2, the background in paras 5.77 – 5.87 (including reference to Enterprise Strategies) and in Policy 27. Reference should be made to evidence on the objections to Policy 27. The Local Plan as modified offers considerable scope for economic development proposals within and outside of settlements, but all consistent with National Park status and other policies in the Local Plan.

## 3.0 Summary of objection(s)

- 3.1 One objection raising 6 issues has been lodged on the general approach to economic development.
- Objects to para 5.79. Highland Council’s enterprise strategy should not be slavishly followed, neither Aberdeenshire nor Moray aspire to increase population. Population of Badenoch & Strathspey not projected to decline and increasing population is an inappropriate aspiration for CNPA in conflict with 1<sup>st</sup> aim. **(400I)**
  - Object to lack of clarity as strategies referred to are not specified **(400I)**
  - Object to phrase “improving demographic structure”. **(400I)**
  - Object to statement regarding being an exemplar of the country’s best as spin, not substance and inappropriate in the Local Plan. **(400I)**
  - Object CNPA should not be in support of Enterprise Strategy etc. **(400I)**
  - Object to lack of clarity in statement that Local Plan approach must be flexible. **(400I)**

## 4.0 Summary of Cairngorms National Park Authority Response

- 4.1 The Deposit Local Plan in paras 5.12-5.20 and Policy 20 clearly expressed the importance of economic development to the Park’s communities and gave scope for a range of business opportunities. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> modifications have expanded and clarified that position through the wider context in Section 2, the background in paras 5.77 – 5.87 (including reference to Enterprise Strategies) and in Policy 27. Reference is made to evidence on objections to Policy 27. The Local Plan as modified offers scope for economic development proposals within and outside of settlements, but consistent with National Park status and other policies in the Local Plan. The National Park Plan has a strategic objective across the Park to encourage a population

level and mix that meets the future needs of communities. The provisions in the Deposit Local Plan are therefore considered to be appropriate in terms of helping to deliver the National Park Plan.

## **5.0 CNPA Commendation to Reporter**

5.1 It is commended to the Reporter that the objection to the general approach to economic development as listed above is rejected. No issues are raised that could lead the Cairngorms National Park Authority to consider the approach deficient. The CNPA is however happy to modify the plan to clarify details of individual enterprise strategies.

## **6.0 Strategic issues**

6.1 Section 2 of the Deposit Local Plan as modified and Topic Paper 1 “The Statutory National Park Context (CD7.21) between them clearly set out the strategic context. SPP8”Town Centres & Retailing” (CD2.8), SPP2 “Economic Development”(CD2.3) and SPP15 Planning for Rural Development”(CD2.11) all apply.

## **7.0 Assessment / Scope of Evidence**

7.1 **4001** Objection: Objects to para 5.79. Highland Council’s enterprise strategy should not be slavishly followed, neither Aberdeenshire nor Moray aspire to increase population. Population of Badenoch & Strathspey not projected to decline and increasing population is an inappropriate aspiration for CNPA in conflict with 1<sup>st</sup> aim.

7.2 **Response:** The National Park Plan has a strategic objective (p67) to encourage a population level and mix to meet the needs of communities. In the short term, because of the demographic imbalance, this means retaining and attracting more young people: in other words a population increase. The Local Plan has a role in helping deliver NPP objectives.

7.3 **4001** Objection: Object to lack of clarity as strategies referred to are not specified.

7.4 **Response:** The CNPA is happy to modify the plan to clarify details of individual enterprise strategies.

7.5 **4001** Objection: Object to phrase “improving demographic structure”.

7.6 **Response:** The National Park Plan has a strategic objective (p67) to encourage a population level and mix to meet the needs of communities. In the short term, because of the demographic imbalance, this means retaining and attracting more young people. Reference to demographic structure is appropriate, and the Local Plan has a role in helping deliver NPP objectives.

7.7 **4001** Objection: Object to statement regarding being an exemplar of the country’s best as spin, not substance and inappropriate in the Local Plan.

7.8 **Response:** This is taken from the National Park Plan (P69) and the Local Plan has a role in helping deliver NPP objectives.

7.9 **4001** Objection: Object CNPA should not be in support of Enterprise Strategy etc.

7.10 **Response:** This is based on the National Park Plan (P69) where it is stated that the Park can make a contribution to the aspirations in Enterprise Strategies. The Local Plan has a role in helping deliver the NPP.

7.11 **4001 Objection:** Object to lack of clarity in statement that Local Plan approach must be flexible.

7.12 **Response:** To have an inflexible approach would result in prescription and restriction which is contrary to Scottish Government policy and advice, contrary to good planning, and contrary to the National Plan objectives with regard to business growth. It is therefore considered appropriate that the policies in the Local Plan give scope for flexibility without losing sight of the purpose which is to contribute to the collective achievement of the 4 aims.

## **8.0 Conclusions**

8.1 It is commended to the Reporter that the objection to the general approach to economic development as listed above is rejected. No issues are raised that could lead the Cairngorms National Park Authority to consider the approach deficient. The CNPA is however happy to modify the plan to clarify details of individual enterprise strategies.

## **9.0 List of documents (including Core Documents)**

- CD1.3 The National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000
- CD7.21 Topic Paper I “Statutory National Park Context”
- CD6.13 Cairngorms National Park Deposit Local Plan as at 2<sup>nd</sup> modifications
- CD7.1 Cairngorms National Park Plan 2007
- CD7.3-7.5 CNPA Reports to Committee
- CD2.8 SPP8 “Town Centres & Retailing”
- CD2.3 SPP2 “Economic Development”
- CD2.11 SPP15 “Planning for Rural Development”

## **10.0 Cairngorms National Park Authority Witnesses for Hearing**

- Don McKee – Head of Planning