

Date:			
Issue:	Aviemore AV/ ED2 – Economic Development Allocation		
Objector(s):	Badenoch and Strathspey Conservation Group	Objection ref(s):	400i(d)

Reporter	Mrs Jill Moody
Procedure	Informal Hearing

1.0 Overview

- 1.1 This statement sets out the CNPA's position in relation to objections raised to the Deposit Local Plan, as modified, in respect of the Economic Development Allocation AV/ED2: South of Dalfaber Industrial Estate, Aviemore and supplements the response made to those objections by the CNPA in its report to Committee (CD7.3, 4 and 5). It recommends no further modification is made to the Plan in respect of this proposal.

2.0 Provision of the Local Plan:

- 2.1 The Local Plan (CD6.11) allocates strategic development sites within the settlement proposals section; these include land for Economic Development. The Local Plan recognises the importance of creating new employment opportunities and providing for existing businesses, to the Cairngorms National Park and its communities. The plan text specifies:

AV/ED2: This 3.5Ha site south of Dalfaber Industrial Estate and the Cairngorm Technology Park allows for its future expansion when the current site reaches capacity. This flexibility to grow will support future expansion options within Aviemore and allow for adequate choice in site identification.

- 2.2 The text has been modified in the 1st modifications of the Deposit Local Plan (CD6.12) with additional and altered wording, to include reference to flexibility in site selection and greater choice.

3.0 Summary of objections

- 3.1 The objections cover the following issues:

- The site is an important semi natural habitat and demonstrates a degree of wildness important to the settlement and its residents. Also the cumulative impact of land changes in Aviemore should be carefully considered in the Plan and this site in particular should be protected from development. **400i(d)**

4.0 Summary of Cairngorms National Park Authority Response

- 4.1 The Local Plan aims to create economic opportunities to accommodate the needs of communities and plan for future growth, promoting sustainability in terms of both communities and the economy. The CNPA, in support of this establishes a number of objectives to improve opportunities for economic development within the Park, and the Local Plan approach must therefore be flexible enough to ensure that enterprise can occur in harmony with the important natural and cultural environment.
- 4.2 The CNPA have included a number of economic development opportunities in Aviemore, recognising the requirements of the 4th aim of the Park, the sustainable economic and social

development of the area's communities, while the Park Plan seeks to create conditions conducive to business growth and investment that are consistent with the special qualities of the Park and its strategic location. The allocation should ensure that the existing business location is able to meet any anticipated changes in the economy and provide choice for a diverse range of economic developments, as required by SPP2 Economic Development (CD2.3). The planning system has an important enabling role in supporting business development and contributing to economic prosperity (SPP15)(CD2.11).

- 4.3 The Local Plan identifies the proposed site as a natural extension to the existing Dalfaber Industrial Estate and Technology Park, allowing for its future expansion as required, supporting the economic growth of the community. The site would only be released when the existing estate reaches capacity thereby allowing for future expansion requirements. The policies and proposals in the plan endeavour to provide a balanced approach to land allocation and services to support local communities, including creating the correct level of opportunities for employment. The allocation endeavours to provide for new development opportunities in support of the community, while preventing the further expansion of the village into the open countryside; consolidating the existing urban form. Any proposals for development will be considered on their merits and judged against all policies in the Plan and if required, appropriate natural heritage surveys will be sought.

5.0 CNPA Recommendation

- 5.1 The CNPA recommend to the Reporter that the objections are rejected. This allocation will provide additional opportunities for industrial/business development within Aviemore and the wider local area, in the event that existing capacity is taken up.

6.0 Assessment / Scope of Evidence

- 6.1 **400i (d)** This is an important area of semi-natural habitat including grassland, heathland, birch, aspen, juniper and Scots pine. It is readily accessible to many people and provides a good area for informal recreation including bikes and dog walking for which it is currently used. In a 'Park for all' the CNPA should be prioritising the retention of such areas in the environs of communities, so that people can experience getting away from it all and quiet solitude close to their homes.
- 6.2 **Response:** The Local Plan identifies the proposed site as a natural extension to the existing Dalfaber Industrial Estate and Technology Park, allowing for its future expansion as required, supporting the economic growth of the community. The site would only be released when the existing estate reaches capacity thereby allowing for future expansion requirements. The allocation endeavours to provide for new development opportunities in support of the community, while preventing the further expansion of the village into the open countryside; consolidating the existing urban form. The site, within the current built up area is therefore considered appropriate for the proposed use.
- 6.3 The Local Plan modifications have endeavoured to ensure a more appropriate balance is struck between development opportunities for business and tourism and the protection of the special qualities of the area as identified as a National Park. The CNPA recognise the paramount importance of rural diversity to the Park's economy, the promotion of sustainable economic and social development is the 4th aim of the National Park and is reflected in other Local Plan policies such as policy 27 Business Development. The wording used within this proposal has

been reworded and clarified to ensure the appropriate level of guidance is available for developers. Together this, with the policies of the plan would ensure the appropriate level of protection and compliance with heritage and conservation obligations placed on the CNPA. Any proposals for development will be considered on their merits and judged against all policies in the Plan and if required, appropriate natural heritage surveys will be sought. No modifications are therefore proposed.

7.0 Strategic issues

7.1 The National Park Plan 2007 (CD7.1) provides a number of strategic objectives, including Conserving and Enhancing the Park(5.1) – Landscape, Built and Historic Environment and Living and Working in the Park (5.2) – Sustainable Communities, and Economy and Employment. All new development and management of the landscapes and settlements within the Park should be based on a sound understanding of this natural and cultural heritage. In addition the Plan seeks to create conditions conducive to business growth and investment that are consistent with the special qualities of the Park and its strategic location.

8.0 Other material considerations

- None

9.0 List of documents (including Core Documents)

- CD7.1 Cairngorms National Park Plan 2007
- CD6.11 Cairngorms National Park Deposit Local Plan
- CD6.12 Deposit Local Plan 1st Modifications
- CD7.3 CNPA Committee Report Deposit Local Plan May 2007
- CD7.4 CNPA Committee Report 1st Modifications October 2008
- CD7.5 CNPA Committee Report 2nd Modifications February 2009
- CD6.6 Badenoch and Strathspey Local Plan 1997
- CD2.3 SPP2 Economic Development
- CD2.11 SPPI5 Planning for Rural Development

10.0 Cairngorms National Park Authority Witnesses for Formal Hearing

- Robert Grant – Planning Officer