

Date:			
Issue:	Braemar – Provision of Tourism/Holiday Accommodation Sites		
Objector(s):	The Proprietors of Mar Centre	Objection ref(s):	394b

Reporter	Mr Hugh Begg
Procedure	Informal Hearing

1.0 Overview

1.1 This statement sets out the CNPA’s position with regard to an objection from The Proprietors of Mar Centre. The objection promotes the reduction of holiday accommodation (second and holiday homes) in Braemar and instead promotes the development of purpose-built holiday houses or chalets outside the settlement. This statement counters this objection and recommends no further modification to the Braemar settlement statement in the CNP Local Plan.

2.0 Provision of the Local Plan:

2.1 The CNP Local Plan (Deposit) July 2007 (CD6.11) in line with the strategy throughout the Plan, did not identify any land allocations specifically for tourism/holiday accommodation uses in Braemar. However, Policy 33 (Tourism Development) (Page 56) provided general support for new or enhanced tourism-related facilities/attractions, where they would enhance the range and quality of attractions and facilities on offer, and/or lengthen the tourism season, with a beneficial impact on the local economy and without adverse environmental or landscape impacts. Proposals which would reduce the tourist facilities of an area would be resisted. This approach was not amended in the 1st Modifications May 2008 (CD6.12) (although there was some alteration to the wording of Policy 33). The 2nd Modifications October 2008 (CD6.13) maintains this position.

2.2 Related policies are:

- Policy 33 Tourism Development (Incl. Background and Justification)
- Policy 27 Business Development

3.0 Summary of objection

- Objects because there should be mechanisms for reducing the amount of holiday accommodation within Braemar, with opportunities afforded for purpose-built holiday houses or chalets outside of the village. Such a site has been identified and is located close to Braemar. They do not agree that the allowance for open market housing is appropriate for Braemar but support the requirement for affordable housing to meet local need **(394b)**.

4.0 Summary of CNPA’s Response

4.1 The identification of potential tourism/holiday accommodation sites in settlements or other areas is not a strategy that has been adopted in the CNP Local Plan. Proposals for tourism/holiday accommodation or facilities will be specifically assessed on their own merits and against the terms of Policy 33 (Tourism Development) of the CNP Local Plan. The purchase of new or existing open market houses for second home or holiday purposes cannot be controlled by the Planning Authority and mechanisms to reduce the amount of second home and holiday accommodation in Braemar is considered to be contrary to Policy 33 and the CNPA Board’s views for promoting tourism in the National Park. Tables 2-4 (CD7.28) and Topic Paper 3

(CD7.23) also set out the housing land requirement and effective supply across the National Park, including Braemar.

5.0 CNPA Commendation to Reporter

5.1 It is commended to the Reporter that no modification to the CNP Local Plan, to include allocated tourist/holiday accommodation sites in or around Braemar, is required.

6.0 Assessment and conclusions

6.1 **394b objects** because there should be mechanisms for reducing the amount of holiday accommodation within Braemar, with opportunities afforded for purpose-built holiday houses or chalets outside of the village. Such a site has been identified and is located close to Braemar. They do not agree that the allowance for open market housing is appropriate for Braemar but support the requirement for affordable housing to meet local need.

6.2 **Response:** The CNP Local Plan, in line with SPP15 and SPP2, and the objectives of the CNP Park Plan, seeks to provide general support for tourism related developments, including accommodation. This is manifested in Policy 33 (Tourism Development) of the CNP Local Plan. No details of the proposed site, mentioned by the objector, have been provided. However, any forthcoming proposals for tourist accommodation in the Braemar area, of the type being promoted by the objector, will be assessed against the terms of Policy 33. It is considered that Policy 33, along with Policy 27 (Business Development) of the CNP Local Plan, provide the appropriate level of support for tourist/holiday type accommodation to meet the needs of the 3rd and 4th aims of the Park. To allocate specific land in the Braemar area for such purposes would be inconsistent with the approach that has been taken throughout the CNP Local Plan, to the allocation of land uses across all the settlements in the National Park. The allocation of open market houses in Braemar is in line with the housing needs studies carried out to inform the housing land requirement. (Topic Paper 3 CD7.23) It is not possible to provide planning mechanisms to prevent the purchase or transfer of open market houses (new or existing) into the holiday/second home sector. To provide mechanisms for reducing the amount of holiday accommodation in Braemar would run contrary to Policy 33, to the objectives of promoting tourism in the National Park, and the 3rd and 4th aims of the Park.

7.0 Strategic issues

7.1 The Cairngorms National Park Plan 2007 (CD7.1) sets out a number of strategic objectives. Of relevance to this case are those relating to Enjoying and Understanding the Park (5.3) – Sustainable Tourism, and Living and Working in the Park (5.2) – Economy and Employment.

8.0 National planning policy/guidance

8.1 SPP15 (Rural Development) (CD2.11) states that Planning Authorities should support the development of the tourism and leisure industry with appropriate policies on siting and design of new development. SPP2 (Economic Development) (CD2.3) advises that in responding to the need for innovative rural development Planning Authorities should include positive policies in development plans in favour of rural development and diversification which satisfy economic and employment needs, including tourism, whilst safeguarding and enhancing the natural and built heritage.

9.0 Other material considerations

9.1 The National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 sets out the aims of the National Park (CD1.3).

10.0 List of documents (including Core Documents)

- CD1.3 National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000
- CD2.4 SPP3 Planning for Housing 2008
- CD2.11 SPPI5 Planning for Rural Development
- CD6.11 Deposit Local Plan
- CD6.12 Deposit Local Plan 1st Modifications
- CD6.13 Deposit Local Plan 2nd Modifications
- CD7.1 Cairngorms National Park Plan 2007
- CD7.23 Topic Paper 3 Approach to Housing Land Supply and Affordable Housing

11.0 Cairngorms National Park Witnesses for Hearing

- Neil Stewart – Planning Officer