

<b>Date:</b>			
<b>Issue:</b>	<b>Kincraig - Allocation of Residential Site Proposal KC/HI</b>		
<b>Objector(s):</b>	Roy Turnbull	<b>Objection ref(s):</b>	390s
	Badenoch and Strathspey Conservation Group		400i(q)

<b>Reporter</b>	Mrs Jill Moody
<b>Procedure</b>	Informal Hearing

## 1.0 Overview

- 1.1 This statement sets out the CNPA's response to the objections raised to the allocation of site KC/HI at Kincraig, for residential land accommodating up to 40 dwellinghouses. It recommends that the site should be retained in the Local Plan as an effective housing site.

## 2.0 Provision of Local Plan

- 2.1 The Cairngorms National Park Local Plan (Deposit) July 2007 (CD6.11) identified two housing sites in Kincraig, including KC/H1. KC/H2 identified a smaller 1.14ha site nearby. Following consideration of objections, KC/H2 was removed as an allocated housing site as part of the 1<sup>st</sup> Modifications May 2008 (CD6.12). KC/H1 was retained and remains in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Modifications October 2008 (CD6.13) as a 5.7ha site within the proposed settlement envelope of Kincraig (Page 89) and as a proposed housing site for around 40 houses (Page 88). Development of the site is required to incorporate a Sustainable Urban Drainage Solution (SUDS) in the wetland area towards to the south of the site.

- 2.2 Related policies are:

- Tables 2-4 Housing Land Requirement and Supply
- Policy 22 Housing Development within Settlement Boundary (Incl. Background and Justification)
- Policy 1 Development in the Cairngorms National Park
- Policy 6 Biodiversity
- Policy 7 Landscape

## 3.0 Summary of objection(s)

- Objects because the allocation of the site is considered to be contrary to the aims of the Park **(390s) (400i(q))**.
- Objects because of the excessive scale of the allocated site **(400i(q))**.
- Objects on the basis that the site contains native woodland and rich grassland and has recently supported at least two red listed species of vascular plant. It is also adjacent to an exceptional site for biodiversity and contributes positively to the landscape. **(400i(q))**.

## 4.0 Summary of CNPA's responses

- 4.1 The site contributes to the housing land supply set out in proposed modifications to Tables 3 and 4 (CD7.28) of the Local Plan, and has been assessed through the site selection criteria set out in Topic Paper 4 (CD7.24). As part of the overall strategy and as an identified intermediate settlement, Kincraig is considered to have the capacity to accommodate the provision of land for housing growth to meet the social and economic needs of the local area. The site is considered

to be free from any significant constraints and therefore, subject to the provision of adequate SUDS, it is considered to be effective. The site has been allocated for residential and some community type development (playing field) in the adopted Badenoch and Strathspey Local Plan since 1997 (CD6.6).

## 5.0 CNPA Commendation to Reporter

- 5.1 It is commended to the Reporter that the residential allocation and the potential number of dwellinghouses for this site is retained, as defined in the CNP Local Plan as Proposal KC/HI.
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## 6.0 Assessment and conclusions

- 6.1 **390s and 400i(q) object** because the allocation of the site is considered to be contrary to the aims of the Park.
- 6.2 **Response:** The CNP Local Plan, in line with SPP3 (CD2.4), and the objectives of the CNP Park Plan (CD7.1) is required to deliver effective housing land for the Local Plan period on the basis of the housing needs established for the area (see proposed modified background text to Housing policies CD7.28). This is further clarified through Topic Paper 3 Approach to Housing Land Supply and Affordable Housing (CD7.23) The development strategy, as defined in Housing Policy 22 (Page 45) and explained at paragraph 5.52, seeks to allow for new housing development within the settlements of the National Park. The allocation of KC/HI has been made in this context. The provision of this site for residential development will help deliver the required numbers of market and affordable housing in line with the objectives for Sustainable Communities and Housing in the CNP Park Plan and the housing needs for the area, and as such, will help to promote the sustainable economic and social development of the Kincaig community (4<sup>th</sup> aim). There are no natural or cultural heritage constraints identified on the site. Due to its location adjacent to existing new development at the immediate settlement edge and it's sense of containment within the landscape, it is considered to offer an acceptable development opportunity in landscape impact terms. In addition, there are good opportunities to enhance the existing knoll with its tree cover and incorporate characteristic features from surrounding areas. The allocation of KC/HI does not therefore conflict with the 1<sup>st</sup> aim. Sensitive development, in line with the other policies of the CNP Local Plan, the Sustainable Design Guide and the proposed Development Brief will ensure compliance with the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> aims of the Park.
- 6.3 The allocation of KC/HI is not considered to be contrary to the aims of the Park.
- 6.4 **400i(q) objects** because of the excessive scale of the allocated site.
- 6.5 **Response:** The number of units and scale of the allocation is based on proposed modifications to Tables 2-4 of the CNP Local Plan (CD7.28). These were based on the housing needs studies referred to in Topic Paper 3 (CD7.23). The site is considered to be of scale and size which can accommodate up to the number of houses proposed without detriment to the character of the Kincaig settlement or the wider area (CD7.24).
- 6.6 **400i(q) objects** on the basis that the site contains native woodland and rich grassland and has recently supported at least two red listed species of vascular plant. It is also adjacent to an exceptional site for biodiversity and contributes positively to the landscape.

6.7 **Response:** The site does not contain any woodland that has been designated on the Ancient Woodland or Semi-Natural Ancient Woodland Inventories. These woodland designations do exist immediately adjacent to the site on its north side but these are outwith the boundaries of the allocated site. There are no other natural heritage designations on the site. Issues relating to impacts on biodiversity and landscape impact of any housing development proposal on the site will be assessed through the implementation of Policies 6 (Biodiversity) and 7 (Landscape) of the CNP Local Plan. The site is well-contained by the topography, surrounding woodland and existing development. The boundaries are well-defined and any forthcoming development will be seen as a reasonable extension of the settlement. The knoll and its cover of birch trees form a visual extension to the adjacent birch woodland despite being physically separated by the railway line but its retention will be covered by the Development Brief. The area surrounding the site is characterised by open fields, predominantly pasture, which combines with woodland of various types to create a defined pattern. The underlying geomorphology is expressed in the area through the undulations resulting from glacial and post glacial erosion and deposition. On the site this is evident by the tree covered knoll. The remainder of the site is relatively even and it is used for arable purposes.

6.8 It is not therefore considered that the site carries any significant biodiversity or landscape value.

## 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 Conserving and Enhancing the Park (5.1) - Landscape, Built and Historic Environment, and Biodiversity; Living and Working in the Park (5.2) - Sustainable Communities and Housing.

## 8.0 National planning policy/guidance

8.1 SPP3 Planning for Homes 2008 (CD2.4) requires planning for housing to be based on the housing need and demand assessment process. Information derived from this process should form the basis of the local housing strategy and the land allocation for housing in the development plan. NPPG14 Natural Heritage (CD3.2) advises that while conservation of the natural heritage will be a key objective in any National Park, due weight must also be given to the social and economic interests of local communities.

## 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
- CD3.2 NPPG14 Natural Heritage
- CD6.6 Badenoch and Strathspey Local Plan 1997
- CD6.11 Deposit Local Plan
- CD6.12 Deposit Local Plan 1<sup>st</sup> Modifications
- CD6.13 Deposit Local Plan 2<sup>nd</sup> Modifications
- CD7.1 Cairngorms National Park Plan 2007
- CD7.23 Topic Paper 3 Approach to Housing Land Supply and Affordable Housing
- CD7.24 Topic Paper 4 Background Information regarding allocate sites

- CD7.28 Proposed Post Inquiry Modifications proposed by Officers through Inquiry Statements

## **11.0 Cairngorms National Park Witnesses for Hearing**

- Neil Stewart – Planning Officer
- Matthew Hawkins – Senior Heritage Officer