

Date:			
Issue:	Settlements – omissions		
Objector(s):	Mr and Mrs J Sunley	Objection ref(s):	056b
	Glenmore Properties Ld		453r

Reporter	Mr Hugh Begg
Procedure:	Informal 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 (CD6.12 and CD6.13) in respect of the omission within the plan of certain settlements which objectors seek identified as Rural Settlements. It supplements the response made to those objections by the Cairngorms National Park Authority in its reports to Committee (CD7.3,4 and 5). It suggests no further change be made to the rural settlements identified or the proposals maps.

2.0 Provision of the Local Plan

- 2.1 The Local Plan within Section 7 identifies a number of Rural Settlements, as part of the hierarchy of settlements including strategic, intermediate and rural. The settlements listed have been amended in both 1st and 2nd modifications to modify those included. The final list comprises Bellabeg, Dinnet and Insh. The settlements are identified in recognition of their role in local communities, and to highlight possible opportunities for small amounts of growth to support local communities. Outwith the identified areas, Policy 23: Housing Development in Rural Building Groups provides additional opportunity for growth within groups of three or more dwellings.
- 2.2 Within the Proposals Maps the boundaries for rural settlements are identified.

3.0 Summary of objection(s)

- 3.1 Two objections raising two issues have been lodged to these proposals and wish to have their objections considered by informal hearing:
- Balmenach should be identified as a settlement within the plan and on the proposals map to reflect the opportunities it contains for development and to reflect its close relationship with Cromdale. **(453r)**
 - A number of settlements within Aberdeenshire should be identified as settlements within the plan and on the proposals maps in recognition of their key roles within the community – Crathie, Dinnet **(056b)**

4.0 Summary of Cairngorms National Park Authority response

- The approach to the identification of settlements has been taken to recognise a small number of settlements within communities where growth may be focused. Policy 23: Housing Development in Rural Building Groups also allows for further development within small groups of houses to support local communities. The approach has been taken to reflect the ad hoc aspirations of communities to support growth. The approach is considered appropriate to allow growth in support of local communities and no further change is therefore proposed. **(056b, 453r)**

- Through 1st modifications and to reflect community aspirations Dinnet has been included as a Rural Settlement, and this modification is considered to address the objection. **(056b)**

5.0 CNPA Commendation to Reporter

- 5.1 It is commended to the Reporter that all objections are rejected. No issues are raised that could lead the Cairngorms National Park Authority to consider that the proposals within the Plan are deficient. The wording of the policies relating to rural building groups and housing development within settlement boundaries should therefore be retained.
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6.0 Assessment / Scope of Evidence

- 6.1 **056b** objects to the lack of particular reference of Crathie as a rural settlement within the Plan, as it is an important settlement.
- 6.2 **Response:** The approach taken to settlement hierarchy combined with Policy 23: Housing in Rural Groups does not preclude development within dispersed settlements such as Crathie. The Plan as a whole is intended to provide clarity and adequate guidance and opportunity to allow communities to grow and remain sustainable. The approach provided through Policy is considered the most flexible way of doing this in a dispersed area such as Crathie. The approach allows the consideration of proposals on their merits against the policies of the Plan, rather than possibly hampering development proposals by restricting development within any settlement boundary. It also supports the settlement hierarchy identified in the National Park Plan (CD7.1). No change is therefore proposed.
- 6.3 Dinnet, demonstrating a more cohesive nature to existing development has been included within the Plan through 1st modifications. This modification is considered to address the objection raised.
- 6.4 **453r** objects to the lack of particular reference to Balmenach as a rural settlement within the Plan, as it offers opportunity for growth. Alternatively it could be identified with Cromdale due to the close relationship between the two.
- 6.5 **Response:** The support for the current approach is as above, and as adequate opportunity is considered to be offered through Policy 23, no further change is proposed.

7.0 Strategic Issues

- 7.1 The settlement hierarchy supports the National Park Plan (CD7.1 page 67) where the strategic objectives to achieve sustainable communities recognises the need to focus settlement growth in the main settlements and plan for growth to meet community needs in other settlements. Objective b) sees the greatest levels of growth occurring in the main settlements and other settlements growing in a way which reflects not only community need, but also the scale and qualities of the settlements, as well as the viability of services and infrastructure present.

8.0 List of documents (including Core Documents)

- CD6.12 Deposit Local Plan 1st modifications

- CD6.13 Deposit Local Plan 2nd modifications
- CD7.1 Cairngorms National Park Plan 2007
- CD7.3 CNPA Committee Report Consultation May 2008
- CD7.4 CNPA Committee Report 1st Modifications October 2008
- CD7.5 CNPA Committee Report 2nd Modifications February 2009

9.0 Cairngorms National Park Authority Witnesses for Informal Hearing

- Karen Major – Local Plan/Policy Officer