

Date:			
Issue:	Lack of choice of housing sites within Kingussie/Phasing HI-Kingussie		
Objector(s):	Davall Developments	Objection ref(s):	460 & 461b

Reporter	Mr Hugh Begg
Procedure	Written Representation

1.0 Overview

1.1 This statement sets out the CNPA's response to objections relating to Kingussie housing allocations, and the omission of suggested sites, and also in relation to the phased land supply for KG/HI. The statement supplements the responses made to those objections by the CNPA in its reports to committee (CD7.3,4 and 5). This statement recommends that KG/HI remains as an allocated site within the Local Plan.

2.0 Provision of the Local Plan

2.1 The Deposit Local Plan Proposals Maps for Kingussie (CD6.13) has identified area HI for expansion of Kingussie identifying the extent to which the village can expand over the plan period. With the exception of the majority of the St Vincent's site, the sites referred to by the objector are not within the settlement boundary.

2.2 Related policies are:

- Proposals Map/Statement for Kingussie
- Tables 2-4 Housing land requirement and supply
- Policy 1 Development in the Cairngorms National Park
- Policy 7 Landscape
- Policy 22 - Housing in Settlements
- Policy 18 - Design Standards for Development

3.0 Summary of objection

3.1 2 objections cover the following:

- Objects to lack of choice of housing sites within Kingussie. Requests for 3 sites at West Terrace/Ardvonie Road, St Vincent's and Ardbroilach Road to be allocated. Otherwise plan fails to produce effective land supply that will result in housing shortage. **(460)**
- Resulting housing target numbers for 2006-2011 should be increased by 10 from 75-85 to take account of smaller sites (see 460 above). Also seek adjustment to housing figures based upon phasing of HI from 15 to 25 over 2006-2011 and 2011 to 2016 period with according adjustments to figures in tables 3 & 4 and paragraph 5.40 of Deposit Plan. **(461b)**

4.0 Summary of CNPA's Response

4.1 The sites **(460)** are not allocated in the Local Plan as informed by Landscape Capacity for Housing Study (CD7.19) which excluded them. This is based upon the first aim of the Park to conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area. Planning applications for West Terrace were assessed and withdrawn due to officer recommendation of refusal with particular regard to quality of habitat/species on sites. An application on the St Vincent's site has been refused by the CNPA Planning Committee. Part of the St Vincent's site may still offer some opportunity for development. Policies within the Local Plan do not preclude opportunities for infill development where appropriate. The sites referred to by the objection could probably

produce at most around 10 plots (**461b**). The lack of this small number of plots by comparison with site H1 allocated for 300 houses would be unlikely to precipitate a housing shortage.

- 4.2 CNPA considers adequate housing numbers allocated for Kingussie on a site accepted for housing by Landscape Capacity for Housing Study. It is to be noted that all capacity figures shown for housing allocations are indicative (Table 4, CD7.28).

5.0 CNPA Commendation to Reporter

- 5.1 It is commended to the Reporter that no further modification to the allocation and provision of housing land for Kingussie is required.
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6.0 Assessment and conclusions

- 6.1 **460 objects** to the lack of choice of housing sites in Kingussie.

- 6.2 **Response:** The sites referred to by this objection are allocated in the 1997 Badenoch and Strathspey Local **Plan (CD6.6)**. This plan was produced before even the initial stages of the National Park designation process so the policy background and context has changed considerably since the allocation of these sites. The aims of the Park are set out clearly in Topic Paper 1 (CD7.21). A brief analysis of each site requested for inclusion is set out below.

- 6.3 Site at the end of **Ardbroilach Road** - The site contributes to the setting of the village because the native birch woodland and steep topography are highly characteristic of this western side of the village. The scots pine plantation is also typical and the relationship of these three landscape elements is seen here and above West Terrace. Development on this site would be both highly visible and reduce the characteristic flora and consequently would be inappropriate.

- 6.4 Sites north of **West Terrace** - The area to the north of West Terrace is another key component of the setting for the village. It is very characteristic with steep topography it's landcover composing of birch/pine woodland and heather/blaeberry heath with grass. The edge of the settlement is generally clearly defined here by a series of back gardens with fencing and there is a clear difference between the open area and the residential properties themselves. Development in this area would disrupt this pattern and blur the distinction between the two as well as reducing the integrity of this area.

- 6.5 **St Vincent's** - This discreet site is located close to the exiting houses on Middle Terrace and is well contained by mature trees. It's contribution to the setting of the village is small because the open area is obscured from many surrounding areas by the peripheral trees and the woodlands above the site which are more important. This site was formerly a garden to the hospital and there is clear evidence of this use from various ornamental plants found on site as well as concrete block walling. As such there is some capacity for a small number of dwellings on this site and this is reflected by the majority of the site being included within the settlement boundary.

- 6.6 A clear emphasis is placed upon conserving and enhancing the natural and cultural heritage qualities of the National Park that is above and beyond any previous policy context that relates to these sites. A Housing Landscape Capacity Assessment has been produced which recommends against the allocation of the sites put forward with the exception of the majority of the St Vincent's site. The site specific descriptions above set out the detailed qualities of each

site that is the subject of an objection. The weight of policy change towards conserving and enhancing taken together with the housing capacity assessment and the assessment carried out here clearly indicates against the inclusion of West Terrace/Ardbroilach Road sites within the Plan. West Terrace has been assessed as a planning application and effectively rejected despite considerable weight being placed upon its existing allocation in the Badenoch and Strathspey Local Plan. As noted above the Arbroilach road site is similar to West Terrace. Policy 7 Landscape sets a clear direction against development that does not make a positive contribution to the landscape character of the National Park.

6.7 With regard to choice of sites the settlement boundary proposed taken together with potential for infill covered by Policy 22 Housing Development Within Settlement Boundaries and allocation of KG/HI provide a range of opportunities for housing without allocating sites that would be damaging to the Park's first aim to conserve and enhance. The loss of these smaller sites would not precipitate a housing shortage.

6.8 **461b Objects to phasing of development rate KG/HI** - Linked to (a) above seeks to increase overall housing Nos by 10 units for Kingussie.

6.9 **Response:** The background information regarding the supply of housing land has been amended in CD7.28, but clarifies that sufficient land is included within the Local Plan to meet the needs of the Plan. This supports the evidence provided in Topic Paper 3 (CD7.23). It is noted that the capacity for the sites allocated is indicative (CD7.28). Development may therefore occur at different speeds, dependent on market conditions, demand and developer aspirations.

7.0 Strategic issues

7.1 Section 5.1 Conserving and Enhancing of the National Park Plan (CD7.1) seeks to maintain and enhance the distinctive landscapes across the Park and also seeks to ensure that development complements and enhances the landscape character of the Park.

8.0 National planning policy/guidance

8.1 National Planning Policy Guidance Note 14 Natural Heritage (CD3.2) Para 33 refers to the fact that planning authorities should take particular care to safeguard the landscape, flora and fauna of the National Parks. Proactive thrust of Scottish Planning Policy 15 to apply throughout Scotland. However, National Parks designated because of the national importance of their natural and cultural qualities. The aims of the Park have equal status but where there is conflict between them greater weight must be given to the first aim to conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area. 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.

9.0 Other material considerations

9.1 Two planning applications on sites at West Terrace have been withdrawn after recommendation of refusal. (06/054/CP, 08/183/CP) A proposal at St Vincent's has been refused by the CNPA Planning Committee (08/184/CP)

10.0 List of documents (including Core Documents)

- CD2.4 SPP3 Planning for Housing 2008
- NPPG14 Natural Heritage
- CD6.6 Badenoch and Strathspey Local Plan 1997
- 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
- CD7.19 Cairngorms Landscape Capacity for Housing Study
- CD7.21 Topic Paper 1 Statutory National Park Context
- CD7.23 Topic Paper 3 Approach to Housing Land Supply and Affordable Housing
- CD7.28 Proposed Post Inquiry Modifications proposed by Officers through Inquiry Statements
- 06/054/CP
- 08/183/CP
- 08/184/CP