

Date:		
Issue:	Kingussie KG/ HI Scale of Housing Allocation.	
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 raised with regard to a number of smaller housing sites indicated by the Badenoch and Strathspey Local Plan (CD6.6) that are not included in the CNPA Deposit Plan. This statement also addresses issues with regard to housing numbers in Kingussie and the changes required to Tables 2-4 of the Deposit Plan for the additional sites mentioned above. Requested changes on phasing are also considered in part due to the timescale for the upgrade of Kingussie Waste Water Treatment Works.

2.0 Provision of Local Plan

2.1 The Cairngorms National Park Local Plan (Deposit) July 2007 (CD6.11) identified site HI (16.05 ha) to provide short and longer term housing supply in Kingussie for around 300 houses. With the exception of part of one site (St Vincent's) the sites referred to by Davall Developments are no longer within the proposed settlement boundary for Kingussie.

2.2 Related policies are:

- Tables 2-4 Housing Land Requirement and Supply
- Policy 1 Development in the Cairngorms National Park
- Policy 7 Landscape
- Policy 18 Design Standards for New Development
- Policy 22 Housing in Settlements
- Policy 24 Housing Developments Outside Settlements

3.0 Summary of objection(s)

- Objects to lack of choice of housing sites in Kingussie. Requests for 3 sites at West Terrace/Ardvonie Road, St Vincent's and Ardbroilach Road to be allocated. Otherwise plan fails to provide effective land supply. This objection includes a request to move the settlement boundary at West Terrace in the Deposit Plan to the north west of allocations in the Badenoch and Strathspey Local Plan **(460)**.
- Resulting from above 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 15-25 units per annum over 2006-2011 and 2011-2016 period with according adjustments to numbers in tables 3 & 4 and para 5.40 of the Deposit Plan (2nd mods). This is due to concerns over constraints on timing for upgrade of Kingussie Waste Water Treatment Works **(461b)**.

4.0 Summary of CNPA's responses

4.1 The sites referred to by objection 460 are not allocated in the Deposit Plan as informed by the CNPA's 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/Ardvonie Road were assessed and withdrawn due

to officer recommendation of refusal based upon the quality of habitat and species (red squirrel) present on the site. An application on the St Vincent's site (08/184/CP) has been refused by the CNPA Planning Committee. However, part of the site may still offer some opportunity for development. Policies within the Deposit Plan do not preclude potential for infill development where appropriate. The sites referred to would produce a small number of houses which when considered against the 300 house H1 allocation for Kingussie would be unlikely to lead to a housing shortage. The CNPA considers that adequate housing numbers are allocated for Kingussie on site KG/H1 and it is to be noted that with regard to H1 the figures in Table 4 Phased land supply are indicative.

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 (a) Objects to the lack of choice of housing sites in Kingussie and location of settlement boundary at West Terrace

- 6.2 **Response:** The sites referred to by this objection are allocated for housing 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. Consequently, the policy context has changed considerably since the allocation of these sites. The aims of the Park are clearly set out in Topic Paper 1 (Overarching Policy/Aims of Park). A brief analysis of each site follows below:

- 6.3 **Sites North of West Terrace:** This area is a key component of the setting for the village. It has steep topography with a landcover of birch/pine woodland. The edge of the settlement is clearly defined by the back gardens of properties on West Terrace leading to a clear distinction between those back gardens and the open, steeper area to the rear. Development in this area would disrupt this pattern and blur the distinction between the two characters as well as reducing the integrity of the area.

- 6.4 **St Vincent's:** This discrete site is located close to the existing houses on Middle Terrace and is well contained by mature trees. Its contribution to the setting of the village is small because the open area is obscured from many surrounding areas by the peripheral trees and woodland above the site. The site was formerly a garden to the hospital and there is clear evidence of this use from various ornamental plants found on the site as well as a section of walling. As such there is some capacity for a small number of dwellings on site and this is reflected by part of the site's inclusion within the settlement boundary.

- 6.5 **Site at end of Ardbroilach Road:** This site contributes to the setting of the village because of the native birch woodland and steep topography that are characteristic of the western side of the settlement. The scots pine plantation is also typical and the relationship of these three landscape elements is evident here as at West Terrace. Development at this site would be highly visible and reduce the characteristics of the site. The last house on the eastern side of Ardbroilach Road is evidence that it would be difficult to develop this site without completely altering its character.

- 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 for the 3 sites. A Landscape Capacity for Housing Study (CD7.19) has been produced which indicates against the allocation of two of these sites or their inclusion within the settlement boundary. However, the majority of the St Vincent's site could provide some limited housing and this is why it is included within the settlement boundary. The descriptions set out above indicate good natural heritage reasons for not allocating the sites or including them in the settlement boundary. This is reinforced by the policy change to reflect the aims of the Park and also the conclusions of the Landscape Capacity for Housing Study. Policy 7 Landscape of the Deposit Plan carries a clear requirement that development should make a positive contribution to the landscape character. The West Terrace site has been assessed under two planning applications (06/054/CP and 08/183/CP) and both have been withdrawn despite considerable weight being placed upon the current (Badenoch and Strathspey) Local Plan (CD6.6).
- 6.7 With regard to the choice of sites and the settlement boundary proposed Policy 22 Housing Development Within Settlement Boundaries and the allocation of KG/HI provide a range of opportunities for housing at Kingussie that would not be detrimental to the Park's first aim to conserve and enhance. While recognising that there requires to be improvements to Kingussie Waste Water Treatment Works the loss of these small sites is not considered to be of such significance to cause a housing shortage or lack of effective land supply and must be balanced against the overarching requirements of the Park's aims. Scottish Water is aware of the housing allocation for Kingussie and has made no objection to the overall number or indicative phasing proposed.
- 6.8 **(b) Linked to (a) above objects seeking to increase overall housing Nos by 10 units. Also objects to phasing of development rate at KG/HI.**
- 6.9 **Response:** Given the rejection of the sites/boundary alteration in (a) above there is no requirement to modify the figures in Tables 2-4 for an additional 10 units. Concern is raised that development will be suppressed because of the timescale for upgrading Kingussie Waste Water Treatment Works (construction 2010) and that because of this the phased land supply should indicate a greater number of units up to 2016 with a reduced capacity for the medium to longer term. However, the CNPA considers this an effective land supply. This must also take account of current market conditions and that housing number calculations have built-in considerable flexibility (15%) in addition to anticipated need/demand (Table 2 CD7.28). With regard to Table 4 Phased land supply it is to be noted that these figures are indicative. This, in the CNPA's view builds in sufficient flexibility to offer comfort to the objector on the phasing of land and is reflective of a market led approach. Again, Scottish Water has been made aware of the total number and proposed phasing of units for KG/HI and has raised no objection. It is assumed that if the lack of capacity at the treatment works is a reason for suppressing development (and non-effectiveness) at HI then this may also true for the additional smaller sites the developer is seeking to have included in the Plan.

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

7.1 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 (CD1.3) sets out the aims of the National Park. Copies of Development Management planning reports for sites at West Terrace and St Vincent's will be provided. An outline masterplan application for allocation KG/HI and ED/I has been submitted by Davall Developments which also covers the Ardbroilach Road site referred to in this statement

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
- CD7.1 Cairngorms National Park Plan 2007
- CD7.19 Cairngorms Landscape Capacity for Housing Study
- CD7.28 Proposed Post Inquiry Modifications proposed by Officers through Inquiry Statements
- 09/048/CP
- 06/054/CP
- 08/183/CP