

Date:			
Issue:	Nethy Bridge – Infill Development and Design/Height of New Houses		
Objector(s):	Paul and Susan Culliford	Objection ref(s):	355
	David Dean OBE		354

Reporter	Mr Hugh Begg
Procedure	Written Representation

1.0 Overview

1.1 This statement relates to objections received which put forward concerns about the principle of new infill housing and its affect on the character of Nethy Bridge. There are also concerns about general design issues. In particular a restriction on the height of new houses in Nethy Bridge is promoted. This statement responds to these concerns and recommends that no further modifications are required.

2.0 Provision of the Local Plan

2.1 The CNP Local Plan (Deposit) July 2007 (CD6.11) provided Policy 25 (Housing Development in Small Rural Settlements) and Policy 18 (Design Standards for New Development). Policy 25 provided support for new housing development within small settlements of more than 15 houses, where they reinforced and enhanced the character of the settlement. Policy 18 set out a number of criteria against which new development would be assessed. The 1st Modifications May 2008 (CD6.12) replaced Policy 25 with Policy 22 (Housing Development within Settlement Boundaries). Policy 22 stated that housing proposals within settlement boundaries will be considered favourably where they comprise infilling, conversion, small scale development, the use of derelict or underused land or the redevelopment of land, where the proposal reinforces and enhances the character of the settlement etc. Policy 18 (Design Standards for Development) modified the wording of the Deposit Plan Version. In the 2nd Modifications October 2008 (CD6.13) some further changes to the wording of Policies 22 and 18 have been made.

3.0 Summary of objections

- Object to infill housing development in Nethy Bridge – this would alter the character of the village, causing its open forest character to disappear and leading to cramped areas and mutual drives/lanes **(355)**.
- The Local plan needs to specify a height limit for new housing – 8m maximum. This is for Nethy Bridge but also for the rest of the National Park **(355)**.
- Ambience and character of the village should be far more responsibly protected that in recent scheme developments – concerns about possible clashes in house styles, heights, render colours etc **(354)**.

4.0 Summary of CNPA’s Response

4.1 In line with National Planning Policy, and the objectives of the National Park Plan, the CNP Local Plan strategy is to direct development towards existing settlements. Appropriate infill development can make a useful contribution to the provision of housing. Policy 22 in the CNP Local Plan allows for infill development but only where it will not have adverse impacts on the character of the settlement. Applications for infill development in Nethy Bridge will be assessed against this policy. Matters of height of buildings and individual design components, are issues of detail not appropriate for inclusion as a specific policy. Development proposals will be assessed

against the terms of Policy 18, the Sustainable Design Guide, and in relation to their individual context.

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 and business land at NB//H2 and ED1 in the CNP Local Plan, is required.
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6.0 Assessment and conclusions

- 6.1 **355 object** to infill housing development in Nethy Bridge – this would alter the character of the village, causing its open forest character to disappear and leading to cramped areas and mutual drives/lanes.
- 6.2 **Response:** In line with SPP3, and the objectives of the National Park Plan, the CNP Local Plan directs new development to existing settlements and infill development on appropriate sites is considered to contribute to the supply of housing land needed to sustain existing communities such as Nethy Bridge. Policy 22 reflects this position and provides in principle support for such developments but also seeks to ensure that new infill development will reinforce and enhance the character and settlement pattern. Any infill development proposals for Nethy Bridge will be considered against the terms of Policy 22 and it is submitted that this policy, alongside Policy 18 and the Sustainable Design Guide, provides adequate and appropriate safeguards to protect the character of the village. No modification is recommended.
- 6.3 **355 object** - The Local plan needs to specify a height limit for new housing – 8m maximum. This is for Nethy Bridge but also for the rest of the National Park.
- 6.4 **Response:** The issue of height of buildings is a matter of detail which is not considered appropriate for a specific planning policy. Across the National Park and within Nethy Bridge itself, there are differences in building heights. New development proposals in Nethy Bridge and elsewhere will be considered in relation to their setting and their local visual impact, and against the terms of Policy 18 and in relation to the Sustainable Design Guide. No modification to the CNP Local Plan is recommended.
- 6.5 **354 object** - The ambience and character of the village should be far more responsibly protected than in recent scheme developments – concerns about possible clashes in house styles, heights, render colours etc.
- 6.6 **Response:** Issues surrounding the detailed design of new housing developments in Nethy Bridge, are matters to be considered against the terms of Policies 18 and 22 of the CNP Local Plan and the Sustainable Design Guide, and will relate to the individual proposal, and its context. It is submitted that the aforementioned policies and guide, provide adequate and appropriate safeguards to protect the character of Nethy Bridge from adverse development impacts. No modification is required.

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 Living and Working in the (5.2) – Sustainable Communities and Housing.

8.0 National planning policy/guidance

8.1 SPP3 Planning for Homes 2008 (CD2.4) requires planning authorities to draw up a sustainable settlement strategy. Encouragement is given to the principle of the re-use of existing land and buildings before development of greenfield sites and directing the majority of new development towards sites within existing settlements to make effective use of existing infrastructure and service capacity etc. Infill development is generally encouraged provided it respects the scale, form, and density of its surroundings.

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
- 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