

Boat of Garten

Tuesday 25 October 2011, 7pm

Community Hall, Boat of Garten

Main points from the National Park Plan (Main bullet points taken from the discussion)

Outcome 7

Settlements and built development will retain and enhance the distinct sense of place and identity within the landscapes of the Park.

- How do we protect important buildings that are not listed?
- Some existing proposed developments do not seem to fit with, and complement, Cairngorm landscapes;
- What about improving existing housing stock and be more focussed on communities;
- The Plan needs to have a more outward focus from communities;
- We cannot rely solely on design to deliver this outcome;
- Too much jargon such as spatial strategy and connectivity;
- The impacts from developments need to be considered alongside the development itself;
- Key worker housing needs to be addressed as lack of it is causing social imbalances;
- Look at “social” housing rather than just “affordable” housing;
- Legislation to look after key workers is required;
- There is lots of housing but a lot of it is only used temporarily. Need to consider imaginative solutions such as residency qualifications;
- How could a residency qualification work?
- Councils are starting to build again and important for the National Park to get its fair share of such housing stock;
- National Park Plan should also “protect” existing streetscapes as well as “enhancing” them;
- Lighting can create a very urban feel;
- Clarify what is meant by “conservation area”;

Outcome 9

The Park's communities will be more empowered and able to develop their own models of sustainability.

- If local community has overwhelming support for a development, would the National Park Authority support the community even where the proposal went against current objectives?
- Concern that National Park Authority is only paying "lip service" to communities unless they were willing to support community led developments;
- Community sustainability and empowerment is predicated on affordable housing being available;
- The National Park Authority is not listening to business people;
- Where are the proposed housing sites in Boat of Garten?
- The Cairngorms Business Partnership will be responding to the consultations on behalf of its members;
- Is there a limit to growth envisaged?
- Need to get younger generation engaged.

Outcome 6

The economy of the Park will have grown and diversified drawing on the Park's special qualities.

- What is the long term vision for growth and specifically housing?
- What are special qualities?
- It would be helpful if the 20 year forward looking assumptions could be shared and do they include factors such as climate change?
- Confirmed that changes could be made to existing plan where circumstances had changed. (Removal of an allocation within a flood zone was specifically mentioned.)
- We need jobs that pay more.
- Does the National Park Authority have the skills to deliver business development support?
- Is there sufficient baseline data for wildlife to allow informed decisions to be made?
- There is a lack of basic environmental information on some sites proposed for development;
- Should second tier sites be identified in the National Park as they do in Aberdeenshire?
- Housing remains a significant problem;
- Red tape for employing youngsters precludes employing them;
- Special qualities not necessarily in conflict with development;
- No ancient woodlands shown on the Main Issues Report which results in needless conflict through lack of knowledge;
- Carbon issue needs to be more effectively addressed;
- Standards of roads not mentioned;

Main Points from the Local Development Plan (Main Issues Report) (Main bullet points taken from discussion)

Issue 4

Housing / Affordable Housing: *How and where can we meet the housing need in our communities – open market, affordable, local needs??*

- Why has the range of affordable housing previously set between 25% - 40% been reduced to 25%?
- Lack of incentive to developer if target is dropped to 25%;
- Banks are not lending money and local aren't getting work. Keep it local and encourage youngsters to build;
- A higher percentage of affordable housing is entirely permissible within a development.
- Lobby Government for a local letting policy;
- Current policy is not working. Must find mechanism to address local housing for local people;
- Housing lists are not working;
- Do we still need to state the obvious case for affordable housing?
- There are significant community advantages in including sheltered housing in community development needs;
- Be careful about pushing percentage rate higher for affordable housing as it may scare off developers;
- We are going around in circles and the same issues came up 5 years ago. We would have been better off with a well run local tourist board;
- Have we looked back and calculated how much affordable housing has been delivered for locals over the last 20 years?
- All the housing in the pipeline may only scratch the surface of local need;
- Lack of information on affordability demand makes allocation percentages nonsensical;
- Collecting affordable housing data will help make the case for changes that can only be done by Government;
- Important to remember that "local" when it comes to waiting list does not necessarily mean local born and bred;
- There are dangers in using "glib terms" such as affordable as it can vary depending on availability of loans, cost of rents and support from employers;
- Too great a burden on employers to pay over the going rate.
- Why should such a high percentage be market housing?
- Is the Park Authority dead set against residency criteria?
- Community Councils are keen to have public feedback on the individual sites being proposed.