



For decision

Title: National Park Partnership Plan 2027 – 2032 Timetable

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Purpose

This paper provides an initial timetable for the development of the 2027 - 2032 National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP).

Recommendations

The Board is asked to:

- a) Agree the timetable for the development of the NPPP 2027 – 2032.

Strategic context

1. The process for the development of a NPPP is set out in the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000.
2. This sets out that a National Park Authority must prepare and submit to the Scottish Ministers a plan setting out its policy for:
 - a) Managing the National Park, and
 - b) Co-ordinating the exercise of:
 - i. The authority's functions in relation to the National Park, and
 - ii. The functions of other public bodies and officeholders so far as affecting the National Park,with a view to accomplishing the purpose set out in section 9(1) of the Act.
3. The Act sets out that the consultation must be for 12 weeks and that the Park Authority must consult local authorities, community councils, such persons as appear to it to be representative of the interests of those who live, work or carry on business in the National Park, and such other persons as it thinks fit.
4. When the NPPP is approved by the Park Authority Board following consultation it is submitted to Scottish Ministers for approval.

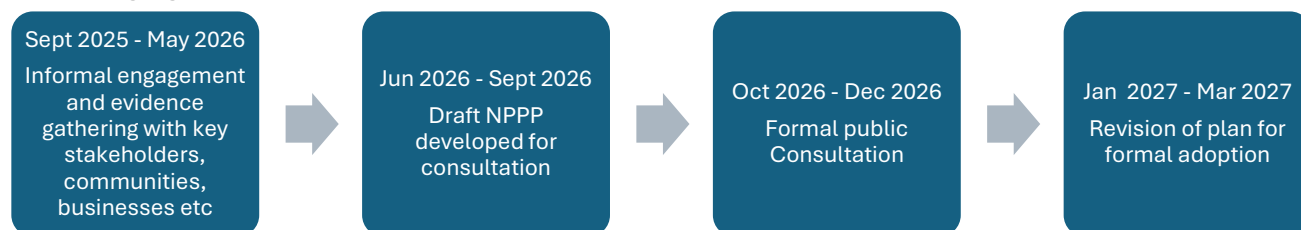


5. The Park Plan is the key statutory management plan for the Park. It is not a plan for the Authority; it is a plan for the place. The Act sets out that "The Scottish Ministers, a National Park Authority, a local authority and any other public body or officeholder must, in exercising functions so far as affecting a National Park, have regard to the National Park Plan as adopted under section 12(7)(a)".
6. The Natural Environment (Scotland) Bill is proposing strengthening this part of the Act with 'have regard to' replaced with 'facilitate the implementation of'.
7. The NPPP is the strategic expression of how the aims will be achieved collectively and how the Authority gives greater weight to the first aim where this is a conflict.
8. The NPPP also sets out what sub-plans will be developed and how they link together eg Cairngorms Nature Action Plan, Economy Action Plan etc.

Timetable

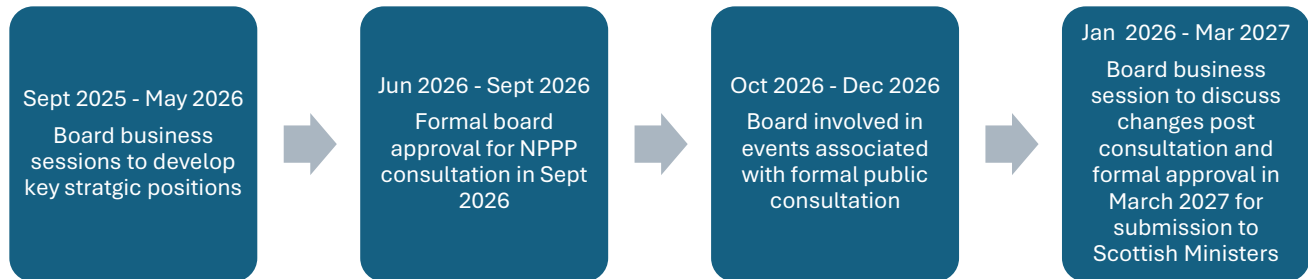
9. The aim is that the Board will sign off the NPPP for submission to Scottish Ministers in March 2027. The flow charts below sets out the key dates for the development of the plan.
10. The engagement work builds on the substantial data collected over the past 18 months via the residents' survey, visitor survey and Cairngorms2030 roadshows and engagement.

Engagement timetable





Board timetable



11. The Local Development Plan (LDP) timetable will be updated at the November 2025 board meeting. However, the LDP consultation will take place in early 2027 after the consultation for the NPPP.

Resources

12. The Park Authority has established an internal programme board to co-ordinate the development of the NPPP and the LDP. There will be significant pressure on staff resources to continue to deliver the current Park Plan including Cairngorms 2030, implement the fire management byelaw and deliver the new LDP alongside the development of the next NPPP. Senior Management Team are looking at this resource issue and the NPPP is a key element of the next whole staff meeting in October.
13. The key mitigation for the resource impact is to look at the next NPPP as a further iteration of the strategic direction of the current Park Plan with its targets out to 2045 but that has still to be tested with board members and stakeholders.

Risks

14. The resource risk is outlined above. The other three key risks are as follows
- a) Finance to implement the changes that the NPPP seeks to achieve.
 - b) Buy-in from key stakeholders to implement the changes that the NPPP seeks to achieve.
 - c) Consultation fatigue – there has been significant engagement over the past few years. There is a real risk that people will be difficult to engage with on another strategic plan.

These are items that will be the focus of early discussions with the Board and stakeholders on the development of the Plan.



15. A Risk Register for the development of the plan is being prepared and any strategic risks will be added to the Strategic Risk Register.

Next steps

16. The next steps will be providing an officer assessment of the current Park Plan, what are the options for change and what evidence base we will have to gather over the next year. Initial thinking around the NPPP will be set out at the Board Business Session on 10 October where members will be able to discuss options.

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