

# **AGENDA ITEM 8**

## **APPENDIX I**

### **MONITORING REPORT 2015-2020**

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PLANNING

Cairngorms National Park Local  
Development Plan 2015

**Monitoring Report for 2015/16 to 2019/20**

November 2020

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## Introduction

The Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan (LDP) was adopted on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2015. This monitoring report provides an overview of how the LDP was used during the period 2015/2016 – 2019/2020, being the second, third, fourth and fifth year of its implementation, by the National Park Authority and the Local Authorities whose area it covers. It also considers how the LDP was used by DPEA and Local Review Bodies for appeals.

## Context

The LDP is the first development plan that covers the whole of the National Park, replacing the Cairngorms National Park Local Plan 2010 and the Perth & Kinross Council Highland Area Local Plan 2000, which covered the part of Perthshire added to the Park in 2010. The LDP sets out policies and proposals for the development and use of land for the next 5-10 years. It gives a broad indication of the scale and location of growth up to year 20, as well as providing the basis for the assessment of all planning applications made across the National Park.

The Scottish Government believes that the planning system is essential to achieving its central purpose of creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth. This involves promoting and facilitating development in the most appropriate places while protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment. The LDP, with its policies and sites allocated for development, is the main tool to deliver that. It provides guidance to developers and investors, and allows local communities and the general public to be involved in shaping the future of their area.

## Summary of key points

Over the monitoring period of 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2020:

- 1876 planning applications were submitted for development within the National Park, of which 107 were subsequently withdrawn and 12 were found not to require planning

permission, with 79 remaining under consideration or had been determined outwith the monitoring period at the time of data collation.

- Of the 1790 applications determined, 1703 were approved, 87 refused – an average approval rate of around 95%.
- Highland and Aberdeenshire areas had the highest number of applications, with Angus having the fewest.
- During the monitoring period the National Park Authority called in and determined around 6% of applications.
- The main policy most referred to in planning reports is Policy 3 (Sustainable Design).
- Sub-policies were not routinely recorded in planning reports, however the sub-policies mostly referred to were 3.1 (Design Statements), 3.4 (Alterations to the existing building stock) and 9.2 (Conservation Areas).
- The Park Authority has taken a more direct role in applications that trigger

the policies that support economic growth, natural heritage and landscape interests (Policies 2, 4 and 5) when compared to Local Authorities.

- There were 29 valid appeals against refusal of planning permission; 15 referred to LDP policies in the decision notice, with 8 referring to sub-policies.
- 7 appeals were against the Park Authority; 5 were allowed (around 71%), 1 dismissed (around 14%), and 1 withdrawn.
- Of the 22 valid appeals against Local Authority decisions, around 55% were allowed (permission granted) and 45% dismissed (refusal upheld).
- Policies 1 (new housing development), 2 (supporting economic development), 3 (sustainable design), 4 (natural heritage) and 5 (landscape) were the most commonly referred to in appeal decisions.

## Applications

This section provides some general statistics about the number of applications received and determined by the CNPA and the Local Authorities.

Over the monitoring period of 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2020, 1983 planning applications were submitted within the National Park, with 1790 going forward to determination. Highland and Aberdeenshire areas had the highest number of applications, with Angus having the fewest (Figure 1).

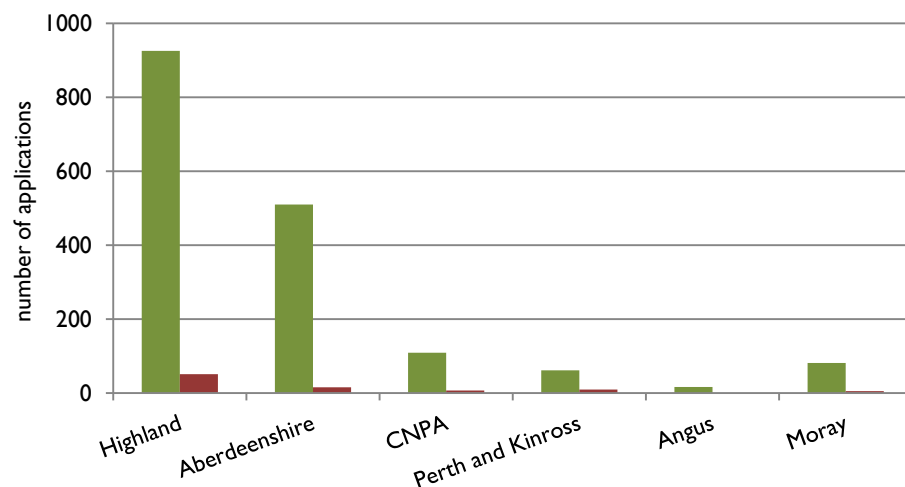


Figure 1: Number of applications determined by the different Authorities during April 2015 – March 2020. Approved in green, refused in red.

129 applications were not determined, being withdrawn or found not to require planning permission. A further 79 applications remained under consideration or were determined outwith the monitoring period at the time of data collation (June 2020).

During the monitoring period, 1703 applications were approved and 87 refused (Figure 2), an average approval rate of around 95%. This fluctuated annually during the monitoring period, with the lowest being around 90% in

2017/18 and the highest being around 97% in both 2015/16 and 2018/19.

On average, the National Park Authority determined around 6% of applications. The remainder were determined by the Local Authorities. This fluctuated annually during the monitoring period, with the lowest amount being determined by the Park Authority being in 2017/18 at around 3%, with the highest being around 8% in 2018/19. Figures 3 and 4 overleaf show the year on year variation in applications determined by the Park Authority compared to Local Authorities.

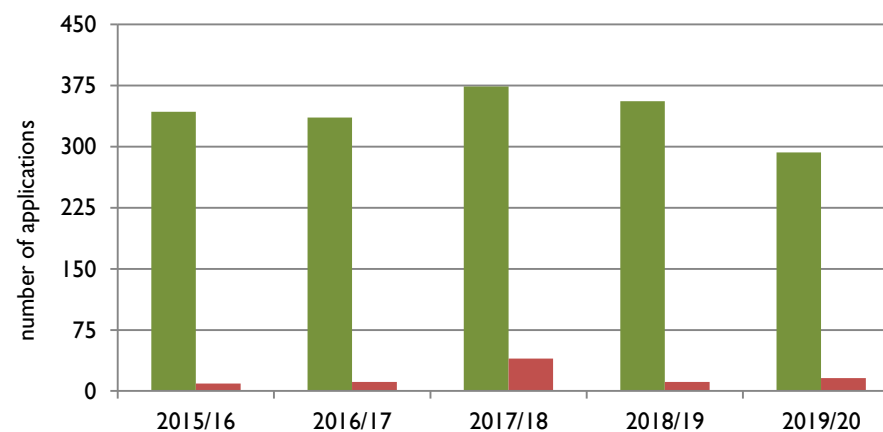


Figure 2: Total number of applications determined by year during April 2015 – March 2020. Approved in green, refused in red.

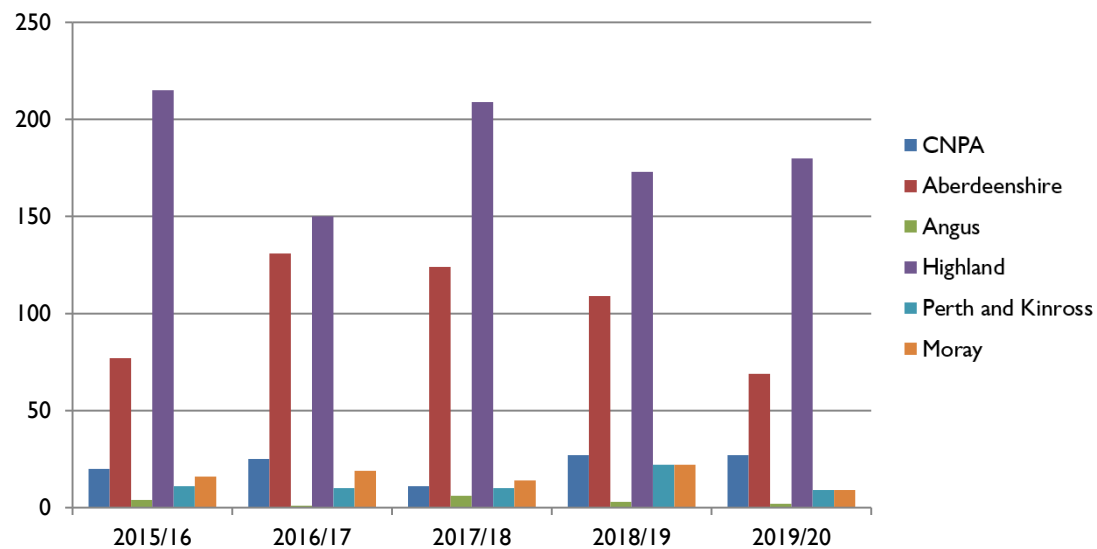


Figure 3: Applications approved by the different Authorities using the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan by year, for the period April 2015 to March 2020.

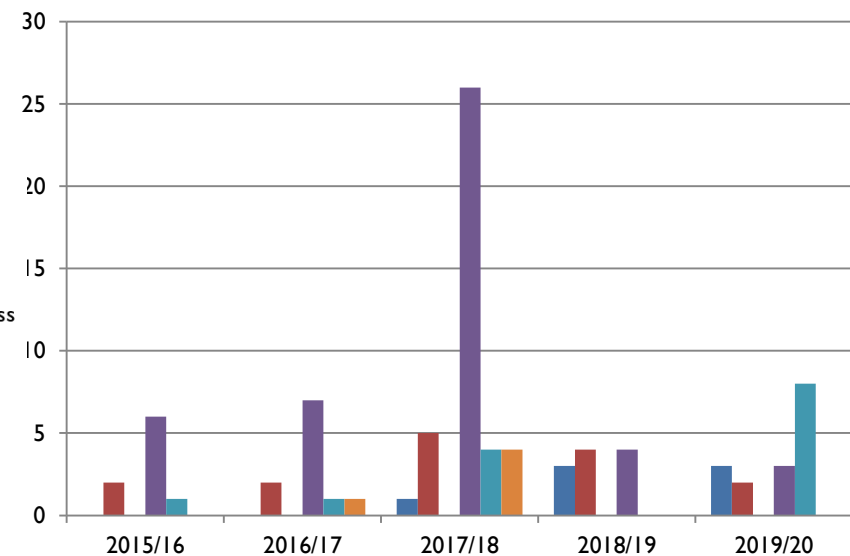


Figure 4: Applications refused by the different Authorities using the Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan by year, for the period April 2015 to March 2020.

## Policy Use

This section provides information on how each policy and sub-policy was used during the monitoring period. Figure 5 provides a summary of this information for the policies, allowing easy comparisons to be made. The most commonly used policy was Policy 3 Sustainable Design. This is unsurprising given that the policy should apply to most forms of development.

### Main policies

Figures 6 and 7 overleaf give an indication of the types of applications determined by the Local Authorities and those called in by the Park Authority in relation to main policy use. For example, as would be expected given the Park aims, the Park Authority has taken a more direct role in applications that trigger the policies that support economic growth, natural heritage and landscape interests (Policies 2, 4 and 5) when compared to Local Authorities.

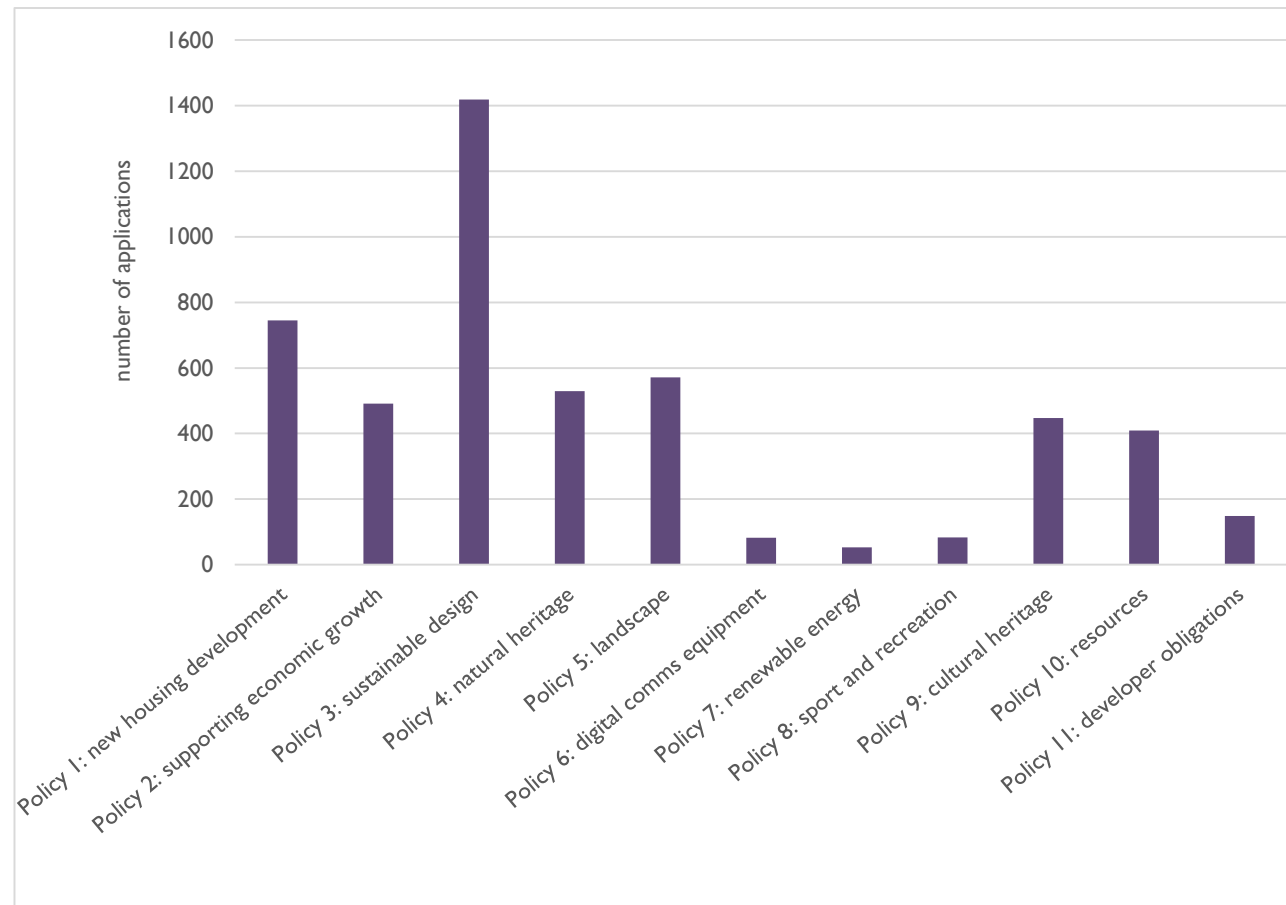


Figure 5: Policy use in decision making during April 2015 - March 2020



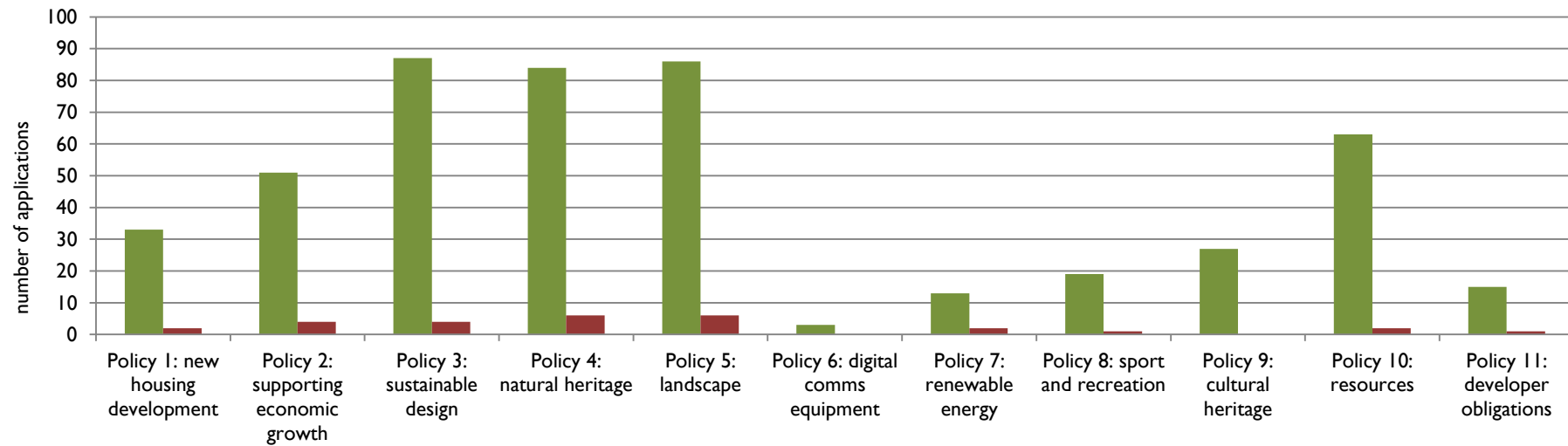


Figure 6: Summary of decisions made by CNPA during April 2015 – March 2020 that refer to specific policy types. Approved in green, refused in red.

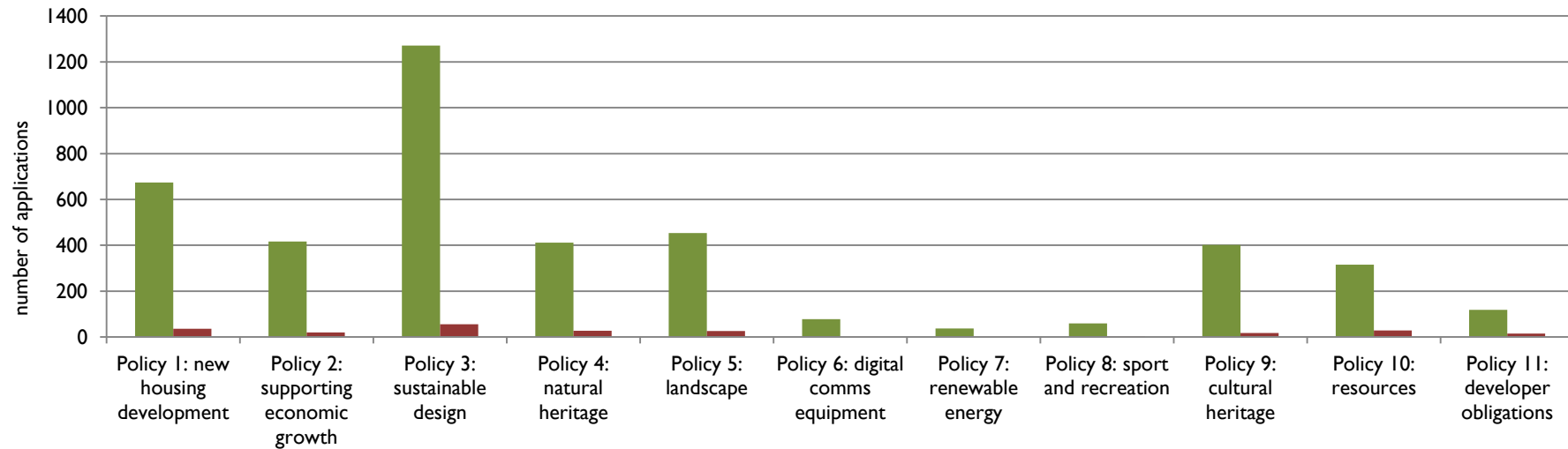


Figure 7: Summary of decisions made by Local Authorities during April 2015 – March 2020 that refer to specific policy types. Approved in green, refused in red.

## Sub-policies

With the exception of Policies 5 (Landscape), 6 (Siting and design of digital communications equipment) and 11 (Developer Contributions), all policies have sub-policies that sit below them, each of which deal with different aspects of the Policy's concerns. Some sub-policies are relevant to all aspects of a particular development, for example sub-policy 3.1 Design Statements could be applied to all applications, while others would apply only in specific situations, for example sub-policy 1.8 on Conversions.

Planning reports have tended to include information on when main policies have been used when determining applications. However information on when sub-policies have been used has not been included in all planning reports. It is therefore not possible to gain a fully representative picture of how sub-policies have been used over the monitoring period, as the data is incomplete\*. Nonetheless information on the number of times sub-policies were referred to in decision making is presented in Table 1.

\*Under reporting may be due to the way the sub-policies have been numbered in the LDP 2015. The proposed LDP 2020 seeks to address this by hierarchically numbering each sub-policy, which is hoped to encourage better recording of sub-policy use once the Plan is adopted.

	Policy 1: new housing development	Policy 2: supporting economic growth	Policy 3: sustainable design	Policy 4: natural heritage	Policy 7: renewable energy	Policy 8: sport and recreation	Policy 9: cultural heritage	Policy 10: resources
Percentage of times main policy only referred to in decisions	28%	22%	61%	21%	3%	4%	13%	17%
Percentage of times sub-policies referred to in decisions	17%	6%	24%	11%	0%	0%	15%	8%

Table 1: Proportion of applications during April 2015 – March 2020 where sub-policies have been referred to in planning reports, and where the main policy has been referred to (note not all reports included information on when sub policies were used, so the data presented below is unlikely to be fully representative of sub-policy use).

### Policy I New Housing Development

Maintaining high quality places where communities can be sustainable and thrive is key to the long-term success of the National Park. This should be undertaken in a way that makes the optimum use of resources, integrates with services and facilities, and promotes the highest standards in design and environmental quality.

The LDP aims to enable and actively support the delivery of new housing that is affordable and meets community needs, in turn supporting and growing the economy.

During the period April 2015 to March 2020, the policy was referred to 745 times in total. CNPA used the policy 35 times and Local Authorities used it 710 times (Figures 8 and 9). It was referred to in around 42% of decisions to approve applications and around 33% that were refused. Figure 10 shows this information geographically.

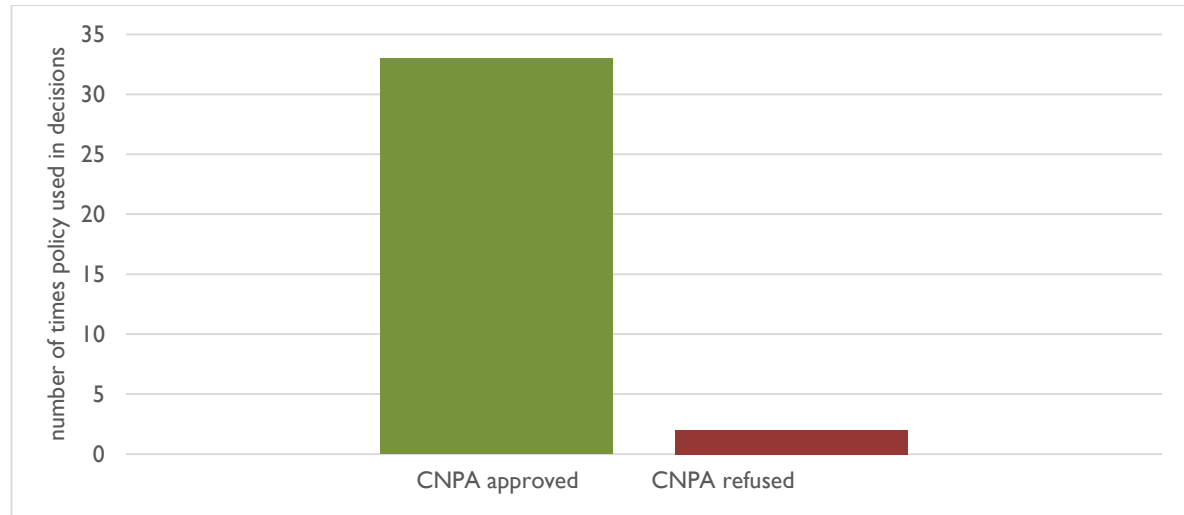


Figure 8: Number of applications determined by CNPA using Policy I during April 2015 – March 2020.



Figure 9: Number of applications determined by the Local Authorities using Policy I during April 2015 – March 2020.

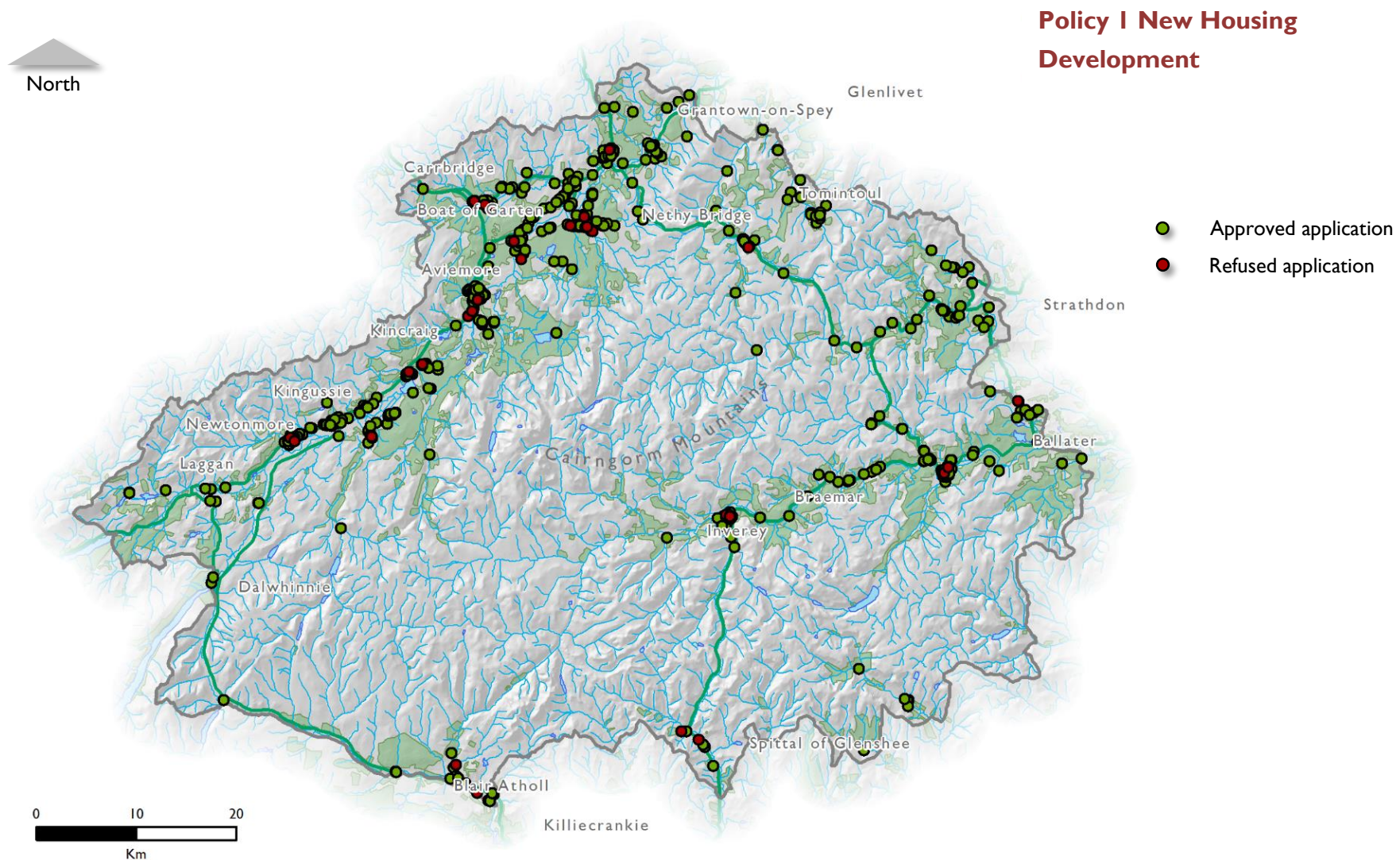


Figure 10: Location of planning applications where Policy I New Housing Development was used. Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO. © Crown copyright and database right 2019. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100040965 Cairngorms National Park Authority.

## Policy 2 Supporting Economic Growth

Sustainable growth in the economy of the Park is at the heart of supporting our communities, helping them become and remain vibrant and attractive places for people to live and work.

The LDP has an important role to play in addressing the economic, social and environmental issues facing towns, settlements and rural areas within the Cairngorms National Park and facilitating successful economic growth in the future.

During the period April 2015 to March 2020, the policy was referred to 491 times in total. CNPA used the policy 55 times and Local Authorities used it 436 times (Figures 11 and 12). It was referred to in around 28% of decisions to approve applications and around 21% that were refused. Figure 13 shows this information geographically.

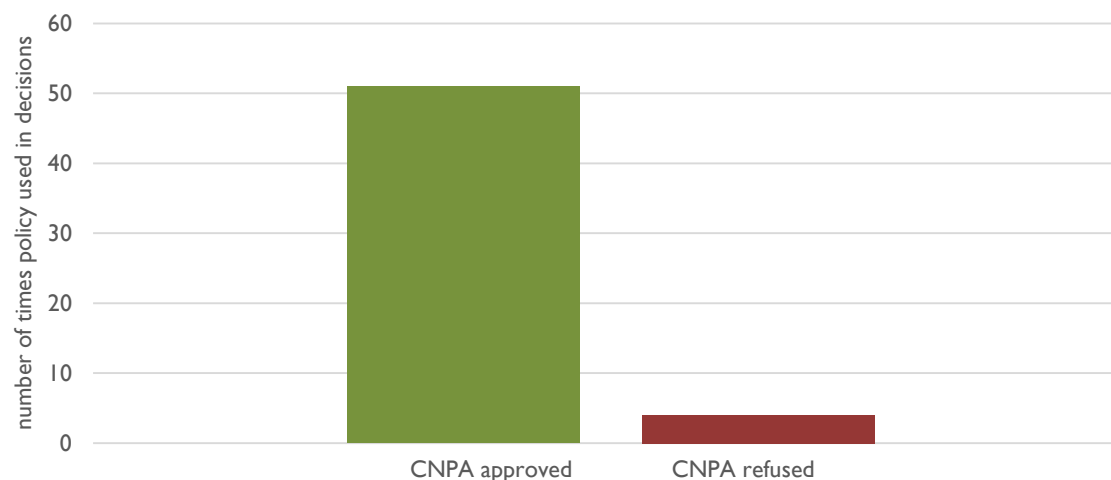


Figure 11: Number of applications determined by CNPA using Policy 2 during April 2015 – March 2020.

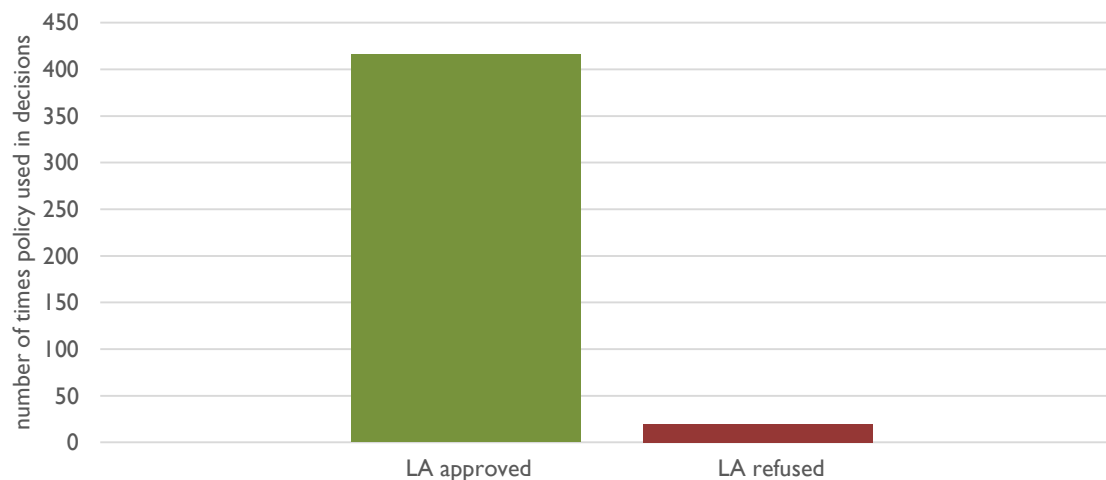


Figure 12: Number of applications determined by the Local Authorities using Policy 2 during April 2015 – March 2020.



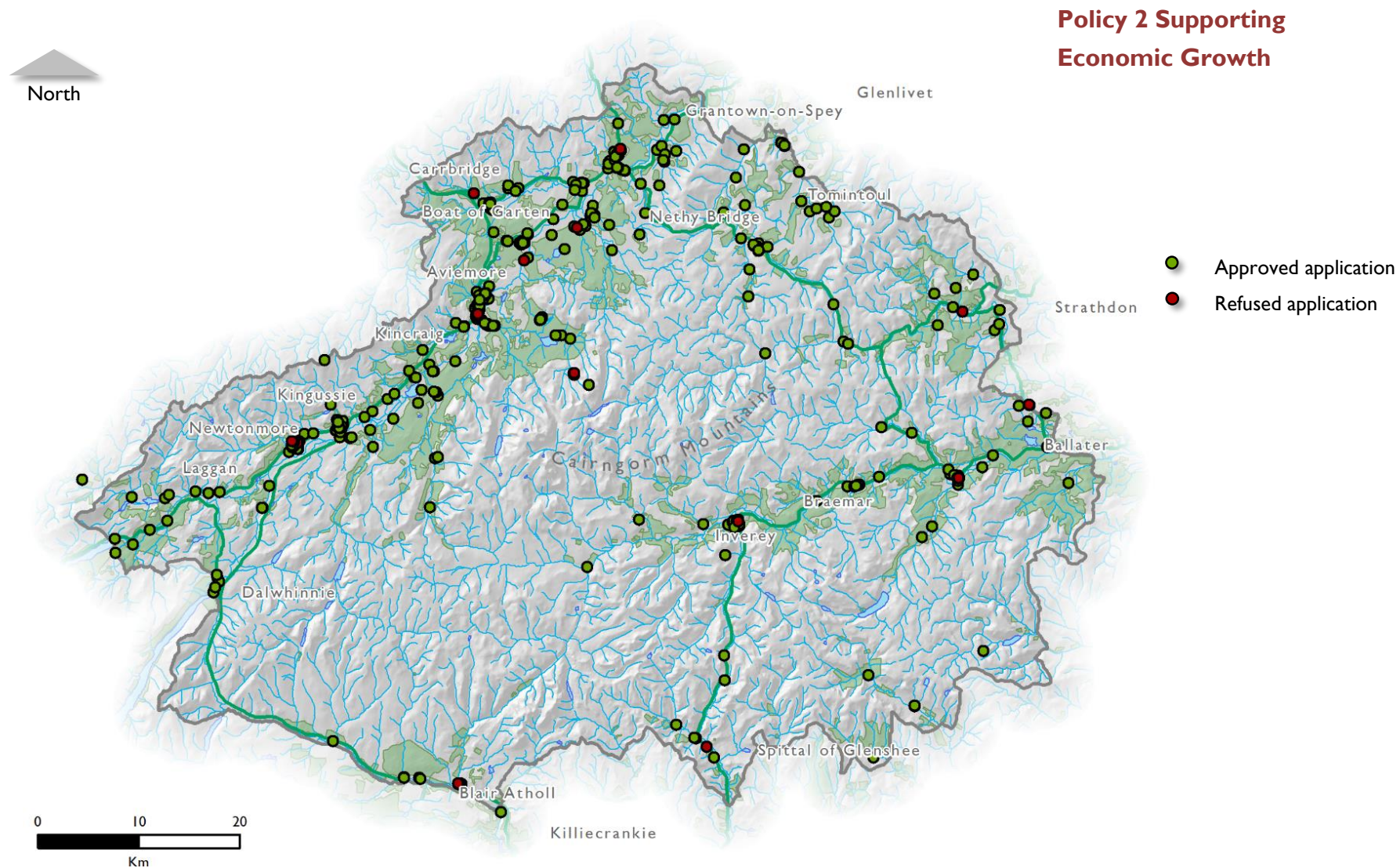


Figure 13: Location of planning applications where Policy 2 Supporting Economic Growth was used. Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO. © Crown copyright and database right 2019. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100040965 Cairngorms National Park Authority.

### Policy 3 Sustainable Design

The distinctive character and identity of the Cairngorms National Park's natural and built heritage and settlements contribute to the qualities that make it special. The contribution that built development makes to our sense of place and quality of life is important to those who live and work in and visit the Park. Good design is key to achieving development fit for a National Park.

The policy aims to ensure that all development, not just the expensive or iconic, delivers high standards of design and contributes to the sense of place.

During the period April 2015 to March 2020, the policy was referred to 1418 times in total. CNPA used the policy 91 times and Local Authorities used it 1327 times (Figures 14 and 15). It was referred to in around 81% of decisions to approve applications and around 52% that were refused. Figure 16 shows this information geographically.

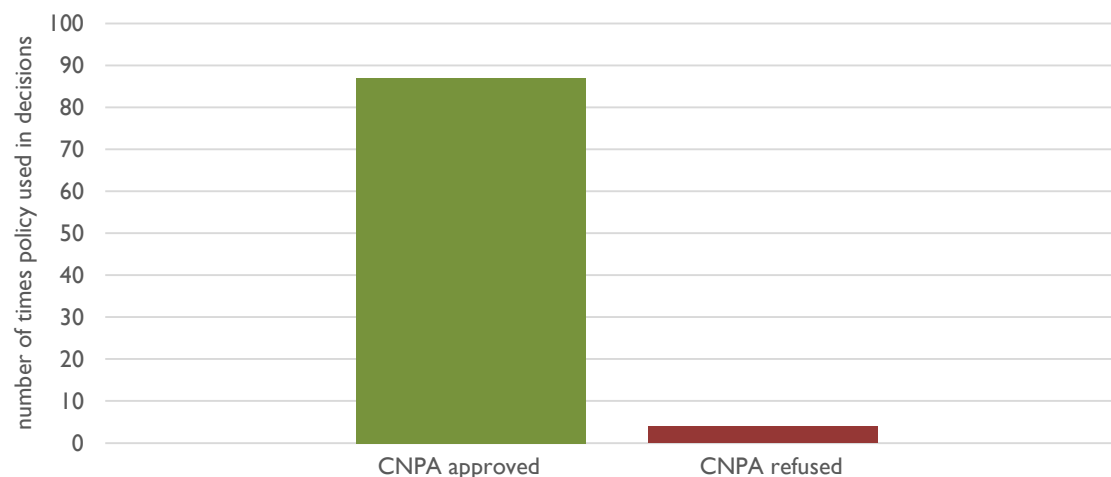


Figure 14: Number of applications determined by CNPA using Policy 3 during April 2015 – March 2020.



Figure 15: Number of applications determined by the Local Authorities using Policy 3 during April 2015 – March 2020.



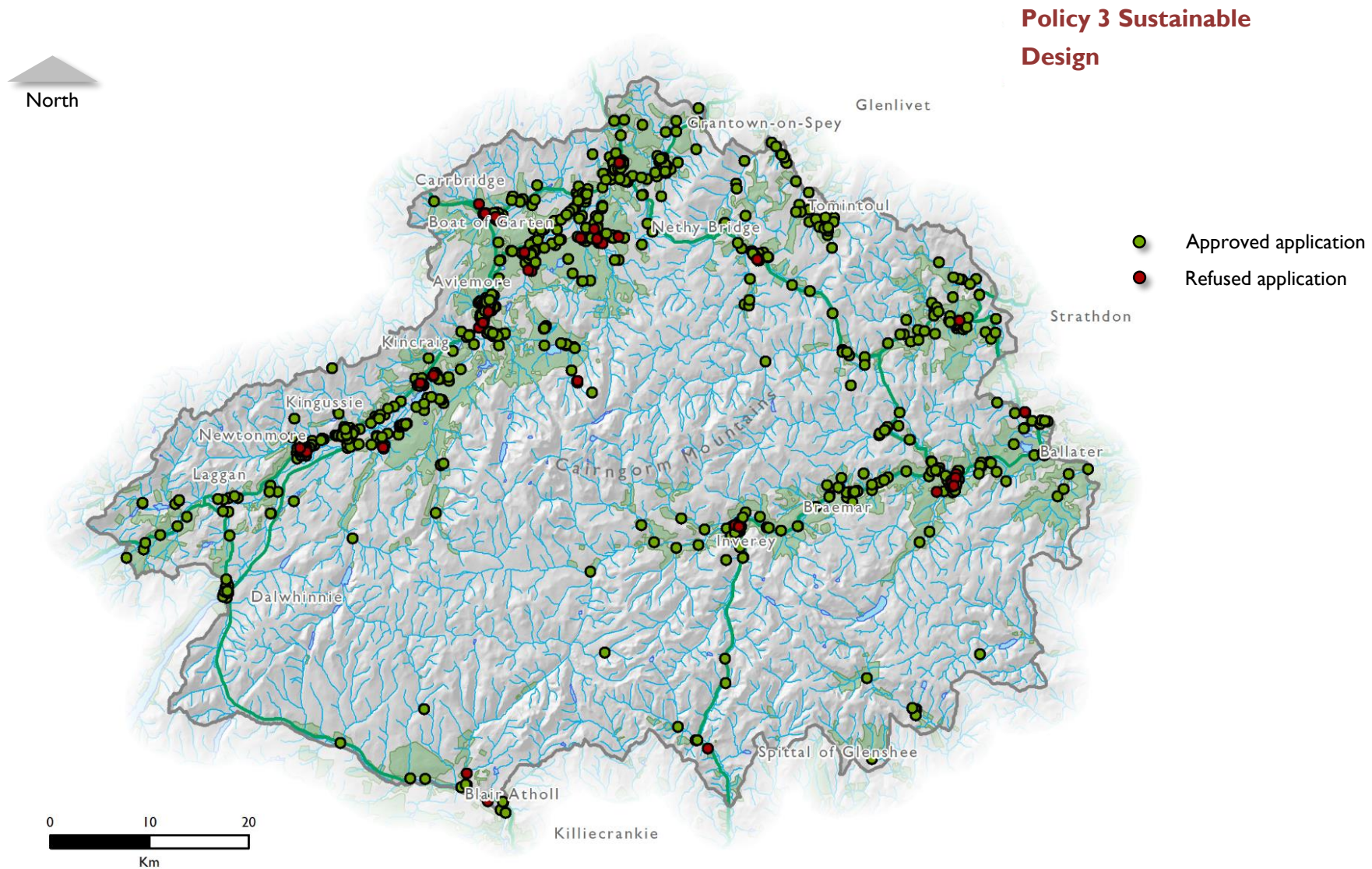


Figure 16: Location of planning applications where Policy3 Sustainable Design was used. Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO. © Crown copyright and database right 2019. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100040965 Cairngorms National Park Authority.



#### Policy 4 Natural Heritage

The range and quality of natural heritage in the Cairngorms National Park is unique in the UK and is internationally valued. A result of natural processes and land management, many of the special habitats and species of the Cairngorms need active management to continue to thrive. The unique natural heritage underpins all four aims of the Park, and the special qualities created as a result are valued by residents, visitors and those who care about the Park. Safeguarding habitats and species is key to the long-term success of the Park. The policy will ensure that development conserves and enhances the outstanding natural heritage of the Cairngorms National Park. It offers the necessary level of protection from adverse development and enables enhancement. During the period April 2015 to March 2020, the policy was referred to 529 times in total. CNPA used the policy 90 times and Local Authorities used it 439 times (Figures 17 and 18). It was referred to in around 30% of decisions to approve applications and around 28% that were refused. Figure 19 shows this information geographically.

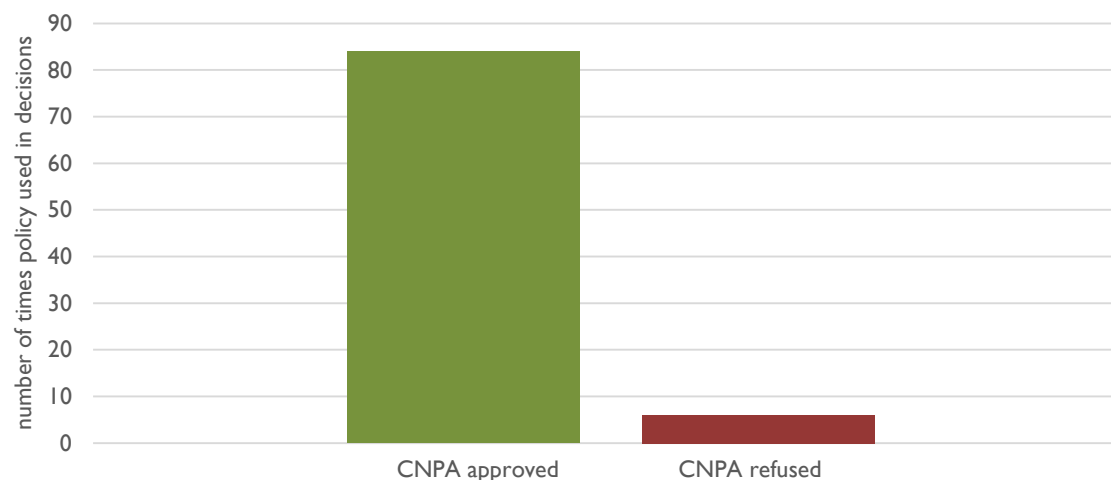


Figure 17: Number of applications determined by CNPA using Policy 4 during April 2015 – March 2020.

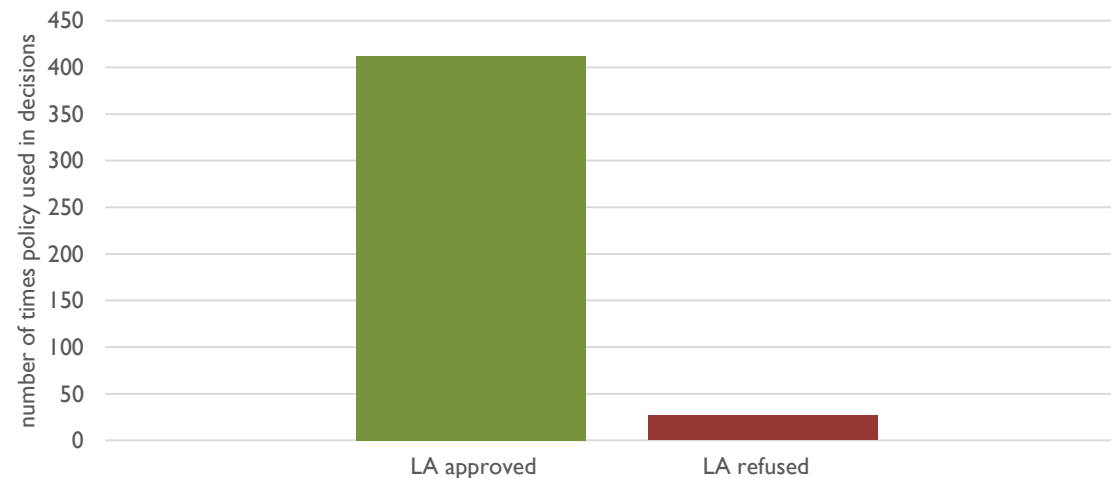


Figure 18: Number of applications determined by the Local Authorities using Policy 4 during April 2015 – March 2020.

## Policy 4 Natural Heritage

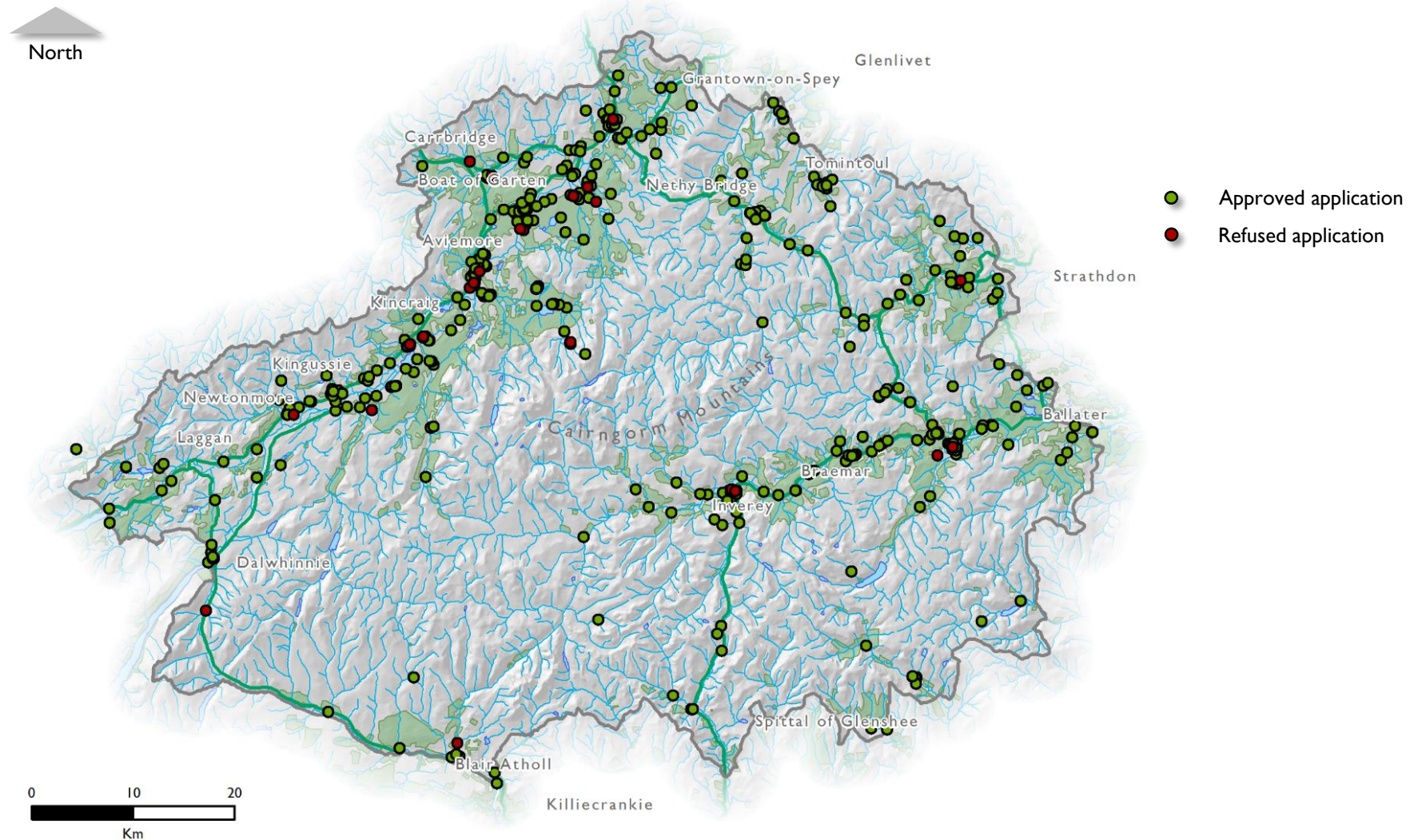


Figure 19: Location of planning applications where Policy 4 Natural Heritage was used. Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO. © Crown copyright and database right 2019. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100040965 Cairngorms National Park Authority.

### Policy 5 Landscape

The landscapes of the Cairngorms are one of the National Park's most valuable assets, underpinning its character, designation and the appeal of the area as a place to visit, live and invest. The experience of large scale wildness in the National Park is particularly distinctive in UK terms.

The policy will conserve and enhance the diverse and spectacular landscapes of the National Park by ensuring that only development which conserves and enhances the special landscape qualities of the Park will be supported. It supports development that contributes to landscape enhancement and protects against development that would erode the landscape qualities we value.

During the period April 2015 to March 2020, the policy was referred to 571 times in total. CNPA used it 92 times and Local Authorities used it 479 times (Figures 20 and 21). It was referred to in around 32% of decisions to approve applications and around 28% that were refused. Figure 22 shows this information geographically.

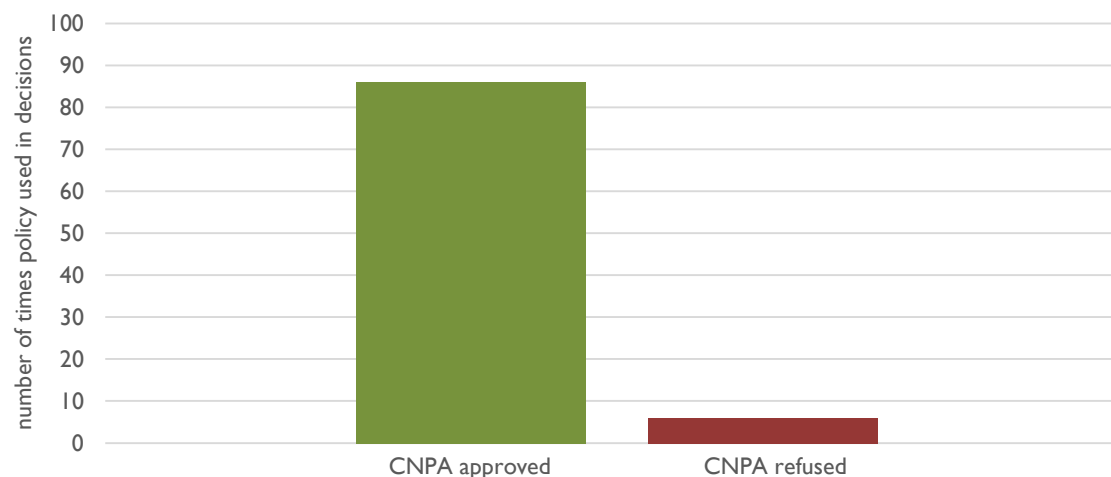


Figure 20: Number of applications determined by CNPA using Policy 5 during April 2015 – March 2020.



Figure 21: Number of applications determined by the Local Authorities using Policy 5 during April 2015 – March 2020.



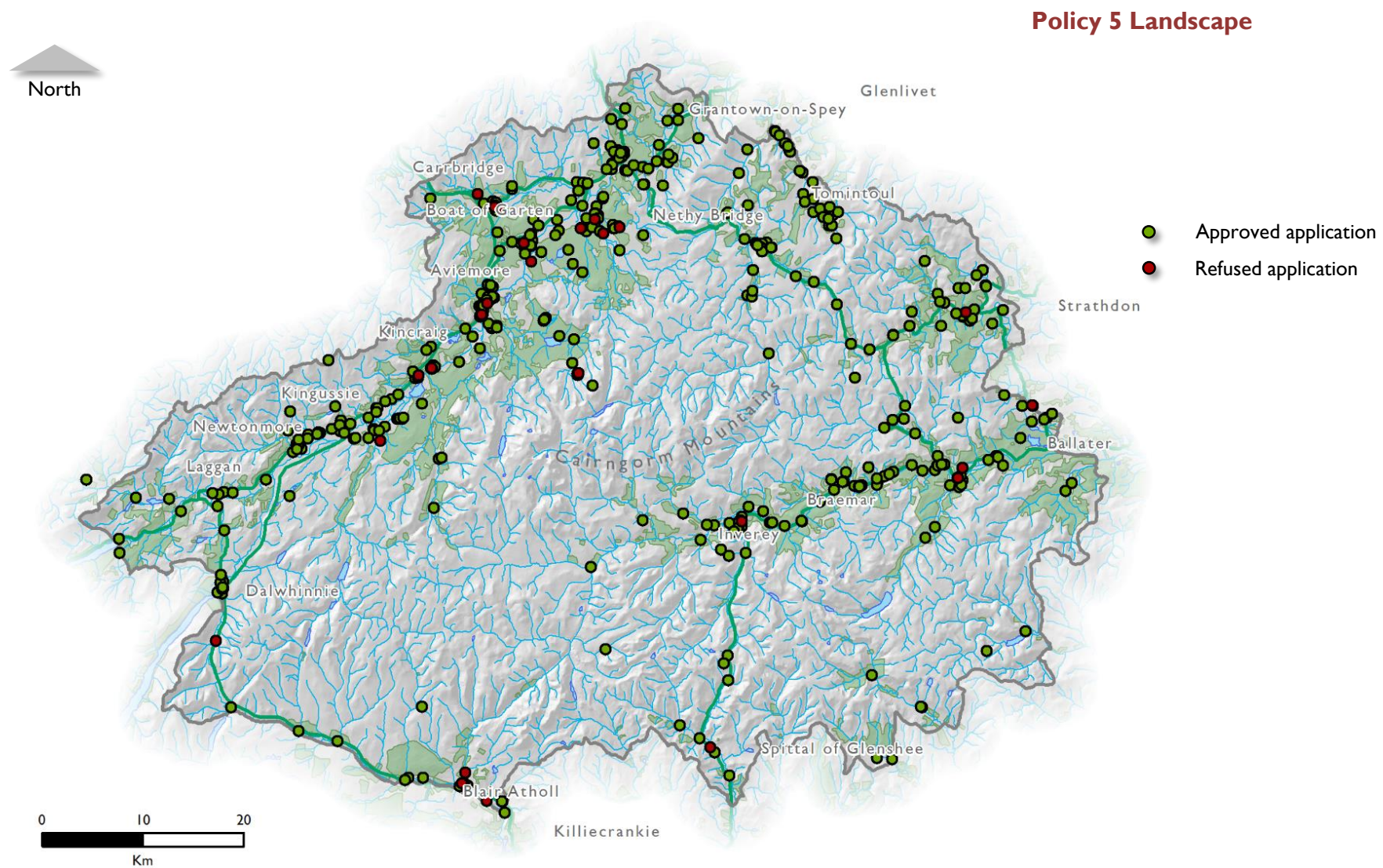


Figure 22: Location of planning applications where Policy 5 Landscape was used. Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO. © Crown copyright and database right 2019. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100040965 Cairngorms National Park Authority.

### Policy 6 The Siting and Design of Digital Communications Equipment

The policy is intended to support world class digital technology through the provision of the most up to date networks to serve homes and business premises, while ensuring that all such infrastructure installations are sited and designed to keep environmental impacts to a minimum.

During the period April 2015 to March 2020, the policy was referred to 82 times in total. CNPA used the policy three times and Local Authorities used it 79 times (Figures 23 and 24). It was referred to in around 5% of decisions to approve applications and around 1% that were refused. Figure 25 shows this information geographically.

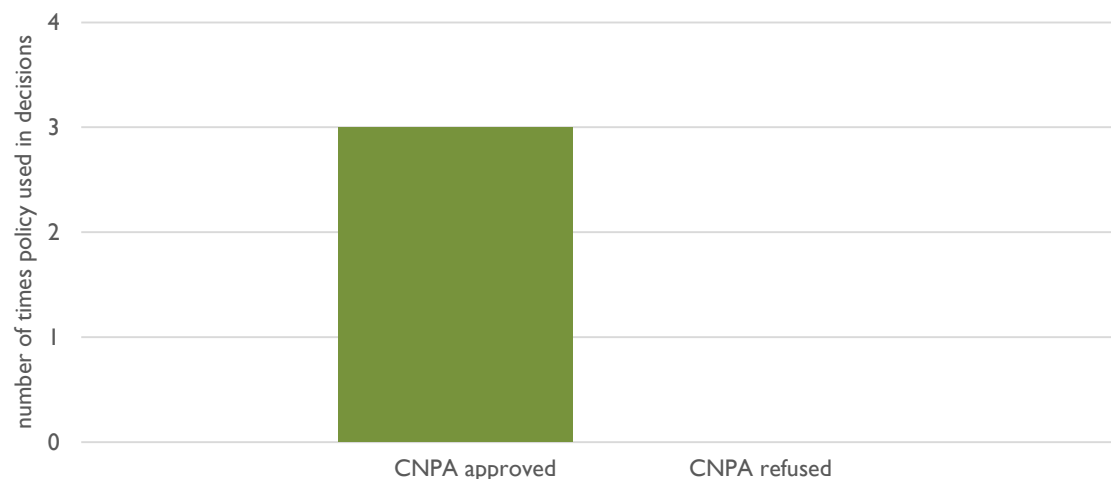


Figure 23: Number of applications determined by CNPA using Policy 6 during April 2015 – March 2020.

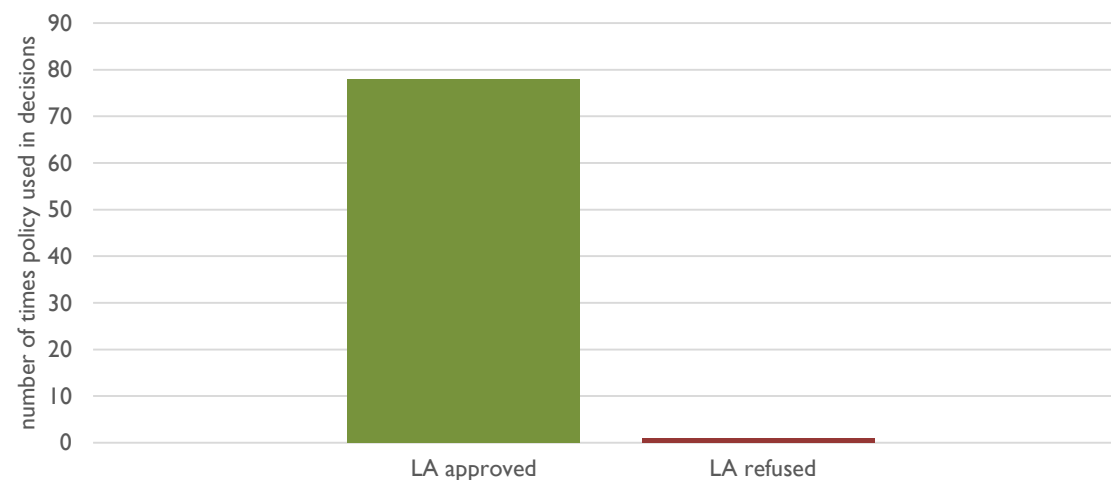


Figure 24: Number of applications determined by the Local Authorities using Policy 6 during April 2015 – March 2020.



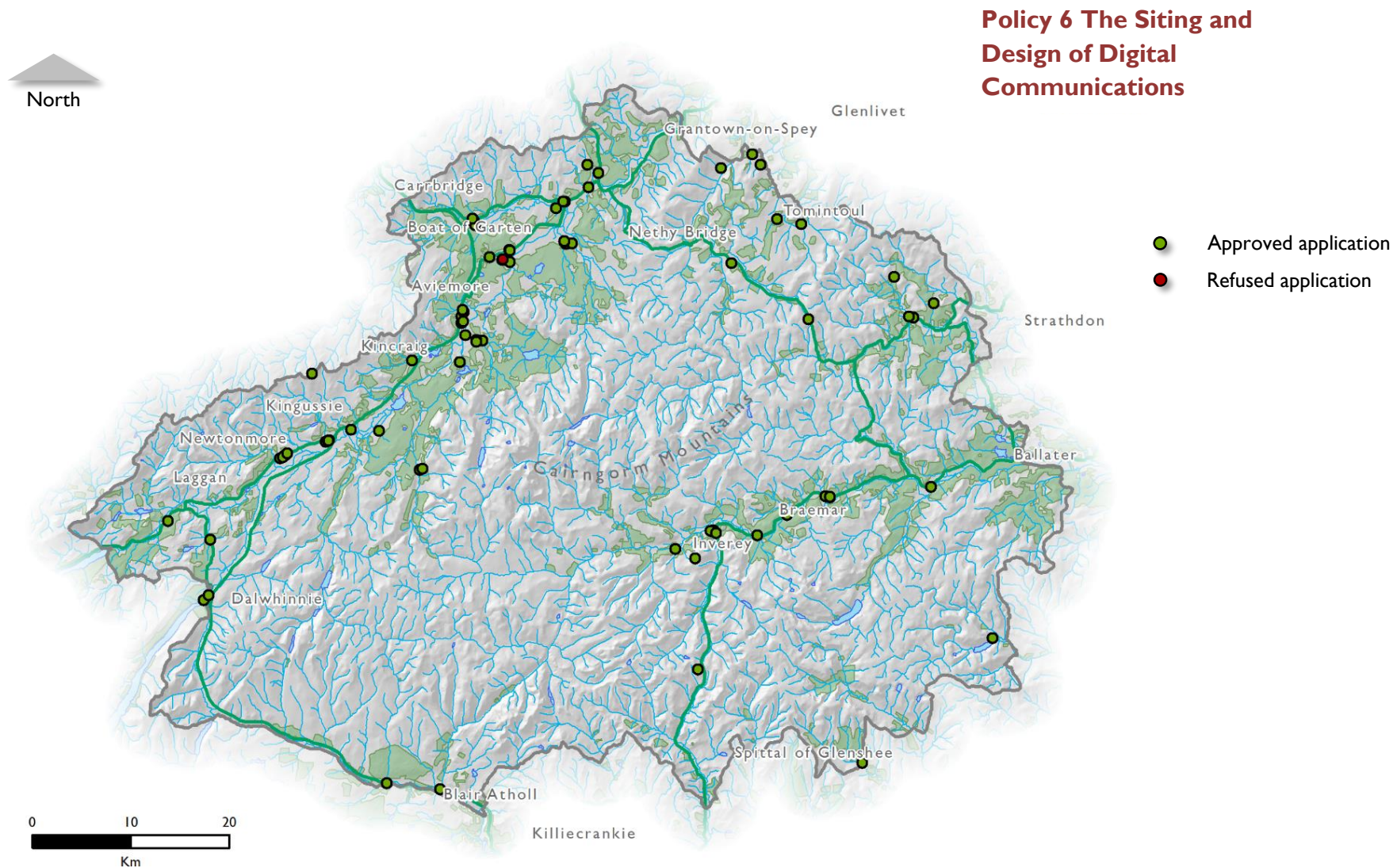


Figure 25: Location of planning applications where Policy 6 The Siting and Design of Digital Communications Equipment was used. Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO. © Crown copyright and database right 2019. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100040965 Cairngorms National Park Authority.

### Policy 7 Renewable Energy

The National Park has an abundance of natural resources which provide options to generate renewable energy. This includes energy from biomass, hydro, solar, heat pumps, anaerobic digestion, energy from waste and some wind energy. The policy aims to enable appropriate renewable energy generation by harnessing the Park's natural resources in a way which achieves the collective delivery of the four aims of the Park. It sets the framework to harness this energy potential, and so will allow the Park to play its part in addressing the issues of climate change and fuel poverty.

During the period April 2015 to March 2020, the policy was referred to 53 times in total. CNPA used the policy 15 times and Local Authorities used it 38 times (Figures 26 and 27). It was referred to in around 3% of decisions to approve applications and around 3% that were refused. Figure 28 shows this information geographically.

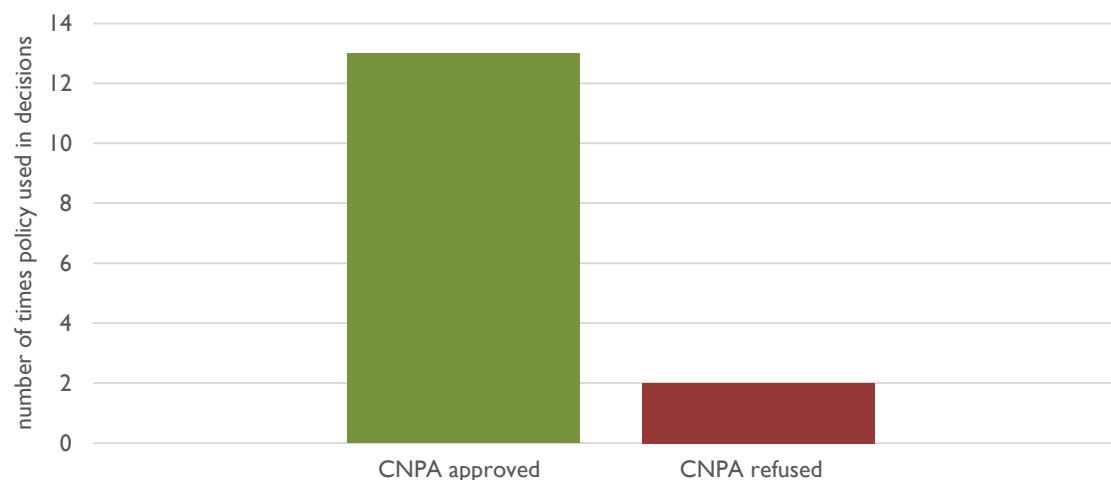


Figure 26: Number of applications determined by CNPA using Policy 7 during April 2015 – March 2020.

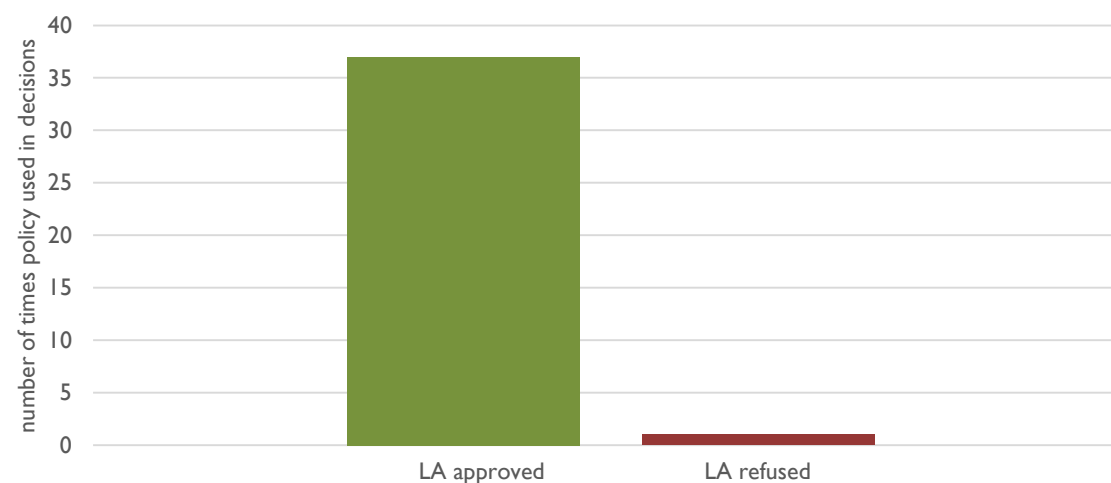


Figure 27: Number of applications determined by the Local Authorities using Policy 7 during April 2015 – March 2020.



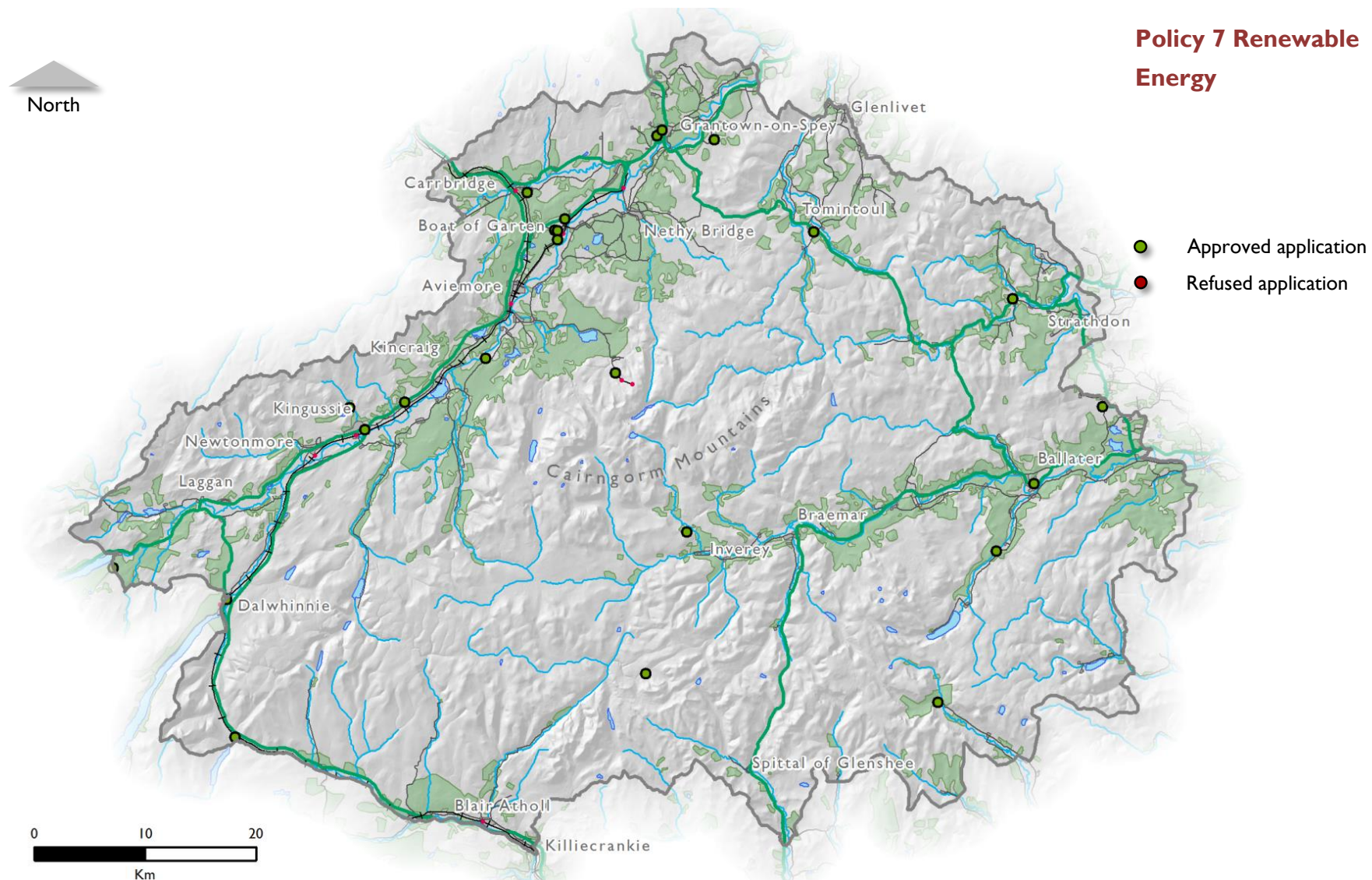


Figure 28: Location of planning applications where Policy 7 renewable Energy was used. Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO. © Crown copyright and database right 2019. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100040965 Cairngorms National Park Authority.



### Policy 8 Sport and Recreation

The Cairngorms National Park offers outstanding opportunities for formal and informal recreation, from sports pitches and sports centres to ski centres, golf courses and mountain bike centres, and a network of paths that links communities to the countryside. There are also many other public and amenity open spaces, ranging from public parks, landscaping schemes within large-scale developments, community sports hubs and formal equipped play areas. The policy aims to ensure the needs of local communities and visitors for recreational space and facilities are accommodated, and existing facilities protected. This includes informal and formal recreation provision.

During the period April 2015 to March 2020, the policy was referred to 83 times in total. CNPA used the policy 20 times and Local Authorities used it 63 times (Figures 29 and 30). It was referred to in around 5% of decisions to approve applications and around 4% that were refused. Figure 31 shows this information geographically.

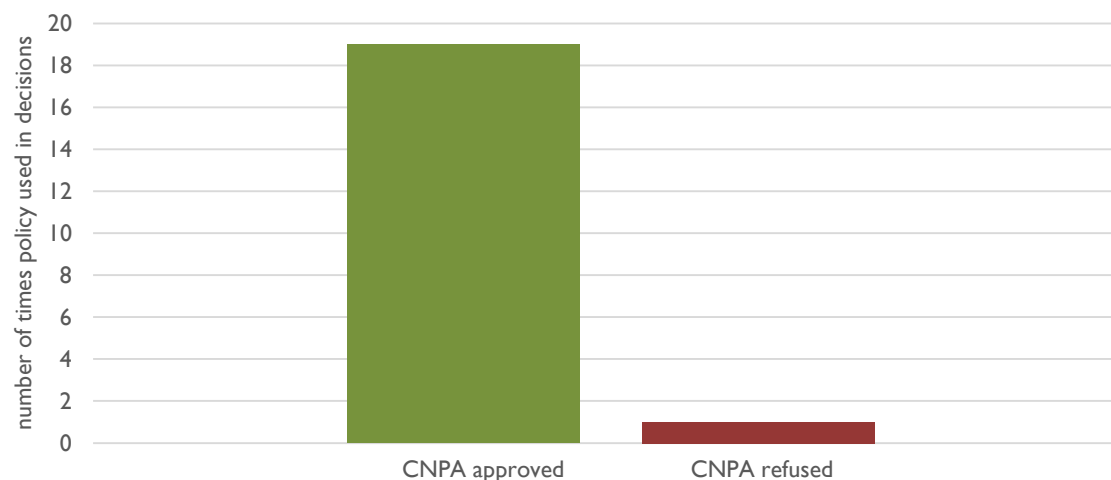


Figure 29: Number of applications determined by CNPA using Policy 8 during April 2015 – March 2020.



Figure 30: Number of applications determined by the Local Authorities using Policy 8 during April 2015 – March 2020.



## Policy 8 Sport and Recreation

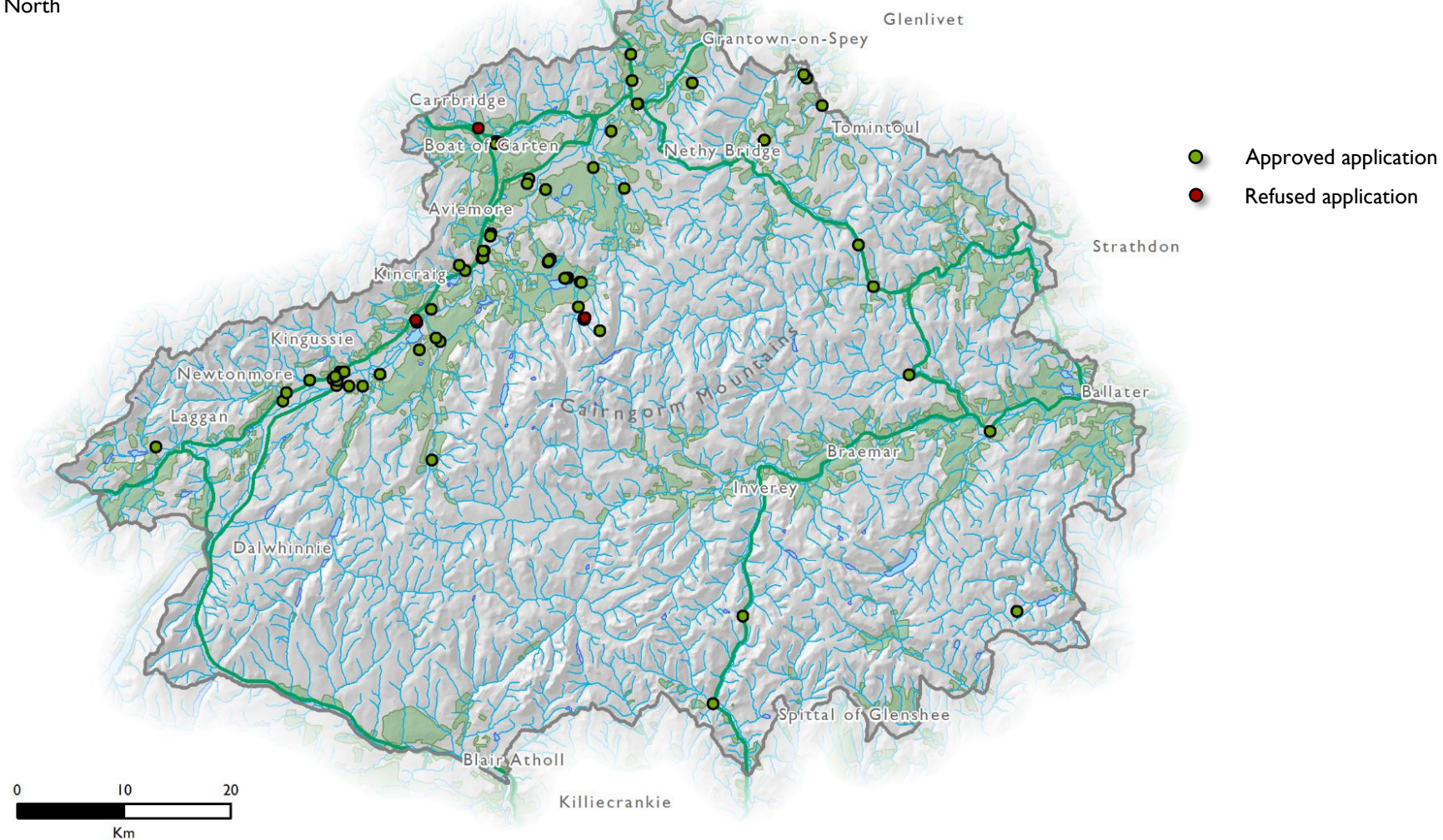


Figure 31: Location of planning applications where Policy 8 Sport and Recreation was used. Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO. © Crown copyright and database right 2019. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100040965 Cairngorms National Park Authority.

### Policy 9 Cultural Heritage

The cultural heritage of the Cairngorms ranges from archaeological remains to internationally significant listed buildings, important architectural and historic townscapes, historic gardens and landscapes, to ancient routes through the Park. All of these provide a clear link to the history of this part of Scotland and the part it played over time to create the Park and communities we know and value today.

The policy aims to conserve and enhance the rich cultural heritage of the Cairngorms National Park. It plays a key role in ensuring all development makes an appropriate contribution to the conservation and enhancement of cultural heritage in the Park.

During the period April 2015 to March 2020, it was referred to 447 times in total. CNPA used the policy 27 times and Local Authorities used it 420 times (Figures 32 and 33). It was referred to in around 26% of decisions to approve applications and around 16% that were refused. Figure 34 shows this information geographically.

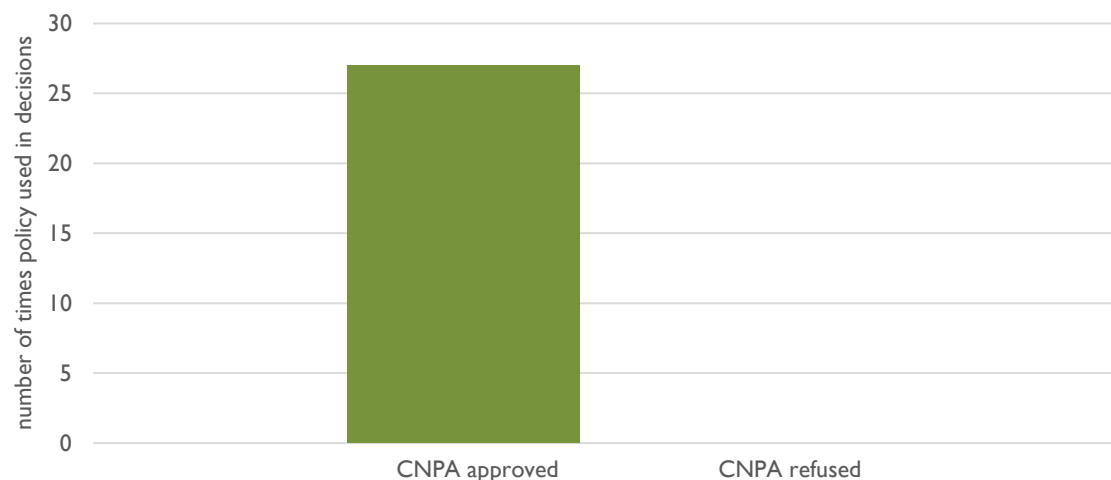


Figure 32: Number of applications determined by CNPA using Policy 9 during April 2015 – March 2020.

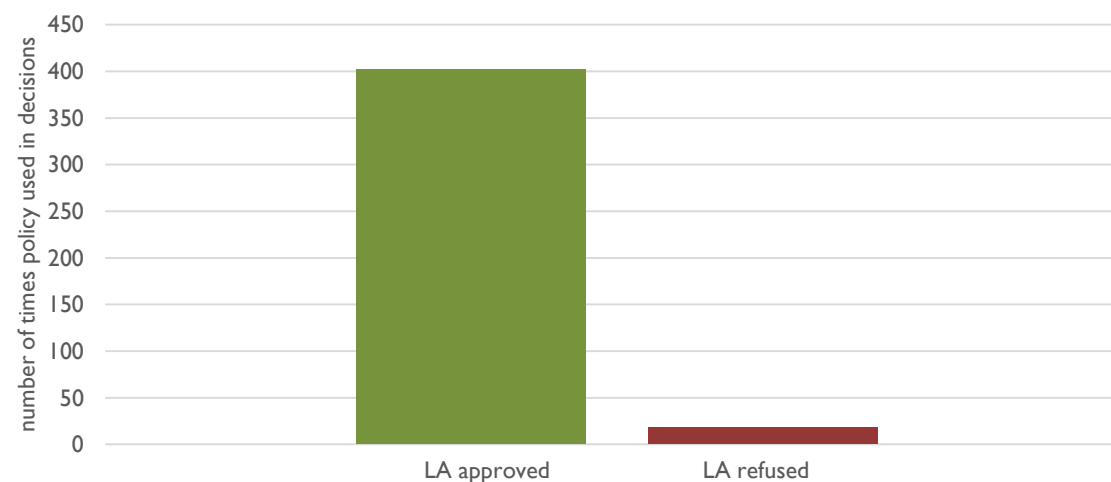


Figure 33: Number of applications determined by the Local Authorities using Policy 9 during April 2015 – March 2020.



## Policy 9 Cultural Heritage

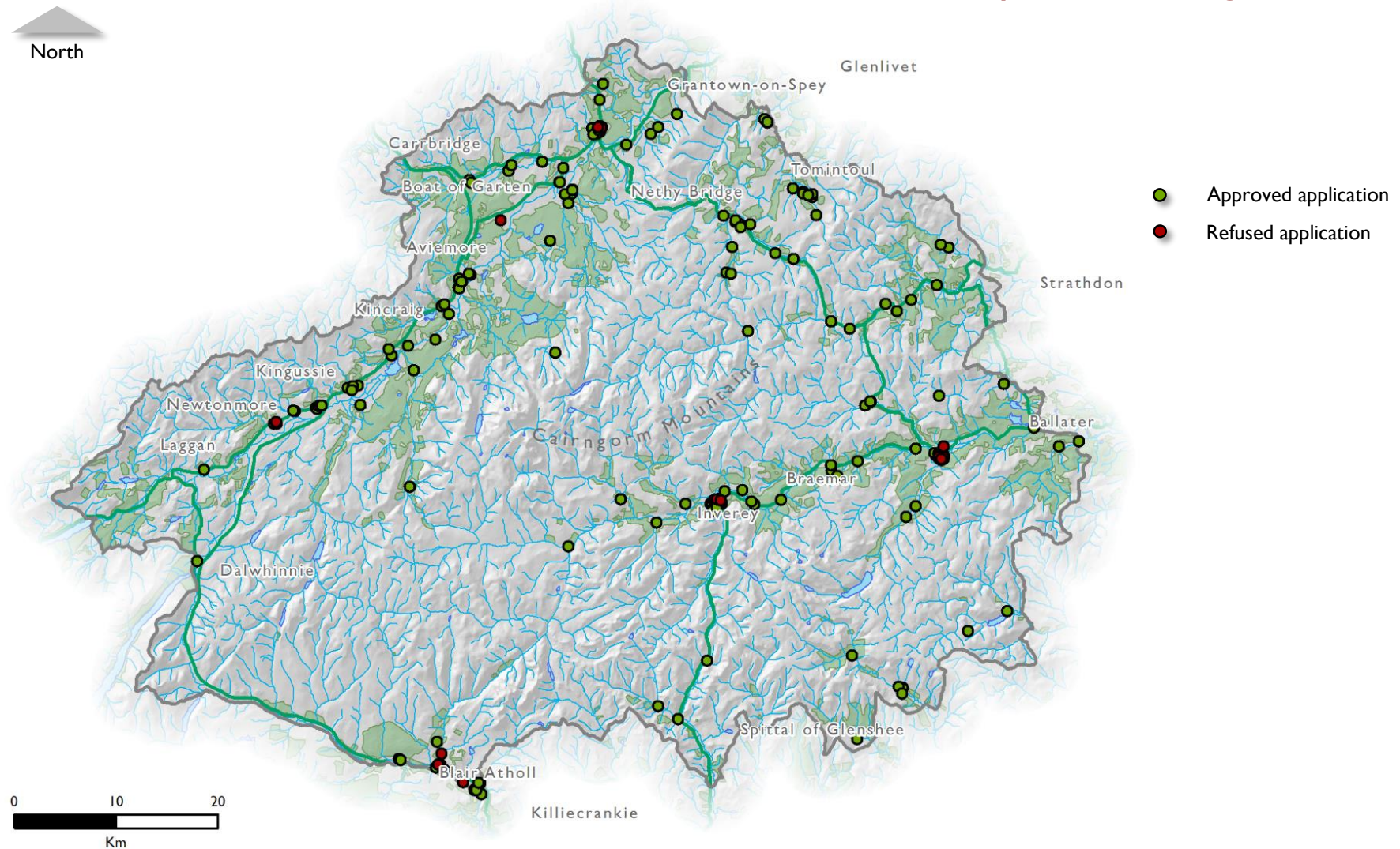


Figure 34: Location of planning applications where Policy 9 Cultural Heritage was used. Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO. © Crown copyright and database right 2019. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100040965 Cairngorms National Park Authority.

### Policy 10 Resources

Reducing our consumption and protecting our limited resources is integral to conserving what is important about the Park, and helping our communities adapt to more sustainable way of living. The policy aims to reduce the overall resource use footprint of the National Park. It will protect what is important about our resources, while facilitating appropriate development in ways that create a net positive outcome. It complements legislative obligations beyond the requirements of planning law, and allows sufficient flexibility to adapt to changes and developments in technology and research associated with the protection and exploitation of resources.

During the period April 2015 to March 2020, the policy was referred to 409 times in total. CNPA used the policy 65 times and Local Authorities used it 344 times (Figures 35 and 36). It was referred to in around 23% of decisions to approve applications and around 27% that were refused. Figure 37 shows this information geographically.

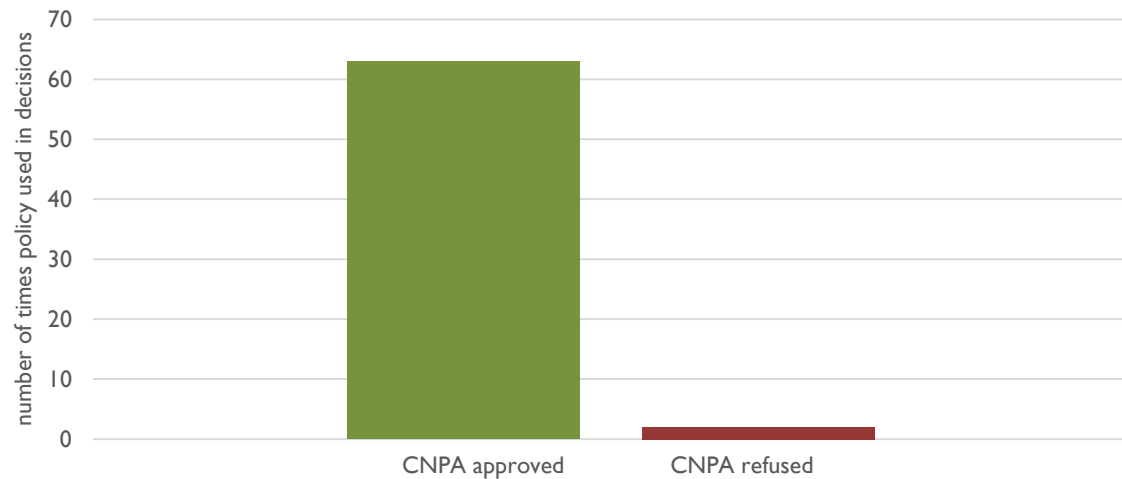


Figure 35: Number of applications determined by the Local Authorities using Policy 10 during April 2015 – March 2020.



Figure 36: Number of applications determined by the Local Authorities using Policy 10 during April 2015 – March 2020.



## Policy 10 Resources

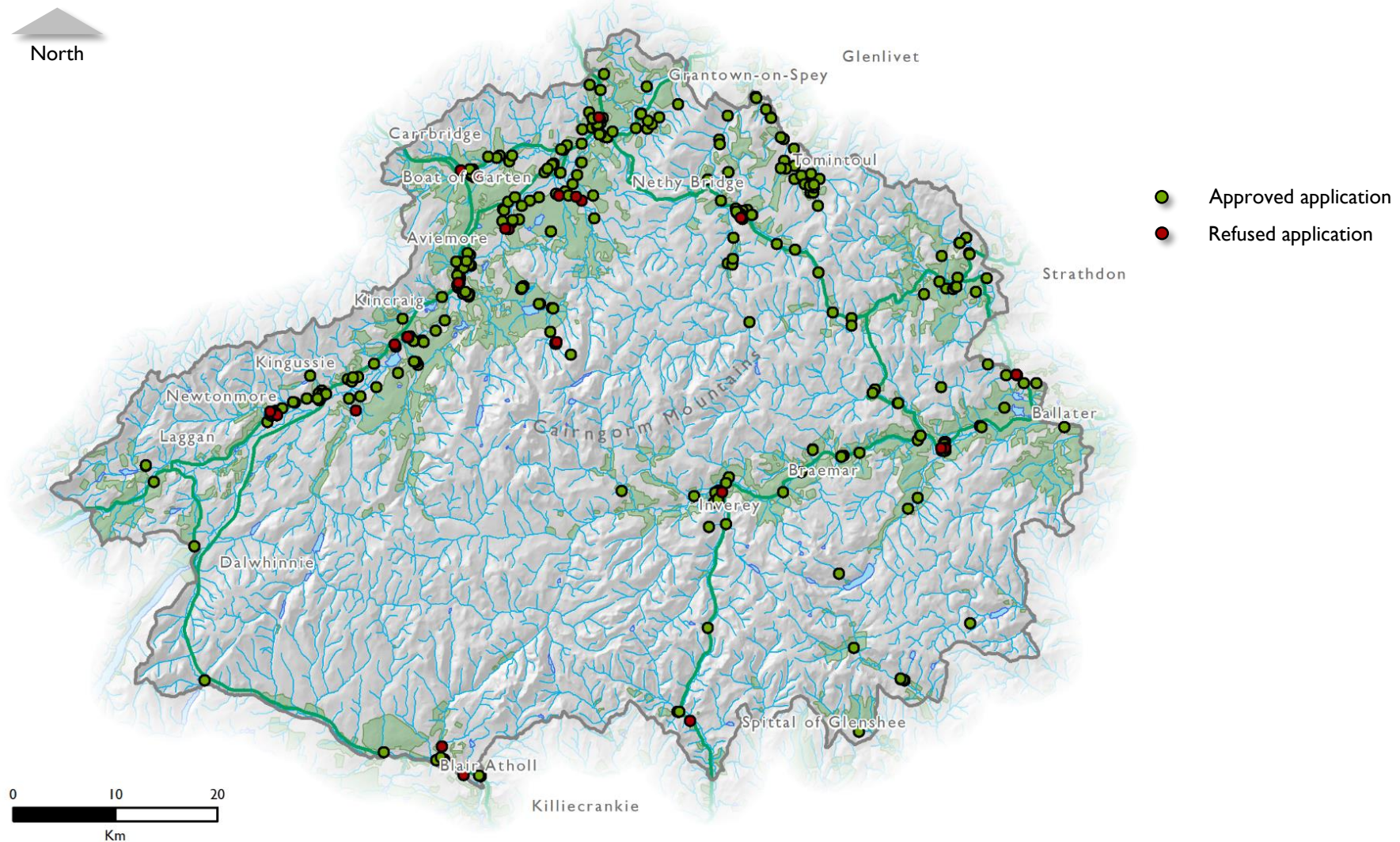


Figure 37: Location of planning applications where Policy 10 Resources was used. Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO. © Crown copyright and database right 2019. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100040965 Cairngorms National Park Authority.

### Policy 11 Developer Contributions

New developments can have an impact on facilities, services and infrastructure outwith the development site. It is important that these impacts are addressed as part of the development, so that communities are not disadvantaged as a result. Developer contributions can help to overcome problems by reducing, eliminating or compensating for some negative impacts arising from the proposed development. The policy aims to ensure the delivery of a range of improvements that may be needed as a result of new development, while ensuring that contributions are at an appropriate level that maintains viability for the developer.

During the period April 2015 to March 2020, the policy was referred to 149 times in total. CNPA used the policy 16 times and Local Authorities used it 133 times (Figures 38 and 39). It was referred to in around 8% of decisions to approve applications and around 14% that were refused. Figure 40 shows this information geographically.

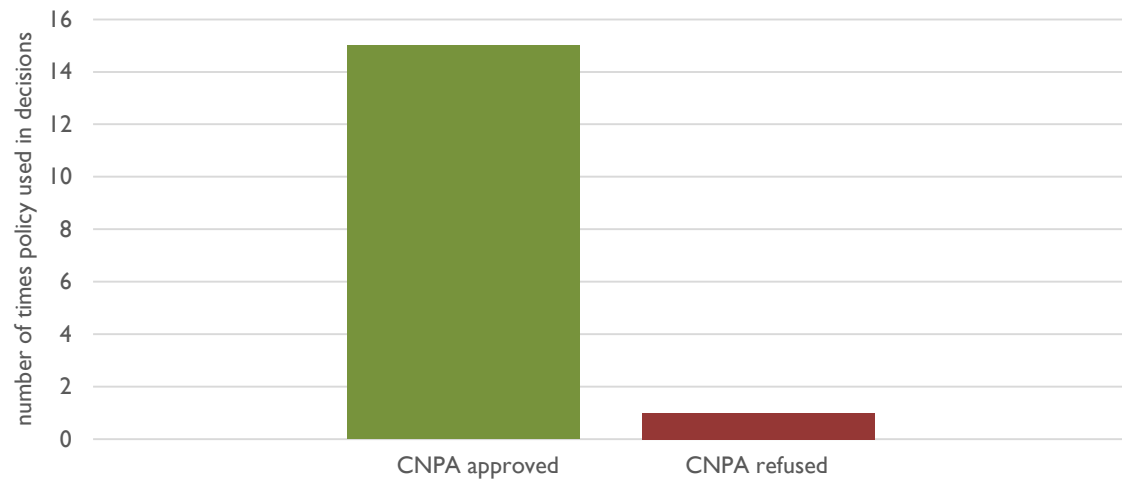


Figure 38: Number of applications determined by CNPA using Policy 11 during April 2015 – March 2020.

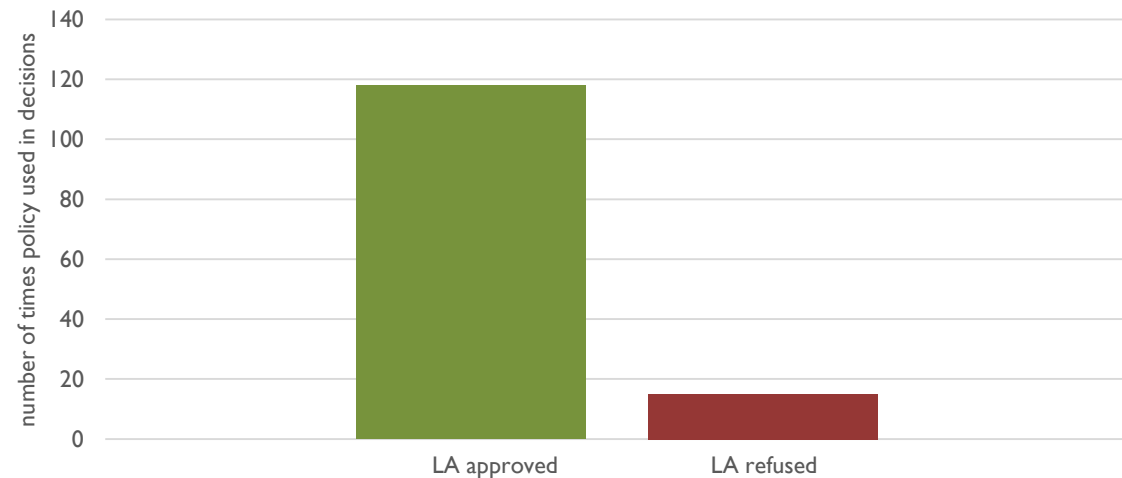


Figure 39: Number of applications determined by the Local Authorities using Policy 11 during April 2015 – March 2020.



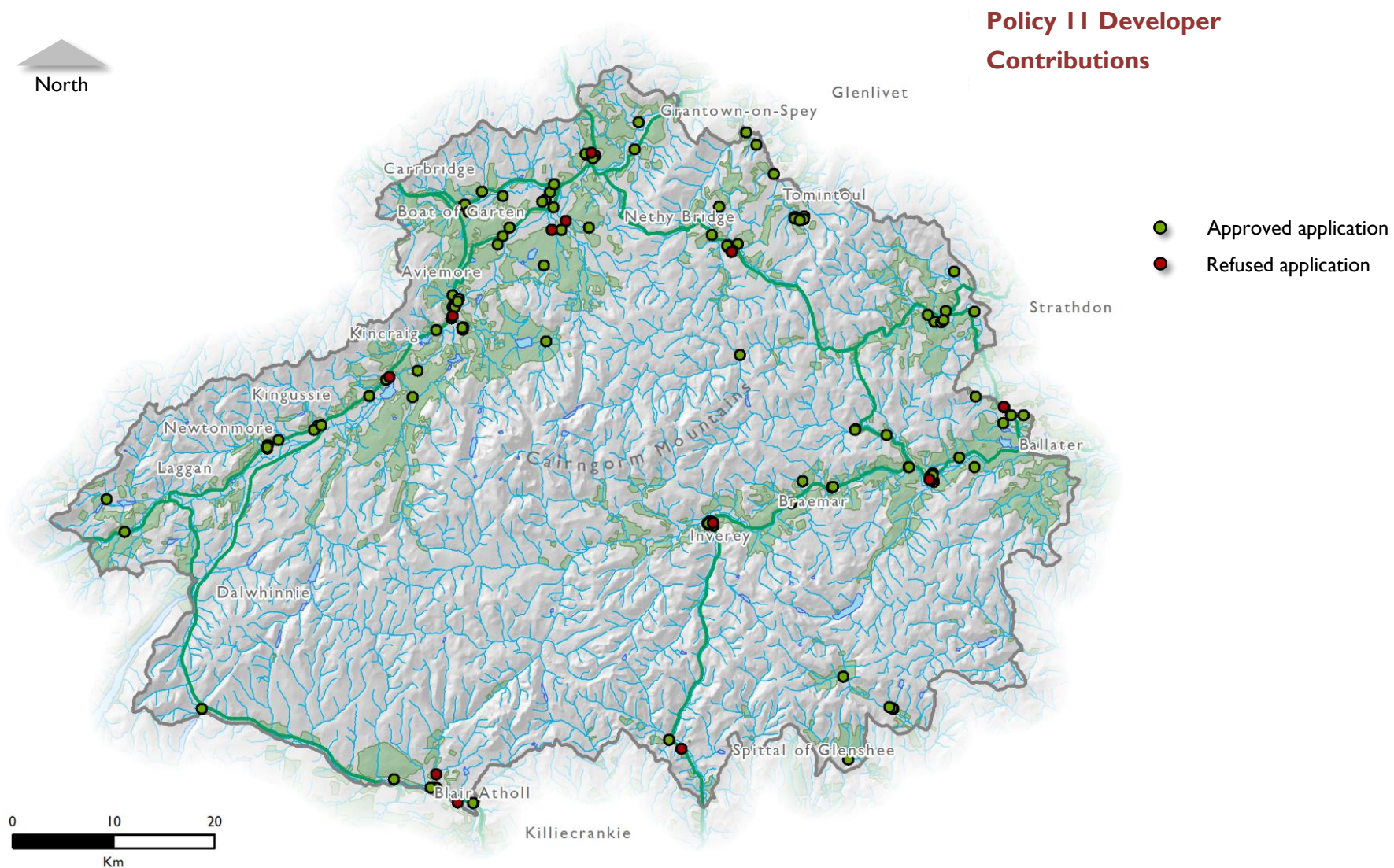


Figure 40: Location of planning applications where Policy 11 Developer Contributions was used. Reproduced by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of HMSO. © Crown copyright and database right 2019. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100040965 Cairngorms National Park Authority.



## Appeals

Where available, information was gathered on the number of appeals made to Planning and Environmental Appeals Division of Scottish Government and the Local Review Bodies of Local Authorities during the monitoring period. Records of 32 appeals were found. Of these, there were 29 appeals were against refusal of planning permission. 15 referred to LDP policies in the decision notice, with 8 referring to sub-policies. The policies and sub-policies referred to are shown in Table 2. Policies 1 (new housing development), 2 (supporting economic development), 3 (sustainable design), 4 (natural heritage) and 5 (landscape) were the most commonly referred to in appeal decisions. There were 7 appeals were against a decision by the Park Authority. Of these; 5 were allowed (planning permission granted), 1 dismissed (refusal upheld), and 1 withdrawn. There were 22 valid appeals against Local Authority decisions, of which 12 were allowed (permission granted) and 10 dismissed (refusal upheld).

Policy	Number of times referred to in appeal decisions
<b>Policy 1: new housing development</b>	<b>10</b>
section 1.7, alterations to existing houses	2
<b>Policy 2: supporting economic development</b>	<b>6</b>
section 2, tourism and leisure development	3
section 4, protecting existing sustainable economic activity	1
<b>Policy 3: sustainable design</b>	<b>11</b>
section 1, design statements	2
<b>Policy 4: natural heritage</b>	<b>5</b>
section 3, other important natural and earth heritage sites and interests	2
section 4, protected species	1
section 5, other biodiversity	1
section 6, all development	1
<b>Policy 5: landscape</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Policy 9: cultural heritage</b>	<b>2</b>
section 1, national designations	1
<b>Policy 10, resources</b>	<b>1</b>

Table 2: Policies referred to in appeal decision notice.

## **Allocated Sites**

Detailed monitoring on the status of the LDP's allocated sites is reported in the Plan's Action Programme. Therefore, for site information, the Action Programme should be referred to. It is available via <https://cairngorms.co.uk/planning-development/local-development-plan-2020/ldp-2015/>.