

Cairngorms Planning Advice Note

Applying for Planning Permission in the Cairngorms National Park

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Planning Applications in the Park

Planning applications in the Cairngorms National Park are decided by either the relevant local authority or by the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA). CNPA “calls in” and determines the bigger and most sensitive applications within the Park. The rest (most planning applications) are determined by the relevant local authority.

All applications are assessed against the same Local Plan whether it is CNPA or the local authority making the decision. The Cairngorms National Park Local Plan 2010 is used for everywhere apart from Perth and Kinross, where two older local plans apply for now.

How does the “call in” system work?

All planning applications in the Park are submitted to the relevant local authority. The local authorities tell CNPA about them as they are received. CNPA draws up a list of applications received each week and decides which applications to “call in”.

The CNPA “calls in” about 15% of planning applications made in the Park. At the time of “calling in” an application, CNPA is not judging whether they will be good or bad for the Park. It is just looking at whether the development proposed in the application is significant for the Park. There’s more information about the types of applications that may be “called in” on the next page.

Applications “called in” and determined by CNPA

If an application is “called in”, CNPA notifies the applicant and any consultees that CNPA will decide the application. CNPA Planning Officers then assess the application against the policies in the Local Plan and make recommendations to

CNPA Planning Committee who make the final decision on each application. The CNPA will offer you a Processing Agreement when an application is “called in” that will set out an agreed timetable to your application determination and decision notice.

Applications determined by a local authority

If an application is not “called in”, then the local authority Planning Officers will assess the application against the policies in the Local Plan and either decide it under their delegated powers or make recommendations to their Planning Committee who will make the decision.

Always get advice before you make an application

To help you make a good application that can be quickly decided, the local authorities will provide you with pre-application advice if you ask for it. Each local authority has a formal process for pre-application advice on major applications and a simpler process for smaller applications. You should contact the local authority you will be making the application to for more advice.

If your application is likely to be “called in” by CNPA, the local authority will ask CNPA to provide them with pre-application advice for your proposal. You may also be offered a Processing Agreement at this point.

Appealing decisions on planning applications

You have three months from the date a decision is sent to you to appeal the decision on a planning application. Your decision notice will tell you who your appeal must be made to and how to make it. You can get further advice from the local authority that made the decision or CNPA.

Applications the CNPA will “call in”

There are some types of planning application that CNPA will almost always “call in” to determine. These are listed as Type 1 applications. There are also some types of application that CNPA is unlikely to “call in” and will be decided by relevant local authority. These are Type 2 applications.

Type 1

Applications that are highly likely to be “called in”:

- All “major” applications as defined in planning legislation;
- Vehicle tracks outside enclosed farmland, unless already under consideration by another authority (e.g. Forestry Commission) under Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations;
- Wind turbines, hydro schemes or large solar panel farms;
- Minerals applications;
- Housing - five or more residential units within a settlement;
- Housing - three or more residential units outside a settlement;
- More than 250m² gross floor area, or 0.25ha, of employment space outside settlements;
- Applications which would require Environmental Impact Assessment;
- Applications which are directly related to applications that have been previously determined by CNPA;
- Listed building consent applications that involve major external or internal changes or are otherwise linked to an application of Type 1¹;
- Conservation area consent applications linked to another application of Type 1.

¹ The CNPA cannot call in listed building consent applications where the planning authority is the applicant. Those applications are referred to Historic Scotland for determination, acting on behalf of Scottish Ministers.

Type 2

Applications that are highly unlikely to be “called in”:

- Householder developments – small developments that need planning permission;
- Housing – four or less residential units within a settlement;
- Housing – up to two residential units outside a settlement;
- Biomass plants that are attached to existing uses;
- Telecommunications masts inside settlements;
- Advertisement consent applications where not linked to a planning application of Type 1;
- Listed building consent applications that involve minor external or internal changes;
- Conservation area consent applications that are not connected with an application of Type 1.

Reasons for “calling in” other applications

If a planning application is not listed under Type 1 or Type 2, it could still be “called in” if it is particularly important or could have a big effect on the Park. Planning applications are more likely to be “called in” by CNPA if because of their size, what they are, where they are, either on their own or in addition to other developments they:

1. Are either incompatible with, or have potential to make a significant contribution to, the aims of the Park;
2. Affect nationally important natural and cultural heritage interests and/or sites;
3. Raise significant issues for the social and/or economic wellbeing of communities in the Park;
4. Raise significant issues with regard to the enjoyment and understanding of the Park;
5. Make a significant visual impact within principal transport corridors (e.g. A- class roads, Perth to Inverness train-line, etc) and heavily-used routes within the Park

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6. Raise new policy issues that have not previously been considered;
7. Affect places with high wildness characteristics, or areas where there are particular landscape sensitivities;
8. Raise significant issues locally and with a high level of public interest.

Further advice

This advice note has been produced to explain how planning applications in the Cairngorms National are decided by the local authorities and Cairngorms National Park Authority.

You can get more advice on making a planning application from the planning department of the relevant local authority or you can contact the Cairngorms National Park Authority planning team in Grantown on Spey at planning@cairngorms.co.uk. Tel: 01479 870535

Local Authority Planning Offices

Aberdeenshire Council

Kincardine & Mearns and Marr Team
Viewmount,
Arduthie Road,
Stonehaven,
AB39 2DQ,
Tel: 01569 768300
Email: ma.planapps@aberdeenshire.gov.uk
W: www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/planning

Angus Council

Planning and Place
County Buildings
Market Street
Forfar
DD8 3LG
Tel: 01307 473360 or 473342
Email: planning@angus.gov.uk
W: <http://www.angus.gov.uk/planning>

Highland Council

Badenoch and Strathspey Planning and Building
Standards
100 High Street
Kingussie
PH21 1HY
Tel: 01349 886608
Email: eplanning@highland.gov.uk
W: www.highland.gov.uk

Moray Council

Development Management
Environmental Services
The Moray Council
High Street
Elgin
IV30 1BX
Tel: 0300 1234561
Email: development.control@moray.gov.uk
W: www.moray.gov.uk

Perth & Kinross Council

Development Management
Pullar House
35 Kinnoull Street
Perth
PH1 5GD
Tel: 01738 475300
Email: developmentmanagement@pkc.gov.uk
W: www.pkc.gov.uk/planning

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