

# Consultation Document

## Priorities for Economic Development in the Cairngorms National Park

<b>Consultation Period</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> March 2014 to 7 <sup>th</sup> April 2014
<b>Who is consulting you and why?</b>	<b>The Cairngorms Business Partnership (CBP)</b> , Public, and Private Sector partners have been working together to identify the key priorities and actions to support economic growth in Cairngorms National Park. We are keen to hear your thoughts on the proposals so far.
<b>Contents of this document</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Summary</li> <li>2. Growing our Economy and Protecting our Natural Assets</li> <li>3. Proposed Priority Themes and what we want to achieve</li> <li>4. Opportunities and Actions</li> </ol>
<b>What are we asking you?</b>	<p>We are asking for your views and comments on the proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority Themes</li> <li>• What we want to achieve</li> <li>• Opportunities and Actions</li> <li>• Partners for delivery</li> </ul>
<b>How do you respond?</b>	Online at <a href="http://www.visitcairngorms.com/surveys">www.visitcairngorms.com/surveys</a> or via email or letter to the contact details below.
<b>What happens next?</b>	We will let you know what has been said and use your responses to develop an Action Plan for delivery. An Economic Forum has been established to help oversee and deliver the Action Plan and includes representatives from the Public and Private sector. We will keep you informed of progress.
<b>Contact</b>	<p>e. <a href="mailto:office@visitcairngorms.com">office@visitcairngorms.com</a> t. 01479 810200</p> <p>w. Cairngorms Business Partnership, Inverdrue House, Aviemore, PH22 1QH</p>



# I. Summary

## Background

The Cairngorms has a unique rural economy which is heavily reliant on a number of key sectors, and in particular the tourism sector. In order to grow and thrive in the future we need to strengthen our economy through supporting and diversifying business, and helping people develop and train towards employment.

Lead by the Cairngorms Business Partnership (CBP), local businesses have come together with the public sector to form the Cairngorms Economic Forum. This forum is working to develop and implement a Strategy and Action Plan for delivering Economic Development in the National Park. It will identify the key priorities for economic growth in the area, the actions that must be delivered to make this happen, and who needs to be involved. It will be one of a number of strategies relating to the area - either in whole or in part - and will need to take account of and link into these other strategies as appropriate. It will help partners to focus on what is important to the unique economy of this National Park.

6 DRAFT key priorities have now been identified along with proposed actions for delivery to support economic growth. These have been identified with the help of the Cairngorms Economic Forum, discussions with key industry groups and forums, baseline economic research and analysis, and a review of existing plans and strategies. Details of the discussions and research can be found online at [www.visitcairngorms.com/surveys](http://www.visitcairngorms.com/surveys)

## The Economy of the Cairngorms National Park

A thriving economy underpins thriving communities, and is the basis for continued investment by both public and private sectors in the environment, infrastructure and facilities that make the Cairngorms National Park a special place. The communities and economy of the National Park, like that of Scotland in general, face a real challenge and opportunity in adapting to a changing global economy over the next few years.

## Economy of the Park - the facts...



Increasing **jobs** - 9,400 people employed in the Park, a 4.5% increase in the number of jobs since 2010



Increasing **population** - 18,000 people living in the Park - an increase of roughly 250 per year since 2010



Decreasing **unemployment** - lower than the Scottish average, only 112 claimants in the Park in September 2013 and decreasing seasonality



Increasing number of **young people** - less out-migration of young people and more young people moving to the area, very different to other rural areas



87% of businesses in the Park are **small-businesses** employing 10 people or less, this is higher than the Scottish average of 81%



17% employed in the **public sector**, much lower than elsewhere in Scotland, therefore there has been less of an impact in this area from public sector job cuts



43% employed in the **tourism** sector, grown from 30% in 2010 which can be attributed in part to 3 cold winters increasing the skier numbers and the weak pound



Average yearly earnings in the National Park are only 74% of the Scottish average



Average house prices in the National Park are 130% of the Scottish Average

\*Statistics taken from 2010 State of the Park Report and 2013 update, some figures relate to earlier years, both reports can be viewed online at [www.cairngorms.co.uk](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk)

The Park has many economic assets from its distinctive economic sectors; strong businesses, and attractiveness as a place to live and visit; connections to other parts of Scotland; and its recent history of young inward migration that is unusual in rural Scotland.

## 2. Growing our Economy and Protecting our Natural Assets

The National Park Partnership Plan 2012-2017 (NPPP) sets a clear aspiration for growth of the economy of the Park that matches the Scottish Government's purpose. This is not growth at the expense of what makes the Park a special place. It is growth that builds on, conserves and enhances those special qualities. It is growth that supports the Park and its communities, which means in turn that we can make the most of the National Park as an asset for Scotland. In response to the call from the Business Community, the NPPP identifies the need for an Economic Development and Diversification Strategy and an Economic Forum to oversee its development and implementation. The aim of the Cairngorms Economic Development and Diversification Strategy is taken from the Policy Priorities in the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2012-2017.

### Aim:

Grow the economy of the Park by strengthening existing business sectors, supporting business start-ups and diversification, and increasing the number of workers employed in the Park.

*National Park Partnership Plan 2012-17,  
Policy Priority 1.1, p41*

### Scotland's Natural Capital

Natural Capital can be defined as the world's stocks of natural assets which include geology, soil, air, water and all living things.

Scotland's natural assets are the basis for our way of life and need to be managed in a sustainable way so that they also benefit the next generation of Scots.

In this way we can both sustain an improvement in our standard of living and at the same time safeguard our valuable natural environment. So, increasing natural capital, or even just maintaining the level, whilst also achieving economic growth can be seen as an achievement.

*Scotland's Natural Capital Asset (NCA) Index, SNH*

### The Natural Capital of the Cairngorms National Park

The Cairngorms National Park makes a strong contribution to the natural capital of Scotland. The headwaters of five of Scotland's major river systems flow out from the Park, we hold 25% of Scotland's native woodland resource, extensive peatland carbon stores, and a landscape valued as an international tourism destination. Key habitats include:

- Enclosed Farmlands
- Woodlands
- Open Water
- Mountains
- Moorland
- Semi-natural grasslands
- Urban

Running through this plan is the ambition not only to safeguard, but to build on our natural capital and realise the market opportunities associated with it. A Strategic Environmental Assessment of this work is being undertaken and an Environmental Report completed which is being consulted on alongside this document and available at [www.visitcairngorms/survey](http://www.visitcairngorms/survey). This process has enabled us to alter and improve the proposals in this document to ensure that they do not have a negative impact on the environment and where possible ensure they have a positive impact.



### 3. Proposed Priority Themes and what we want to achieve

The proposed Priority Themes are outlined in the table below. These have been compiled as a result of a range of research, workshops, and discussions with key groups, businesses, and partners. We have also identified what it is we want to achieve for each Priority Theme and for each of the key sectors under Priority Theme 1 and these are outlined on the following pages.

<b>Proposed Priority Themes</b>	<b>What we want to achieve</b>
<b>Building on the strengths of the Park</b>	Key economic sectors are stronger ( <i>Tourism, Forestry, Food &amp; Drink, Renewables</i> )
<b>Supporting and attracting Businesses</b>	The business sector has grown with increasing employment
<b>Strengthening education and training as an economic asset</b>	More Further and Higher Education takes place in the National Park in support of key sectors
<b>Attracting Investment</b>	More investment in business, infrastructure and the Natural Capital of the Park
<b>Infrastructure</b> ( <i>accommodation, transport, connectivity</i> )	Improved infrastructure in the Park supports a growing economy
<b>Planning for the Future</b>	Policies and Plans are based on a better understanding of current and future trends and changes

### 4. Opportunities and Actions

A number of opportunities and potential actions have been identified to help deliver what it is we want to achieve. These are outlined below and grouped under each of the Priority Themes. A guide to key partners is shown in the table below.

BG - Business Gateway	Cycling Scotland	NTS - National Trust for Scotland	STA - Scottish Tourism Alliance
Business Groups	EST - Energy Savings Trust	QMS - Quality Meat Scotland	STF - Sustainable Tourism Forum
CRAGG - Cairngorm, Rothiemurchus, Glenmore Group	Enterprise Europe	RDCDMO - Royal Deeside & Cairngorms DMO	Strathspey Steam Railway
CBP - Cairngorms Business Partnership	FCS - Forestry Commission Scotland	SAOS - Scottish Agricultural Organisation Society	Sustrans
CFDG - Cairngorms Food & Drink Group	FE - Forest Enterprise	SFD - Scotland Food & Drink	SW - Scottish Water
Community Groups	FSB - Federation of Small Businesses	SDI - Scottish Development International	Tourism Groups (local groups)
Climate Challenge Fund	HIE - Highlands & Islands Enterprise	SDS - Skills Development Scotland	Transport Scotland
CNPA - Cairngorms National Park Authority	HITRANS	SE - Scottish Enterprise	UHI - University of Highlands & Islands
CBS - Community Broadband Scotland	HS - Historic Scotland	SFC - Scottish Funding Council	Universities/Colleges
CES - Community Energy Scotland	HSCT - Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust	SG - Scottish Government	VS - VisitScotland
Community Rail Partnerships	Housing Associations	SLE - Scottish Land & Estates	
COAT - Cairngorms Outdoor Access Trust	LA's - Local Authorities	SportScotland	
ConFor - Confederation of Forest Industries	NFUS - National Farmers Union Scotland	SRUC - Scotland's Rural College	

## Priority Theme I - Building on the strengths of the Park

### Overview

The Economy of the Cairngorms National Park can be considered in a number of key sectors of industry, these include the core elements of the industry as well as considering the supply chains and supporting industries. The strongest of these sectors within the National Park are Tourism, Forestry and Food and Drink. The Natural Capital of the Cairngorms (see page 3) is also a key strength of the Park and a key element of each of the sectors. This priority aims to improve the management of the Natural Capital and is the foundation for each of the key economic sectors. A key ambition for this priority is not only to safeguard, but to build on our Natural Capital and realise the market opportunities associated with it.

### I - What we want to achieve

Key economic sectors are stronger

An overview of each sector is outlined in the tables on the following pages and for each of these, what it is we wish to achieve for that sector. The Land Management sector, a key part of the Park's economy, appears across several categories. This is because land management activities cut across a range of sectors, and the key priorities for economic development and growth should be identified within these e.g. Tourism, Forestry, Agriculture, Renewables etc. In addition, the wider themes relate to supporting business in general and are also appropriate to the Land Management 'sector'.

## Priority Theme I - Building on the strengths of the Park

### Sector: Tourism

#### Overview:

Tourism accounts for 43% of jobs within the Cairngorms National Park but is traditionally a low wage sector. The Aviemore area is the most tourism intensive in Scotland with a strong family and outdoor activity market. Other areas of the Park also have strong offerings more suited to other visitor markets. These individual strengths need to be identified and promoted effectively.

#### What we want to achieve:

A more valuable and resilient tourism economy with increased profitability and local prosperity

Opportunities	Actions	Key partners
<b>Visitor accommodation:</b> improvement in the range and quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake and/or disseminate market research to identify opportunities to attract inward and indigenous investment</li> </ul>	CBP, STF, CNPA, VS, LA's, SE, HIE, SDI
<b>Cycling:</b> off-road, on-road, and family biking sector very important locally with opportunities for growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve infrastructure and maximise potential for cycling, active travel and economic benefit, including Speyside Way and Deeside Way</li> <li>Marketing activity to promote opportunities to family markets</li> <li>Work with businesses to improve support facilities and aligned information provision for cycle tourism supporting delivery of the Cairngorms Cycling Action Plan</li> </ul>	CNPA, LA's, CBP, BG, Cycling Scotland

<p><b>Develop growing sectors within the industry:</b> wildlife, cultural, adventure, business, food &amp; drink, and attractions are all growing sectors in tourism which the Cairngorms National Park is well positioned to capitalise on and is closely aligned with the National Tourism Strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake and/or disseminate market research to identify opportunities to attract visitors, inward and local indigenous investment</li> <li>• <b>Cultural</b> - develop and deliver an action plan to identify and support local cultural assets such as events, festivals and promotion to help build a distinctive Cairngorms cultural offer</li> <li>• <b>Business Tourism</b> - develop and deliver an action plan to maximise opportunities and support (e.g. Scottish Conference BID fund/Ambassador Programme) to grow the value of business tourism to the area's economy</li> <li>• <b>Wildlife and Adventure</b> - develop and deliver an action plan for this key asset aligned with the National Tourism Strategy to support businesses, including attractions, in turning activities into experiences and promoting these as part of the tourism offering and safeguarding our wildlife and habitats</li> <li>• <b>Food &amp; Drink</b> - develop and deliver an action plan to grow the turnover of the sector and participating businesses, identify and remove barriers to improved product and service, and training to enhance customer service, including using local exemplars as case studies</li> </ul>	<p>CBP, STF, VS, LA's, CNPA, HIE, SE, UHI, SFC, SDS, STA, HS, NTS, FSB, BG, SDI, RDCDMO, Tourism Groups</p>
<p><b>Destination development including branding, visitor experience and marketing:</b> opportunity to collaborate on marketing and destination development to promote the area and improve the visitor experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work to identify key product offerings within the National Park and develop marketing initiatives to increase the value of the sector</li> <li>• Integrate localised area marketing initiatives with wider Cairngorms National Park destination marketing activities and align to the National Tourism Strategy growth sectors</li> <li>• 'Make it Yours' customer service programme delivery to improve promotion of the destination and the visitor experience through improved customer service and product knowledge</li> <li>• Packaging and marketing of offers for key growth sectors</li> <li>• Maintain a strong Business Partnership to develop and deliver marketing initiatives linked to local business</li> </ul>	<p>CBP, STF, VS, LA's, SDI, HIE, SE, RDCDMO, Tourism Groups</p>
<p><b>Transport:</b> improvements to booking systems, connectivity and linkages will allow visitors to utilise transport more easily</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotion of public transport and existing linkages via marketing platforms and encouraging awareness amongst local business</li> <li>• Initiatives to improve linkages and carriage of sports equipment</li> <li>• Develop partner initiatives with key national transport providers</li> <li>• Enhance the interpretation of the area on transport links and availability to buy joint and advanced ticketing between carrier and local business</li> </ul>	<p>STF, LA's, CBP</p>
<p><b>Glenmore area:</b> enhance the high quality of environment and visitor experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review, update, and implement a strategy for the Cairngorm, Rothiemurchus and Glenmore area to improve the quality of visitor experience, sense of place and the environment as well as maintaining the integrity of designated sites</li> </ul>	<p>CNPA, HIE, CRAGG</p>

## Priority Theme I - Building on the strengths of the Park

### Sector: Forestry

#### Overview:

Scottish Government has set targets for woodland expansion which must be achieved alongside a steady increase in the timber harvest over the next 10 years. 20% of the Cairngorms National Park is covered in woodland or forestry at present and it is a significant industry in the Cairngorms National Park, particularly when the number of related industries are taken into account e.g. recreation and tourism, logging, joinery, sawmilling, construction etc. There is a target to increase woodland cover by 5% (5,000ha) within the National Park.

#### What we want to achieve:

A more valuable and resilient forestry sector with increased profitability and local prosperity

#### Opportunities

**Expansion of forest resource and diversification of woodland type:** to support increased woodfuel supply, increased productivity and timber usage and value, recreation and tourism, increased resistance to disease, for environmental benefit, and as Natural Capital in support of the wider economy

#### Actions

- Identify and promote opportunities for woodland expansion and species diversification and target SRDP Investment and other funding
- Explore market opportunities associated with growing and maintaining the Natural Capital of the area to encourage increased woodland cover
- Identify opportunities for market expansion in woodfuel supply to establish a business case for potential expansion into this market
- Identify and target skills gaps and training to support woodfuel diversification and maximise potential of Renewable Heat Incentives
- Skills development through the Land Management Training Scheme and others to support woodland expansion targets
- Encourage and support innovation, skills development, and marketing to increase demand for timber products - particularly in relation to the construction industry

#### Key partners

CNPA, FCS, SLE, SDS, UHI, BG, ConFor

## Priority Theme I - Building on the strengths of the Park

### Sector: Agriculture, Food & Drink

<b>Overview:</b> The main features of the sector in the National Park are the significance of meat and meat produce – which is shown in the strength of meat processing, meat wholesaling and butchers. Game and Game management are also key to this sector, particularly in relation to venison. Food retailers, farming, brewing and distilling are also strong.		<b>What we want to achieve:</b> A growing food and drink sector locally and with new markets
Opportunities	Actions	Key partners
<b>Collaboration:</b> strengthening ties between producers to improve marketing, product availability (e.g. venison) and more resilient local supply and processing chains	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate supply chain networking events, promote knowledge transfer between businesses, learning journeys, showcase events</li> <li>Consolidate the various research &amp; studies on food and drink in the CNP and identify gaps to research further</li> <li>Support the establishment of closer links between businesses across the Cairngorms National Park and their local Food Network</li> <li>Promote and facilitate the uptake of the Cairngorms National Park Brand as a marketing tool for food &amp; drink producers</li> <li>Explore opportunities to grow and develop the food and drink economy of the Cairngorms National Park beyond its boundary</li> </ul>	CFDG, VS, LA's, SE, HIE, Local Food & Drink Networks, SAOS, NFU, QMS, SFQA, SFD, SRUC
<b>Facilities:</b> to encourage increased production of produce in the CNP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore the establishment of a shared processing, packaging &amp; labelling facility</li> </ul>	
<b>Training/skills dev needs:</b> (also see <i>Connecting employer needs and local skills</i> section)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further research to identify skills gaps, requirements and opportunities for food and drink businesses</li> <li>Increase internet skills in order to make better use of social media to promote local food and drink and to better connect with producers, suppliers and users</li> <li>Improve the leadership skills of potential grassroots champions</li> <li>Work with education providers to increase knowledge of local produce</li> </ul>	



## Priority Theme I - Building on the strengths of the Park

### Sector: Energy Efficiency and Renewables

#### Overview:

The government is committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions through policy and action, and fuel prices are likely to rise and to be volatile. Both of these will increase costs to businesses and households unless they adapt by becoming more efficient and using alternative sources of energy. There are opportunities for business and households to adapt well and even to profit from changes. Work to deliver this includes the ambition to move towards a low carbon economy. Being more efficient in using energy and generating renewable energy can both save money and generate income.

#### What we want to achieve:

Businesses are using less energy, are reducing costs and generating income from renewable energy

Opportunities	Actions	Key partners
<p><b>Increasing renewable energy generation:</b> small-scale business and community renewable projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build awareness with businesses of opportunities for support and interventions available to business</li> <li>• Attracting investment</li> <li>• Skills and training to deliver small scale local renewable projects</li> </ul>	<p>Community Groups, CBP, CNPA, Climate Challenge Fund, SG, CES</p>
<p><b>Decrease energy usage and emissions:</b> by businesses to secure cost savings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training and practical support for businesses to help reduce energy usage and emissions</li> <li>• Promote high standards of sustainable design and efficient use of energy and materials in construction of business premises</li> </ul>	<p>EST, CBP, CNPA, LA's</p>

## Priority Theme 2 - Supporting and attracting businesses

### Overview

Most businesses in the Cairngorms National Park employ less than 10 people: across Scotland as a whole these small-businesses make up nearly 94% of businesses and provide 27% of the private sector jobs but in the Cairngorms National Park (and other rural areas) these figures are significantly higher. Small-businesses have significant growth potential and 58% of new jobs in Europe between 2002–2010 were created in small-businesses. This means that they have significant potential for contributing to employment growth.

### What we want to achieve:

The business sector has grown with increasing employment

## Priority Theme 2 - Supporting and attracting business

Opportunities	Actions	Key partners
<p><b>Business Support:</b> Creating a high quality comprehensive business support resource for businesses across the Park which coordinates and improves access to the wide range of support available – including specific advice on key issues for smaller businesses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formation of business support group to review the current provision and make recommendations on the most appropriate way of moving forward</li> <li>• Work to establish awareness and improve current support for businesses, with particular focus on small businesses, to help them with the process of recruiting, employing and developing staff and providing specific advice on key issues for small-businesses</li> <li>• Work with partners to ensure a highly responsive regulatory service (i.e. helping planning, building standards, trading standards, licensing and permits and environmental health staff become part of the business support service) by identifying business growth opportunities and issues and ensuring a response</li> <li>• Support a thriving Business Partnership for the area</li> </ul>	<p>BG, HIE, FSB, SDS, CBP, SE, SDI, LA's, CNPA</p>
<p><b>Connecting employer needs and local skills:</b> Skills gaps and training identified and promoted ensuring progression from school to and through work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further research required to identify skills gaps, requirements and opportunities</li> <li>• Build connections between local employers and schools</li> </ul>	<p>BG, HIE, FSB, SDS, CBP, SE</p>

## Priority Theme 3 - Strengthening education and training as an economic asset

### Overview

One of the most important parts of the infrastructure of a local economy is the presence and scale of Further and Higher Education facilities. They can attract new kinds of people to the area (e.g. teachers and researchers) and studies elsewhere (for example, on the impact of the Crichton Campus in Dumfries) show that such investments can bring a significant return in terms both of changing young people's migration patterns and contributing in other ways to the local economy. Currently there is a significant gap in this area in the National Park.

### What we want to achieve:

More Further and Higher Education takes place within the National Park in support of key sectors

## Priority Theme 3 - Strengthening education and training as an economic asset

Opportunities	Actions	Key partners
<b>Further and Higher Education facilities:</b> there is an opportunity to strengthen a presence in the education and research sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement with higher/further education providers to look at options for increasing educational presence in the Park focusing on appropriate sectors which focus on distinctive local assets</li> <li>Development and promotion of opportunities for remote study utilising video-conferencing and communications technology</li> <li>Work with Sport Scotland's National Centre at Glenmore Lodge to develop further Outdoor Education opportunities and explore potential for a Centre of Excellence for wider training and education linked to conservation, environmental management, hospitality etc.</li> <li>Explore opportunity for specialised training centres and qualifications linked to key initiatives e.g. COAT SVQs in path building or training and accreditation for Steam Railway boiler engineers capitalising on local assets</li> </ul>	CNPA, UHI, SDS, Universities/Colleges, CBP, LAs, SportScotland (Glenmore Lodge), Strathspey Steam Railway, COAT
<b>Hospitality and customer service training:</b> a key area for development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support, develop and promote training designed to raise standards of customer service and improve the customer experience</li> </ul>	CBP, VS, HIE, BG
<b>Make it easier to enter the Land Management sector:</b> to encourage new entrants to become involved in traditional land management jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support and promote land management training opportunities and apprenticeships schemes with local schools and estates to encourage new entrants</li> </ul>	SLE, CNPA

## Priority Theme 4 - Attracting Investment

### Overview

Research has identified that the economy of the Park is growing despite the difficult economic climate. This can be used to promote and attract further investment to the area to help diversify and grow key sectors. The ability to run effective businesses, have a great lifestyle, and live in a very beautiful place should be actively promoted to investors.

### What we want to achieve:

More investment in business, infrastructure and the Natural Capital of the Park

## Priority Theme 4 - Attracting Investment

Opportunities	Actions	Key partners
<b>EU Funding:</b> new programme of Structural Fund 2014 to 2020.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raise awareness of funding opportunities for businesses through the CEF website and other relevant portals and</li> <li>CEF to engage with the Cairngorms Local Action Group to maximise the benefits of the LEADER fund to SME's within the Park</li> </ul>	CEF, CNPA, Enterprise Europe, SE, HIE, BG
<b>Encouraging Internationalisation:</b> developing trade links in a global market should be a key focus for the benefit of local companies and the local economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop information to support SDI and HIE/SE with inward investment enquiries in order to respond to enquiries from targeted parties for all parts of CNP including; labour supply (skills/wages/demographics), property (types/sizes/prices), transport (road/rail/air/sea), quality of life (housing/schooling/environment)</li> <li>Encourage and support businesses in the pursuit of International Trade Outcomes which supports delivery of Theme 1</li> <li>Work with SDI and HIE/SE to attract further business investment to the region</li> </ul>	CNPA, CBP, BG, SDI, HIE/SE
<b>Capital Investment:</b> investing in key capital projects which could benefit the wider economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify key projects for investment and work with partners to identify potential opportunities, business case, support and linkages</li> <li>Creation of an Inward Investment Unit charged with actively attracting capital investment to the area</li> </ul>	LA's, Transport Scotland, HITRANS, HIE, SE, CNPA, SDI, SW, FE, SG
<b>Venture Capital:</b> improve funding to support the growth of small-businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with key businesses and partners to identify the demand and type of businesses looking for investment and identify opportunities to address this</li> </ul>	CBP, FSB, CNPA
<b>Create a positive image of the Park as a place for thriving businesses:</b> to attract investment and new business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a communications plan to create a positive image of the Park as a place for thriving businesses which uses success stories. This can be used to raise awareness of opportunities with partners and as the basis for developing proposition documents for potential investors</li> </ul>	CNPA, CBP, FSB, HIE, LA's, SE, SDI
<b>Development Planning:</b> create an environment for business growth which is attractive to investors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on evidence collation (theme 5) identify appropriate sites for key target businesses in developing sectors and ensure new development supports home working opportunities - work with partners to promote and attract investment</li> </ul>	CNPA, CBP, FSB, HIE, SE

## Priority Theme 5 - Infrastructure (accommodation, sites, transport, connectivity)

### Overview

The Cairngorms National Park is a rural area which faces key challenges around telecommunications provision, transport and affordable housing. Due to the high proportion of small-businesses there is also demand for business units and sites which meet the needs of small businesses.

### What we want to achieve:

Improved infrastructure in the Park supports a growing economy

## Priority Theme 5 - Infrastructure (accommodation, sites, transport, connectivity)

Opportunities	Actions	Key partners
<b>Improve broadband &amp; mobile connectivity:</b> delivering high speed broadband & mobile infrastructure is crucial to business growth, development and competitiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Form a steering group to assess the feasibility of wireless broadband loop around the Park</li> <li>• Identifying opportunities for further development of community broadband initiatives (building on Laggan experience)</li> <li>• Identify opportunities to create Wi-Fi towns with open access to broadband via commercial partners</li> </ul>	CBS, HIE, CBP, SLE, CNPA, FSB, LA's
<b>Improve transport and 'Active Travel' provision:</b> Improvements to public transport provision to enable access to education, workplaces and for visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look at solutions to improve services, affordability, information &amp; links and promote active travel</li> <li>• Improve booking systems, connectivity and linkages to allow visitors to utilise public transport more easily and carry sporting equipment</li> <li>• Promote improved rail links in the west of the Park</li> <li>• Identify potential challenges and opportunities presented by the dualling of the A9 and work to influence delivery</li> <li>• Support active travel initiatives and ensure core paths are fit for purpose and maintained to the benefit of both visitors and residents</li> </ul>	CBP, FSB, LA's, CNPA, Sustrans, Transport Scotland, Community Rail Partnerships, HITRANS
<b>Accommodation - housing:</b> appropriate and affordable housing/rental accommodation for staff could enable further business growth and help to attract and keep staff in the area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake a demand and supply audit to clarify housing accommodation requirements for employers and employees with particular reference to geographical areas and link outcomes to Inward Investment Unit</li> <li>• Develop initiatives to provide housing to rent/buy which is affordable to local working people</li> </ul>	HSCHT, CNPA, LA's, Housing Associations, CBP, FSB, SG
<b>Accommodation - business premises:</b> provision of business units with flexible leases could support business growth in some areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undertake a demand and supply audit to clarify requirements for number, type and location of business premises and link outcomes to Inward Investment Unit</li> <li>• Develop and support initiatives to provide business premises with flexible lease arrangements</li> </ul>	HIE, CNPA, LA's, CBP, FSB, SG
<b>Logistics:</b> improvement services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocacy work to influence delivery services including availability and cost</li> </ul>	CBP, FSB, LA's

## Priority Theme 6 - Planning for the Future

### Overview

There has never been any sense of a planned and coordinated approach to the economy of the Cairngorms National Park. Inevitably we don't have good information about what is happening currently and or what might happen in the future. This Theme can help us to think long-term about how our local economy can deal with change and future opportunities. Horizon scanning is used as an overall term for analysing the future: considering the potential impacts of emerging trends and developments. Analysing this can help to inform future policy making e.g. in planning and development, economic growth etc.

### What we want to achieve:

Policies and Plans are based on a better understanding of current and future trends and changes

## Priority Theme 6 - Planning for the Future

Opportunities	Actions	Key partners
<b>Horizon Scanning:</b> identification of current and potential future trends will help to ensure that policies around e.g. development and economic growth are well informed and considered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with partners to identify emerging local, national and international trends that may have an impact on the Cairngorms National Park and analyse potential short, medium and long term impacts</li> </ul>	CNPA, HIE, SE, LA's, CBP, FSB, UHI, VS
<b>Improved information about businesses:</b> gathering and analysing information about businesses and their needs will help to inform future policy and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a mechanism for monitoring the number of business start-ups and failure rates in the area (what type, where and issues) to improve understanding of the business environment and the issues that may lead to business failures to inform future support</li> </ul>	CNPA, HIE, SE, LA's, CBP, FSB, VS