

Dear Mr Miles

**COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSAL TO RE-ALLOCATE THE EXISTING PROTECTED OPEN SPACE AT SPAVEN DRIVE FOR COMMUNITY USES.**

Reference: Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan 2020 Post Main Issues Report: New Sites Consultation 13 August – 21 September 2018

As owners of property on the Lochan Mor Development we were disappointed to learn of the proposal to re-allocate the existing protected open space at Spaven Drive at the north end of Aviemore for community use the site having been identified by Aviemore Community Enterprise Company as a possible location for a new community hall with a kick park and playground.

This open space which was established, and indeed approved by the Parks Authority as part of the Lochan Mor Development, but also serves the wider surrounding area, represents the sole remaining free green open space in Aviemore and as such is of inestimable intrinsic environmental and social value in providing a readily accessible facility particularly for older children, and indeed adults, who would otherwise be denied the opportunity for its use. We remain to be convinced the factors which underpinned the original decision to create this green space, which provides an open green focal point north of Spaven Drive framed by views of the Cairngorm, have fundamentally changed in the interim. We would note that as part of the original Lochan Mor development there are already two established play parks for younger children in the immediate vicinity.

This open space represents in our view an asset with significant benefits for the current and future generations of young people in the area, and indeed adults which once developed cannot be replaced.

Current academic research points to the importance of the access to green space for the mental well-being of children.

The UK and Scottish Governments have published a number of papers on the subject three examples of which are listed below:

a. GovUK: <https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2016/11/09/green-space-mental-wellbeing-and-sustainable-communities/>

b. Green space and health - Parliament UK

c. The Scottish Government GreenHealth Project:  
<https://www.hutton.ac.uk/sites/default/files/files/projects/GreenHealth-InformationNote4-Urban-green-space-and-wellbeing.pdf>

These, other current Research papers, and other data on the subject all point to the positive benefits of retaining and improvising access to and use of green space in contributing to physical and mental health and well being of individuals and communities.

In the matter of a “Community Hall” we also note there are already modern purpose built community facilities, including sports pitches, available nearby at the Aviemore Community and Leisure Centre in Burnside Place, Muirton, which opened in August 2012 and are only 10 minutes walk away from Spaven Drive.

We recognise the Consultation Document states: “*Although there is an existing community use allocation in Aviemore (site C1), it has been highlighted that the existing allocation is not appropriate to accommodate this development proposal. An additional new community use allocation is therefore required*”. But no independent evidence to demonstrate

how or why these facilities are insufficient or inappropriate to meet the community's needs has been made available to prove/support this inference/statement/assertion.

In the light of this lack of supporting proof, and all the recent evidence, particularly the involvement of the Scottish Government in promoting Green Health, we would call for a formal assessment of the full socio economic and cost/benefits of the rezoning proposal to be carried out in conjunction with local stakeholders before the proposal is taken forward, for demonstrable evidence to be published to support the Proposal as currently worded, or for the proposal to be deferred for reconsideration at a later date when all of the relevant facts have been fully identified, assessed and all interested parties fully consulted.

Yours sincerely

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