

Cairngorms National Park

Local Development Plan 2020

Proposed Local Development Plan

Evidence Paper: Visitor Experience



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I. CONTEXT

Over 1.75 million people visited the Cairngorms National Park in 2016 (STEAM, 2016), resulting in an economic impact of over £250 million¹ (STEAM, 2016). Tourism makes a significant contribution to the local economy and visitor numbers have steadily increased since 2012.

The Cairngorms Economic Strategy (2013) states that 43% of people living in the National Park are employed in tourism related business and 30% of the economy (Gross Value Added) is generated by tourism.

Maintaining and enhancing the role of tourism is central to the vitality of the National Park's economy. Therefore ensuring that the National Park's visitor infrastructure such as paths and roads, attractions and facilities help to enhance the experiences of all visitors is important. The Local Development Plan will play a role in setting out the principles for tourism, leisure and recreation related development as well as identifying where it should go.

However, the need to continue to support and enhance the experiences of visitors to the Cairngorms National Park needs to be carefully balanced with conserving the high quality and sensitive environment that visitors come to see. There is an inherent tension between increasing visitor numbers and the need to sustain and enhance the natural environment and rare and endangered species.

¹ Combined direct and indirect expenditure. Source: STEAM (2016)

2. TRENDS AND OTHER DRIVERS OF CHANGE

There has been an overall increase of 13.4% in the number of visitors to the Cairngorms National Park between 2009 and 2016 (Figure 1). Visitor numbers have increased by 12.67% and visitor days by 19.79% since 2012 (STEAM, 2016).

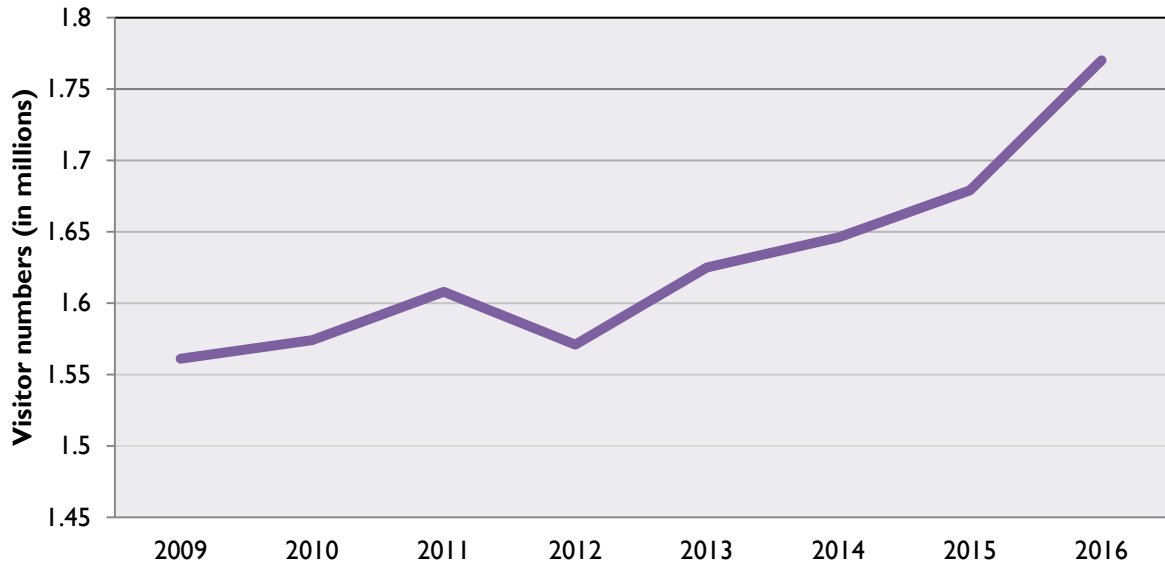


Figure 1 Visitors to the Cairngorms National Park (Source: STEAM report 2016)

Whilst the overall numbers have increased, there is still a strong seasonal trend in tourism, with the highest numbers of visitors in the summer months (Figure 2). A continuing challenge for the National Park is creating a more year round tourism economy, and the 2016 data shows some slight improvement in that area.

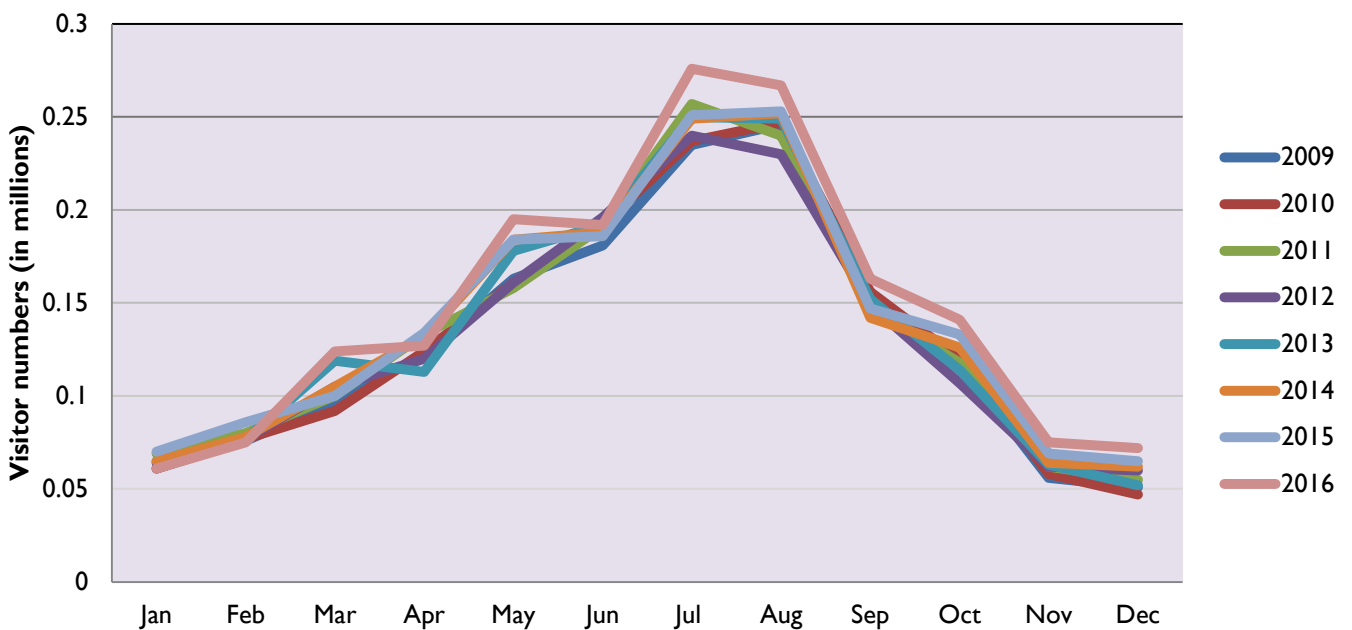


Figure 2 Visitors to the Cairngorms National Park by month (Source: STEAM report 2016).

Cairngorms Visitors Survey

The Cairngorms Visitor Survey has been carried out every 5 years since 2003/04 using the same methodology of 2,500 face to face interviews over a 12 month period in a range of locations across the National Park. It gathers a range of information about the type of visitors and how they interact with the National Park.

The most recent survey was completed in 2014/15 and has shown that overall visitor satisfaction has increased from 8.25 out of 10 (2004) to 8.76 out of 10 in 2015. The highest level of overall satisfaction was in Aberdeenshire and Angus with 8.89 out of 10 (Figure 3). However, whilst visitor satisfaction is high, expectations and competition continues to rise.

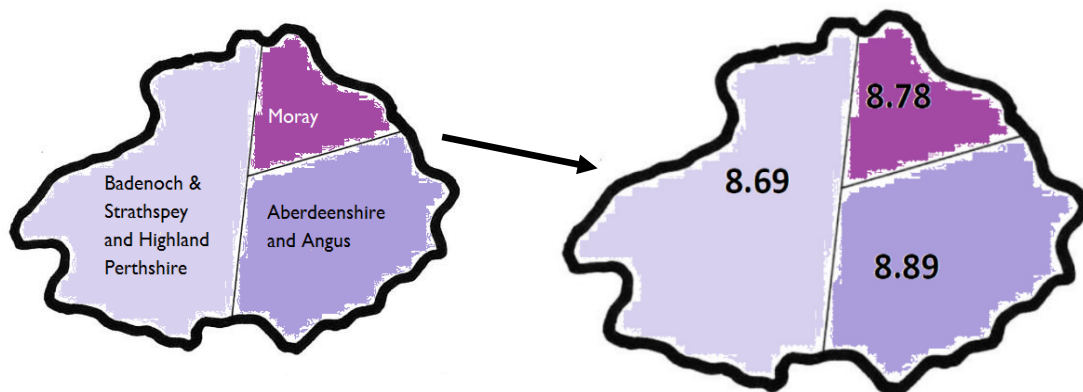


Figure 3 Visitor satisfaction across National Park areas (Source: Cairngorms Visitor Survey 2014/15).

The importance of the National Park's status as an attraction for those deciding to visit the area is also high and there is a continued need to ensure that the Cairngorms National Park continues to provide the experience that visitors are looking for. This includes maintaining the high quality natural environment whilst also supporting and developing visitor facilities and infrastructure.

Visitor demographics

The Visitor Survey gathers data about the demographic of people visiting the National Park (Figure 4). When compared with previous year's data and the census, this can show any trends over time, but also where there are notable differences between visitors to the Park and the national population.

The National Park Partnership Plan (2017-2022) sets out the aim of "Creating a 'Park for All' by reducing barriers and inspiring a diversity of people to engage with and care for their National Park through lifelong learning" (p.53). The information from the Visitor Survey is particularly important in terms of equality and inclusion as it helps to identify groups that may be under-represented and to consider barriers that may be preventing them from visiting the National Park.

Figure 4: Demographic comparison of visitors to the National Park	2014/15 NP visitor survey (% visitors)	2009/10 NP visitor survey (% visitors)	2014 mid-year estimates national average (% population)	
Gender				
Male	56%	55%	48.5%	
Female	44%	45%	51.5%	
Age				
Under 15	-	-	16.9%	
16-24	6%	9%	11.6%	
25-34	16%	13%	13.1%	
5-44	22%	19%	12.7%	
45-54	20%	20%	15%	
55-64	19%	18%	12.6%	
65+	17%	18%	18.1%	
Socio-economic group			From 2011 Census (national average) % population aged 16-74	
AB Higher and intermediate managerial, admin or professional	31%	24%	Higher managerial, admin and professional; Intermediate occupations; small employers and account workers*	29%
C1 Supervisory or clerical, junior managerial, admin or professional	45%	41%	Lower managerial and prof occupations;*	20.2%
C2 Skilled manual workers	15%	25%	Lower supervisory and technical occupations*	8.2%
DE Semi and unskilled workers; those at lowest level of subsistence	3%	10%	Semi-routine and routine occupations; never worked, unemployed; students*	42.5%
Ethnic group				
White	97%	-	96%	
Black and minority ethnic group	1%	-	4%	
Long term health problem or Disability				
Yes	7%	-	20%	
No	92%	-	80%	

*suggested equivalent Social economic Class categories in Census

The Visitor Survey data set out in Figure 4 (when compared to the national average) highlights the groups who are under-represented in making visits to the Park. It highlights that 16-24 year olds make up 11.6% of the national population; however they represented only 6% of visitors to the National Park in the most recent Visitor Survey. In addition, black and minority ethnic groups make up 4% of the national population, yet they only represented 1% of visitors in the 2014/15 survey. Finally, people with long term health problems or disabilities form 20% of the national population, yet they made up only 7% of visitors. Therefore there is clear indication that these form under-represented groups within the National Park.

This mirrors these issues identified in the 'Scotland People and Nature Survey' (SPANS) 2013/14 which measures how people in Scotland use, value and enjoy the natural environment. There are specific questions on National Parks which are of interest, particularly those that are relevant to equality and inclusion.

- Those in AB and C1 and C2 social groups* are more aware of Scotland's National Parks than those in DE group
- Older adults (aged 35 and over) are more likely than younger adults (under 35) to be aware of National Parks
- Those in AB and C1 and C2 social groups are more likely to have visited a National Park than those in DE group
- Those in employment are more likely than those who aren't working to have visited a National Park.

* Definition of social groups are given in table above (Figure 4).

It is the higher socio-economic groups and older people who are more aware of and likely to visit National Parks than those in lower socio-economic groups and younger people. Therefore this is an opportunity for more targeting of lower socio-economic groups / younger people to engage with the Park.

CNPA's Equality Mainstreaming and Outcome Report (April, 2017) includes a specific outcome (outcome 2) stating that more under-represented equality groups will visit and experience the National Park.

The demographic data above needs to be considered in a spatial planning context. The LDP sets out the principles for future development which contributes to improving visitor infrastructure, accessibility and facilities for all. These together play an important role in enhancing visitor experience and it is important that LDP policies encourage a range of developments that can provide for and support different needs and abilities.

3. ACCOMMODATION

The Visitor Survey also asked visitors about where they stay when in the National Park. The Visitors Survey 2014/15 has shown an increase in visitors staying in self-catering (up from 24% in 2009/10 survey) and camping (up from 15% in 2009/10) accommodation. There has also been a reduction in hotel accommodation (down from 32% in 2009/10).

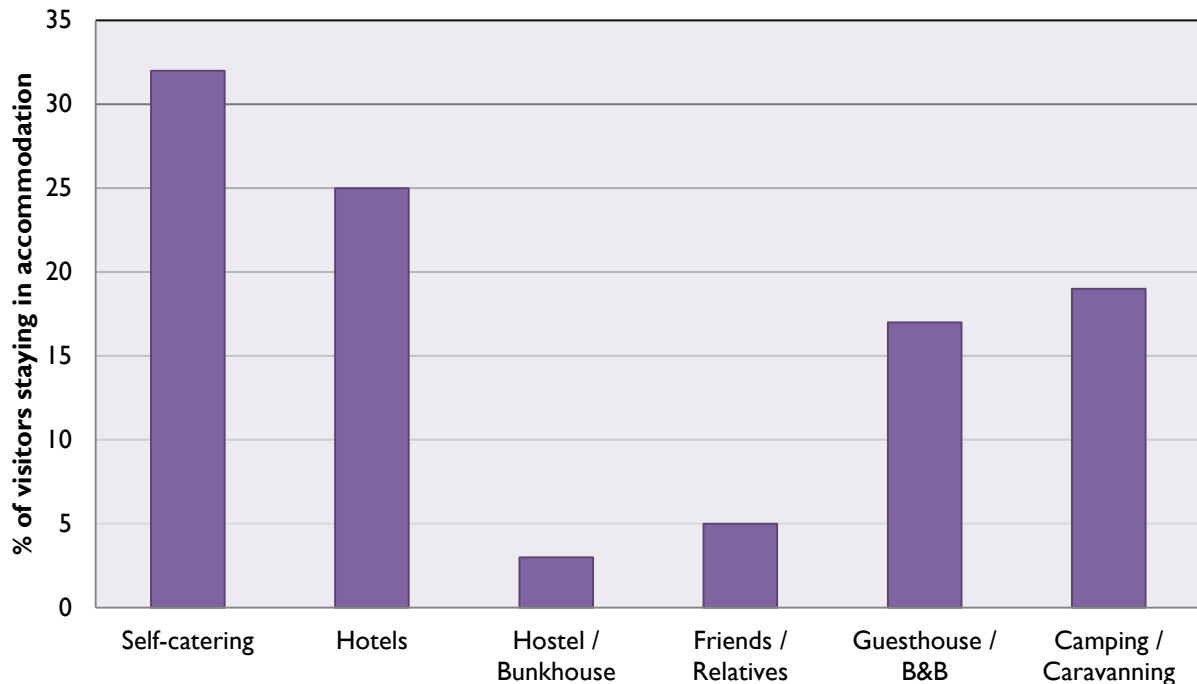


Figure 5 Visitor accommodation choices

It is evident that there is an increasing shift in terms of the type of accommodation that visitors are choosing, with an increase in independent non-serviced accommodation such as self-catering and camping. In 2017 the non-serviced accommodation sector usage increased by 18% on the previous year and on average has seen an increase of 50% since 2009.

It was highlighted in the recent [National Park Partnership Plan consultation](#) report that a key issue included the need to overcome 'barriers such as costs through the provision of more accommodation to suit different needs and budgets' (p. 57). Therefore there continues to be a need for a wider range of flexible accommodation options to meet varying requirements. As a result, the National Park Partnership Plan 2017 – 2022 (NPPP) identifies 'encouraging the provision of low cost camping and motor home sites in appropriate locations' as an important priority (p. 48). The LDP can play an important role in helping to deliver this objective through the inclusion of appropriate supportive policies and/or the identification of specific sites where appropriate.

4. FACILITIES

The Visitors Survey gathered data in respect of basic visitor facilities. Figure 6 below shows the percentage of visitors who scored each element as 'good' or 'very good'.

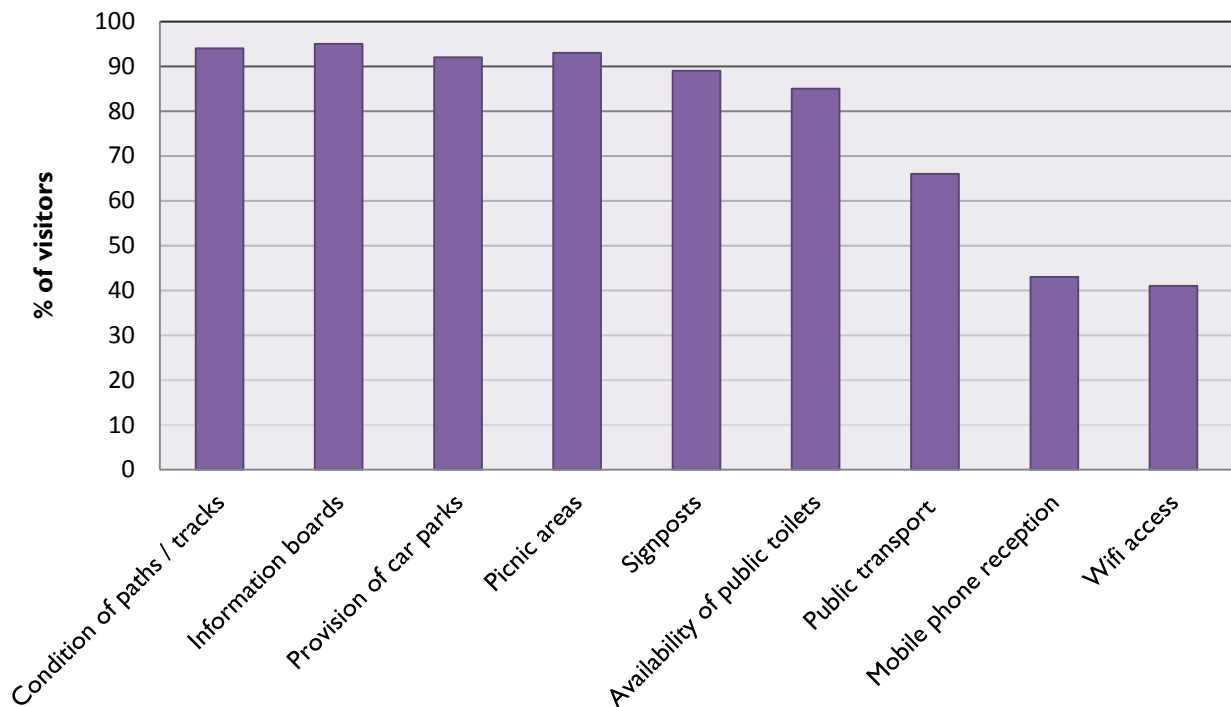


Figure 6 Rating of facilities as 'good' or 'very good' (Source: Cairngorms Visitor Survey 2014/15).

It is evident that the condition of paths are highly regarded along with the provision of car parks and information boards as they all score very highly (all over 90%). However, the areas that had poorer scores were mobile phone reception and wifi access (both below 50%). 28% of visitors rated mobile phone reception as poor or very poor, and 28% rated it average. In addition, 28% of visitors rated wifi access as poor or very poor and 31% rated it average.

Digital connectivity

Given the remote nature of the National Park, providing good digital connectivity is challenging. However significant progress has been made and work is currently ongoing to deliver superfast broadband in many parts of the National Park with mobile reception also improving in many areas. The Economic Development paper discusses the issue of digital connectivity further and highlights the Scottish Government new programme - Reaching 100 'R100' – which is their commitment of delivering superfast broadband to 100% of premises in Scotland by 2021.

5. INFRASTRUCTURE AND INFORMATION

The investment in visitor centres, community information, visitor attractions, ranger bases, National Nature Reserves and path infrastructure has resulted in very positive feedback from visitors.

The 2014/15 Visitor Survey demonstrates that visitors know they are coming to a National Park and their expectations are being met across a wide range of indicators. Nevertheless, we are still aware of many opportunities where the experience could be improved and many opportunities where partners could better link their activity to the National Park. Providing up to date and consistent information for visitors is an important part of a visitor's experience and there is a need to support continued investment in and delivery of infrastructure to provide this.

The map below (Figure 7) shows key visitor infrastructure and information services within the Park.

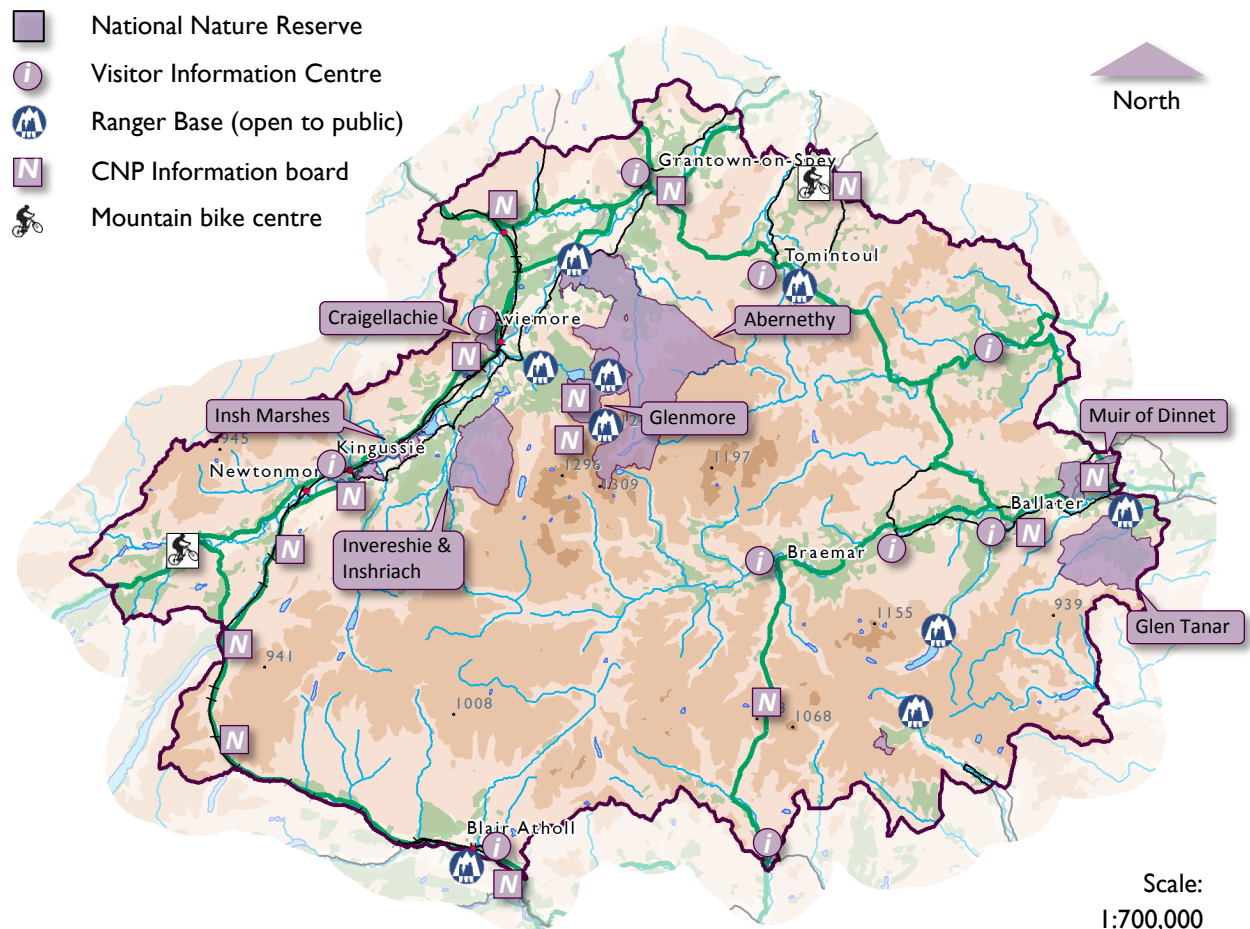


Figure 7 Visitor Infrastructure across the National Park

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Recent investment in quality visitor infrastructure to improve facilities including information and interpretation about the National Park and the special qualities has included:

- 6 Visit Scotland Visitor Information Centres (VIC) and partnership VICs upgraded and refurbished
- New interpretation at all National Nature Reserves including:-
 - New ranger base at Glen Doll – Corrie Fee
 - New hide at Insh Marshes
 - Major upgrades in visitor centres at Nethy Bridge (Dell Wood), Glen Tanar, Muir of Dinnet, Glenmore
- Interpretation and information interventions in 13 communities ranging from community notice boards with Cairngorm National Park (CNP) interpretation and information to more major projects:-
 - Station Square Sculpture, Boat of Garten
 - Community Visitor Centres in Blair Atholl and Lair, Glenshee
 - Braemar Castle
- Two mountain bike centres with new hubs at Glenlivet and Laggan
- All ranger bases upgraded
- 6 visitor attractions with CNP information and interpretation and indications that others are interested in developing interpretation linked to CNP.

Note: some positive 'double accounting' in these figures because Glen Doll ranger base is both an upgraded ranger base and interpretation for NNR

The Visitor Survey (2014/15) showed that half of visitors still collect information from facilities and attractions (27% from Visitor Information Centres, 15% from attractions & 14% from tourism businesses). So whilst there has been considerable progress, there is an ongoing need to maintain and expand information and interpretation about the National Park. The potential upgrading and improvement of a number of large visitor attractions within the National Park will also provide new opportunities to engage visitors with the outstanding nature and culture of the area. The LDP will need to provide a framework to support such improvements in the future and ensure that they are delivered without adversely affecting the environment.

6. PATH INFRASTRUCTURE AND ACTIVE TRAVEL

The National Park's strategic path network (Figure 8) is an important attraction to the National Park and part of its visitor infrastructure and active travel routes. Paths also provide an important way of managing and guiding visitors by providing routes which can help avoid sensitive or vulnerable habitats or species. Partners have delivered significant investment in this area, including extending the Speyside Way and constructing the Old Logging Way, now used by 70,000 people each year along with the improvements to visitor centres, ranger bases and information points.

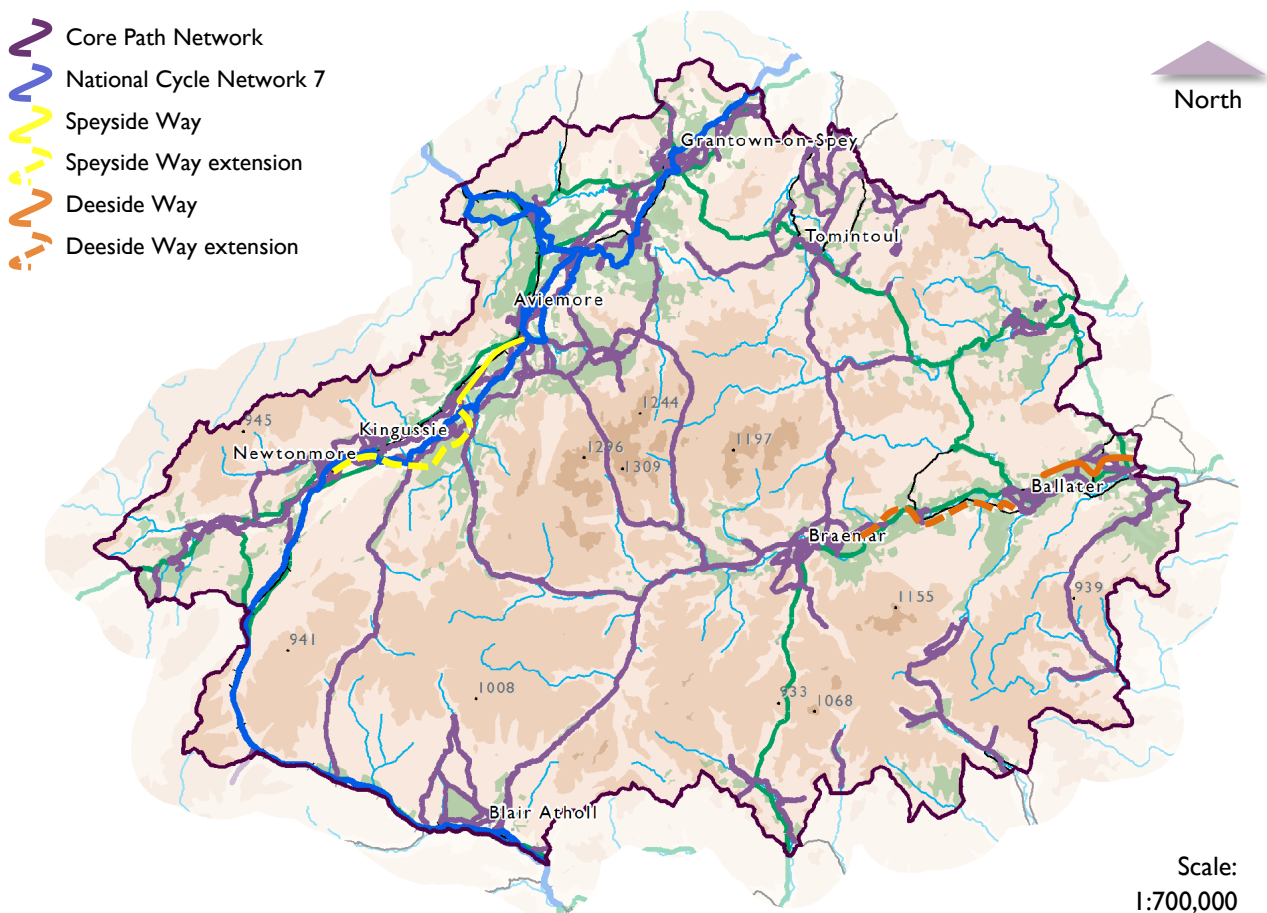


Figure 8 Strategic Path network.

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The Map (Figure 8) shows the current network of core paths in the National Park as well as the Deeside and Speyside Ways which are strategically important walking and cycling routes. The Speyside Way has recently been extended to Kincaig (shown on map), with the aim of extending it to Newtonmore. In addition, the Deeside Way currently reaches Ballater (from Aberdeen) and work is ongoing to extend it through to Braemar. Both these routes add to existing long distance paths improving and expanding the visitor offering. However, as both

follow river valleys and are relatively flat if they are constructed to allow walking and cycling they will also encourage active travel between communities and to visitor attractions. The path network is important to both visitors and communities and should be maintained and enhanced. The [Core Paths Plan \(2015\)](#) promotes the use of paths within the National Park and is used to prioritise resources and path development projects as well as support visitor management plans on sensitive sites. It also ensures core paths are waymarked and signposted so that they can be promoted by communities and partners.

The Core Path Plan also works with the Local Development Plan to inform large scale infrastructure projects by protecting and enhancing access opportunities, for example along the A9 corridor or in and around proposed new development. The Local Development Plan will be important in ensuring future development helps to maintain and enhance the core path network as well as encouraging new opportunities for active travel.

Active Cairngorms

The importance of a well maintained and extensive path network is also central to encouraging increased physical activity within the National Park. Encouraging both visitors and local residents to utilise these routes will have multiple benefits for health.

Active Cairngorms (2015) is the Outdoor Access Strategy for the National Park and cuts across much of the visitor experience and infrastructure work. The Active Cairngorms programme aims to promote and utilise the health benefits of outdoor activity for residents and visitors to the National Park by making it easier and safer for people to move around the Park whatever their age, ability or background.

The Active Cairngorms Strategy also directs the development, management and promotion of non-motorised outdoor access in the Cairngorms National Park and contains an 'Action Plan' for the delivery of its objectives. The Action Plan is divided into 3 themes:

- **Active Places:** Designing places that encourage physical activity
- **Active Management:** Champion recreational management best practice and environmental appreciation
- **Active promotion:** Promoting healthy lifestyles using Park facilities

The 'Active Places' theme is specifically relevant for the Local Development Plan with a key objective to 'improve design of existing outdoor and active travel infrastructure'. Policy I of the Active Places theme aims to 'Improve path provision and quality for people of all abilities', for which one priority involves supporting the development of an Aviemore Active Travel Hub. The NPPP reinforces this by specifically including an aim of 'improving opportunities for active travel in Aviemore that deliver improved transport connections for visitors and residents' (p.51).

This has now become known as 'Active Aviemore'. The Scottish Government has agreed to fund the construction of a new £13m hospital in Aviemore. CNPA has identified this investment as a catalyst to deliver other strategic developments including the Active Aviemore project which aims to improve Aviemore's walking and cycling infrastructure,

promote active travel and enhance the integration of social and health care facilities. The project is being run in partnership with CNPA, NHS Highland, Sustrans and the Highland Council.

A site has been identified for the hospital and should be included within the next LDP as well as setting out key opportunities for the expansion of active travel routes around Aviemore. There is a need to ensure that other future developments within Aviemore will integrate with and contribute to the wider active travel network for the benefit of visitors and residents.

Active Travel should also be encouraged across the National Park and encouraging these principles within the Local Development Plan could help to ensure future developments incorporate design principles that promote and expand the opportunities for active travel.

7. ATTRACTIONS

According to the Visitor Survey, 38% of visitors list going to attractions as one of their main activities while in the National Park – the third most popular activity. Visitor attractions play an important role in providing a positive experience for visitors, attracting people to the area and supporting the local economy.

A number of established key visitor attractions within the National Park have plans to expand and enhance their offering whilst some new attractions are planned. These proposals are significant for the National Park and also for the Local Development Plan.

Key attractions include:

Glenmore and Cairngorm

With a range of activities and accommodation in a picturesque setting, Cairngorm and Glenmore is the most popular countryside visitor destination in the National Park with over 1 million visits per year. It is also highly designated and an important place for nature. Owned on behalf of the people of Scotland, the Cairngorm Estate is managed by Highlands and Islands Enterprise and the National Forest Estate. In 2014, these public bodies, along with the Cairngorms National Park Authority, Scottish Natural Heritage and Highland Council, formed the Cairngorm & Glenmore partnership.

The purpose of the Partnership is to collaborate in the strategic management of these land holdings in order to deliver:

- An exceptionally high quality natural environment
- A world-class visitor experience
- An economic asset contributing to the economy of the National Park and Scotland
- Engaged business and community stakeholders
- Efficient and effective public service delivery

The Cairngorm & Glenmore Strategy is the long term strategy for these two land holdings and was adopted in 2016 with the purpose to:

- Increase collaboration between public agencies and private businesses in managing the area and progressing strategic projects;
- Help individual businesses and operators in the area shape development plans and connect the visitor experience;
- Inform and assess future development proposals;
- Make the case for investment in this part of the National Park.

This area is strategically significant for tourism and continuing to work with the Partnership to improve and enhance the visitor experience of this area is key. Future development in this area will likely be of significance to the wider aims of the National Park and the Local Development Plan and the NPPP includes the specific action of 'Improving the visitor infrastructure in Cairngorm and Glenmore'.

Cairngorms Mountain is leased to Natural Retreats who are proposing to invest significantly in the infrastructure and facilities at Cairngorm Mountain, further enhancing visitor experience here. The aim is to develop the visitor offering and improve the provision of outdoor activities all year round.

Highland Wildlife Park

Run by the Royal Zoological Society, the Highland Wildlife Park attracts over 135,000 visitors every year (Scottish Visitor Attraction Monitor, Moffat Centre, 2016) to visit a wide range of native and non-native animals. It is a hugely popular attraction and the RZSS continue to invest in the Wildlife Park to enhance the offering for visitors which includes proposals to build a new visitor hub and improve the information and interpretation.

Highland Folk Park

The Highland Folk Park is an open air museum demonstrating how Highland people have lived and worked since 1700. It is owned by Highlife Highland and continues to expand its collection of buildings and artefacts on the site. The attraction is also looking to develop proposals to build a new visitor centre and café.

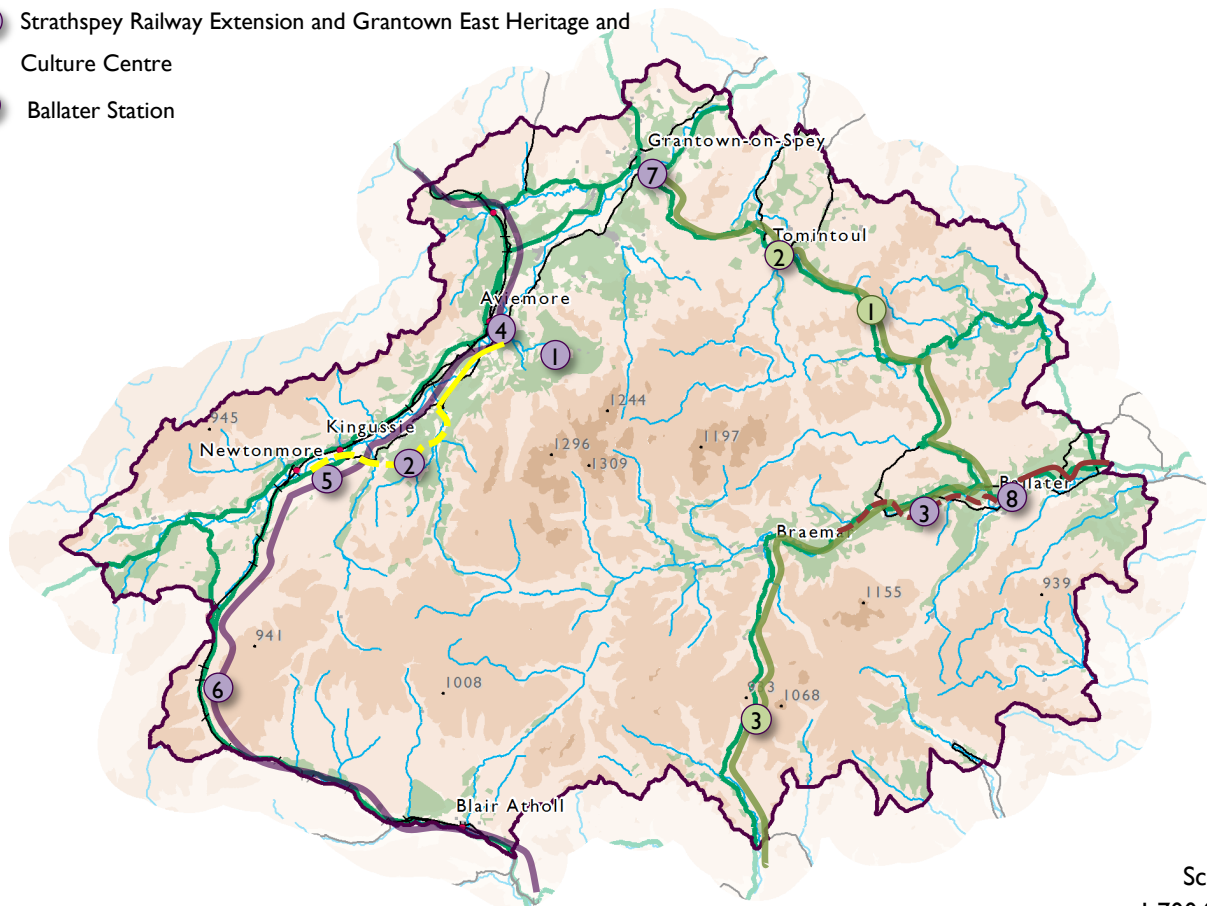
8. OTHER PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

There are a number of additional projects and initiatives that have or are projected to deliver significant investment in the National Park's visitor infrastructure and enhance visitor experience. These include:

- ① Visitor facility improvements at Cairngorm and Glenmore
- ② Speyside way extension (hatched)
- ③ Deeside way extension (hatched)
- ④ Active travel enhancements in Aviemore
- ⑤ Highland Folk Museum
- ⑥ A9 Dualling between Perth and Inverness
- ⑦ Strathspey Railway Extension and Granttown East Heritage and Culture Centre
- ⑧ Ballater Station

Scenic Route installations

- ① Still
- ② The Watchers
- ③ Connecting Contours



Scale:
1:700,000

Braemar Highland Games Centre

Development of a new highland games centre in Braemar at the Princess Royal & Duke of Fife Memorial Park has recently been completed. This new Centre will provide a year round visitor attraction and facilities, primarily associated with the history and function of the existing games site. It will include a gallery, exhibition hall, café and gift shop, office, and general service areas.

Ballater Station

Ballater Station reopened during the summer of 2018 after a two year renovation project, after the original station suffered from fire damage in 2015. The station is intended to be a hub for visitors to enjoy the Victorian heritage of Ballater and its royal connections. The facility includes a replica waiting room and carriage used by Queen Victoria, museum exhibits and a Victorian themed tea room.

Strathspey Railway Extension

This project involves extending the Strathspey Railway by 3 miles from its current terminus at Broomhill, to Grantown-on-Spey. The project has been in the pipeline for a number of years due to the complexity of part of the route which has a number of engineering, legal and financial challenges. However the Transport and Works (Scotland) (TAWS) application for the extension is due to be submitted in the foreseeable future.

Grantown East Heritage and Culture Centre

Grantown East railway station closed its doors 1968. This project saw a complete renovation of the station, the platform and the grounds. The facility includes a museum space, a train carriage restaurant, gift shop and a mini railway. There is also a replica Highland Games field on site. The centre opened in autumn 2018.

Speyside Way and Deeside Way

The Speyside Way is a long distance route which currently runs from the Moray Coast down as far as Kincaig. It has been expanded in sections over the last three decades and is an important strategic long distance route for recreation, particularly for walking and cycling. The aim is to complete the route to Newtonmore and the preparation for the next section from Kincaig to Kingussie is underway for implementation in 2018.

The Deeside Way currently runs from Aberdeen into the eastern part of the National Park to Ballater and the overall aim is to extend the route through to Braemar. Work is currently underway to progress the section of the between Braemar and old Brig o Dee with planning permission having recently been submitted.

Both the Speyside and Deeside Ways are important long distance routes nationally as well as for visitors and residents in the National Park. The proposals to extend / complete both routes will enhance the visitor experience of these routes and also provide additional active travel opportunities for the settlements they will connect.

In addition to the proposals to extend the routes, there is also the need to continue to maintain and enhance the existing routes. The NPPP's 'Agenda for Action' sets out that this should be supported by 'Developing new ways including visitor giving to fund infrastructure

investment and maintaining and upgrading key off-road routes including Speyside Way, Deeside Way and the Core Paths network' (p.48).

Scenic Routes Initiative

The Scenic Routes initiative launched in 2013 and involves installing innovative and interactive sculptures along scenic tourist routes to promote and develop Scotland's 'international appeal and reputation'. As part of this initiative, a Route is being / has been developed between Blairgowrie and Grantown-on-Spey along the A93 and A939 via Glenshee, Braemar and Tomintoul. The first sculptures - 4 viewing pods at Corgarff – were installed in 2015 and two further installations at Tomintoul and Glenshee were completed in 2017. This will develop a new visitor experience based on the landscape qualities of the National Park and may provide opportunities for other similar projects.

Tomintoul and Glenlivet

There are a number of projects going on within Tomintoul and Glenlivet that will contribute to enhancing visitor experience within the National Park.

The Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust was established in 2011 to work towards addressing the economic decline experienced in the area. Supported by CNPA and a number of other partners, the Trust developed a regeneration strategy which has been used to secure funding for projects in the area. In addition, more recently has been the establishment of the Tomintoul and Glenlivet Landscape Partnership, a £3.6 million project which is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) along with 10 partners. A total of 20 projects will be delivered covering the natural and cultural heritage of the Tomintoul & Glenlivet area. This will involve access improvements, training opportunities, habitat creation, developing a cultural archive, running events and involving the local community in music and art projects.

A9 dualling

A significant strategic project which runs parallel with the preparation of the Local Development Plan and many of the other projects set out in this paper, is the dualling of the A9. The proposal to dual the A9 between Perth and Inverness – running through the National Park - is likely to have a range of impacts as well as create new opportunities. During construction it is important that opportunities to visit the area are not restricted and that visitors feel that are able to travel easily both to and within the National Park. Once completed a fully dualled A9 is likely to open up new day and short stay markets that see the Cairngorms as being within reasonable driving distance.

Implications for the LDP

It will be important that the LDP helps to support the delivery of all these projects and initiatives as far as possible. This could be through the inclusion of supportive policies or through specific site designations where appropriate. The A9 dualling project, in particular,

is likely to have more significant implications for the LDP's overall spatial development strategy and could present opportunities for development and inward investment.

9. KEY ISSUES / IMPLICATIONS FOR THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The evidence set out in this report highlights a number of key issues affecting and interlinked with visitor experience and infrastructure which will have implications for the LDP. The LDP will have varying influence in how it can help to address the issues raised.

Supporting a year round economy

As set out earlier in the report, the number of visitors to the National Park continues to be significantly higher in the summer months than the winter months. There are three Ski centres in the National Park providing an important winter attraction / activity. However, visitor numbers are dependent on good weather conditions for winter sports, which can often be uncertain. The LDP will need to consider how best to support moves towards a more year-round economy.

Encouraging under-represented groups

Creating a 'Park for All' is a key priority of the NPPP and ensuring that there are opportunities for everyone to visit, enjoy and stay in the National Park regardless of physical ability, age, income or background. As the data shows, the higher socio-economic groups are more aware and more likely to have visited the National Park. Whilst the LDP cannot influence who visits the National Park, it can help to encourage visitor infrastructure and accommodation that helps to meet a range of needs. Part of this could include the provision of 'low cost camping and motor home sites in appropriate locations' as identified within the NPPP as a key action.

Strategic tourism projects / sites / attractions

There are a number of strategically important tourist attractions within the National Park as well as some major projects and initiatives that are in progress or proposed. These will be central in sustaining and enhancing visitor infrastructure within the National Park as well as contributing to the local economy. There is a need to ensure that the LDP contains appropriate and supportive policy principles for tourism related development as well as identifying key sites / attractions within settlement statements.

Active travel and core paths

The continued support and enhancement of the extensive network of strategic routes including the Deeside and Speyside Ways and the wider core path network will be vital in encouraging and promoting active travel across the National Park. The need for investment to maintain and upgrade key off-road routes including the Speyside Way, Deeside Way and core path network is set out in the NPPP's 'Agenda for Action'. These strategic routes along with the core path networks all play an important role in supporting and encouraging active travel. However there is also a need promote and develop routes at an even more local

level – in and around settlements – to increase the benefits for people and make the wider networks more accessible and connect people to the places they want to go.

The LDP will play a role in supporting each of these elements. In addition, it can ensure that the core path network is protected and appropriate mitigation is provided where development has the potential to impact on a core path and support the continued provision of the path.

There is also the need to support the delivery and expansion of more localised active travel routes that connect to the wider path network within the National Park. The LDP can encourage the provision of and connection to active routes through sustainable design guidance, supporting active places. The LDP could also help to support the Active Aviemore project and encourage a similar approach in other settlements.

A9 dualling

The dualling of the A9 is not carried out through a standard planning process and the LDP cannot directly influence the delivery of the project itself. However, it can highlight and plan for the opportunities that the project may bring for economic development and inward investment within the Park. The LDP may also be able to support the delivery of the project by safeguarding the land needed for new junctions etc. However, much of the design detail is not currently confirmed.

RESOURCES

- Active Cairngorms (<http://cairngorms.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/ActiveCairngorms.pdf>)
- Core Paths Plan (<http://cairngorms.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/CorePathsPlanFinal150727.pdf>)
- Current Local Development Plan (<http://cairngorms.co.uk/park-authority/planning/local-dev-plan/>)
- National Park Partnership Plan (2017 – 2022) (<http://cairngorms.co.uk/working-partnership/national-park-partnership-plan/>)
- Scottish Tourism Economic Activity Monitor 2016
- Cairngorms Visitor Survey 2014/15 (<http://cairngorms.co.uk/caring-future/local-economy/tourism/>)