CAIRNGORM NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY – REPRESENTATIONS ON DRAFT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2020, BALLATER SETTLEMENT

Settlement Objectives

1. Arguably the most important objective should be to ensure that Ballater remains a pleasant place in which to live and work, and this statement should be included.

2. *Deliver housing that meets local need.* The housing fact sheet for Ballater predicts that during the 5 year life of the plan, 30 market and 30 affordable houses will be required. The draft plan allocates site H1 for housing with an indicative capacity of 250 units – 138 market houses plus 112 affordable, while site C has planning permission for about 26 affordable houses.

Site H1 should not be allocated for 250 units. Only about 30 housing units are required to meet predicted needs.

With regard to affordable housing, the system of allocation to tenants does not benefit locals. Site C should provide more than enough units for the period of the plan.

Experience shows that recent market housing developments result in about 50% occupancy as second homes and that there is little or no benefit to the community.

Parking in the village centre and particularly at the supermarket in Golf Road is already totally inadequate and would be worsened by the addition of unneeded housing.

A portion of site H1 is used for car parking at the annual Games which constitute one of the highlights of the village and draws in many visitors.

**The boundary should be clarified in the masterplan, which will also need to demonstrate how adequate parking for the Highland Games will be maintained.* All that is necessary is to protect the area currently used for parking.

Future community projects for allotments, community gardens, and a men's shed have been mooted and sufficient open space should be provided on site H1 to allow for these.

3. *Increase the attraction of Ballater as a business, tourist and recreation destination.* This will not be achieved by the construction of unneeded housing and resulting inadequacy of car parking. Tourists will not be encouraged to stop off at the village.

   SUMMARY

   Settlement objectives should contain a statement to the effect that Balater should remain a pleasant place to live and work.

   Site H1 should be designated for community use and up to about 30 housing units. Games car parking should be maintained.

Bryan Wright

[redacted] 4 March 2019