

Aviemore and Glenmore Community Trust Submission for CNPA Economic Action Plan Consultation



Cairngorms National Park Economic Action Plan 2019-2022 Consultation 26 June to 20 September 2019 - **Questions**

The Cairngorms Economic Action Plan 2019-2022 will ensure that all relevant organisations in the Park – in the public, private and third sectors – work together to deliver the economic strategy which is set out in the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2017-2022.

Name Organisation (if relevant) Aviemore and Glenmore Community Trust
Address
..... Email

Q1 **Review of changes in strategic context (see pp9-11)**
Are there other significant economic trends, challenges, opportunities or data sources that we should be taking into account in developing this Action Plan?

Please see attached submission document

Q2 **Priority themes and actions (see pp12-17)**
Do you support these Actions to deliver the economic strategy as set out in the National Park Partnership Plan? Please explain why.

Please see attached submission document

Q3 **Delivery and monitoring (see p18)**
Are these delivery and monitoring arrangements appropriate for the Economic Action Plan? Please explain why.

Please see attached submission document

Please return this form to us by 5pm, Friday 20 September 2019.
Email: economy@cairngorms.co.uk
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Grantown-on-Spey PH26 3BR

Data Protection: Details provided in response to the consultation will only be used for purposes associated with the Cairngorms National Park Economic Action Plan 2019-2022. You may request to see personal information held by the CNPA at any time.

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AGCT welcome the opportunity to submit this response to the CNPA Economic Action Plan consultation document, following the joint meeting on the 26th August.

The Trust have spent considerable time and effort in carrying out 12 public Q&A sessions over the last 2 years, and are in the process of signing MOU's with a number of local bodies including

- Cairngorm Mountain Trust
- Cairngorm Business Partnership
- Aviemore and Vicinity Community Council
- Aviemore Community Enterprise

We therefore believe that CNPA should view our submission as representing not just the directors of the Trust, but a wide body of local opinion to whom we are accountable

The health of the Cairngorm Mountain business is of significant economic importance to the whole of Strathspey. This is reflected by CBP's business barometer for the winter of 2018/19 which showed a significant drop in business health due to a combination of poor snow conditions, CML going into receivership, the funicular not running, and all the attendant negative publicity surrounding these events. It is therefore imperative that CNPA acknowledge the importance of a sustainable future for the business as a core part of their Economic Action Plan

HIE are working on a Master Plan for Cairngorm Mountain, but it is likely that this will not be delivered until Q420. In the meantime, AGCT are developing a business plan to be delivered Q419 that represents the input from the community Q&A sessions combined with our work on potential projects with associated revenue and return. The plan also commits AGCT to using any infrastructure development work to environmentally improve Coire Cas so that the net outcome will be less visual and environmental impact than is currently the case

The development of a long term sustainable future for Cairngorm Mountain, as per the AGCT plan, fits with two of the three commitments from the October 2018 Scottish Economic Action Plan from the Scottish Ministers:

- support the development of a diverse and healthy rural economy through the growth of traditional and non-traditional sectors
- invest in our infrastructure to deliver housing, improved access to services and connectivity enabling improved sustainable and inclusive economic growth
- deliver a rural skills action plan to ensure that rural enterprises have access to a highly-skilled workforce

Cairngorm Mountain's sustainable future and the AGCT plan also support all 4 aims of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000:

- To conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area
- To promote sustainable use of the natural resources of the area
- To promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public
- To promote sustainable economic and social development of the area's communities

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Answers to the questions from the consultation document

Question 1

Are there other significant economic trends, challenges, opportunities or data sources that we should be taking into account in developing this Economic Action Plan?

1. Adventure tourism is emerging as a huge growth market which Cairngorm and the whole park could benefit from. There should be specific plans to understand and address how this market could be exploited
2. Ebikes are a significant development in the last few years and will lead to both big opportunities and big challenges. Existing mountain bikers will explore further afield, and many people who would not normally consider cycling are being drawn into the sport. With so many miles of good forest track available, the area could become one of the prime UK ebike destinations with some development work on a few key tracks to create complete loops. Ebikes will also create challenges with more advanced bikers heading for the plateau, greater erosion of existing trails, and potential conflicts with walkers in busy areas
3. With the climate emergency declared, and more people coming to the park, we would like to see specific mention of plans to provide environmental education opportunities, either in the form of assets like exhibitions and signage on walks, or with services like rangers and guides
4. In order to support “the development of a diverse and healthy rural economy through the growth of traditional and non-traditional sectors” new attraction infrastructure will be needed. CNPA should have a clear plan as to how these will be permitted and how concomitant environmental schemes can mitigate their impact. This is in addition to ‘normal’ infrastructure projects such as roads, broadband etc
5. In terms of data sources, it is questionable whether the survey points for the visitor survey currently being conducted would capture many mountain bikers so it is possible that input from that section of users is not being captured
6. There are a number of major rivers in park with ideal opportunities for both large and small hydro schemes. Given that schemes would likely cross estate/ownership boundaries, CNPA should develop a specific policy/action under either priority themes 1 or 4

Question 2

Do you support these actions to deliver the economic strategy as set out in the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan?

- Given the importance of the Cairngorm Mountain business to the whole of Strathspey as laid out in the first page, CNPA should have a specific objective of supporting sustainable development on Cairngorm within the existing skiing infrastructure
- There should also be a specific project, however funded, to extend the Old Logging Way up to Cairngorm to create a complete walking/cycling route which would be hugely attractive especially to ebikers, and it would reduce the intensity of car use

Question 3

Are these delivery and monitoring arrangements appropriate for the Economic Action Plan? Please explain why.

- Under section 6, delivery and monitoring, it states that delivery should be based on “coordination of delivery....” . The document does not state who is responsible for the actual delivery, or a process on how the body responsible for the delivery is determined