

LOCAL PLAN WORKING GROUP in conjunction with the
PARK PLAN WORKING GROUP
APPROVED MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON
Thursday 1st July 2004 at 3.30pm.
in the Town-House, Grantown-on-Spey.

PRESENT:

Peter Argyle	CNPA Board
Duncan Bryden	"
Basil Dunlop	"
Douglas Glass	"
Bruce Luffman	"
Sue Walker	"
David Green	"
Angus Gordon	"
Jane Hope	CNPA Staff
Fiona Green	"
Danny Alexander	"
Nick Halfhide	"
Norman Brockie	"
Anna Barton	" LP Community Liaison Co-ordinators (on contract)
Jean Henretty	" "
Bill Rowell	Association of Cairngorms Community Councils
David Bale	SNH
Duncan McKellar	Cairngorms Chamber of Commerce
Miff Tuck	SRPBA (Scottish Rural Property & Business Association)
Martin Wanless	Moray Council

AGENDA:

1. N.Brockie welcomed those present and offered introductions.

Action

APOLOGIES:

2. N.Brockie offered apologies for: Laura Robertson & Peter McRae, Aberdeenshire Council; Maggie Bochel & Andrew Brown, Highland Council; Jim Mackay & Nicola Abrams, SEPA; and Don McKee/Gavin Miles CNPA Planning.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

3. Were approved, with revision of item 29 to change the name SLF (Scottish Landowner's Federation) to SRPBA (Scottish Rural Property and Business Association).

MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES:

4. Item 15: N.Brockie noted that the questionnaire was undergoing further revision, following a pilot study to test its effectiveness and user-friendliness; a final draft would be issued when ready.

DISCUSSION OF THE PARK PLAN: Nick Halfhide.

5. Nick gave a brief description of the Park Plan; strategic in nature across the whole Park, but covering more issues (than a traditional structure plan) as a management plan, and being used to co-ordinate all public/private sector and voluntary bodies who operate within the Park. The plan has a 5-year review schedule (from adoption); currently, the 'State of the Park Report' is being prepared from baseline data, from which the Park Plan will grow.
6. As the Park Plan develops, it will be crucial to engage people externally, to increase ownership of the Plan. This will need to take place before the formal consultation on the Plan, following which the Plan goes to the Scottish Executive for approval.
7. General concern was raised that the Local Plan (LP) was being developed in advance of the Park Plan (PP) (considering that the PP has to provide the strategic framework for the LP). N.Brockie noted that the LP was being developed now because the existing Badenoch & Strathspey Local Plan was chronically out-of-date. Once the LP was developed to Finalised Draft stage (and could be put on deposit) it would then be a material consideration when assessing planning applications and could operate as Local Plan 'emerging policy'. The LP could not be finally adopted, however, until the PP was adopted. NB
8. The PP & LP would therefore be developed in tandem, which would ensure cross-fertilization and synergy between the plans. This way, the strategic framework would be developed to suit both plans exactly. It was suggested that the section which provides the 'strategic context' for the Local Plan could be advanced at the same time as the LP, or a 'unitary-plan' developed to combine the two. Given the breadth of the PP it would not be possible for it to be finalised in the same time as the LP. The legal issue of the LP having to comply with the PP could be covered by the LP not being adopted prior to the PP's adoption, as noted above. This could leave the LP open to legal challenge by those who wished to exploit any weaknesses, and it was agreed that the CNPA should take legal advice on this issue, to avoid such challenges. NB/DM
9. The issue of Structure Plans was also perceived as a confusing/contentious issue. N.Halfhide noted that the existing local authority structure plans would remain in place until superceded by the adopted Park Plan. The CNPA Local Plan will also need to comply with the existing structure plans in the meantime, or justify its departure from their policies. This issue will also require confirmation from the Scottish Executive. NH/NB
10. N.Halfhide noted that while the PP Working Group was being wound-up, a joint staff group would be formed between the PP & LP teams to ensure co-ordinated development of the two plans. This would ensure that an integrated approach to

both was applied, and not least with the co-ordinated delivery of the Park's 4 aims.

11. S.Walker questioned whether the PP could have a specific section to cover the strategic framework for the LP, which would add clarity (and possibly legality) for both plans.
12. It was generally felt that the relationship between the plans (PP + LP) needed to be further clarified, especially to the CNPA Board, as well as their relationship to the other plans that operate within the Park (such as Community Plans etc.); all of the plans which operate within the Park should provide a shared vision for the agencies that must apply them. This relationship should also be clarified for the people of the Park to fully understand. The relationship between the PP and the LP has a particular legal status which must be complied with. This differs with respect to other plans where compliance is more of a policy issue.
13. P.Argyle noted that the 'Joined-up Government Advisory Group' was now in place, bringing together senior figures from all the public agencies who would have to implement the PP, to ensure they were 'on-board' from the start, with a view to future implementation.
14. The lack of guidance from the Scottish Executive, relative to the development of the PP was also perceived as a problematic issue, and something that may also require legal advice.

COMMUNITY LIAISON CO-ORDINATORS' REPORT. (full written reports were also provided, covering all their Community Council areas); additionally:

15. Anna Barton (Badenoch & Strathspey) noted that she had been in contact with all the Community Councils in her area, and was also targeting primary schools with a view to them doing 'visions for their community' projects next term. Targeting kids also has the added benefit that parents and families will most likely also get involved. Elspeth Grant (CNPA Social Inclusion Officer) had also been contacted with a view to involving secondary schools, although it is generally difficult to engage with the young people who won't be leaving the area for further education; one good example however is the Aviemore 'street project'.
16. Jean Henretty (Tomintoul - Angus Glens) has been touring areas with community reps, garnering local knowledge and making contacts beyond the Community Councils. Like Anna, primary schools are also being targeted, and methods sought to engage older children. There was a general low level of Local Plan knowledge, and a perception of inadequate feedback from previous consultations.
17. Community Councils have been asked to provide volunteer 'facilitators' who will work with Jean & Anna, and have also been given 3 options for helping to run the consultation process, with varying degrees of autonomy. *For info, these are:*

- a) The Community Liaison Co-ordinator (CLC's) and CNPA Planning Officers (PO's) organise & run the consultations.
- b) The Community Councils select one or more 'facilitators' to assist the CLC's and PO's to organise & run the consultations.
- c) The Community Councils facilitators, with the CLC's, will organise & run the consultations.

18. It was generally noted that the consultation should be as widespread as possible, and it was essential to engage all sectors of the community. The Local Plan would have an impact on everyone's lives, whether they knew it or not, and they should be given every opportunity to contribute and participate.

UPDATE ON QUESTIONNAIRE & COMMUNITY PROFILE.

19. N.Brockie noted that pilot studies were about to be carried-out by Anna & Jean to test the effectiveness and user-friendliness of the questionnaire, following which a final draft would be produced. Concerns had been raised within communities that the questionnaire results could be swayed by people with holiday homes who don't actually live in the area. This issue should be addressed with great care, but the questionnaire would have a residency question so results could be compared and analysed.

20. J.Hope noted that it would be preferable if the proposed Housing Needs Survey (HNS) could be sent out with the LP questionnaire, to reduce the number of separate Q's being sent out to people. Fiona Munro (CNPA Housing Officer) noted that there was a meeting with the four local authority Housing Depts. and Communities Scotland to discuss the need (and extent of) the housing needs survey, planned for 22nd July. If there was adequate baseline data existing, then a new survey may not be required. It was also noted that the H.N.S. could potentially follow the LP questionnaire as a second phase of the consultation process. The HNS's that had already been carried-out by the Highland Small Communities Trust were raised as good examples, and they could possibly be involved in any future survey work. There was a fair bit of discussion about concerns over consultation fatigue, the need to give feedback to avoid this, and also about enabling communities to become geared up to expect and deal with a range of consultations as a matter of process.

21. It was also noted that in areas where the main provider of rented-housing was the sporting estates, there were often no people on council/housing association waiting lists and it was difficult to accurately assess housing needs.

LOCAL PLAN TIMETABLE

22. The timetable was issued, but N.Brockie noted that the dates would be considered as somewhat 'elastic' as it was impossible to accurately timetable a consultation of this size and complexity; the one milestone date that had to be met was that the first round of community consultation would have to be complete by Christmas 2004.

LANDSCAPE ISSUES.

23. N.Brockie noted that the need for specialist landscape input for the Local Plan (specifically for Landscape Capacity Studies around settlements) was still being assessed.

ADDITIONAL EXTERNAL MEMBERS FOR GROUP.

24. No new members were proposed.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

25. N. Brockie noted that Alan Simpson would be coming to a future meeting to discuss the Highland Council Community Plan.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING.

26. The next meetings were arranged for Thursday 12th August in Logie Coldstone at 3.00pm, venue to be confirmed.

27. The meeting closed at 5.00pm.