

Badenoch & Strathspey Conservation Group
STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE
Hearing Session

Provision of the Local Plan

Boat of Garten H1

Summary of objection(s)

This allocation is excessive in scale and conflicts with the aims of the Park.

The woodland is extremely important for the endangered capercaillie. It is strategically placed between Kinveachy and Abernethy SPAs for capercaillie. This wood is known to support over 1% of the Scottish population. These figures indicate that the population of caper in this wood is of national significance and is sufficient for the wood to qualify as an SPA for capercaillie.

There is evidence from field research undertaken recently within this wood and Anagach Wood that recreational disturbance (walkers, cyclists, dogs etc) impacts on capercaillie. This research demonstrates that in Boat of Garten wood caper avoid the most disturbed area of the wood nearest the village. Thus, their droppings are sparser within 700m of the much-disturbed zone near the village. This research also shows that their droppings are sparser within 250m of tracks. A distance between tracks of over 500 m is required to provide capercaillie with relatively peaceful havens. Larger peaceful refuges are needed for hens to successfully rear broods (the actual size has not yet been determined).

The allocation H1 would create a new heavily disturbed area in what is currently woodland. It is likely that this new area of housing would be avoided by caper to a comparable extent as the current heavily disturbed zone i.e. by up to 700m, and especially so for 250m. The allocation would increase the recreational disturbance in the wood, and would also be likely to lead to new 'desire line' paths becoming established between the new housing and the already existing paths.

Overall, the effect of this allocation would be to expand the impact of recreational disturbance on caper.

An invertebrate new to Scotland, a slender groundhopper, was recorded on the allocation site in 2008.

Scottish Biodiversity List species of invertebrates on this site include Wood ants. There has been no proper survey of invertebrates.

Red squirrel dreys occur on the site, including dreys not referred to in the survey by the developer.

The allocation impacts on the Priority Habitat of Caledonian pinewood.

The allocation ignores the Reporter's recommendation for an earlier appeal on a site that included the present site.

Recommendation.

Omit allocation from LP.

Moss R. 2008. The Distribution of capercaillie droppings in relation to sources of disturbance: Part II. Boat of Garten Wood. Progress Report to Capercaillie BAP Group – Draft.

British Wildlife December 2008. Recent Records.

SEIRU Report PPA/270/380 2006.

Documents provided to HC planners and SEIRU by BSCG on wildlife interest of this site. HC Ref BS/02/00230/OUTBS and appeal ref P/ PPA/270/380 2006