

Cairngorms National Park
Partnership Plan 2017-2022

Habitats Regulations Appraisal Report

April 2017

THE
BIG 9



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List of Abbreviations

2000 Act	National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000
AA	Appropriate Assessment
Ha	Hectares
HRA	Habitats Regulations Appraisal
LSE	Likely Significant Effect
MRE	Minor Residual Effect
NPPP	National Park Partnership Plan
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SNH	Scottish Natural Heritage
SPA	Special Protection Area

Introduction

This document records the Habitats Regulations Appraisal (HRA) of the National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP) 2017-20122 which is the National Park Plan for the Cairngorms National Park required under the section 11 of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000.

Article 6(3) of the EC Habitats Directive requires that any plan (or project) which is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site, but would be likely to have a significant effect on such a site, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to an 'appropriate assessment' of its implications for the European site in view of the site's conservation objectives. This procedure is applied in Scotland through The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended), and is known as the 'Habitats Regulations Appraisal' of plans.

European sites are Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the

EC Habitats Directive to protect particular habitats and non-bird species, and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the EC Birds Directive to protect wild birds. Ramsar Sites are identified under the International Convention on the Conservation of Wetlands of International Importance and Scottish Ministers require these sites to be subject to the same protection as European sites.

The NPPP can only be adopted if it can be ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of a European site.

This document is the consultation Report of the NPPP Habitats regulations appraisal. Following the consultation a final report shall be prepared and published.

The NPPP also falls within the scope of section 5(3) of the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. The SEA of the NPPP is being conducted in parallel to the HRA and will be reported separately during the NPPP process.

The HRA Process

There is no prescribed method for a HRA. The CNPA are therefore following the guidelines prepared by David Tyldesley and Associates for Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) 'Habitats Regulations Appraisals of Plans' (January 2015) and have consulted SNH during the preparation of the appraisal.

There are 13 stages to the methodology followed, set out in **Table I**. This report records all stages. Further details of the methodology applied during screening and appropriate assessment are given in the relevant sections.

Table I Stages of the methodology (Source: SNH Guidance: Habitats Regulations Appraisal of Plans, D Tyldesley, 2015)

Stage 1	Decide whether plan is subject to HRA
Stage 2	Identify Natura Sites that should be considered
Stage 3	Gather information about the Natura Sites
Stage 4	Discretionary consultation on the method and scope of the appraisal
Stage 5	Screening the plan for potential likely significant effects on Natura sites
Stage 6	Apply mitigation measures
Stage 7	Re-screen the plan after mitigation measures have been applied
Stage 8	If significant effects still likely, undertake an appropriate assessment in view of conservation objectives
Stage 9	Apply mitigation measures until there is no adverse effect on site integrity
Stage 10	Prepare a draft record of the HRA
Stage 11	Consult on the draft record of the HRA
Stage 12	If amending the plan in light of consultation, screen amendments for likely significant effects and if required, carry out appropriate assessment and consult SNH again
Stage 13	Modify HRA record in light of any amendments, complete and publish the final HRA record with clear conclusions (this report)

Stage 1: The Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2017-2022 and the Decision to Screen for HRA

The NPPP will be the management plan for the Cairngorms National Park as required under section 11 of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000.

It is a plan for all those with an interest in and responsibility for managing the National Park. This includes public bodies that must have regard to the Plan in carrying out their functions and the private and voluntary sectors including businesses, land managers and communities who are all integral to managing the National Park.

In particular, the NPPP will:

- Set out the vision and overarching strategy for managing the Park;
- Provide focus and priorities at a time of limited financial resources;
- Provide a strategic context for the next Local Development Plan;
- Show how the four aims of the National Park can be achieved

together, benefiting people and place.

In order to make a plan that is effective and can be used by the many organisations needed, it needs to provide a clear framework for action and management, with flexibility in how it is delivered by different partners in different ways, places and times. This means that it necessarily leaves the detailed planning of programmes and projects to deliver it to the most appropriate organisations and partners.

The NPPP will set out the strategic direction and priorities, identifying the things that the CNPA and its partners think will make the biggest contribution to a successful National Park over the plan's lifetime and beyond.

It is clear that the NPPP may contain aspects that could have a direct consequence for at least one natura site. It is also clear that it is not solely for the

purposes of managing natura sites and therefore an HRA is required.

Stages 2 and 3: Identification of Natura Sites and Gathering their Details

The second and third stages in the assessment process are to identify which European sites either within or outwith the National Park that may be affected by the NPPP.

A total of 2,213 km² (around 50%) of the National Park has been designated as a European site (**Figure 1**). A number of European sites overlap the National Park Boundary, with a total 572 km² of their area located outwith its boundary.

A total of 43 European sites were considered in the assessment. They are listed in **Table 2**. Details of the sites are provided in **Appendix 1**.

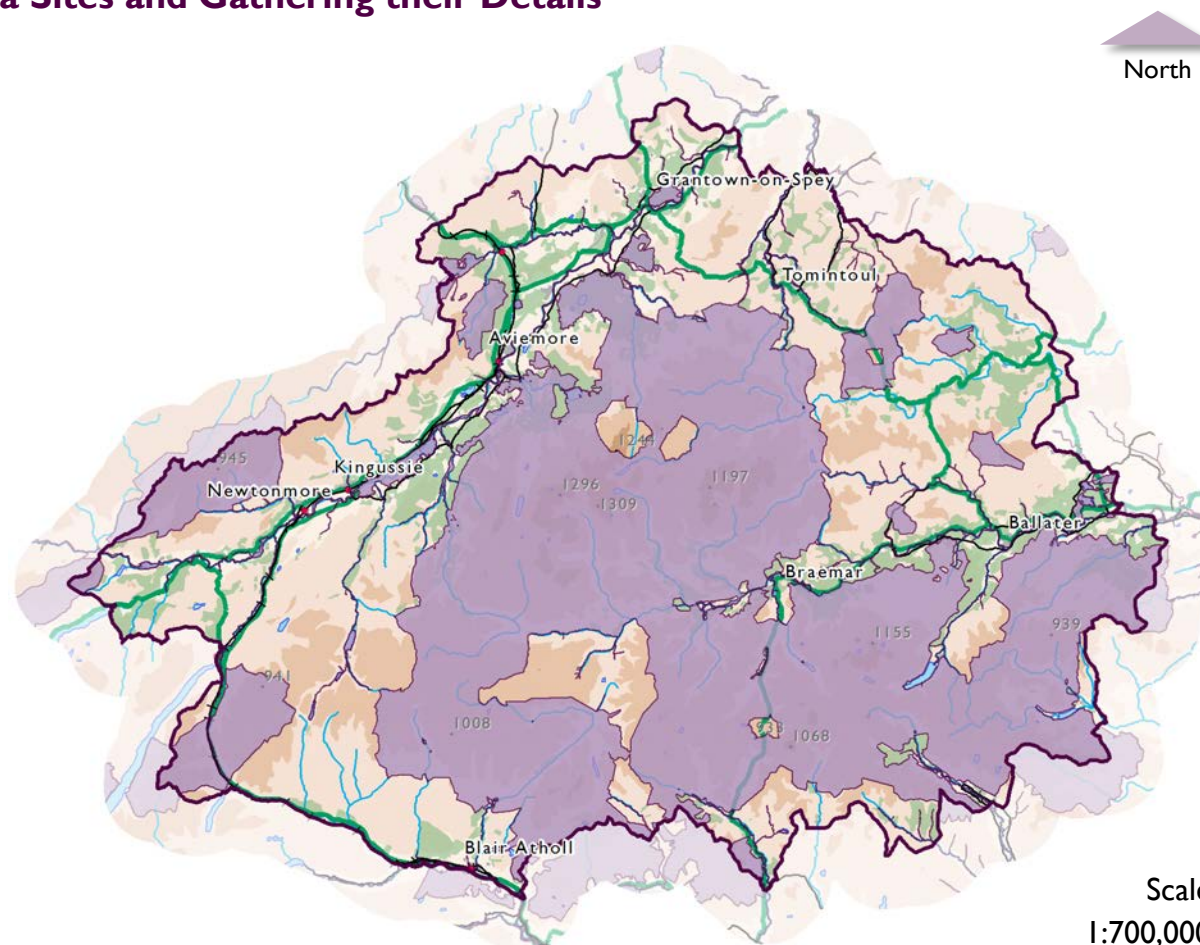


Figure 1 Land within the Cairngorms National Park that is protected as either an SAC, SPA or Ramsar site. For individual site maps, see Appendix 1.

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Table 2 European Sites selected for assessment in the HRA of the NPPP.

Site Code	Site Name	Site Status	Local Authority Area	Wholly Within CNP	Partially Within CNP	Total Area (ha)	Area within CNP (ha)	% Within CNP
UK9002561	Abernethy Forest	SPA	Highland	✓	✗	5,793.46	5,793.46	100%
UK9020297	Anagach Woods	SPA	Highland	✓	✗	392.78	392.78	100%
UK0012957	Beinn a' Ghlo	SAC	Perth & Kinross	✗	✓	8,084.76	7,762.25	96.0%
UK0030030	Ballochbuie	SAC	Aberdeenshire	✓	✗	1,881.73	1,881.73	100%
UK9002781	Ballochbuie	SPA	Aberdeenshire	✓	✗	1,881.73	1,881.73	100%
UK0012821	Caenlochan	SAC	Aberdeenshire; Angus; Perth and Kinross	✓	✗	5,204.16	5,204.16	100%
UK9004011	Caenlochan	SPA	Aberdeenshire; Angus; Perth and Kinross	✓	✗	5,975.28	5,975.28	100%
UK13002	Cairngorm Lochs	Ramsar	Highland	✓	✗	172.99	172.99	100%
UK0016412	Cairngorms	SAC	Aberdeenshire; Highland; Moray	✓	✗	57,685.02	57,685.02	100%
UK9002241	Cairngorms	SPA	Aberdeenshire; Highland; Moray	✓	✗	50,903.74	50,903.74	100%
UK9020308	Cairngorms Massif	SPA	Aberdeenshire, Angus, Highland, Moray, Perth and Kinross	✗	✓	187,504.06	173,254.64	92.4%
UK0030122	Coyles of Muick	SAC	Aberdeenshire	✓	✗	135.16	135.16	100%
UK9001801	Craigmore Wood	SPA	Highland	✓	✗	654.09	654.09	100%

Site Code	Site Name	Site Status	Local Authority Area	Wholly Within CNP	Partially Within CNP	Total Area (ha)	Area within CNP (ha)	% Within CNP
UK0012955	Creag Meagaidh	SAC	Highland	✗	✓	6,144.58	507.19	8.3%
UK9002161	Creag Meagaidh	SPA	Highland	✗	✓	2,872.64	71.18	2.5%
UK0013584	Creag nan Gamhainn	SAC	Moray	✓	✗	15.75	15.75	100%
UK0030134	Dinnet Oakwood	SAC	Aberdeenshire	✓	✗	19.73	19.73	100%
UK0012942	Drumochter Hills	SAC	Highland; Perth and Kinross	✗	✓	9,445.56	7,382.22	78.2%
UK9002301	Drumochter Hills	SPA	Highland; Perth and Kinross	✗	✓	9,445.56	7,382.22	78.2%
UK9004381	Forest of Clunie	SPA	Perth and Kinross	✗	✓	19,349.38	905.22	4.7%
UK0012756	Glen Tanar	SAC	Aberdeenshire	✗	✓	4,180.09	4,142.25	99.1%
UK9002771	Glen Tanar	SPA	Aberdeenshire	✗	✓	4,180.09	4,142.25	99.1%
UK0030159	Green Hill of Strathdon	SAC	Aberdeenshire	✓	✗	640.77	640.77	100%
UK0019812	Insh Marshes	SAC	Highland	✓	✗	1,158.78	1,158.78	100%
UK0012759	Kinveachy Forest	SAC	Highland	✗	✓	2,849.36	2,232.59	78.4%
UK9002581	Kinveachy Forest	SPA	Highland	✗	✓	2,849.36	2,232.59	78.4%
UK0030179	Ladder Hills	SAC	Aberdeenshire; Moray	✓	✗	4,357.94	4,357.94	100%
UK9002951	Ladder Hills	pSPA	Aberdeenshire; Moray	✓	✗	4,240.4	4,240.4	100%

Site Code	Site Name	Site Status	Local Authority Area	Wholly Within CNP	Partially Within CNP	Total Area (ha)	Area within CNP (ha)	% Within CNP
UK9002751	Loch Vaa	SPA	Highland	✓	✗	44.6	44.6	100%
UK9002281	Lochnagar	SPA	Angus, Aberdeenshire	✓	✗	1,431.28	1,431.28	100%
UK0030210	Monadhliath	SAC	Highland	✗	✓	10,671.11	7,121.03	66.7%
UK0012894	Morrone Birkwood	SAC	Aberdeenshire	✓	✗	318.4	318.4	100%
UK0019958	Morven & Mullachdubh	SAC	Aberdeenshire	✓	✗	916.76	916.76	100%
UK0019959	Muir of Dinnet	SAC	Aberdeenshire	✓	✗	415.76	415.76	100%
UK9002791	Muir of Dinnet	SPA	Aberdeenshire	✓	✗	157.6	157.6	100%
UK13049	Muir of Dinnet	Ramsar	Aberdeenshire	✓	✗	157.6	157.6	100%
UK0030251	River Dee	SAC	Aberdeenshire	✗	✓	2,446.82	1,368.59	55.9%
UK0030262	River South Esk	SAC	Angus	✗	✓	478.62	103.48	21.6%
UK0019811	River Spey	SAC	Highland; Moray	✗	✓	5,729.48	4,181.76	73.0%
UK9002231	River Spey – Insh Marshes	SPA	Highland	✓	✗	1,158.87	1,158.87	100%
UK13053	River Spey – Insh Marshes	Ramsar	Highland	✓	✗	1,158.77	1,158.77	100%
UK0030312	River Tay	SAC	Angus; Argyll and Bute; Perth & Kinross; Stirling	✗	✓	9,497.72	233.94	2.5%

Site Code	Site Name	Site Status	Local Authority Area	Wholly Within CNP	Partially Within CNP	Total Area (ha)	Area within CNP (ha)	% Within CNP
UK0030348	The Maim	SAC	Aberdeenshire	✓	✗	484.58	484.58	100%

Stage 4: Discussions on the Method and Scope of Appraisal

Advice from SNH was sought at key stages
in preparing the HRA including:

- Scoping approach and methodology
for assessment
- Review and discussion of first draft

Stage 5: Screening the Plan

According to David Tyldesley and Associates (2015), the purpose of screening is to:

- a. Identify all aspects of the plan which would have no effect on a European site, so that they can be eliminated from further consideration in respect of this and other plans;
- b. Identify all aspects of the plan which would not be likely to have a significant effect on a European site (i.e. would have some effect, because of links/connectivity, but which are minor residual), either alone or in combination with other aspects of the same plan or other plans or projects, which therefore do not require 'appropriate assessment'; and
- c. Identify those aspects of the plan where it is not possible to rule out the risk of significant effects on a European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or

projects. This provides a clear scope for the parts of the plan that will require appropriate assessment.

The screening process has four key steps:

- Screening step 1: screening out general policy statements
- Screening step 2: screening out projects referred to in, but not proposed by, the plan
- Screening step 3: screening out aspects of a plan that could have no likely significant effect on a site, alone or in combination with other aspects of the same plan, or with other plans or projects.
- Screening step 4: consideration of likely significant effects in combination

Screening Step 1: Screening out general policy statements

The long term outcomes of the NPPP, Priorities, and policy statements that support this set out the overall direction for the plan. **Table 3** sets out the screening for these statements.

Table 3 Screening of General Policy Statements.

Aspect of Plan, policy, project or strategy	General policy statement
Long Term Outcomes	
A special place for people and nature with natural and cultural heritage enhanced	Long term outcome from the NPPP for the National Park to be a special place for people and nature.
People enjoying the Park through outstanding visitor and learning experiences	Long term outcome from the NPPP for the National Park to be a special place for people and nature.
A sustainable economy supporting thriving businesses and communities	Long term outcome from the NPPP for the National Park to have a sustainable economy supporting thriving businesses and communities.
Priorities for Action	
2a) Providing clarity on the public interest priorities;	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
2c) Supporting an adaptive approach by monitoring the habitat, economic and welfare implications of changes in the context of the Deer Code;	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
2d) Supporting greater co-ordination of roe deer management and associated habitat and economic benefits;	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park

Aspect of Plan, policy, project or strategy	General policy statement
2e) Facilitating communication and joint action across Deer Management Group boundaries where necessary.	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
3d) Minimising landscape (impacts) through a presumption against new constructed tracks in open moorland;	
3e) Eliminating the illegal killing of raptors through increased wildlife crime enforcement capacity and recognition for good management:	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
i) Supporting a more collaborative approach to integrating objectives for conservation, sport and woodland through the East Cairngorms Moorland Partnership and with other estates.	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
Delivery of the Tourism Action Plan	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
4a) 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	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
4b) Delivering a consistent high quality of visitor welcome through new and improved information, support for rangers services and partnership working to support businesses, communities and visitor attractions;	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
4c) Improving the visitor experience in Cairngorm and Glenmore, and Tomintoul and Glenlivet;	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park

Aspect of Plan, policy, project or strategy	General policy statement
4d) Completing the 'Snow Roads Scenic Route' and developing a similar experience along the A9; and	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
4e) Encouraging the provision of low cost camping and motor home sites in appropriate locations	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
4f) Improving visitor transport options and information	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
5a) Using partnership in the National Park as an example of how to support delivery of Scotland's Natural Health Service	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
6a) Maintaining existing outdoor learning programmes; John Muir Award and Junior Rangers;	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
6e) Creating a 'Park for All' that reduces barriers and inspires diversity of people to engage with and care for their National Park through lifelong learning.	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
7a) Reducing the proportion of second homes by ensuring that new housing development is targeted at meeting local needs as far as possible;	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
7e) Applying flexible planning policies to encourage or enable majority affordable housing developments and encouraging the use of innovative delivery models to maximise the number of affordable homes that are built;	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
7f) Targeting public sector funding towards sites with the greatest potential for delivering affordable housing;	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park

Aspect of Plan, policy, project or strategy	General policy statement
7h) Promoting high standards of sustainable design and energy efficiency in new homes to ensure they are affordable in terms of lifetime running costs	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
8a) Offering support to communities across the National Park through locally based support organisations and working with partner organisations, with a presumption in favour of collaborative working;	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
8b) Supporting community groups to improve communication and engagement with their communities in order to enhance local democracy and participation	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
8c) Continuing to support communities to review and update their Community Action Plans at least every five years;	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
8d) Working with community groups to improve succession planning and volunteering in order to allow them to take advantage of new opportunities and proactively address issues; ;	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
8e) Working collaboratively through community planning structures within the five Community Planning Partnership areas to provide consistent and clear support and information to communities;	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
8f) Continuing to offer support to the Association of Cairngorms Communities and using it as a forum for broader engagement;	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park

Aspect of Plan, policy, project or strategy	General policy statement
8g)Establishing a new spatial priority area to provide an enhanced level of future assistance/collaboration over a focused time period to the Dalwhinnie, Kingussie, Laggan and Newtonmore area from 2019/20, making the most of investment in the A9 dualling project	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
8h) Establishing a new spatial priority area to provide an enhanced level of future assistance/collaboration over a focused time period to the Dalwhinnie, Kingussie, Laggan and Newtonmore area from 2020/2021, making the most of investment in the A9 upgrade.	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
9a) Developing sector-specific plans (e.g. forestry, food and drink) to tackle investment, skills and support long-term resilience as well as building business on the natural capital of the National Park;	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
9b) Supporting Cairngorms Community Broadband to deliver superfast broadband in the hardest to reach parts of the Park;	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
9c) Continuing to improve physical infrastructure, including access to affordable housing and digital connectivity;	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
9d) Maximising the opportunities for businesses, communities and visitors from the A9 dualling project;	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
9e) Using the next Local Development Plan (LDP) to identifying new sites for business use and expansion and the delivery of the LDP to target investment that opens up those sites to business.	General statement from NPPP setting out priority for the National Park
Policies	

Aspect of Plan, policy, project or strategy	General policy statement
1.2 Enhance the resilience of habitats, species and land use to climate change pest and disease risks	General policy statement from NPPP setting out long term outcome for the National Park to be a special place for people and nature.
1.3 Conserve and enhance the special landscape qualities	General policy statement from NPPP setting out long term outcome for the National Park to be a special place for people and nature.
1.3 a) conserving and enhancing wildness qualities	General policy statement from NPPP setting out long term outcome for the National Park to be a special place for people and nature.
1.3 d) enhancing opportunities to enjoy and experience the landscapes of the Park	General policy statement from NPPP setting out long term outcome for the National Park to be a special place for people and nature.
1.5 c) engaging people on species that are important in the National Park	General policy statement from NPPP setting out long term outcome for the National Park to be a special place for people and nature.
1.6 a) deer and moorland management;	General policy statement from NPPP setting out long term outcome for the National Park to be a special place for people and nature.
1.6 b) wildlife crime;	General policy statement from NPPP setting out long term outcome for the National Park to be a special place for people and nature.
1.6 c) species reintroductions.	General policy statement from NPPP setting out long term outcome for the National Park to be a special place for people and nature.
1.7 Conserve and enhance the cultural heritage that helps to create the sense of place and identity of communities within the Park by:	General policy statement from NPPP setting out long term outcome for the National Park to be a special place for people and nature.
1.7 d) promoting opportunities to enjoy and celebrate the cultural heritage of the Park.	General policy statement from NPPP setting out long term outcome for the National Park to be a special place for people and nature.

Aspect of Plan, policy, project or strategy	General policy statement
2.1 Provide a welcoming and high quality National Park experience for all	General policy statement from NPPP setting out the long term outcome for the National Park to be a place people enjoy through outstanding visitor and learning experiences
2.1 c) enhancing the provision of ranger services to deliver visitor welcome and resource protection	General policy statement from NPPP setting out the long term outcome for the National Park to be a place people enjoy through outstanding visitor and learning experiences
2.2 Promote sustainable tourism management	General policy statement from NPPP setting out the long term outcome for the National Park to be a place people enjoy through outstanding visitor and learning experiences
2.2 a) co-ordinated promotion and management of the Cairngorms National Park as a visitor destination	General policy statement from NPPP setting out the long term outcome for the National Park to be a place people enjoy through outstanding visitor and learning experiences
2.5a Enhance the design and sense of place in new development and existing settlements	General policy statement from NPPP setting out long term outcome for the National Park to be a special place for people and nature.
3.1c. encouraging growth of business sectors that draw on the special qualities of the Park such as sustainable tourism and food and drink	General policy statement from NPPP setting out long term outcome for the National Park to have a sustainable economy supporting thriving businesses and communities
3.3 Support development of a low carbon economy	General policy statement from NPPP setting out long term outcome for the National Park to have a sustainable economy supporting thriving businesses and communities
3.4. a) supporting communities to plan for their own futures, develop and implement projects, engage the support of partners	General policy statement from NPPP setting out long term outcome for the National Park to have a sustainable economy supporting thriving businesses

Aspect of Plan, policy, project or strategy	General policy statement
and share good practice.	and communities
3.4c) aligning community planning processes to simplify support to communities	General policy statement from NPPP setting out long term outcome for the National Park to have a sustainable economy supporting thriving businesses and communities
3.4 d) engaging communities effectively in the long term management of the National Park and in projects or programmes that affect them	General policy statement from NPPP setting out long term outcome for the National Park to have a sustainable economy supporting thriving businesses and communities

Screening Step 2: Screening out projects referred to in, but not proposed by, the plan

Policy 1.2. c) refers to improvements in road and rail infrastructure, Priority 1e) refers to the Tomintoul and Glenlivet Landscape Partnership project, there are no other references to projects which are not proposed by the plan (**Table 4**).

Table 4 Projects referred to in, but not proposed by, the Plan.

Aspect of Plan, policy, project or strategy	General policy statement
Priorities	
1 e) Deliver co-ordinated conservation action through the Tomintoul and Glenlivet Landscape partnership;	General supporting statement of Projects not proposed by this plan
Policies	
3.2 c) supporting sensitively designed improvements to the A9 and other trunk roads and main railway line as an integral part of enhancing the connectivity of the Highlands;	General supporting statement of Projects not proposed by this plan

Screening Step 3: Screening Out Other Aspects of the NPPP that Could Have No Likely Significant Effect

The remaining policies have been screened for any likely significant effects on any specific Natura site (**Table 5**).

Table 5 Screening policy for no likely significant effects.

Nature of policy	Title of policy or guidance
Aspect protective of the natural environment and so has no potential negative effects upon designated sites.	<p>Priority</p> <p>1d) Co-ordinate habitat, recreation and development management to secure the capercaillie population through delivery for the Capercaillie framework:</p> <p>1f) Develop a regional Natura Plan for the suite of SACs and SPAs in the Cairngorms National Park. The plan will address conservation objectives, measures and priorities for the suite of sites. It will seek to enhance delivery of favourable condition and integrate site management with broader conservation objectives beyond the designated sites;</p> <p>1g) Consider options to provide appropriate public recognition where large areas of land are managed for nature conservation;</p> <p>2b) Supporting the use of population modelling, herbivore impact assessments and habitat monitoring to inform management;</p> <p>3a) Improving a shared definition and understanding of healthy moorland ecosystems;</p> <p>3b) Delivering more habitat and species diversity within and alongside moorlands;</p> <p>3f) Delivering peatland restoration and securing peatland for the long term</p> <p>5e) Delivering more environmental volunteering opportunities and developing volunteer rangers</p> <p>Policy</p> <p>1.2 b) enhancing the health and connectivity of habitats;</p>

Nature of policy	Title of policy or guidance
	<p>1.2 c) securing effective management of peat and carbon-rich soils;</p> <p>1.3 c) enhancements that also deliver habitat improvements; 1.2.4 Conserve and enhance habitat quality and connectivity;</p> <p>1.4 a) woodland enhancement and expansion, especially montane, farm and riparian woodlands;</p> <p>1.4 b) wetland enhancement;</p> <p>1.5 Conserve and enhance the species for which the Cairngorms National park is most important;</p> <p>1.5 a) species whose conservation status is in decline or at risk;</p> <p>2.5 b) tackling and reducing the impacts of invasive non-native species;</p> <p>1.2 b) ensuring high quality facilities and infrastructure are designed to manage the effects of visitor pressures on the natural heritage and communities;</p> <p>1.2 c) implementing and reviewing the strategy and action plan for sustainable tourism in the Cairngorms National Park;</p> <p>1.3 c) identifying areas where particular management measures are needed in relation to delivering a high quality visitor experience, safeguarding sensitive environments and maintaining the integrity of designated sites;</p>
Aspect not lead to change or does not promote development	<p>3.1 e) slowing outward migration of young people; to encourage their return; and the inward migration of workers to the Park to meet business and community needs;</p> <p>1.7 a) protecting archaeological sites and their settings and promoting understanding of their significance;</p> <p>1.7 c) protecting and enhancing the built heritage and designed landscapes;</p>
Aspect has no conceivable effect or would not otherwise undermine conservation objectives	<p>Priority</p> <p>6d) Raising awareness and understanding of the Park and the issues and choices involved in management of the Park;</p> <p>Policy</p> <p>1.1 The management and use of land should deliver multiple benefits – delivering the best possible combination of the</p>

Nature of policy	Title of policy or guidance
	<p>National Park Partnership Plan's long-term outcomes, always ensuring that the integrity of designated sites is maintained; and that the special qualities are conserved and, where possible, enhanced. This will be supported by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1 a) a long-term planned approach by landbased businesses to delivering environmental, economic and social benefits; 1.1 b) support for land managers to plan and deliver environmental and social benefits underpinned by sound economic businesses; 1.1 c) research to support an ecosystems approach to management 1.3 b) maintaining and promoting dark skies; 1.7 b) ensuring appropriate advice and investigation for archaeology is used to inform proposals for land use change; 2.1 a) delivering a visitor/customer experience that spans organisational boundaries; 2.1 b) providing high quality co-ordinated information setting visitor experiences in the context of the National Park; 2.1 d) building on the National Park brand and the promise it delivers; 2.3 d) promoting responsible behaviour in enjoying and managing access; 2.4 c) promoting a sense of shared ownership and responsibility towards Scotland's National Parks and rural environment. 3.1g) securing ways to reduce the proportion of vacant and second homes to support community vibrancy and ensure the overall housing supply best meets local needs; 3.1h) reducing the proportion of vacant and second homes to support community vibrancy by ensuring that new housing development best meets local needs; 3.1i) maximising the proportion of new housing development that is affordable in perpetuity. 3.2 a) consolidating the role of the existing main settlements of Aviemore, Ballater, Grantown-on-Spey, Kingussie and Newtonmore, as well as new community at An Camas Mòr, as the most sustainable places for future growth and the focus for housing land supply while maintaining the integrity of designated sites;

Nature of policy	Title of policy or guidance
	<p>3.2 e) planning and supporting improvements to the information technology network;</p> <p>3.3 a) increasing renewable energy generation, especially biomass and hydro, that is compatible with conserving the special qualities of the National Park and maintaining the integrity of designated sites. Large-scale wind turbines are not compatible with the landscape character or special landscape qualities of the National Park. They are considered inappropriate within the National Park or where outside the Park they adversely affect its landscape character or special landscape qualities;</p> <p>3.3 b) supporting businesses and communities to use less energy, reduce emissions, improve the energy efficiency of existing buildings, generate low impact renewable energy and plan for a changing climate;</p> <p>3.3 c) maximising the benefits to communities through direct use of locally generated energy or where sold to the grid, reinvesting income to support community development;</p> <p>3.3 d) promoting high standards of sustainable design and efficient use of energy and materials in construction</p> <p>Policy 3.5 Enhance the design and sense of place in new development and existing settlements, in particular:</p> <p>3.5 b) promoting a high standard of sustainable design, energy efficiency, sustainably sourced materials and construction in new development;</p> <p>3.5 c) supporting the retention and enhancement of local character;</p> <p>3.5 f) promoting active travel and public transport provision and reducing the reliance on private motor vehicles.</p>
Aspect can have no significant effect	<p>Priority</p> <p>5c) Targeting people currently living sedentary lifestyles where inactivity is the norm; older adults, teenage girls and those living with long-term medical conditions</p> <p>5f) Better co-ordination and promotion of public transport and active travel</p> <p>Policy</p> <p>1.2a) collaborating on land use and flood management, including natural flood management, through river catchment management plans, Proposals arising from the river catchment management plans will always ensure that</p>

Nature of policy	Title of policy or guidance
	the integrity of designated sites is maintained;
Aspect too general to know when, how or which site could be affected	<p>Priority</p> <p>1a) Target effort and support to the most effective opportunities to deliver the public interest priorities such as woodland expansion, peatland restoration, flood risk management</p> <p>1c) Support land owner led collaborations to co-ordinate planning, delivery and monitoring across multiple land holdings, including Cairngorms Connect and the East Cairngorms Moorland Partnership;</p> <p>1g) Plan proactively for the potential and management implications of beaver populations;</p> <p>3c) Implementing guidance and trialling new approaches emerging from national initiatives, for example: mapping what implementation of the revised muirburn code means, using the Principles of Moorland management and using the lessons of the Understanding predation project to share knowledge and data;</p> <p>3g) Integrating woodland expansion and montane scrub within and around moorlands, supporting a more collaborative approach to integrating objectives for conservation, sport and woodland through the East Cairngorms Moorland Partnership and with other estates.</p> <p>5b) Encouraging residents and visitors to responsibly enjoy and use the National Park for physical activity as part of daily life;</p> <p>5d) Maintaining and growing health walks through the Cairngorms Walking project and linking with other opportunities to be active;</p> <p>5g) Improving opportunities for active travel in Aviemore that deliver improved transport connections for visitors and residents.</p> <p>6b) Providing an opportunity for every child to visit the Cairngorms National Park during their school life to learn about and connect with the Park;</p> <p>6c) Developing and promoting learning resources and training opportunities that make it easier for education providers to use the National Park;</p>

Nature of policy	Title of policy or guidance
	<p>6f) Using volunteering and physical activity to promote learning and inclusion</p> <p>7a) Maximising the proportion of new housing that is affordable in perpetuity;</p> <p>7b) Identifying sites in the next Local Development Plan where the affordable housing contribution will be more than 25% because of acute affordability pressures and the shortage of supply;</p> <p>7c) Using the next Local Development Plan to manage the nature of new open market housing so it is better targeted towards local needs (eg by seeking a greater mix of house types and sizes, including smaller homes, in new developments)</p> <p>7f) Supporting communities to deliver community-led housing solutions, including by making the most of powers to buy land and taking a more pro-active role in management where appropriate;</p> <p>Policy</p> <p>1.1 d) linking land management planning with community action planning</p> <p>1.4 d) delivering a combination of ecosystem services including natural flood management, carbon</p> <p>2.3 Provide high quality opportunities for access and recreation while maintaining the integrity of designated sites, with a particular focus on;</p> <p>2.3 a) ensuring a high quality functional network of core paths and long distance routes;</p> <p>2.3 b) promoting the health benefits of outdoor recreation, including through the Active Cairngorms outdoor access strategy;</p> <p>2.4 Provide opportunities for inspiration, learning and understanding through engaging with people with a particular focus on;</p> <p>2.4 a) young people and other under-represented groups;</p> <p>2.4 b) opportunities to deliver the curriculum for excellence.</p> <p>3.1 Grow the economy of the Park by strengthening existing business sectors, supporting business start-ups and diversification, and increasing the number of workers employed in the Park;</p>

Nature of policy	Title of policy or guidance
	<p>3.1 a) maintaining the population of the National Park and maintaining or growing the proportion of the working age population;</p> <p>3.1 b) supporting the diversification of existing landbased businesses;</p> <p>3.1 d) broadening the economic base of the Park into sectors such as creative industries, renewable energy, and making stronger links with higher and further education;</p> <p>3.1 e) increased provision for business land where there is an identified need and demand; and to support the use of land for small business, particularly within settlements</p> <p>3.1 g) provision of a housing land supply that meets identified need and demand, supports migration of young people and workers to the Park, and maintains vibrant communities;</p> <p>Enable sustainable patterns of settlement growth, infrastructure and communications;</p> <p>3.2 b) providing any additional flexibility in future land supply for housing at small sites around a wider range of settlements;</p> <p>3.2 d) planning and improving integrated and sustainable local transport networks that allow for safe travel off-road and link with public transport;</p> <p>3.2 f) planning and supporting improvements to the mobile communications network that improve access to new generation technology and minimise the need for visually intrusive infrastructure;</p> <p>3.4 b) supporting innovative approaches to providing affordable housing to meet local needs;</p> <p>sequestration and storage, timber and food production;</p> <p>3.5 a) enabling new development which contributes positively to the sense of place;</p> <p>3.5 d) facilitating the rehabilitation of redundant rural buildings and recycling of resources;</p> <p>3.5 e) ensuring road upgrades and improvements respond to local landscape character;</p>

Screening Step 4: In-combination effects

There were no Minor Residual Effects identified within the long term objectives, priorities or policies, therefore there are no in-combination effects.

Summary of Screening

Table 6 provides a summary of the screening process, outlining the steps in which the elements of the NPPP were either screened in or out of the appraisal.

Table 6 Screening Summary

Outcome /Priority/ Policy		Step 1: General policy statements	Step 2: Projects referred to in, but not proposed by, the plan	Step 3: Other aspects of the NPPP that could have no LSEs	Step 4: In-combination effects	Aspect not screened out
Long term Outcome 1		Out				
Long term Outcome 2		Out				
Long term Outcome 3		Out				
Priority 1	1a			Out		
	1b					In
	1c			Out		
	1d			Out		
	1e		Out			
	1f			Out		
	1g			Out		
	1h	Out				
Priority 2	2a	Out				
	2b			Out		
	2c	Out				
	2d	Out				

Outcome /Priority/ Policy		Step 1: General policy statements	Step 2: Projects referred to in, but not proposed by, the plan	Step 3: Other aspects of the NPPP that could have no LSEs	Step 4: In-combination effects	Aspect not screened out
Priority 3	2e	Out				
	3a			Out		
	3b			Out		
	3c			Out		
	3d			Out		
	3e	Out				
	3f			Out		
	3g			Out		
	3h					In
	3i	Out				
Priority 4	4a	Out				
	4b					In
	4c	Out				
	4d	Out				
	4e	Out				
	4f	Out				
Priority 5	5a	Out				
	5b			Out		
	5c			Out		
	5d			Out		
	5e			Out		
	5f			Out		
	5g			Out		

Outcome /Priority/ Policy		Step 1: General policy statements	Step 2: Projects referred to in, but not proposed by, the plan	Step 3: Other aspects of the NPPP that could have no LSEs	Step 4: In-combination effects	Aspect not screened out
Priority 6	6a	Out				
	6b			Out		
	6c			Out		
	6d			Out		
	6e	Out				
	6f			Out		
Priority 7	7a	Out				
	7b			Out		
	7c			Out		
	7d			Out		
	7e	Out				
	7f	Out				
	7g			Out		
	7h	Out				
Priority 8	8a	Out				
	8b	Out				
	8c	Out				
	8d	Out				
	8e	Out				
	8f	Out				
	8g	Out				
Priority 9	9a	Out				
	9b	Out				

Outcome /Priority/ Policy		Step 1: General policy statements	Step 2: Projects referred to in, but not proposed by, the plan	Step 3: Other aspects of the NPPP that could have no LSEs	Step 4: In-combination effects	Aspect not screened out
	9c	Out				
	9d	Out				
	9e	Out				
Policy 1.1	Policy 1.1			Out		
	a			Out		
	b			Out		
	c			Out		
Policy 1.2	Policy 1.2			Out		
	a			Out		
	b			Out		
	c					In
	d			Out		
Policy 1.3	Policy 1.3	Out				
	a			Out		
	b			Out		
	c			Out		
	d			Out		
	e			Out		
Policy 1.4	Policy 1.4			Out		
	a			Out		
	b			Out		
	c			Out		
	d			Out		

Outcome /Priority/ Policy		Step 1: General policy statements	Step 2: Projects referred to in, but not proposed by, the plan	Step 3: Other aspects of the NPPP that could have no LSEs	Step 4: In-combination effects	Aspect not screened out
Policy 1.5	Policy 1.5			Out		
	a			Out		
	b			Out		
	c			Out		
	d			Out		
Policy 1.6	Policy 1.6	Out				
	a	Out				
	b	Out				
	c	Out				
Policy 1.7	Policy 1.7	Out				
	a			Out		
	b			Out		
	c			Out		
	d	Out				
Policy 2.1	Policy 2.1	Out				
	a			Out		
	b			Out		
	c	Out				
	d			Out		
Policy 2.2	Policy 2.2	Out				
	a	Out				
	b			Out		
	c	Out				

Outcome /Priority/ Policy		Step 1: General policy statements	Step 2: Projects referred to in, but not proposed by, the plan	Step 3: Other aspects of the NPPP that could have no LSEs	Step 4: In-combination effects	Aspect not screened out
Policy 2.3	Policy 2.3	Out				
	a			Out		
	b			Out		
	c			Out		
	d			Out		
Policy 2.4	Policy 2.4			Out		
	a			Out		
	b			Out		
	c			Out		
	d			Out		
Policy 3.1	Policy 3.1			Out		
	a			Out		
	b			Out		
	c	Out				
	d			Out		
	e			Out		
	f			Out		
	g			Out		
	h			Out		
	i			Out		
Policy 3.2	Policy 3.2			Out		
	a			Out		
	b			Out		

Outcome /Priority/ Policy		Step 1: General policy statements	Step 2: Projects referred to in, but not proposed by, the plan	Step 3: Other aspects of the NPPP that could have no LSEs	Step 4: In-combination effects	Aspect not screened out
	c		Out			
	d			Out		
	e			Out		
	f			Out		
Policy 3.3	Policy 3.3	Out				
	a			Out		
	b			Out		
	c			Out		
	d			Out		
Policy 3.4	Policy 3.4	Out				
	a	Out				
	b			Out		
	c	Out				
	d	Out				
Policy 3.5	Policy 3.5			Out		
	a			Out		
	b			Out		
	c			Out		
	d			Out		
	e			Out		
	f			Out		

Summary of Likely Significant Effects

Table 7 provides a summary of the NPPP's Likely Significant Effects identified during the screening process.

Table 7 Summary of Likely Significant Effects.

Aspect of NPPP	Natura sites	Likely Significant Effect
Priority 1b: Support and further develop the role of catchment partnerships as mechanisms to co-ordinate land use planning and identify priority area for natural flood management;	River Spey SAC , River Dee SAC, River Tay SAC & River South Esk SAC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Disturbance to Qualifying Interests ➤ Pollution and siltation ➤ River engineering ➤ Changes in water management ➤ New or increased discharges to watercourses ➤ New or increased sources of diffuse pollution/sedimentation ➤ Changes to levels, patterns or types of recreational use ➤ Release of invasive species, plant pests or diseases, or land management that facilitates faster spread
Priority 3h: Integrating woodland expansion and montane scrub within and around moorlands,	All non-river SACs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Loss of qualifying features ➤ Changes in the distribution of qualifying features ➤ Changes to the supporting habitats for qualifying species
Priority 4c: Developing new ways to fund infrastructure investment and maintaining and upgrading key off-road routes including Speyside Way, Deeside Way and the	Abernethy Forest SPA, Craigmore Wood SPA, Anagach Woods SPA, Kinveachy Forest SPA, Cairngorms SPA, Glen Tanar SPA, Ballochbuie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Disturbance to Qualifying Interests ➤ Changes to levels, patterns or types of recreational use

Aspect of NPPP	Natura sites	Likely Significant Effect
Core Paths network, maintained;	SPA	
Policy 1.2c: expanding woodland on appropriate soils;	All non-river SACs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Loss of qualifying features➤ Changes in the distribution of qualifying features➤ Changes to the supporting habitats for qualifying species

Stage 6: Mitigation measures

Where LSEs have **not** been screened out during **Stage 5** it may be possible to incorporate measures into the Plan that will mitigate these effects. Such mitigation must reduce the effects identified to a level where they are not likely to be significant and will have no adverse effect on the integrity of any Natura site.

Stage 6 immediately follows screening. At this point mitigation may be applied by deleting an aspect of the Plan or modifying

it in some way; for example by relocating it, changing the time of delivery, or by making changes that avoid effects or reduce scale. Where this is done the mitigated aspect is then re-screened to see if LSEs remain.

Once mitigation measures have been applied in **Stage 6**, **Stage 7** re-screens the Plan to determine whether significant effects are still likely. If they are, an appropriate assessment is undertaken (Stage 8), through which further mitigation measures are identified.

Having considered the LSEs identified in **Stage 5**, and summarised in **Table 7**, **Stage 6** identifies a mitigation measure that is straightforward and can be applied to the Plan immediately after screening to address specific LSEs.

Table 8 outlines the caveat that must be included within Policy 2.2, as of the 2nd June 2016.

Table 8 Mitigation Measures

Step Screened in I	Original Policy wording	Amended Policy wording
Step 1	Priority 1b: Support and further develop the role of catchment partnerships as mechanisms to co-ordinate land use planning and identify priority area for natural flood management;	The priority does not need to be amended but it needs to be explicitly stated that the priorities are only delivered through the later policies. These policies have been screened for LSE separately. Therefore additional wording to this effect is required: <i>An 'Agenda for Action' is identified for each of the nine priorities, and a series of clearly defined policies provide a framework for delivering the priorities and actions.</i>
Step 1	Priority 3h: Integrating woodland expansion and montane scrub within and around moorlands,	The priority does not need to be amended but it needs to be explicitly stated that the priorities are only delivered through the later policies. These policies have been screened for LSE separately. Therefore additional wording to this effect is

		required: <i>An 'Agenda for Action' is identified for each of the nine priorities, and a series of clearly defined policies provide a framework for delivering the priorities and actions.</i>
Step 1	Priority 4c) Developing new ways to fund infrastructure investment and maintaining and upgrading key off-road routes including Speyside Way, Deeside Way and the Core Paths network, maintained;	The priority does not need to be amended but it needs to be explicitly stated that the priorities are only delivered through the later policies. These policies have been screened for LSE separately. Therefore additional wording to this effect is required: <i>An 'Agenda for Action' is identified for each of the nine priorities, and a series of clearly defined policies provide a framework for delivering the priorities and actions.</i>
Step 1	Policy 1.2c) expanding woodland on appropriate soils;	<p>Enhance the resilience of habitats, species and land use to climate change, pest and disease risks, with a particular focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) collaborating on land use and flood management, including natural flood management, through river catchment management plans; b) enhancing the health and connectivity of habitats; c) expanding woodland on appropriate soils; d) securing protection and sustainable management of peat and carbon-rich soils and restoring them where they are degraded. <p>All proposals to deliver these objectives will always ensure that the integrity of designated sites is maintained.</p>

Stage 7: Re-screen the NPPP and Determine the Need for an Appropriate Assessment

Following application of the mitigation measures in **Stage 6**, this stage re-screens the plan to identify LSEs that remain.

Stage 6 shows that there are simple mitigation measures available to the four aspects identified as having possible LSEs during screening. As a consequence there are no remaining LSEs to take forward to appropriate assessment or Minor Residual Effect to be considered in-combination with other MREs from other plans or policies.

An appropriate assessment is not required because no outstanding LSEs have been identified.

Stages 8 and 9: Appropriate Assessment and further mitigation

As determined in stage 7 above this stage is not required.

Stage 10: Preparing the consultation draft

This document is the consultation draft for the HRA.

Stage 11: Consultation Process

There is a requirement under the regulations to consult upon the draft HRA with the statutory conservation body. In Scotland this is Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH).

Stage 12: Modifying the HRA in light of the consultation process

This will be undertaken at the close of the consultation processes outlined above.

Stage 13: Final conclusion

This assessment based upon the best available scientific evidence and advice offered from SNH and others has shown that there is no likely significant effect from the proposed development upon the qualifying features or the conservation objectives for any Natura site.

The CNPA therefore conclude that the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2017-22 will not adversely affect the integrity of any Natura site.