



Cairngorms
NATIONAL PARK

CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK
2021-2022



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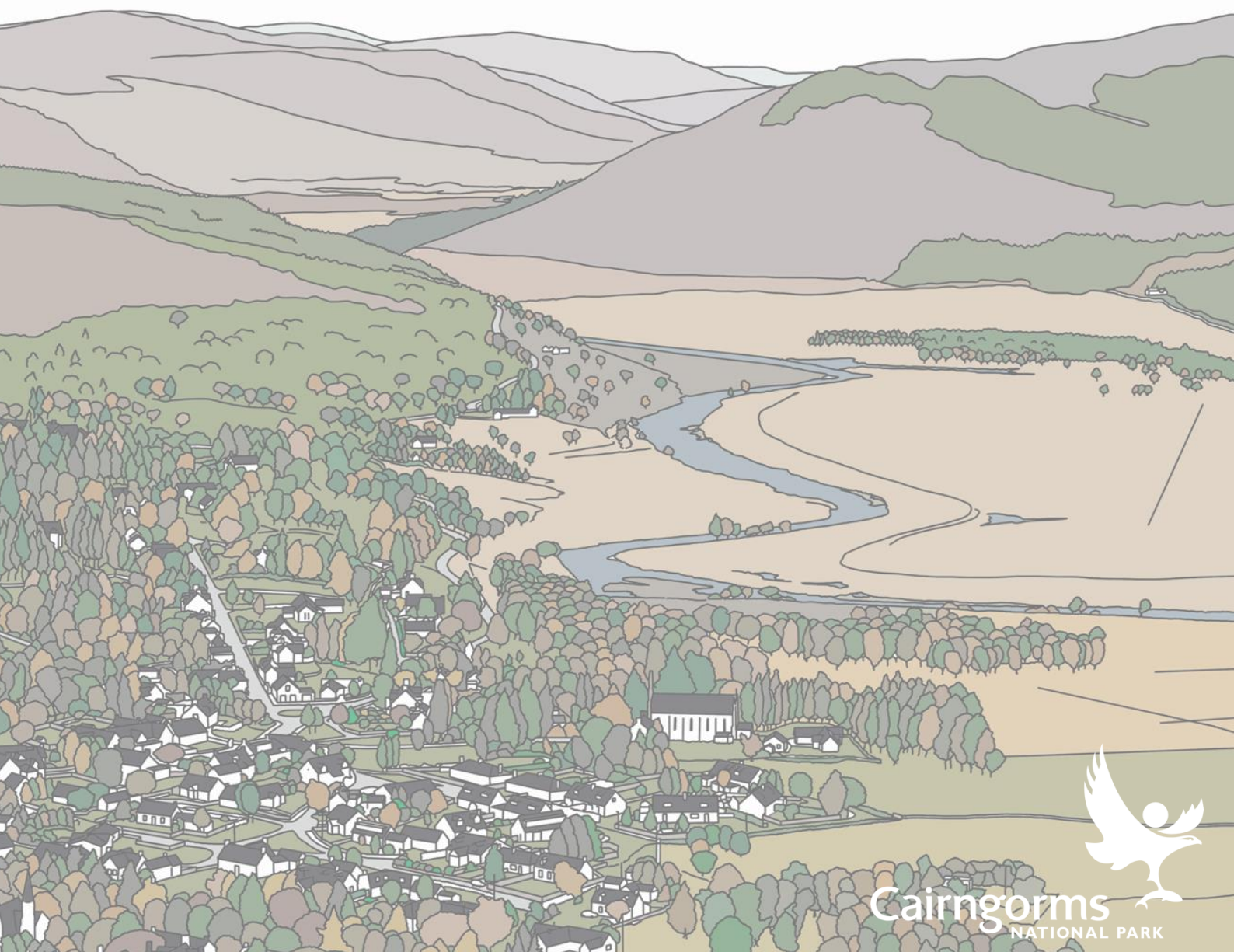
Cover Photo: Community affordable housing, Tomintoul. Credit: Alpha Projects (2022).

Our Planning Service is a key part of the Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) and is committed to the Vision, Mission and Values as set out in the National Park Partnership Plan. The Planning Service plays a key part in creating the Park we all want by getting the right development in the right place, by promoting investment, by protecting and enhancing the natural/cultural environment and by creating places that we will value and enjoy. Further information in our Planning Service Charter at <http://cairngorms.co.uk/>.

The Vision for Cairngorms National Park is:

“An outstanding National Park, enjoyed and valued by everyone, where nature and people thrive together.”

(Source: National Park Partnership Plan 2022-2027)



DEVELOPMENT PLANNING & LAND SUPPLY



Local Development Plan **1 years old**



334 new houses built over last 5 years



11.3 years of effective housing land



29.5 ha marketable employment land available

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT & DECISION MAKING



92.9% of applications approved



Pre-application advice on **21%** of applications



0 legacy applications remaining at end of year



Processing agreements : **91.7%** of all applications



6.8wks weeks on average to determine planning applications

ENFORCEMENT



58 enforcement cases taken up

57 breaches resolved



Background

The Planning Performance Framework (PPF) was developed by Heads of Planning Scotland in conjunction with the Scottish Government. The framework involves a mix of qualitative and quantitative measures to provide a toolkit to report on and improve performance. All planning authorities prepare PPF reports annually.

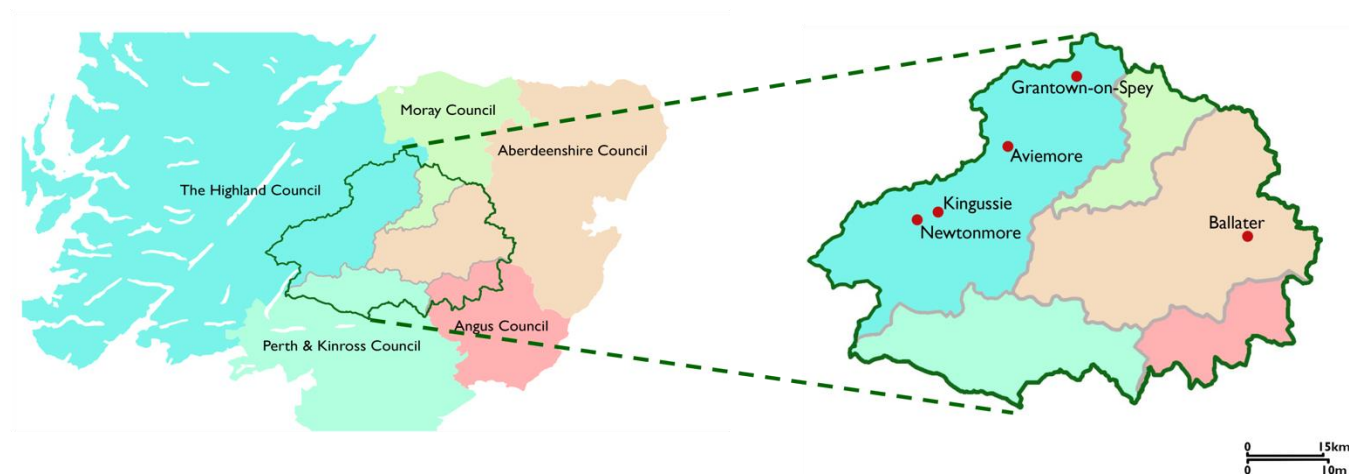
This is the eleventh annual Planning Performance Framework report for the CNPA Planning Service. Scottish Government feedback about our last report for 2020/21 was generally very positive and the report is available online. This report includes a summary of how we have performed in 2021/22 and looks ahead to 2022/23, highlighting the key areas where we want to improve our practice. We use the PPF report to feed back to Scottish Government and to significant stakeholders including our Developers Forum and Planning Representatives Network (Community Councils and Associations).

Partnership Approach

In the Cairngorms National Park, more than in any other part of Scotland, there is a partnership approach to planning – the National Park Authority and the five relevant local authorities all play a key role in making the planning system work efficiently. The CNPA sets the planning policy for the National Park through the development of the National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP) and the Local Development Plan (LDP). During the 2021/22 year covered by the PPF the CNPA successfully completed the preparation of the proposed NPPP and delivered its successful public consultation. The final adopted version is now available online at <https://cairngorms.co.uk/working-together/partnershipplan/>

Call-in Authority

All planning applications in the National Park are determined with reference to this policy background. CNPA “calls in” and determines the most significant planning applications, generally around 8.4% of all applications, leaving the five local authorities to determine the remainder.



Quality of Outcomes

The CNPA has:

1. Completed work on the final three pieces of supplementary and non-statutory guidance that will support the delivery of the Local Development Plan (2021) Policies. All three underwent a successful public consultation process. The Design and Placemaking non-statutory guidance was adopted on the 21st March 2022. The Developer Obligations supplementary guidance has since been approved by Ministers and will be adopted shortly. The Housing supplementary guidance is currently in the final stages of completion awaiting official approval from Scottish Ministers before being formally adopted.
2. Held online and hybrid online and in-person Planning Committee meetings, streamed videos of meetings and ensured the opportunity for public representation by video link meetings. This has ensured the planning process continues in an effective and publicly accessible manner.
3. Improved the ability of the planning team to undertake their work remotely, supporting them with increased technical assistance, utilising online sharing and virtual meeting platforms and started a transition to increased office working.
4. Promoted and increased the team of Mental First Aiders to support staff as we adjust back to a new normal of hybrid working and attending meetings in person in the office. During Covid restrictions we allowed one to one walking meetings when regulations allowed to promote wellbeing.
5. Continued to support the delivery of a range of high-quality developments through the planning process. Selected highlights are identified within the case study section of this report.
6. Delivered a successful public consultation for the next National Park Partnership Plan (NPPP) which saw a record 1453 public responses recorded in the formal consultation phase. The new NPPP will also act as the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and inform the production of the next LDP under the new procedure; the level of engagement and topics raised will be beneficial in identifying key issues to further examine.

Quality of service and engagement

The CNPA has:

1. Following the end of the Covid-19 restrictions the CNPA has begun to deliver Planning Committee meetings in a hybrid approach and have continued to allow public representation by video link. We have continued to live stream our public meetings on our website.
2. Started the process of reviewing our Planning Service Charter. The document sets out clearly the overall purpose of the planning service, how the CNPA planning process differs from other Local Authorities and our commitments to customers engaged in the process.
3. Continued to maintain our good working relationships and shared understanding of different customer's experiences of the planning service through our Developer's Forum.
4. Completed work on the final three pieces of supplementary and non-statutory guidance that will support the delivery of the Local Development Plan (2021) Policies. All three underwent a successful public consultation and the Design and placemaking non-statutory guidance was adopted within this report's timeframe.
5. Adopted new Design and Placemaking non-statutory guidance to encourage improved design in new development.



Good Design: Am Fasgadh, Newtonmore

6. Offered processing agreements on all applications that are “called in” by CNPA and continued to promote the availability of this service via the CNPA website. Uptake of processing agreements has remained high in 2021/22, with 92.9% of the planning applications determined by CNPA during the reporting period having a processing agreement (this compares with the previous high of 95.7% during 2020/21).
7. Continued to maintain and review our suite of Planning Advice Notes which explain the way the planning system operates within the National Park and provide easy to read advice on matters that customers frequently ask about. Updates have continued to be made to reflect the changing practices surrounding the Public Meetings and attending Planning Committees.
8. Began the preparation of the second Development Plan Scheme (DPS) for the 2021 Local Development Plan , updating the timetable for the delivery of next LDP. The DPS includes an overview of the project plan for the next LDP and demonstrates that robust project planning and management structures are in place to ensure the delivery of the new LDP. This edition will review and update any changes to the LDP process that have arisen.



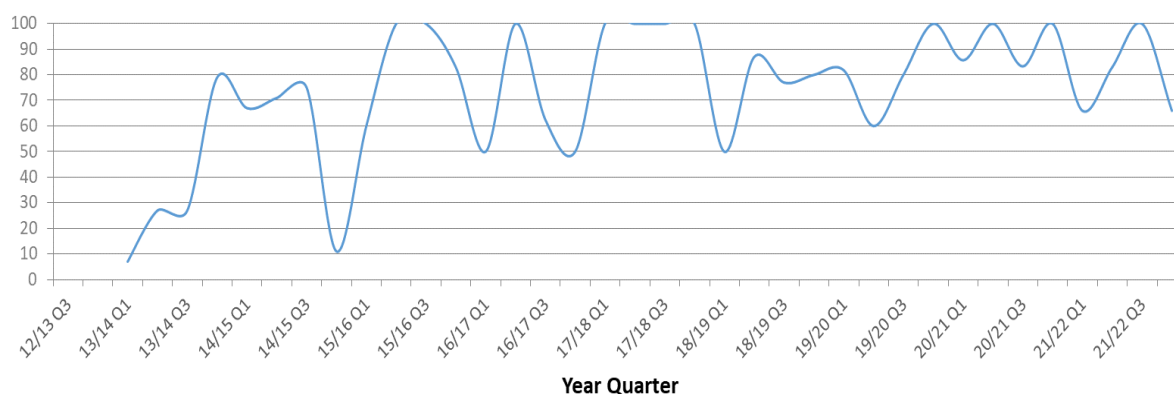
New Community Hospital, Aviemore

Governance

The CNPA has:

1. Continued to apply the Cairngorms National Park Planning Service Protocol – the voluntary agreement between the CNPA and the five Local Authorities who all work together in the exercise of planning functions within and affecting the National Park.
2. Continued to implement our procedure for reviewing applications post-determination where outstanding s75 legal agreements have delayed the issue of decision notices.
3. Maintained a pattern of issuing swift decision notices following planning committee meetings (where there are no requirements for s75 legal agreements to be concluded). The majority of decision notices were issued within 7 days of committee determination.

Figure 1: Percentage of Decision Notices for Local Developments Issued within 7 days



Culture of continuous improvement

The CNPA has:

1. Streamlined the developer contributions process with The Highland Council. CNPA provides applicants with direct payment options to Highland Council for relevant developer contributions, simplifying and speeding-up the process for all parties.
2. Used six-monthly performance updates to monitor performance barriers our Management Team and reported to Planning Committee.
3. Continued to participate in the Heads of Planning Scotland's Development Planning and Development Management Sub-Committees.
4. Continued to participate in the North of Scotland Development Plans Forum (NSDPF), which allows the sharing of experiences, best practice, skills and knowledge amongst peers.
5. Officers continue to be active participants within the Royal Town Planning Institute North of Scotland chapter, including assisting Highland Council RTPi in the provision of an online CPD event during 2021/22.
6. Evaluated the effectiveness of the Covid-19 working practices to ensure the widest possible engagement and effectiveness in delivering the planning service can be continued post Covid. This has led to the delivery of hybrid planning meetings allowing representation in person in the office or to continue to be made virtually. The CNPA continues to live stream planning meetings through the CNPA website and at publicly accessible venues in Key settlements.
7. The CNPA continues to monitor and review of the working knowledge of the committee members to identify gaps in knowledge and deliver appropriate training to improve the planning committee process.
8. Has identified a need for more dedicated resource in the planning team to evaluate the environmental impacts of applications. A job specification has been changed and an additional Planning Ecological Advice Officer will be recruited within 2022/23.

I. Revised environmental advice template for planning applications



CNPA



November 2021 – April 2022

Elements of a High-Quality Planning Service this study relates to:

- Quality of outcomes
- Quality of service and engagement
- Culture of continuous improvement

Key Markers:

7. Continuous improvement
12. Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer Benefit.

Key Areas of Work:



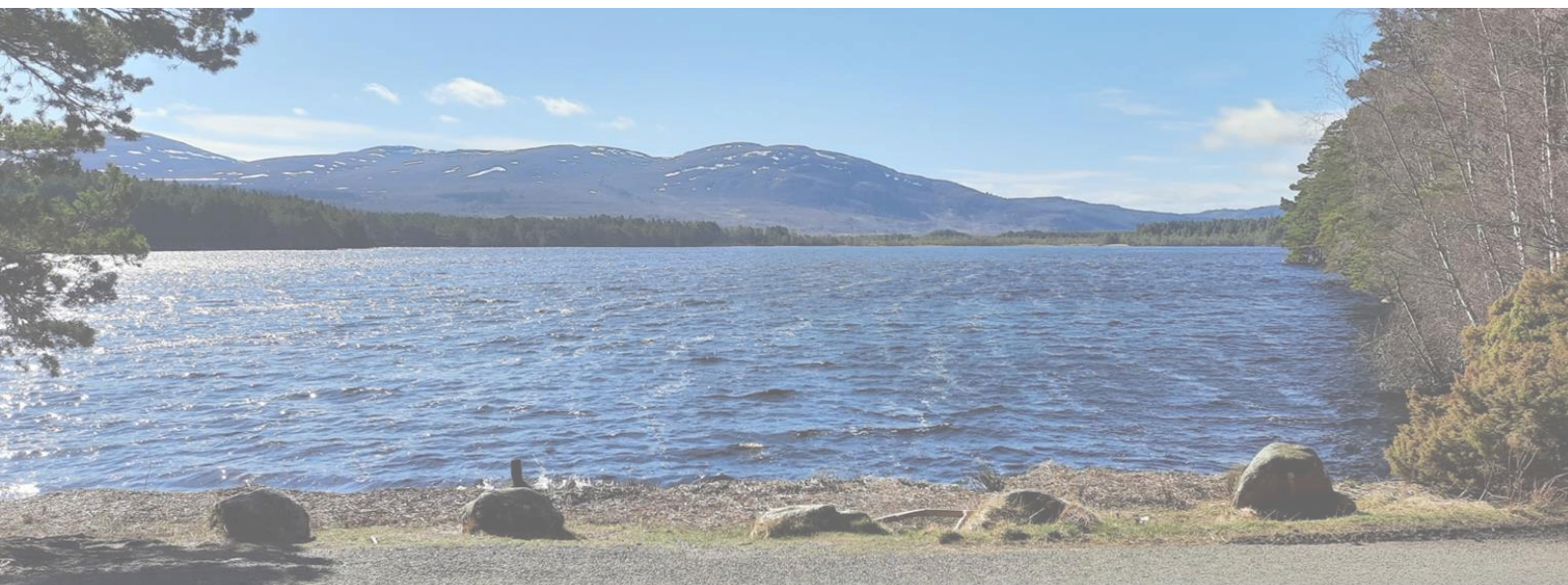
BIODIVERSITY



INTERDISCIPLINARY WORKING

Stakeholders Involved:

- Authority Planning Staff
- Authority Other Staff



Loch Garten, Boat of Garten

Overview:

In late 2021, the CNPA started a process of strengthening the targeting and efficiency of advice on environmental and ecology matters with the development management process. Initially this used the existing skillset of a planning officer with experience of protected species and habitats and undertaking Habitats Regulations Appraisals (HRAs) for a previous employer.

The officer reviewed the standard templates for advice that had been developed in the past and been used for several years. They identified that the templates could be more streamlined and focused to relate specifically to relevant Local Development Plan policies and reduce the possibility of environmental effects that were not significant or relevant to an application being raised by internal advisers.

The officer restructured and re-configured the advice templates, focussing the environmental advice on the environmental topics covered by policy in a clear and accurate way. This meant that planning officers (or applicants or the public) with more limited environmental knowledge, could easily digest any issues, relate them to the relevant planning policy and understand what would be required to overcome any issues.

The new templates were tested on live applications at the same time as the established templates and with colleagues in the CNPA's Conservation team and small revisions were made as a result. The new templates were then adopted and established within working practice.

Goals:

- To increase the efficiency of providing environmental advice by focussing on significant effects relevant to topics covered by LDP policy, and
- To make advice on environmental issues easier to understand for planning officers and others without specialist knowledge and provide greater clarity for anyone with an interest in case, including the decision-maker.

Outcomes:

Environmental advice is provided in a more efficient way and focusses on the significant issue relevant to an application and to planning policy. Less officer time is spent creating the advice and there is less need for clarification of issues between officers. The advice is clearer and easier to understand for applicants. The revised template is kept under continuous review, to ensure it responds to challenges thrown up by different development types and complexities.

The revised template has also subsequently been used as a basis to create pre-application and EIA scoping environmental advice templates, to enable consistency of approach and also so that advice given at those stages links through to advice given at application stage.

Key Officer: Nina Caudrey, Planning Officer (Dev. Planning and Environmental Advice)

2. Production of Design and Placemaking Non-statutory Guidance



CNPA



January 2021 – March 2022

Elements of a High-Quality Planning Service this study relates to:

- Quality of outcomes
- Quality of service and engagement
- Culture of continuous improvement
- Governance

Key Markers:

7. Continuous improvement.
11. Production of relevant and up to date policy advice.

Key Areas of Work:



DESIGN +
PLACEMAKING



LDP + NON-STATUTORY
GUIDANCE

Stakeholders Involved:

- Authority Planning Staff
- General Public



Well-designed affordable housing in Nethy Bridge

Overview:

Design and Placemaking Non-statutory Guidance was adopted in March 2022 to support delivery of the Cairngorms National Park LDP 2021. It was intended to provide simple and visual guidance on the principles of good design and placemaking. The new guidance incorporates clear drawings and visual representations of real developments and conceptual examples.

Goals:

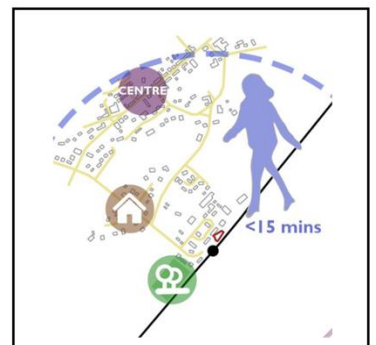
To provide applicants with clear guidance on the principles of good design and support decision-makers in considering design and placemaking in the appraisal of planning applications.

To create more successful places through new development.

Outcomes:

Clear, accessible and visually attractive planning guidance adopted in March 2022, supporting better project development and decision-making.

Key Officer: Nasim Mehrabi, Planning Officer



Above: Images from the Non-statutory Design and Placemaking Guidance illustrating new well designed commercial building that supports sustainable travel options through proximity to rail connections.

3. Delivering Small Settlement Regeneration

Redevelopment of former secondary school site to create 12 affordable houses at Former Tomintoul Secondary School, 2021/0043/DET



TOMINTOUL



Pre 2016 (Pre-application advice) – construction 2021/22

Elements of a High-Quality Planning Service this study relates to:

- Quality of outcomes

Key Markers:

3. Early collaboration with applicants and consultees on planning applications:
 - availability and promotion of pre-application discussions for all prospective applications/clear and proportionate requests for supporting information

Key Areas of Work:



REGENERATION



HOUSING SUPPLY



Image from planning application:2021/0043/DET

Stakeholders Involved:

- Authority Planning Staff
- Tomintoul & Glenlivet Development Trust & The Communities Housing Trust

Overview:

In March 2018, the CNPA Planning Approved Tomintoul and Glenlivet Development Trust's (TGDT) planning application for 12 affordable units on a former secondary school site in the centre of Tomintoul. The development has been funded through the Rural Housing Fund and additional borrowing by TGDT. The Communities Housing Trust have managed the project through planning and construction phases. Development began in 2021 and made significant progress 2021/22 with the site now expected to be completed later in 2022.

The site lies within the centre of the village and covers approximately 3400 square metres. Tomintoul is a planned village with a traditional grid layout with the central north / south Main Street. The site comprises the former school building and associated playground area and the new development reflects the grain of the planned grid pattern of Tomintoul. The dwellings fronting Main Street and Cults Drive take reference from the existing building lines and forms to address the street frontage sympathetically.

Goals:

To deliver a range of affordable housing options in a relatively remote rural community, providing homes for local employees and supporting a stable working population.

Outcomes:

Excellent pre-application processes with advice sought and used to inform the planning application and good engagement by applicant with local community to gain support and inform the types of housing needed.

Regeneration of a long-redundant space within the community, replacing vacant buildings with affordable housing and supporting the vibrancy of Tomintoul.

Key Officer: Stephanie Wade, Planning Officer – Development Management



Construction underway, 2022

4. Affordable Housing Provision

Erection of 13 Affordable residential Units at Land 150m NW of Beachen Court,
2019/0275/DET



Grantown-On-Spey



May 2021 – April 2022

Elements of a High-Quality Planning Service this study relates to:

- Quality of outcomes.

Key Markers:

1. Project management: offer of processing agreements (or other agreed project plan) made to prospective applicants in advance of all major applications and availability publicised on planning authority website.

Key Areas of Work:



AFFORDABLE
HOUSING



HOUSING SUPPLY

Stakeholders Involved:

- Local Developers
- Key Agencies



Completed affordable housing on site, 2022



Completed affordable housing (right) on site, 2022

Overview:

The site known as Beachen Court in Granttown-on-Spey has had planning permission since 2016 for roads and housing plot layout. Two phases of affordable and private housing were approved and completed by 2019. A further application for 13 affordable units was made by the Highland Council in August 2019 and approved by the CNPA Planning Committee in November 2019. Construction began in 2020 and was nearing completion by March 2022.

Goals:

To deliver further affordable housing on a wider residential development site in the strategic settlement of Granttown-On-Spey.

Outcomes:

The proposed development was completed in Spring 2022. The affordable cottage style flats on plots 15-18 and the single storey bungalow on plot 29 are managed by the Highland Council for social rent and the remaining properties are for mid-market rental managed by the Highland Housing Alliance providing much needed affordable homes in the key settlement. Of the 53 units approved across the wider site, 23 completed units have been affordable and mid-market rent and a further eight market dwellings have been sold targeted at first time buyers through the Government's help-to-buy scheme.

Key officer: Katherine Donnachie, Planning Office

Left first phase of affordable housing on wider development



5. Development to meet visitor needs

Formation of campervan site, 2021/0090/DET.



Nethy Bridge



Feb 2022 - ongoing

Elements of a High-Quality Planning Service this study relates to:

- Quality of outcomes.

Key Markers:

2. Early collaboration with applicants and consultees on planning applications
 - Availability and promotion of pre-application discussions for all prospective applications
 - Clear and proportionate requests for supporting information

Key Areas of Work:



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Stakeholders Involved:

- Planning Committee
- Authority Planning staff

Overview:

The Covid-19 pandemic contributed to a surge in domestic holidays and short breaks, with an increase in caravan and motorhome ownership and use. The sudden change in behaviour and in the desires of motorhome users, meant there were opportunities for additional overnight stopping off places that were serviced. The CNPA called in an application for a small, serviced campervan site near Nethy Bridge in March 2021. The campervan site would form part of a farm diversification scheme to support the existing agricultural business whilst meeting demand needs for campervan stopover facilities within the area.

The location of the development site was close to Nethy Bridge in an area surrounded by woodlands used by capercaillie and woodland sites designated for their protection. The CNPA and applicant worked together to demonstrate that with appropriate mitigation, the new facility would not increase disturbance to capercaillie in neighbouring areas or the integrity of the designated sites. This allowed a small but locally important visitor facility to be granted planning permission by the CNPA in February 2022.

See: <https://cairngorms.co.uk/catering-for-a-wide-variety-of-visitors-at-cnpa-planning-committee/>

Goals:

The proposed development would support the local economy through provision of a small scale but serviced campervan site in a popular area, encouraging visitors to stay responsibly and spend money in the area.

The development could help reduce ad-hoc overnight stops by camper vans in the area in location that would disturb protected species or harm protected sites.

To ensure that that there was no effect on the integrity of sites protected for capercaillie.



Above image : Proposed plan from planning application 2021/0090/DET

Outcomes:

The approved development demonstrated that it would not affect the integrity of neighbouring sites protected for capercaillie.

The approved development would provide a diversification opportunity for an existing business, increase the range and variety of campervan stopover facilities, helping to manage an activity that can have negative impacts where it is not managed or not undertaken responsibly. One member of the committee noted that “it provides a good, low cost, holiday option for visitors”.

Key officer : Stephanie Wade, Planning Officer – Development Management

This report was compiled drawing on evidence from the following sources:

Cairngorms National Park Local Development Plan, associated policy guidance documents

<https://cairngorms.co.uk/planning-development/ldp-2021/>

Planning Advice Notes

<https://cairngorms.co.uk/planning-development/the-planning-service/viewing-and-making-comments-on-applications/planning-advice-notes/>

Cairngorms Design Advice

<http://cairngorms.co.uk/park-authority/planning/good-design/>

Cairngorms Planning Enforcement Charter

<https://cairngorms.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Item9AppendixIPlanningEnforcementCharter.pdf>

Cairngorms Planning Enforcement Register

<https://cairngorms.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/211121EnforcementRegistertextversion.pdf>

Planning Service Performance Update Reports to Planning Committee

1. December 2017

<http://cairngorms.co.uk/resource/docs/boardpapers/15122017/Item9PlanningServicePerformanceUpdateV1.0.pdf>

2. May 2018

<http://cairngorms.co.uk/resource/docs/boardpapers/25052018/Item7PlanningServicePerformanceUpdate.pdf>

3. June 2019

<https://cairngorms.co.uk/resource/docs/boardpapers/28062019/Item10PlanningServicePerformanceUpdate.pdf>

4. 4December 2020

<https://cairngorms.co.uk/resource/docs/boardpapers/11122020/Item7PlanningServicePerformanceUpdate.pdf>

5. May 2022

<https://cairngorms.co.uk/resource/docs/boardpapers/27052022/Item7AAPanningServicePerformanceUpdate.pdf>

Case Study Topics	Issue covered by case study (pg no.)	Case Study Topics	Issue covered by case study (pg no.)
Design	2 (p12)	Interdisciplinary Working	
Climate change		Collaborative Working	2 (p12)
Conservation	1 (p10) 3 (p14)	Community Engagement	2 (p12)
Biodiversity	1 (p10)	Placemaking	2 (p12)
Regeneration	3 (p14)	Design Workshops/ Charrettes	2 (p12)
Environment	1 (p10)	Place Standard	2 (p12)
Greenspace	1 (p10) 2 (p12) 5 (p18)	Performance Monitoring	1 (p10)
Town Centres		Process Improvement	1 (p10)
Masterplanning		Project Management	3 (p14) 4 (p16)
Local Develop Plan & Supplementary Guidance	2 (p12)	Skills Sharing	1 (p10) 2 (p12)
Housing Supply	3 (p14) 4 (p16)	Staff Training	1 (p10)
Affordable Housing	3 (p14) 4 (p16)	Online Systems	
Economic Development	6 (p20)	Data and Information	
Enforcement		Digital Practice	
Development Management Processes	3 (p14) 4 (p16)	Transport	5 (p18)
Planning Applications	3 (p14) 4 (p16)		

CNPA Service Improvements 2022-23

In the coming year the CNPA will:

1. **Continue our monitoring of hill tracks development and increase awareness of policy amongst estates and land managers** - Our monitoring and enforcement of unauthorised hill tracks has increased in recent years. During 2022/23 we will continue work on completing a monitoring project using aerial photography.
2. **Adopt the next National Park Partnership Plan (2022-2027)** which will act as the National Parks Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS).
3. **Adopt the final two pieces of Supplementary Guidance; Developer Contributions and Housing**, to support the delivery of the LDP Policies.
4. **Support Highland Council implement Short Term Let Area** in Badenoch and Strathspey and prepare CNPA planning guidance on Short Term Letting.
5. **Finalise the plan for the CNPA Design Awards**; begin the delivery of the Cairngorms National Park Design Awards, through an engagement and awareness campaign beginning toward the end of 2022. The Design Awards will be scheduled to be conducted in the Summer/ Autumn of 2023.
6. **Continue to review the effectiveness of the delivery of the Action Programme and DPS** to ensure they are accessible and comprehensive in their reporting of the LDP.
7. **Deliver specialist training to committee members on landscape in relation to wind farm developments**— and with continued reviews to monitor gaps in members knowledge to deliver suitable additional training as required.
8. **Review the format and content of the Planning Service Performance Updates reported to the Planning Committee**; Improve the clarity and data representation in a more engaging and meaningful manner.

The identified service improvements aim to respond to feedback received from stakeholders, including through the National Park's Planning Representatives Network and the Developers Forum. The priorities will build upon progress that has been made in previous years.

Delivery of CNPA Service Improvement Actions in 2021-22

Committed Improvements and Actions	Complete
<p>Continue to simplify mechanisms for securing planning obligations and reduce the need for planning agreements – Establishing simpler, cheaper and faster ways of securing necessary planning obligations.</p>	<p>Yes - Simplified arrangements regarding developer contributions with Highland Council are now in place.</p>
<p>Develop and deliver a ‘good’ design competition using the publicly accessible Minecraft Map of the Cairngorms National Park. This will increase the awareness of the National Park and widen engagement in discussions surrounding what is deemed to be good design going forward to inform future policy. This can be done remotely and therefore complies with any Covid-19 restrictions on participation at the time.</p>	<p>Partially – Plan proposal ready for delivery in 2023</p>
<p>Continue to make the planning process more accessible – Using our experience of the lessons learned during our move to online committee meetings as a result of covid restrictions, we will continue to deliver the planning committees virtually alongside the conventional ‘in person’ meetings (once permitted) to ensure the widest possible public accessibility. We will also be trialling the use of the new software (commonplace) to increase engagement in public consultations by making the material more accessible to a wider audience.</p>	<p>Yes - Commonplace trialled in National Park Partnership Plan consultation phase.</p>
<p>Continue work to undertake a monitoring scheme on holiday and second home ownership, changes of use from residential property and impacts on communities – The development of the LDP has increased awareness of the changes in use from residential to short term holiday lets. The data available through council tax and non-domestic rates records requires some ground truthing for accuracy. CNPA will undertake some additional monitoring of newly completed housing developments. We will also publish a Planning Advice Note to explain the rules on use classes and changes of use. This work has been delayed due to Covid-19 but is expected to be completed in 2021/2022.</p>	<p>Yes – Work ongoing</p>

Continue our monitoring of hill tracks development and increase awareness of policy amongst estates and land managers - Our monitoring and enforcement of unauthorised hill tracks has increased in recent years. During 2021/22 we will continue work on completing a monitoring project using aerial photography and to provide further guidance for estates and land managers.

Yes – Work ongoing

Prepare the next National Park Partnership Plan with a view to it being a Regional Spatial Strategy if partners and content are appropriate.

Yes, Final Draft approved by Board, delivery is in the final design stage and nearing completion.

Publicly consult on and adopt new non-statutory Design and Placemaking guidance to support policy 3 of the LDP 2021, replacing the existing outdated Design Guidance. This will aim to help developers improve the quality of proposals, which should have a positive effect on processing timescales and enhance/ improve pre-application advice.

Yes – this was adopted in April 2022

Publicly consult on proposed changes to developer contributions and the associated non-statutory guidance supporting policy 11 of the LDP.

Yes – following a successful consultation this is expected to be adopted in 2022

Review the effectiveness of the delivery of the Action Programme and DPS to ensure they are accessible and comprehensive in their reporting of the LDP.

Partially, work ongoing. A new format DPS has been created reflecting the changes to the LDP process, setting out the plan for the next LDPs delivery.

Review and update the Planning Service Charter

Completed , now awaiting final approval from Planning Committee prior to adoption.

Deliver specialist training to committee members on landscape in relation to wind farm developments– and continue to monitor gaps in members knowledge to deliver suitable additional training as required

Partially- Work on going further training Scheduled for delivery

National Headline Indicators (NHI's)

Key Outcomes	2021 - 2022	2020 - 2021
Development Planning		
Age of local development plan (years and months) at end of reporting period. Requirement: less than 5 years	1yr 0m	0yr 0m
Will the local/strategic development plan(s) be replaced by their 5th anniversary according to the current development plan scheme? (Y/N)	Y	Y
Has the expected date of submission of the plan to Scottish Ministers in the development plan scheme changed over the past year? (Y-earlier/Y-later/N)	N	N
Were development plan scheme engagement/consultation commitments met during the year? (Y/N)	Y	Y
Effective Land Supply and Delivery of Outputs		
Established housing land supply	3023	2953 units
5-year effective housing land supply programming	812	715 units
5-year effective land supply total capacity	2827	2785 units
5-year housing supply target	358	439 units
5-year effective housing land supply	11.3 years	8.1 years
Housing approvals	48 units	131 units
Housing completions over the last 5 years	334	354
Marketable employment land supply	29.5ha	29.51ha
Employment land take-up during reporting year	Not available	Not available
Development Management Project Planning		
Percentage and number of applications subject to pre-application advice	21%	2%
Percentage and number of major applications subject to processing agreement	N/A	N/A ¹

¹ No major Planning Applications determined during period

Decision-making		
Application approval rate	92.9%	95.5%
Delegation rate	0% ²	0% ⁴
Percentage of applications valid upon first receipt	N/A ³	N/A ⁵
Decision-Making Timescales Average number of weeks to decision:		
Major developments	N/A	N/A
Local developments (non-householder)	6.8	18.6
Householder developments	N/A	N/A
Legacy Cases		
Number cleared during reporting period	0	0
Number remaining	0	0
Enforcement		
Time since enforcement charter published / reviewed (months) Requirement: review every 2 years	0year 7 months	1year 9 months
Complaints lodged and investigated	58	37
Breaches identified – no further action taken	38	30
Cases closed	57	30
Notices served	0	0
Direct action	0	0
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0	0
Prosecutions	0	0

² There is no scheme of delegated authority in the National Park – all applications are taken to committee for decision.

³ Planning applications within the National Park are initially submitted to and validated by local authorities.

⁴ There is no scheme of delegated authority in the National Park – all applications are taken to committee for decision.

⁵ Planning applications within the National Park are initially submitted to and validated by local authorities.

Context Statement

Development Planning

A project plan for the third Cairngorms National Park Design Awards (2023) has been drafted and a marketing and engagement plan is underway to ensure maximum public engagement ahead of the planned program for 2023.

After a very successful public consultation on the National Park Partnership Plan 2022-27 (NPPP), the consultation responses have been analysed and the final plan is now in preparation. Once adopted the NPPP will act as the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the Cairngorms National Park area. Specialist training for committee members on landscape in relation to wind farm developments has been scheduled for later this year.

Work is ongoing to continually monitor and deliver training to the Committee on matters of clarification where additional training/ or information is deemed necessary. In late 2021, to ease pressure on the conservation team by making use of existing skillset held by one of the planning officers, the Planning Officer (Development Planning and Environmental Advice) started to provide ecological advice on planning applications to improve the delivery and outcomes of the development management team (see case study I).

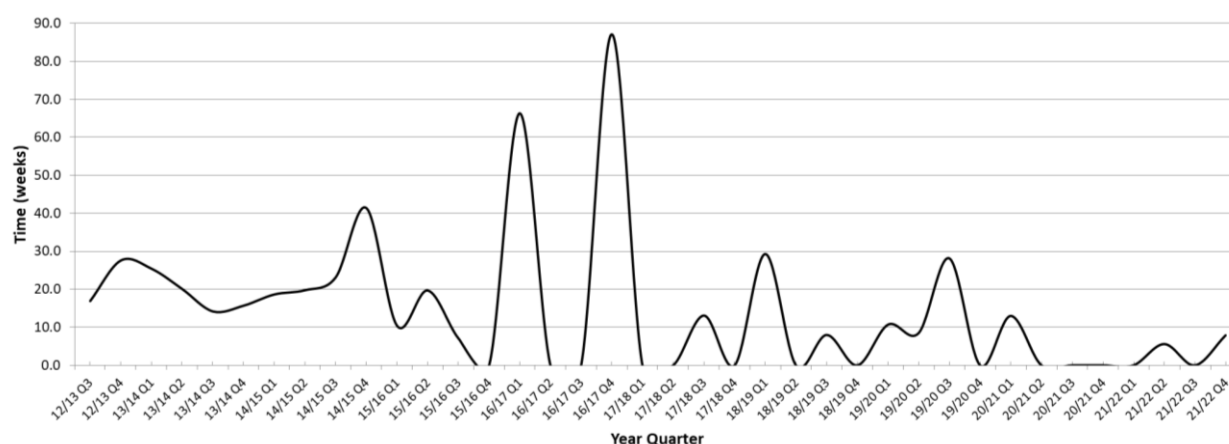
Completed work on the final three pieces of supplementary and non-statutory guidance that will support the delivery of the Local Development Plan 2021 (LDP2021) Policies. All three have gone through the public consultation process and the final two are now awaiting official approval from Scottish Ministers before being formally adopted. The Design and Placemaking Non-statutory Guidance was adopted on the 21st March 2022.

Development Management

In 2021/22 CNPA called in 24 planning applications during the reporting period and determined 22 applications (0 being withdrawn). This is slightly higher than in 2020/21 when 21 planning applications were called in reflecting an upturn in applications and future development since the Covid-19 Pandemic.

The CNPA's use of processing agreements continues to be a good way to provide certainty for applicants and for CNPA staff. The use of processing agreements is reflected in the official statistics produced by the Scottish Government, which exclude timescales for applications with processing agreements. Figures 1 shows the official statistics for applications that did not have processing agreements as well as the timescales for applications with processing agreements.

Figure 1: Average time for planning application determination for Local Developments (most CNPA call-in apps).



Overall processing timescales for applications determined by CNPA tend to be longer than the national average for a number of reasons. In particular, the CNPA only calls in applications that raise issues of significance to the overall aims of the National Park, and does not deal with the simpler cases such as the majority of householder applications. The National Park has a large proportion of internationally and nationally important nature conservation and landscape areas, and many rare, threatened and protected species. This requires sufficient information to be submitted with applications to enable assessment against policy and legislation. When applications lack sufficient information, applicants have to seek extensions to their processing agreements to allow them to gather the necessary information. In addition, all planning applications called in by the CNPA are determined by the CNPA Planning Committee which meets monthly over 10 months of the year, adding 2-3 weeks to the determination process of most applications. These issues are acknowledged in the national publication of statistics, which notes that:

“It should be expected that Cairngorms has a longer average decision time as they have no householder applications in their case mix. Also Cairngorms do not receive planning applications directly but are notified of applications which have been made to those planning authorities within the National Park boundaries. Cairngorms may then decide to call applications in for their determination. Planning applications are likely to have already been in the system for a number of weeks before being transferred to Cairngorms. Due to these reasons average times for Cairngorms applications can be expected to be higher than those of the other planning authorities.”

The internal audit of the planning service that reported during 2015/16 recommended that the CNPA use a rolling annual average indicator for service performance monitoring.

Covid-19 Service Delivery

Since the Covid-19 pandemic related restrictions were lifted, the CNPA has seen an increased amount of development related activity and this has led to an increase in enforcement cases being taken up. Despite a 54% increase in cases taken up during 2021/22 the enforcement officer has managed to successfully resolve 57/58 of the cases representing 98% an improvement from 81% in 2020/21.

Following the end of the restrictions the CNPA has also begun to deliver Planning Committee in a hybrid approach and have continued to live stream our public meetings on our website.

A: Decision-making timescales (based on 'all applications' timescales)

Category	Total number of decisions 2021-2022	Average timescale (weeks)	
		2021-2022	2020-2021
Major developments	-	-	-
Local developments (non-householder)		6.8	13
Local: less than 2 months			
Local: more than 2 months		6.8	13
Householder developments	-		-
Local: less than 2 months	-		-
Local: more than 2 months	-		-
Housing developments	-		-
Major	-		-
Local housing developments	-		-
Local: less than 2 months			
Local: more than 2 months			
Business and industry			
Major	-		-
Local business and industry	-		-
Local: less than 2 months			
Local: more than 2 months			
EIA developments	-		-
Other consents ⁶	0	N/A	13
Planning/legal agreements ⁷	-		-
Major: average time	-		-
Local: average time	-		-
Local Reviews	N/A	N/A	N/A

⁶ Consents and certificates: Listed buildings and Conservation area consents, Control of Advertisement consents, Hazardous Substances consents, Established Use Certificates, certificates of lawfulness of existing use or development, notification on overhead electricity lines, notifications and directions under GPDO Parts 6 & 7 relating to agricultural and forestry development and applications for prior approval by Coal Authority or licensed operator under classes 60 & 62 of the GPDO

⁷ Legal obligations associated with a planning permission; concluded under section 75 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 or section 69 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973

B: Decision-making: local reviews and appeals

Type	Total number of decisions	Original decision upheld			
		2021 – 2022		2020 - 2021	
		No	%	No.	%
Local reviews ⁸	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Appeals to Scottish Ministers	1	1	100%	0	100%

C: Enforcement activity

	2021-2022	2020-2021
Cases taken up	58	37
Breaches identified	38	30
Cases resolved	57	30
Notices served ⁹	0	0
Reports to Procurator Fiscal	0	0
Prosecutions	0	0

D: Context

The official decision-making timescales during 2021/22 (6.7 weeks on average) are slightly lower than the 13 weeks reported in 2020/21. The shorter decision show that despite the low numbers of applications in CNPA's overall case mix the CNPA has avoided any single complex and lengthy cases that can otherwise significantly affect the overall figures (as has happened in previous years).

⁸ See above.

⁹ Enforcement notices; breach of condition notices; planning contravention notices; stop notices; temporary stop notices; fixed penalty notices, and Section 33 notices.

The workforce information below represents a snapshot of the position within CNPA's planning service at 31 March 2022. The financial information relates to the full financial year 2021/22.

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4
Head of Planning			✓	

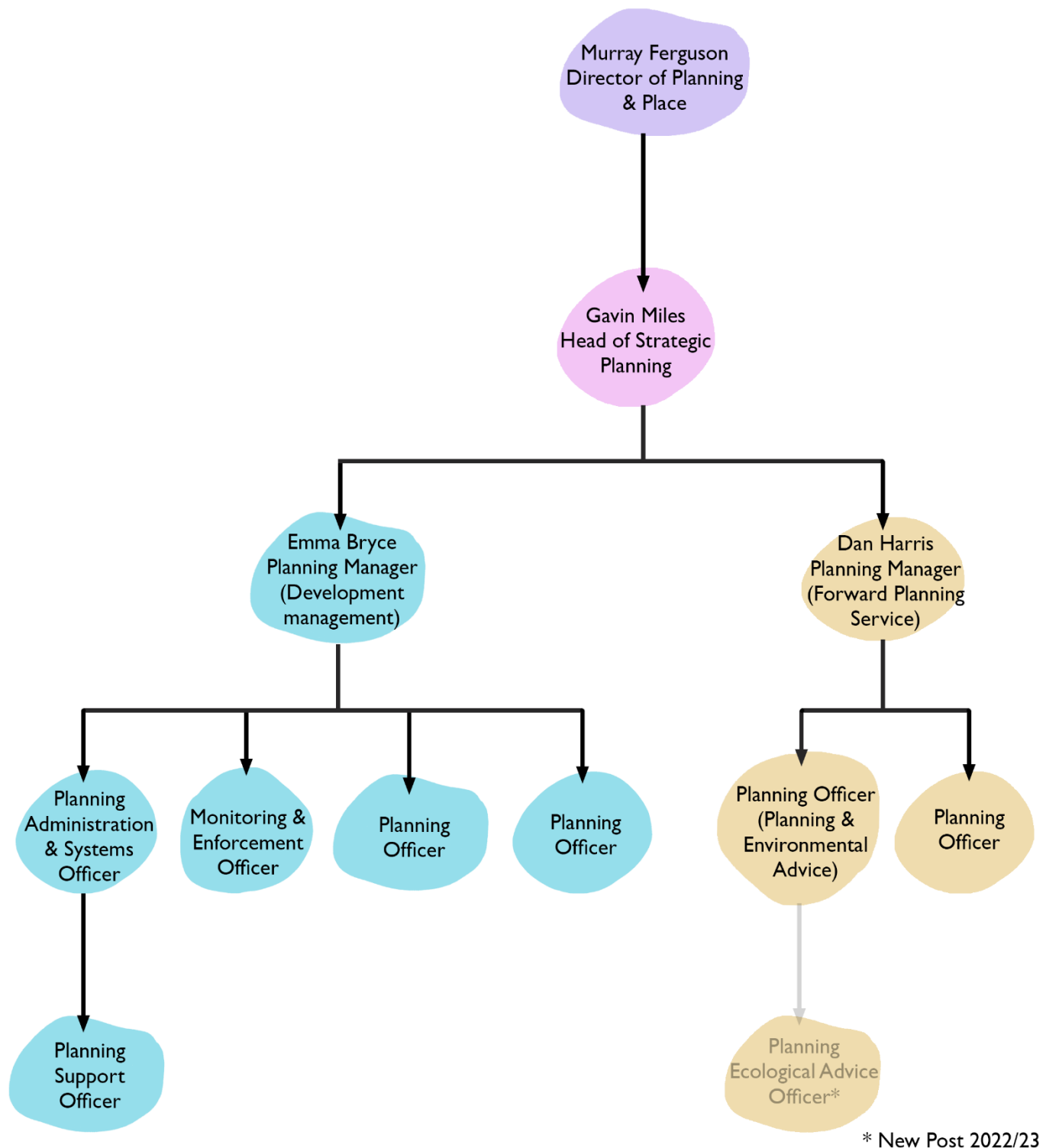
Note: Tier 1 = Chief Executive, Tier 2 = Directors, Tier 3 = Heads of Service, Tier 4 = Managers

RTPI Qualified Staff	Headcount	FTE
Development Management	3	3
Development Planning	3	3
Enforcement	1	1
Specialists	0	0
Other (including staff not RTPI eligible)	2	2

*One member currently on maternity leave – FTE =0.6)

Staff Age Profile	Headcount
Under 30	1
30 – 39	2
40 – 49	3
50 and over	4

CNPA Planning Organisational Structure



* New Post 2022/23

Committee and Site Visits¹⁰	Number per year
Full Board Meetings	4
Planning Committees	10
Area Committees (where relevant)	N/A
Committee Site Visits	1
LRB ¹¹	N/A
LRB Site Visits ¹²	N/A

¹⁰ References to committees also include National Park Authority Boards. Number of site visits is those cases where visits were carried out by committees/boards.

¹¹ CNPA does not have a Local Review Body, with all appeals against CNPA planning decisions going straight to DPEA.

¹² See above.

	Performance Marker	Previous R.A.G. Rating	Source or Evidence
DRIVING IMPROVED PERFORMANCE			
1	Decision making: authorities demonstrating continuous evidence of reducing average timescales for all development types	Amber in PPF10	<p>Major Applications The CNPA determined no applications for major developments in 2021-22</p> <p>Local (Non-Householder) Applications The CNPA's average timescale of 6.8 weeks is faster than both the previous year (13 weeks).</p> <p>Householder Applications The CNPA determined no applications for householder developments in 2020-21</p>
2	Project management: offer of processing agreements (or other agreed project plan) made to prospective applicants in advance of all major applications and availability publicised on planning authority website	Green in PPF10	<p>Processing agreements are offered on all applications called-in: 91.7% of applications determined by CNPA were subject to a processing agreement.</p> <p>Processing agreement information is publicised on the CNPA's website.</p>
3	Early collaboration with applicants and consultees on planning applications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - availability and promotion of pre-application discussions for all prospective applications - clear and proportionate requests for supporting information 	Green in PPF10	<p>The CNPA provide a pre-application advice service which is promoted through an advice note. This is reviewed regularly as required.</p> <p>Planning guidance provides clarity on information required to support applications. The role of pre-application advice was implemented in two of the case studies (3 and 5).</p>
4	Legal agreements: conclude (or reconsider) applications within 6 months of 'resolving to grant' ³	N/A	No applications where legal agreements took longer than 6 months to conclude.

5	Enforcement charter updated / re-published	Green in PPF10	The CNPA enforcement charter was updated and republished in September 2021
6	Continuous improvements: - progress ambitious and relevant service improvement commitments identified through PPF report	Green in PPF10	<p>The LDP and enforcement charter are up to date. Decision making timescales are now faster than last year and the Scottish average with no legacy cases.</p> <p>The CNPA has completed 8/11 of its improvement commitments, with the remaining 3 partially completed.</p> <p>Case Study 1 illustrated the CNPA's continuous improvement in delivering environmental advice.</p> <p>The newly adopted Design and Placemaking Guidance illustrated and promotes good design in the National Park (Case Study 2)</p>
PROMOTING THE PLAN-LED SYSTEM			
7	LDP (or LP) less than 5 years since adoption	Green in PPF10	Current LDP was adopted in March 2021
8	Development plan scheme demonstrates next LDP: - on course for adoption within 5-year cycle - project planned and expected to be delivered to planned timescale	Green in PPF10	Current LDP was adopted in March 2021. A new development Plan Scheme (DPS) was published in September 2021 and will guide the preparation of the next LD.
9	Stakeholders including Elected Members, industry, agencies, the public and Scottish Government are engaged appropriately through all key stages of development plan preparation	N/A	Current LDP was adopted in 2021. In 2021 / 2022 further public and stakeholder consultation has been undertaken on new Supplementary and Non-statutory Guidance.
10	No longer applicable – gap kept for data continuity	N/A	N/A
11	Production of relevant and up to date policy advice	Green in PPF10	Recently updated LDP provides basis for up-to-date policy. Eight supporting guidance documents have now been adopted on various topics following consultation. Two further pieces of supplementary guidance

			are being progressed having underwent successful consultations. One has been approved by Ministers and will be put before the Planning Committee in September for formal adoption.
SIMPLIFYING AND STREAMLINING			
12	Corporate working across services to improve outputs and services for customer benefit (e.g. protocols; joined-up services; single contact; joint pre-application advice)	Green in PPF10	CNPA contributed to various pre-application advice requests from Local Authorities, including a number of Major Applications.
13	Sharing good practice, skills and knowledge between authorities	Green in PPF10	The CNPA continues to share best practice with the North of Scotland development forum. Several Officers are also active in the RTPI North of Scotland Chapter.
DELIVERING DEVELOPMENT			
14	Stalled sites/legacy cases: conclusion/withdrawal of planning applications more than one-year-old	Green in PPF10	No legacy cases remaining at end of reporting period
15	Developer contributions: clear expectations - set out in development plan (and/or emerging plan,) and - in pre-application discussions	Green in PPF10	LDP and supplementary guidance both set out information on developer contributions. Referred to in pre-application discussions where relevant.