

**THE ELECTRICITY ACT 1989
THE PLANNING ETC (SCOTLAND) ACT 2006
Town and Country Planning (Appeals) (Scotland) Regulations 2008**

INQUIRY INTO AN APPLICATION UNDER SECTION 36 OF THE ELECTRICITY ACT

DORENELL WIND FARM

NEAR DUFFTOWN, MORAY

WRITTEN SUBMISSION

BY CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

NATIONAL PARK POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document represents the Cairngorms National Park Authority's ("CNPA") written statement as requested by the Reporter on policy issues in so far as they relate to National Policy, the aims of the Cairngorms National Park, the National Park Plan (NPP) signed off by Scottish Ministers in 2007 and the soon to be adopted CNP Local Plan – expected to be adopted on 29th October 2010. This document has been prepared by Andrew Tait, who has been a Development Management Officer at the CNPA since March 2004. Mr Tait holds a BA (Hons) in Countryside Planning, a MA in Town and Country Planning and has been a Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute since 2006. A copy of Mr Tait's CV is attached.
- 1.2 The CNPA has serious concerns regarding the landscape and visual impact of the application upon the Park which led the CNPA Planning Committee to strongly object to the proposal. These concerns have been adopted and articulated by my landscape colleague David Tyldesley. The proposal is considered to have an unacceptable landscape and visual impact. This has a consequential negative effect upon the aims of the National Park and the ability of the CNPA to achieve those aims.

2 CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK DESIGNATION

- 2.1 The Cairngorms National Park was designated on 7th January 2003 by virtue of Section 3 of The Cairngorms National Park Designation,

Transitional and Consequential Provisions (Scotland) Order 2003 in line with Sections 6 and 7 of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 **(CD A20 & CD A4)**.

- 2.2 The National Park is a national designation, at the behest of Scottish Ministers, which required specific secondary legislation to bring it into being. The principle of the designation of the National Park, along with the boundaries and extent of the area so designated, were all the result of a Ministerial decision.
- 2.3 The National Park was designated under Section 2 (2) of the 2000 Act. It, i.e. the whole Park, was considered to be an area of outstanding national importance because of its natural heritage or the combination of its natural and cultural heritage. It was considered to have a distinctive character and coherent identity. Designation was intended meet the special needs of the area and was considered to be the best means of ensuring the National Park aims are collectively achieved in a co-ordinated way.
- 2.4 Section 1 of the 2000 Act sets out the National Park aims:
 - a) to conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage of the area,
 - b) to promote sustainable use of the natural resources of the area,
 - c) to promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public, and
 - d) to promote sustainable economic and social development of the area's communities.

- 2.5 Section 9(1) of the 2000 Act states that the general purpose of a National Park authority is to ensure that the National Park aims are collectively achieved in a co-ordinated way. Furthermore, Section 9(6) states that if, in relation to any matter, it appears to the authority that there is conflict between the National Park aim set out in Section 1(a) and other National Park aims, the authority must give greater weight to the aims set out in Section 1(a). This demonstrates the overarching importance that the Scottish Parliament attaches to conservation and enhancement of the natural and cultural heritage of National Parks.
- 2.6 Set up under the above powers, the CNPA Planning Committee comprises all Board Members and meets every two weeks. One of its functions is to determine which of the planning applications submitted to the 4 Local Authorities within the National Park area raise issues of significance with regard to the statutory aims of the National Park and, as a consequence, should be called in for determination by the CNPA. The Planning Committee also considers consultations from adjacent authorities on proposals outside of the Park which may have an effect upon it. In addition to the variety of personal skills and experience that led to their appointment to positions on the Board, Members therefore have a considerable experience on assessing the significance and impact of proposals both inside and outside the Park within the National Park's statutory context.
- 2.7 Given the particular circumstances of the Park and to avoid duplication the CNPA and SNH have a protocol agreement (**CNPA20**) that sets out what role each agency plays in the

consideration of development management work. In general either the CNPA or SNH, but not both, will take a leading role on any natural heritage aspect of casework. As confirmed by the letter from SNH (**CNPA18**) the CNPA advises on the impact of proposals outside the Park that may have an impact on the National Park designation and this was the process followed in respective agency responses to the Dorenell proposal. To be clear, in this case, the CNPA are responsible for commenting on the landscape and visual issues that affect the Park. In this case, the landscape and visual effects are not part of SNH's remit.

CNPA consideration of the Dorenell application

2.8 The CNPA were consulted upon the Dorenell proposal by the Scottish Government. The proposal was presented to the CNPA Planning Committee on 19 September 2008 and the relevant report (**CDK13**) sets out the view of its professional officers on the proposal, see the Appraisal at paragraphs 46-55 and recommendations 1, 2 and to a lesser extent 4 at paragraph 64. In particular the views of the CNPA Landscape Officer at paragraphs 35 and 36 concerned:-

- 1) the wide visibility from within the National Park area;
- 2) dominant visual impact upon the upland areas that are contiguous to the landscape character and setting of the National Park;
- 3) impacts on the strength of wildness especially within the Ladder Hills area;
- 4) cumulative effects from other wind farms upon the landscape character and wildness qualities, and;
- 5) interruption of views to and from National Park.

The CNPA Landscape Officer considered the magnitude of impact from these effects to be highly significant and objected strongly.

- 2.9 The report also points out, at paragraph 30, that large scale wind farms are not appropriate in the National Park due to landscape and natural heritage impacts. Although this proposal is obviously not within the Park, it is very close to it and that reinforces the need to give scrutiny to its impact.
- 2.10 The CNPA Planning Committee specifically decided to “strongly” object to the proposal raising concern with regard to landscape and visual impact, impacts upon wild land, impacts upon the experience of users of the Ladder Hills, cumulative impacts in terms of views both into and out of the Park, see Minutes (CDK14). While recognising the subjective nature of such issues the Planning Committee also raised concern regarding the potential impacts of the proposal upon the understanding and enjoyment of the Park by hill walkers and also those participating in traditional sporting activities in the area.

Cairngorms National Park Plan

- 2.11 The position taken by the CNPA in September 2008 is reinforced by the Cairngorms National Park Plan **(CD F4)** approved by Scottish Ministers and the CNPA Board in Spring 2007.
- 2.12 While the Plan does not cover the area of the wind farm in a geographic sense it is an important material consideration for the following reasons. Firstly, there is a duty under Section 14 of the 2000 Act on all public bodies and office-holders to have regard to it in exercising functions affecting the National Park. Secondly, the plan has been the subject of extensive consultation and has the support of the major public agencies and the four local authorities. The

Scottish Executive confirmed in writing in **(CNPA19)** December 2004 that the National Park Plan has materiality in planning decisions. The fact that the site is not within the park is immaterial as the test is whether the proposal 'affects' the Park and not whether the site is located within the National Park.

2.13 The preparation of the National Park Plan has had regard to the international context and the status of the Scottish National Parks as Category V protected areas in the IUCN (World Conservation Union). Annex II of the National Park Plan lists the 12 Management Principles for Category V Protected Areas. The specific aim of these international guidelines is to advise all those with responsibilities for protected areas on the planning and management of Protected Landscapes, including government at all levels. Conservation and enhancement of landscape and other qualities of protected areas lie at the heart of these guidelines, see principle 1. The IUCN guidelines for land use planning state that large-scale developments are not appropriate within a Protected Landscape on the grounds of environmental impact and their incongruous character and scale. Principle 9 reinforces that view.

2.14 The National Park Plan provides a strategic context for assessment of this appeal with respect to the National Park. The Vision, 25 Year Outcomes, Guiding Principles, Strategic Objectives and Priorities for Action 2007-2012 consistently convey the expectations of all who have contributed to and given their support to the Plan:

a) Vision

"Imagine a world-class National Park – an outstanding environment in which the natural and cultural resources are cared for by the people who live there and visit; a renowned international destination with fantastic opportunities for all to enjoy its special places; an exemplar of sustainable development showing how people and place can thrive together. A National Park that makes a significant contribution to our local, regional and national identity. This is our vision for the Cairngorms National Park in 2030."

b) 25 Year Outcomes (not exhaustive, but most pertinent)

- "The distinct character of the Cairngorms landscape.... will be conserved and enhanced, shaped by natural processes and positive management";
- "The sense of wildness, particularly in the high montane areas, will be enhanced and renowned as a particular special quality of the area that continues to be enjoyed by many."
- "The outstanding environment of the Park will stimulate economic activity, businesses will thrive, and the Park will be an economic asset to the wider regional economy."
- "The Cairngorms National Park will be renowned in Scotland and internationally and will make a significant positive contribution to Scotland's national identity..."
- "The Cairngorms National Park will be an internationally recognised world class sustainable tourism destination that consistently exceeds residents' and visitors' expectations in terms of quality of environment, services and experience."

c) The 5 Guiding Principles for delivery of the Plan (section 4).

- "Sustainable Development – a National Park for today and for the future".
- "Social Justice – A National Park for All"
- "People Participating in the Park – A National Park for people"
- "Managing Change – A National Park open to ideas"
- Adding Value – A National Park that makes a difference".

3 Strategic Objectives of the National Park Plan 2007 (CNPA2)

- 3.1 Section 5.1 of the Plan on Conserving and Enhancing the Park contains the Parks Strategic Objectives in respect of Landscape, Built and Historic Environment.
- 3.2 Strategic objectives include Objective a) which seeks to maintain and enhance the distinctive landscapes across the Park. Under this objective it is noted that "the distinctive landscape character is a result of the interaction of landforms, geophysical processes, habitats species and land management. It is one of the prime reasons people enjoy the Park and is recognised as nationally important. Within the landscape there is dynamic change and evolution but management and development of the Park should retain and enhance the distinctive character and restore areas of degraded landscape".
- 3.3 Evidence provided by David Tyldesley (**CNPA 5**) demonstrates how over 200km² of the area will be affected by the proposal. This is a significant area and there is a significant effect. This reinforces the view of officers discussed above. However, the effect of the proposal upon this part of the Park is an effect upon the Park as a whole, where all parts are covered by this national designation. It is

too simplistic, and not consistent with the various Park policies, to assess significance of impact by reference to the proportion of the overall Park affected by a proposal, whether in percentage terms or otherwise. The effect of a proposal on the aims and objectives of the Park, whether inside or outside the Park has to be judged on the particular circumstances of the proposal and the impact it will have on these aims and objectives.

- 3.4 The key test as to whether the proposal is acceptable or not goes to the heart of the reasons for setting up the Park. The first aim requires development to conserve and enhance the area. The evidence presented by David Tyldesley confirms that the proposal fails to accord with this aim. The first aim is transposed into strategic objective a) which seeks any proposal to maintain and enhance the distinctive landscapes across the Park. This test is failed by the proposal.
- 3.5 Further, the Scottish Government Reporters who considered the CNP Local Plan sought a very direct relationship between the aims, the strategic objectives of the Park Plan and the policies of the CNP Local Plan, see 13.14 of their report in CD-Q4. They clearly state that "there is no scope for a local plan policy which supports development that has even a minimal or neutral impact on the landscape". Again, there is a presumption against development that does not complement and enhance the landscape character of the Park, see policy 6. The thread from the aim, through the Strategic Objective to the Local Plan policy requires a positive contribution for a proposal to be acceptable.

- 3.6 The Inquiry Report then makes two important points. First, it mentions that the designation of the National Park has highlighted the national importance and coherence of the landscape qualities *throughout* the area. Secondly, having noted that the Park contains two previously identified NSAs, it importantly states that “an equivalent level of consideration will be given to landscape throughout the area”. It would therefore be wrong to concentrate upon impact upon the NSA's or to treat them differently from other areas of the Park.
- 3.7 Objective b) under Conserving and Enhancing, the Plan seeks to conserve and enhance the sense of wildness in the montane area and other parts of the Park. It states that “Large areas of the Park, not restricted to the montane area, are valued for their innate qualities and the experience of wildness that many people come to the area to enjoy. This sense of wildness and current enjoyment should be safeguarded from encroachment by human infrastructure, inappropriate activities or insensitive management and use. New tracks, paths, roads, structures, motorised access, aircraft and organised outdoor events should seek to minimise effects on the experience of wildness. The removal of inappropriate vehicle tracks and the repair of badly eroded paths should be pursued where possible”.
- 3.8 Again, as with the previous objective a positive contribution is being sought in that at minimum “the sense of wildness and enjoyment should be safeguarded” and where possible positive steps pursued to reduce rather than increase effects on wildness.

- 3.9 Objective c) seeks to ensure development complements and enhances the landscape character of the Park. The Plan states that "All new development and infrastructure necessary to meet the needs of those living and working in the Park should be designed to complement and enhance the landscape character of its setting. The potential impact of public and private roads, masts, utilities, renewable energy developments (in and where relevant beyond the Park) road signs and all other man made artefacts will be assessed to ensure that designs and locations do not detract from the landscape character."
- 3.10 As clearly illustrated in CNPA's evidence and as was evident on the ground from the accompanied site visit with the Reporter, in particular to the Ladder Hills above Glen Buchat, there is an obvious consistency of landscape character between the site and the Ladder Hills. There is no distinct, or even indistinct change, in the landscape character between the Ladder Hills part of the Park and the site. Objective c) looks for development that complements and enhances the landscape character of the Park. This refers to the existing landscape character. It is difficult to envisage how 125 metre high structures with moving parts could complement and enhance the existing landscape character of the Ladder Hills area. Consequently, the proposal fails to accord with strategic objective c).
- 3.11 At 5.1.3 of the National Park Plan objectives for the Sustainable Use of Resources and then Energy are dealt with. Before setting out the relevant Energy Objectives, the Plan makes a very clear statement

with regard to wind farms: "Large scale wind farms are not appropriate in the National Park due to landscape and natural heritage impacts, but the development of domestic, business and community-scale facilities in a full range of energy options should be pursued in appropriate locations." Whilst this proposal is not in the National Park it is immediately adjacent to it and constitutes a very large scale windfarm. The impact it will have on landscape and natural heritage may in fact vary little whether just inside or just outside the National Park. In these particular circumstances, the difference in impact is not significant. In such circumstances, the disposal of an application for large scale windfarms whether just inside or just outside the Park boundaries should be the same. This reflects a judgment made as to the weighing of priorities as to landscape protection against energy production. The balance has been struck in favour of landscape.

- 3.12 However, the Plan is not at odds with national strategies on renewable energy. Strategic Objective a) seeks a contribution to national targets for greater renewable energy production through increasing community, business and domestic scale renewable energy schemes. This objective notes that there is a need to raise awareness of the range of renewable energy sources available and to encourage the necessary supply chains and infrastructure. By supporting small scale schemes within communities, in halls, houses, land-based industries and business, the Park can help Scotland achieve its national targets and work towards an efficient use of energy within the Park. The public sector should also take a lead in using renewable energy in its own facilities within the Park"_This

objective is being pursued through Policy 15 Renewable Energy Generation in the CNP Local Plan.

3.13 David Green, Convener of the CNPA, in his Foreword to the National Park Plan, states that *“A world class Cairngorms National Park will deliver real benefits for the people who live and work in the area and indeed for all of Scotland and beyond – but this demands a new approach to managing the Park”*. He goes on to say that *“only by being creative and doing things in a different or better way can we really make that difference to benefit the people and places in the Park”*. These sentiments encapsulate the thrust of the National Park Plan and the expectation on all those including planning decision makers contemplating activity with regard to the Park to contribute to realisation of the Plan.

3.14 The National Park Plan contains a number of priorities for action that are of direct relevance to this inquiry. Priority for Action 6.1 Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Landscape lists a number of actions that are key to meeting this objective. Action 1b refers to the formulation of a Landscape Management Plan to identify areas of the Park where wild land experiences are especially significant. Action 1c seeks to identify detractors from wild land qualities and begin a programme of action to mitigate their impacts. Action 1d seeks to ensure that all approved developments are based on a site design plan to make a positive contribution to their local natural and cultural landscape setting and character. The proposal is not considered to be compatible with the actions outlined above, as agreed by Scottish Ministers and could potentially undermine them.

4 Planning Policy Assessment Against SPP, PAN45 and CNP Local Plan

- 4.1 This statement does not propose to set out a full assessment of all policies but to concentrate upon those matters relevant to National Parks.
- 4.2 Paragraph 75 of PAN 45 **(CD-C1)** considers that a cautious approach is necessary in particular landscapes which are rare or valued such as the proposed National Parks and their wider settings. The advice goes on to consider that it may be difficult to accommodate wind turbines without detriment to natural heritage interests, in this case the proposal is considered detrimental to these interests and fails to comply with PAN 45.
- 4.3 Scottish Planning Policy (CD-B9) deals with renewable energy at paragraph 182 and following. Wind Farms are specifically considered from paragraph 187. Guidance is provided on landscape and natural heritage from paragraph 125 onwards. Paragraph 138 gives specific advice on National Parks. The guidance reinforces the points that where there is conflict between National Park objectives and proposals, the objectives take precedence. (This approach is reflected in the CNP Plan considered above.) It also emphasises that statutory natural heritage designations are important considerations where they are directly or indirectly affected by a development proposal. At paragraph 132 advises that planning authorities should apply the precautionary principle where the impacts of proposed development on a nationally significant landscape or natural heritage resources are uncertain but there is sound evidence for

believing that significant adverse damage could occur. That approach is clearly to be applied in National Parks.

- 4.4 In this case the CNPA's view is that the proposal would have a significant detrimental effect upon the setting of the Park, in particular because of the overlap of landscape characteristics between the site and the Park. The evidence of David Tyldesley has clearly established this overlap (both from within and outwith the boundary) and the integral importance of the site as part of the setting of the Park. Consequently, significant weight should be afforded to the setting of the Park in the determination of this appeal in line with the advice of PAN 45.

CNP Local Plan

- 4.5 The Local Plan has been prepared by the CNPA and is one of the key mechanisms for contributing to the delivery of the National Park Plan and hence the collective achievement of the aims of the Park. The plan has been subject to extensive public consultation and is expected to be adopted on 29 October 2010.
- 4.6 Given that the landscape character between the site and the park boundary is consistent in terms of character with no physical features on the ground that define the boundary the CNP Local Plan can provide some assistance in helping to assess the proposal. In making this comment it is recognised that the site is outside of the boundary but it is submitted it has a significant impact within it. Further, in this case the boundary is an arbitrary administrative line being the boundary of the Park with the Moray Council area , but in

terms of the character of the overlapping area there is no physical distinction. A similar point can be made about visual impact.

- 4.7 First, if the proposal were in the Park it would likely be strongly resisted by the CNPA and generally wind farm developers have an understanding that large scale commercial wind farms are not acceptable in the Park (as indeed the CNP Plan states) and none, so far, have been proposed.
- 4.8 This view is strengthened by the comments of the Reporters into Local Plan at Inquiry where in their analysis on the then Policy 16 'Energy Generation' **(CD-Q4)** (now policy 15) they consider that any local plan policy would run contrary to the strategic objectives of the National Park Plan were it to allow for medium to large scale renewable energy projects. The insertion of the words 'small scale' were recommended and a definition of what may be acceptable being offered by the Reporters amounted to not more than 2 turbines.
- 4.9 Secondly, the Reporters on the Local Plan Inquiry were also particularly keen to ensure that Local Plan Policy complied with the strategic objectives of the National Park Plan. Policy 6 (7 when debated by the Reporters) Landscape was a particular consideration and the background to it is relevant here. In so far as the developer's case appears to focus upon the NSA's as a national designation to the exclusion of the remainder of the Park and refers to areas affected by the development as being the fringes of the Park that runs contrary to their appreciation of Park Policy. Policy 6 (7) has been adjusted by the Reporters to accord with the National Park Plan and includes a clear requirement to

conserve and enhance unless any significant benefits are clearly outweighed by matters of national importance. (It is to be noted that large scale windfarms would not qualify, see their comments on Policy 16.)

- 4.10 In particular, in their analysis at paragraphs 13.4-13.6 of the Local Plan Inquiry Report (CD Q4) the Reporters consider that in approving the National Park Plan Scottish Ministers have agreed that the whole park, whether or not explicitly identified as an NSA, must be treated as if it had the benefit of that designation in line with comments contained within the NPP.
- 4.11 To summarise, the National Park must be treated as a whole references to fringe areas (e.g. appellants inquiry statement para. 1.5.12) or core areas have no basis in policy.
- 4.12 Considering that all parts of the Park have an equal value an effect upon the edge of the park is (or can be) as important as an effect upon the centre, or any other areas of the Park. In addition, a proposal must be tested for its effects upon the value of the Park nearest to or most relevant to what is being proposed. Attempts have been made to test the effects of individual wind farms on the park as a whole arguing that if a proposal effects only 5% of the Park this is not detrimental to the whole and is therefore acceptable. As noted above, this argument is entirely wrong. As a worst case scenario this argument could be repeated until there was no part of the Park unaffected by significant infrastructure development

5 Wildland

- 5.1 The third aim of the Park seeks to promote understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Park by residents and visitors alike. Strategic Objectives for landscape, Built and Historic Environment of the National Park Plan include Objective b). This recognises that there are large areas of the Park not restricted to the montane area that are valued for their innate qualities and the experience of wildness that many people come to the area to enjoy.
- 5.2 The State of the Park Report 2006 (**CDQ-2**) reinforces this message and notes that surveys have highlighted the perception of wildness and tranquillity as a reason for visiting. The Cairngorms area is seen as offering unspoilt landscapes, inaccessible areas and a feeling of peace and solitude. The SNH Public Perceptions of Wild Places Report (**CNPA 12**) recognises that the public place an important value upon wild land and to some extent the proposal will reduce wild land value in this area. The National Park Plan notes that this sense of wildness and quiet enjoyment should be safeguarded from encroachment by human infrastructure. This is a key element of the Park's planning case that should be afforded significant weight in the determination of the appeal.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 While recognising that the site is located outwith the Park the location, scale and nature of the proposal means that it would

have significant adverse effects upon the Park. These must be a key consideration of this inquiry.

- 6.2 The planning framework considered above emphasises the value of the whole Park and every part of it. It is not just the original NSA's that merit particular consideration.
- 6.3 There is no doubt and no argument as to the emphasis that Scottish Planning Policy places upon the production of renewable energy including wind farms. However, with all proposals of this kind a 'planning balance' has to be sought between the positive contribution of the proposal to renewable energy targets and the spatial effects of planning a wind farm in a particular location.
- 6.4 The Park planning framework makes it clear how that balance is to be determined within the Park. Large scale windfarms within the park, of the nature of this proposal, would almost inevitably be rejected because of the impact they would have on the Park.
- 6.5 As to proposals outside the Park, the CNPA has always sought to achieve this balance and only objects to proposals that would have an unacceptable level of impact upon the Park (**see table CNPA5**).
- 6.6 Evidence presented by David Tyldesley predicts an unacceptable level of landscape and visual impact in this case. The development's impact is as great as if it were just within the Park.

- 6.7 Such issues relate to the first aim of the National Park and the strategic objectives contained within the NPP. The policy analysis in this statement illustrates that, in these circumstances, the proposal fails a number of the strategic objectives of the approved NPP.
- 6.8 The aims of the National Park are to be achieved collectively unless there is a conflict where greater weight must be afforded to the first aim. The aims of the Park embodied in the Park Plan, considered by a Scottish Government Reporter and filtered down into the detail of the NPP all, correctly emphasise the need for proposals to conserve and enhance, or in other words build upon, or add to the existing special qualities of the Park rather than subtract from those qualities.
- 6.9 This weighs the 'planning balance' towards the rejection of the proposal. In this case, the evidence clearly shows that the proposal would subtract from this planning balance and therefore fails to meet the tests set out in the statutory designation and all policy that ultimately cascades from it and should be rejected on this basis.

ANDREW TAIT

CV SUMMARY

QUALIFICATIONS

B A (Hons) Countryside Planning, MA Town and Country Planning,
Member of Royal Town Planning Institute (2006).

EDUCATION

School

Smithills School Bolton
Bolton College of Further Education.

Higher Education

University of Gloucestershire, Cheltenham (formerly GLOSCAT)

BA (Hons) Countryside Planning (1997).

This qualification focussed upon a wide range of planning issues from a rural perspective, including economic development, agricultural economics, estate management, natural environment and recreation management as well as more general aspects of planning and community planning practice.

University of West of England, Bristol

MA Town and Country Planning (1999).

This qualification considered more urban aspects of planning in relation to urban design, sustainability and the European planning context.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Planning Technician, Sedgemoor District Council

Bridgwater 1997-1999.

This post involved being the first point of contact for all planning enquiries within the organisation. Also involved checking planning applications with building regulations proposals. Some project work was also carried out with regard to hazardous substance consultation zones and potential revocation and compensation for historic planning consents.

Planning Officer (Development Control) Dartmoor National Park Authority

Bovey Tracey 1999-2002

This post involved handling a high number of planning applications within a sensitive environment in an area with one of the highest

concentrations of listed buildings and archaeological remains in the UK. Also assisted with public consultation on the review of the Dartmoor National Park Local Plan and was a member of the Best Value project team for the authority.

Planning Officer (Development Control) Bristol City Council

Bristol 2002-2004

This post involved acting as Senior Planner within a team composed mostly of younger planners providing advice and assistance. The post involved handling a range of major housing and commercial planning applications to strict deadlines. Proposals included the relocation of a high profile company based in Bristol in a very short timescale to allow the business to continue trading. Also, key involvement with plans for the redevelopment of Bristol City Football Club.

Current Post

Planning Officer (Development Management) Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA) Ballater (March 2004)

My current post involves assessing planning applications against the statutory aims of the National Park and existing planning policy across four Local Authority areas. The CNPA has no delegated planning powers and all proposals are assessed with recommendations provided to the National Park Planning Committee. I have also been involved in the consultation process for the CNPA Local Plan and have written evidence on settlement specific issues for the Local Plan Inquiry.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Prior to being involved in planning I worked as an engineer for several years on military projects. I am also the planning advisor to the Mountaineering Council of Scotland. I have also worked for the Scottish Field Studies Council in Perthshire.

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