

Report 2

The Report on the proposal for a National Park in the Cairngorms

An account of the information received during the consultation exercise

Scottish Natural Heritage

September 2001

Contents

Section

Section 1: Introduction

Section 2: Analysis of the full written responses

Section 3: Analysis of the summary-leaflet responses

Section 4: The consultation exercise in the local area

Section 5: The consultation events in towns and cities

Section 6: Events and initiatives for young people

Section 7: Special initiatives

Annexes

A The Cairngorms Partnership Community Council Group Manifesto

B The Cairngorms Youth National Park Manifesto

List of tables

Table 1-1: Response categories and codes for written responses

Table 1-2: Geographic origin categories and codes for written responses

Table 2-1: Individuals and organisations who submitted full written responses, listed by stakeholder group

Table 2-2: Number of full written responses by response category and by geographic origin

Table 2-3: The main issues arising from the full written responses (with selected illustrative quotes), organised by key issue from the consultation document.

Table 3-1: Individuals and organisations who submitted a written response using the summary leaflet

Table 3-2: Responses using the summary leaflet response forms listed by response category and geographic origin

Table 3-3: Summary of responses about the area of the proposed National Park

Table 3-4: Selected quotes about the area of the proposed National Park

Table 3-5: Summary of responses about planning and other powers of the National Park Authority

Table 3-6: Selected quotes about the proposed arrangements for planning and other powers of the National Park Authority

Table 3-7:	Summary of responses about membership of the National Park Authority
Table 3-8:	Selected quotes about the membership of the national Park Authority
Table 3-9:	Summary of responses related to other issues
Table 3-10:	Selected quotes related to other issues
Table 4-1:	Communities involved in the community-led consultation exercise
Table 4-2:	Methods used during the community led consultation
Table 4-3:	Communities choosing independently facilitated meetings
Table 4-4:	Community events on the periphery of the proposed National Park
Table 4-5:	Summary of the views expressed in the community-led consultation exercises
Table 4-6:	Summary of the views expressed in the independently facilitated community meetings
Table 4-7:	Summary of the views expressed in the peripheral and additional meetings
Table 5-1:	Details of evening meetings
Table 6-1:	Participation of school pupils in the discussions
Table 6-2:	Opportunities arising from the establishment of a National Park in the Cairngorms
Table 6-3:	The threats arising from the establishment of a National Park in the Cairngorms
Table 6-4:	Examples of the Board membership suggested by young people
Table: 6-5:	Participation of students in the event
Table 6-6:	Skills, knowledge and experience of Board appointees
Table 7-1:	Outline of the online discussion at www.think-net.org.uk

Section 1: Introduction

Background

1-1 In September 2000, Scottish Ministers made a formal proposal under Section 2 of the National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 for a National Park in the Cairngorms area. They also asked SNH to act as the statutory reporter on this proposal, as required under Section 3 of the Act. We were required to consult widely on the proposal and to report in the light of the responses to the consultation. We were asked to report on:

- the desirability of designating the area in question as a National Park;
- the area of the proposed National Park;
- the functions proposed for the National Park Authority;
- the likely annual costs and capital expenses of the Authority; and
- other matters as specified in the proposal, including representation on the governing Board of the National Park Authority and the name of the National Park.

1-2 The Act places a number of duties on the reporter with respect to consultation and the preparation of its advice. Guidance was provided by Ministers about how SNH should undertake this task. For example, we were required to consult for a period of at least 12 weeks and to make sure that the consultation was participatory and that people have opportunities to discuss issues, and to suggest and consider alternatives.

1-3 This report contains a summary of all the information we received during the consultation exercise, including written responses and reports of the events and initiatives held throughout Scotland. It is one of a series of reports submitted to Ministers on the proposed National Park. Other reports in the series are as follows.

Report 1: A report on the proposal for a National Park in the Cairngorms

This report, submitted to Ministers on 21 August 2001, contains our advice to Ministers which was based on the views we heard during the consultation exercise. As instructed by Ministers, the report makes clear and distinct the views of SNH in our role as advisers on the natural heritage. Section 2 of the report contains a comprehensive description of how we undertook the consultation exercise.

Report 3: A description of the consultation exercise in the local area, concerning the proposed National Park

This report was produced by the facilitators who were contracted to co-ordinate local aspects of the consultation exercise. It presents an evaluation of the consultation exercise in the Cairngorms area and pointers for how the process could be improved.

Report 4: An independent assessment of the consultation on the proposed National Park for the Cairngorms

An independent evaluation of the public consultation exercise was undertaken by a post-graduate student at the Department of Social Anthropology,

University of St Andrews. The author is an employee of Parks Canada, the Canadian National Parks Service.

Coding and analysis of responses

- 1-4 SNH received a total of 849 written responses, including almost 400 letters and over 450 summary-leaflet response forms. Each written response was numbered as it was received, and given a prefix relating to one of a number of categories as shown in Table 1-1.

Table 1-1: Response categories and codes for written responses

Category of respondent	Respondent code
Individuals/individual households	A
Individual landowners/managers/factors	B
Individual companies and businesses	C
Community councils and associations	D
Local Authorities (e.g. Perth and Kinross Council)	E
Members of Parliament/ Members of Scottish Parliament/Local councillors	F
National agencies(e.g. Scottish Environment Protection Agency)	G
Regional/Local public agencies (e.g. North of Scotland Water Authority)	H
Land Management Groups (e.g. National Farmers' Union Scotland)	J
Natural/Cultural Heritage Groups (e.g. RSPB, Gaelic groups)	K
Recreation and sport interest groups (e.g. Scottish Canoe Association)	L
Social and economic groups (e.g. Cairngorms Chamber of Commerce)	M
Professional bodies (e.g. The Royal Town Planning Institute)	N
Research/academic organisations/individual academics (e.g. The Macaulay Institute)	O
Others/Unknown	P

- 1-5 Each response was also coded by the area of origin as shown in Table 1-2.

Table 1-2: Geographic origin categories and codes for written responses

Geographic origin	Origin Code
Within the Park:	
Individuals within area Option A	X1
Individuals within area Option B, outside A	X2
Individuals within area Option C, outside A and B	X3
Organisations, overlapping or within Option C (e.g. Aberdeenshire Council)	Y2
Adjacent area:	
Individuals outside Option C but within the 5 local authority areas	X4
Other out with the Park area:	
Individuals outside the 5 local authority areas	X5
National Organisations(e.g. VisitScotland / STB)	Y1

Other organisations not within or overlapping Option C (e.g. Cabrach and Mortlach Community Association)	Y3
Organisations and individuals based primarily outside Scotland	Y4
Unknown	Z

- 1-6 In addition to the written responses, we estimate that around 3,000 people were engaged in other aspects of the consultation programme, including meetings, seminars and drop-in surgeries. Independent facilitators submitted reports to SNH on behalf of the participants of many of these events. For some events, for example the meetings organised in Aberdeen by the Cairngorm Club and the Royal Scottish Geographical Society, no report was submitted, but participants were invited to respond directly to SNH. Occasionally SNH staff prepared reports of meetings, but in these circumstances care was taken to ensure that the reports were checked and agreed by the organisers, and participants before they were finalised for analysis.
- 1-7 All of the material we received was read and analysed by four members of SNH staff, each of whom led on a specific aspect of the proposals. These members of staff compiled tables showing the main points raised under each of the key issues and who held those views. They then took responsibility for initial drafting of sections of our advice to Ministers. The draft advice was considered and modified by the SNH Board in open session at a meeting in mid August.

Reporting back to consultees

- 1-8 It was recognised from the outset that feedback about the Reporter's recommendations made in the light of the consultation exercise should be provided to all those who were consulted. We thought this was important to ensure that all those who had contributed to the consultation exercise could see how their comments had been taken into account as we finalised our advice. We also felt that it would help encourage people to become involved in future consultation exercises in the area. In addition to the publication of this series of the reports, measures taken to date to provide feedback have included the following measures.
- *Open session of SNH Board meeting.* Around 25 members of the public, including representatives from a wide range of stakeholder groups, attended the SNH Board meeting in Inverness in mid August to observe the discussions about the finalisation of our advice;
 - *Widespread availability of the report to Ministers.* The report was available to anyone who wished to see it at the same time that it was presented to Ministers and available on the SNH website. The printed report was distributed to all those who submitted responses or who attended meetings;
 - *Press activity.* A considerable amount of press coverage arose about the messages we heard from consultees, and about our advice in newspapers, on radio and on television at the time we presented our advice to Ministers;
 - *Meetings with interested parties.* SNH has also met with a number of groups and organisations to summarise what we heard during the consultation exercise and to explain the reasoning behind our advice to

Ministers. We would welcome any further opportunities to provide feedback about our work.

Evaluation of the consultation exercise

1-9 The consultation on the proposed National Park was the largest and most comprehensive national exercise of this type ever undertaken by SNH. As described in Report 1, SNH considers that we were able to meet all of the aims set for us by Scottish Ministers, and all of the objectives which we set ourselves. Feedback from those who were consulted has, in general, been positive. Further information is provided in the evaluation reports (Reports 3 and 4).

Public availability of the information

1-10 All of the written responses and reports of meetings which we received during the consultation exercise are available for anyone to look at, the only exception being the very small number of responses which we were asked to keep from public view. We have made copies available at the SNH offices in Aberdeen, Aviemore, Battleby near Perth, Hope Terrace in Edinburgh and at the Cairngorms Partnership office in Grantown-on-Spey. Please contact the office concerned to make an appointment if you wish to consult the information. If you have any queries please contact the Cairngorms Reporting Team in Aberdeen on 01224 642863.