

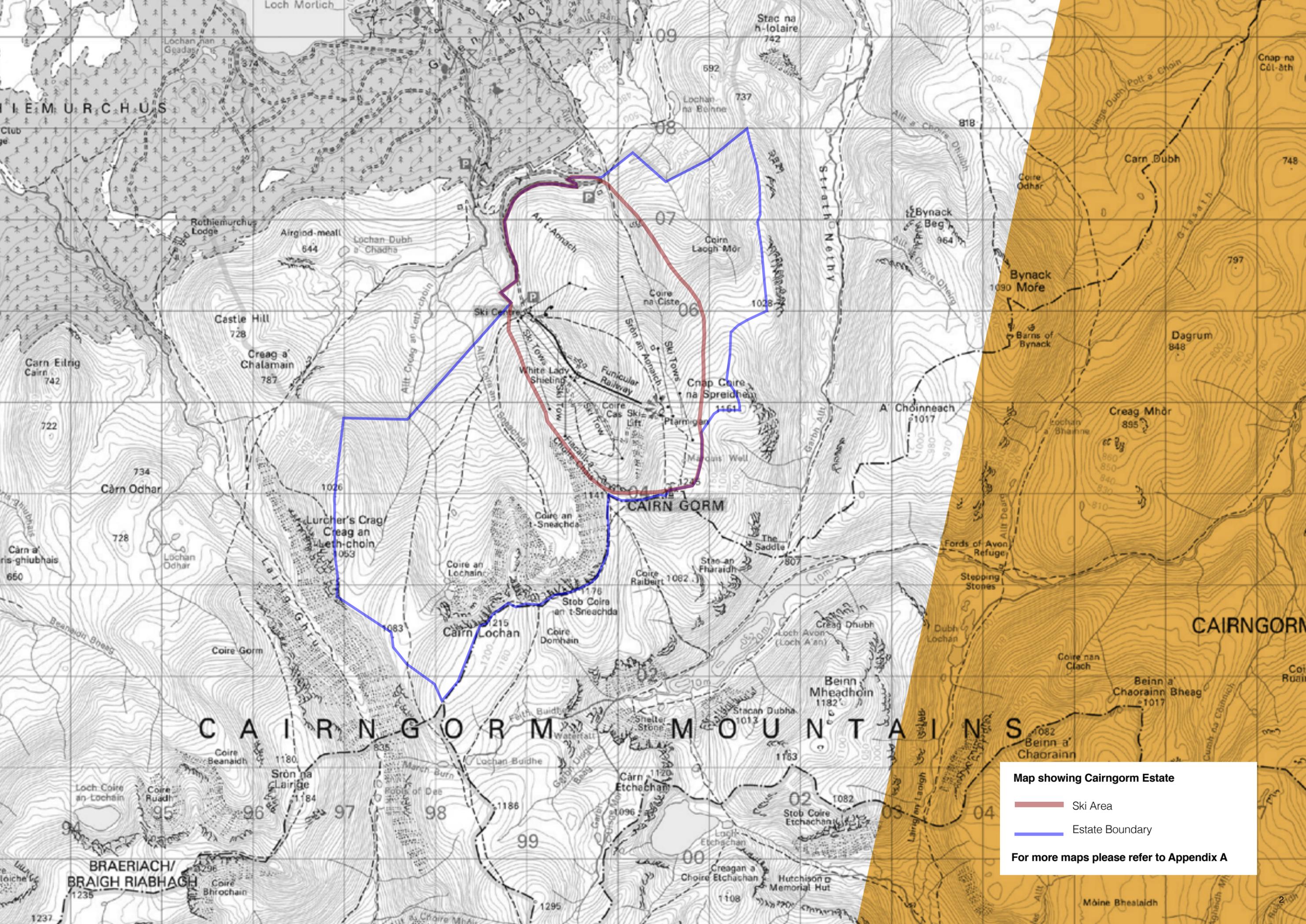
Cairngorm Mountain

Towards a vision and masterplan

Stakeholder and community second consultation and feedback

JULY / AUGUST 2020





Map showing Cairngorm Estate

- Ski Area
- Estate Boundary

For more maps please refer to Appendix A

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Foreword by HIE

Cairn Gorm is rightly regarded as a very special place.

It is both an environmental and economic asset for Scotland – a place of great natural beauty and scientific interest that underpins the area's vital tourism sector and has the potential to attract thousands of visitors every year.

Although Highlands and Islands Enterprise technically 'owns' Cairngorm Estate, our role is really that of custodian. The true owners are the people of Scotland, particularly those who have formed a bond with Cairn Gorm, including local communities, sports enthusiasts and nature lovers.

Your views and knowledge are vital to shape a new masterplan for Cairngorm, a strategic framework that will guide future investment in the estate and help us fulfil its potential as both a driver of the local economy and an environmental asset.

We hope you will take the time to consider the contents of this document, which draws from public engagement that took place in February and March 2020, and take part in further consultation through our online questionnaire at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/cairngormvision> from 27 July to 31 August.



Highlands and Islands Enterprise
Iomairt na Gàidhealtachd 's nan Eilean

Executive Summary

Over the last nine months, we (Threesixty Architecture and Jura Consultants) have been engaging with stakeholders including community groups, businesses, sports people and local residents to gather views and knowledge that will inform a 25-year masterplan for Cairngorm Estate*. This document is the latest outcome of that process and your opportunity to review and comment on the proposed framework that will create a final masterplan that has the support of all relevant statutory bodies, including Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE), Cairngorms National Park Authority (CNPA), The Highland Council (THC) and Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), as well as Forestry and Land Scotland (F&LS) and operating company Cairngorm Mountain Scotland Ltd (CMSL).

The introduction states why this exercise has been undertaken, gives an overview of the process and summarises conclusions from the initial stages of analysis, research and consultation.

First consultation with the community

The first consultation period has proved invaluable and has informed the process by allowing us to create a draft version of the proposed vision, its guiding principles and key strategies.

We held public events in venues throughout Badenoch and Strathspey to introduce local people and visitors to the process, inform them of the scope of the study, and encourage them to play their part by participating in an online survey that attracted over 1,800 responses.

The team attended each of the events with pop-up information banners. At the school venues, additional presentations were given to the pupils and at all venues the team discussed matters with members of the community. A detailed review of the feedback is available in Appendix B.

Assumptions and acknowledgements

This process has been undertaken assuming and acknowledging the following:

1. **The funicular will be operational**
2. **We are in a climate emergency**
3. **Cairngorm Mountain sits within the context of the Cairngorms National Park**

More details are provided in Appendix A.

Consultation with stakeholders

We identified a number of stakeholders who have a relationship with the estate; some directly affect the operation of the mountain while others are affected by it. These include the neighbours of the estate, statutory authorities, conservation bodies, sporting organisations, and local business and community groups. Stakeholders were invited to talk to the vision team and asked many of the questions that formed our first community consultation questionnaire. Many of the stakeholders have provided their own vision statements that can be found in Appendix B.

Distilling the information

Since the first consultation, we have been distilling the information gathered from research, stakeholder, community and business engagement to identify:

- National and local policy requirements
- HIE's core objectives for Cairngorm
- Recurring themes, ideas and aspirations
- Consensus phases, where common ground exists

Outputs outlined in this document

The process has delivered the following outputs:

1. **A draft vision statement with guiding principles**
2. **Draft key strategies**
3. **Draft definitions of potential zone designation for Cairngorm Mountain**
4. **Potential or suggested supporting activities that have been put forward by the community and stakeholders**

Continuous consultation with Stakeholders

We have achieved the current outputs through sustained engagement with stakeholders.

Your input and feedback is invited to shape the final vision and masterplan

We are now asking you to review this document and give feedback on the draft proposals via our online questionnaire.

Final outputs

We will review your responses to the questionnaire and listen to your views to inform, finalise and then publish the following:

1. **A final vision with guiding principles**
2. **Key strategies**
3. **A zoned, adaptable masterplan**

These three elements will be the framework for guiding future economic, development and statutory planning decisions and activities at Cairngorm Mountain.

The online questionnaire can be completed here ...

[Cairngorm vision and strategies questionnaire](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/cairngormvision)

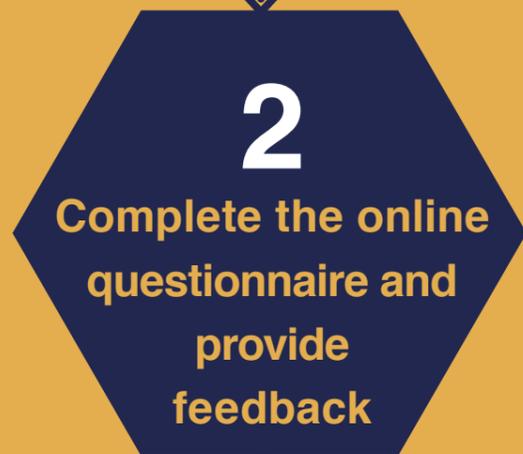
<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/cairngormvision>

* Throughout this document, we use the names 'Cairngorm' and 'Cairngorm Mountain' to refer to the estate that is in public ownership through HIE. The name 'Cairn Gorm' is used to refer specifically to the mountain alone.

Second stage consultation: your views



We would like you to review this document.



The online feedback will focus on the review of the following:



We will review your responses and with support for the key stakeholders finalise and publish:

1. A final vision with guiding principles
2. Key Strategies
3. A zoned, adaptable masterplan for the next 25 years

These three elements will be the framework for guiding future economic, development and statutory planning decisions and activities at Cairngorm Mountain.

The online questionnaire can be completed here

[Cairngorm vision
and strategies
questionnaire](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/cairngormvision)

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/cairngormvision>

Why create a vision & masterplan?

The range of people who value and enjoy Cairn Gorm is large and diverse. All who know and love the mountain have a stake in its long-term future as both an environmental and an economic asset for Scotland.

As custodian of Cairngorm Estate, Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) recognises the need to engage with, and listen to, the broadest possible range of stakeholders. In 2019, HIE appointed Threesixty Architecture and Jura Consultants to lead an exercise that will create a new vision and masterplan for Cairngorm Mountain as a sustainable attraction that benefits local communities. This masterplanning exercise aims to:



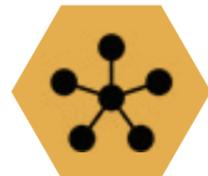
Engage and communicate

The process allows us to tap into the knowledge and experience held by a broad range of stakeholders, including local residents, the sporting community, businesses and visitors as well as HIE, CMSL, CNPA, THC, SNH and F&LS). It is envisaged that this exercise will lay the foundation for a continued culture of collaboration.



Create guiding principles and key strategies that can be supported

Create a framework of guiding principles and key strategies that can be supported by stakeholders including the local community.



Create a clear framework to guide future decisions

The core purpose is to give clarity to stakeholders and the community regarding the future of the mountain estate by creating a transparent framework to guide future economic, development and statutory planning decisions and activities at Cairngorm Mountain.



Create a sustainable future

Guided by environmental, economic, and community-based strategies.



Create Balance

Across stakeholders, business leaders and the community there are many different views of what should happen, the vision will strive to take a balanced view.



“Cairngorm Mountain...”

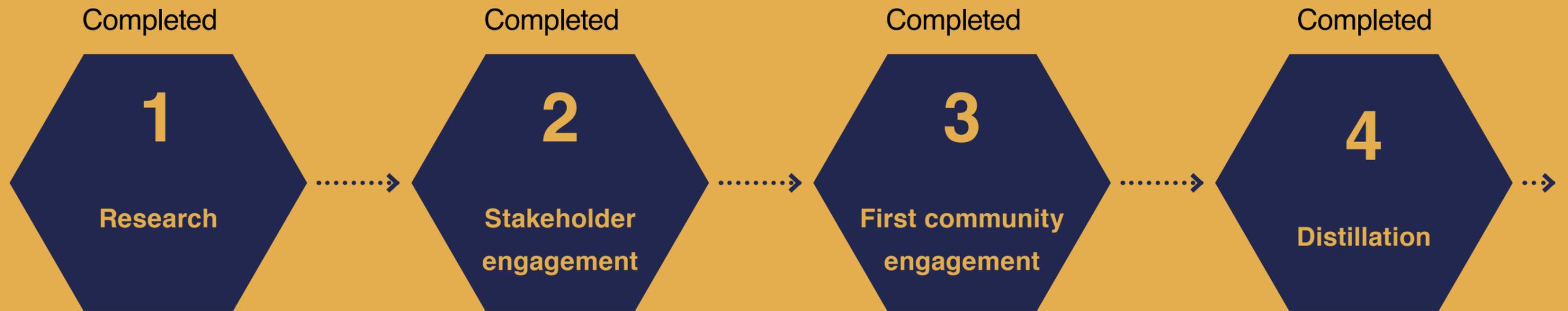
In order to succeed, the vision needs to command broad support, and must be both ambitious and deliverable. .

HIE's core objectives

Highlands and Islands Enterprise aims to optimise the potential of Cairngorm as an environmental and economic asset where a sustainable, year-round business helps underpin the area's vital tourism sector. The purpose of the Cairngorm Masterplan is to support the vision and, in partnership with stakeholder groups, to consider a series of objectives that focus on the following perspectives:



The Process (1 of 2)



Collation and research of existing information and a review of what is happening at Cairngorm and other mountain resorts in Scotland and around the world.

Engagement with stakeholders who have a relationship with the estate and directly affect, or are affected by, the operation of Cairngorm Mountain.

Within a framework, talk to these parties and listen to their views to help shape a shared vision of Cairngorm Mountain for the future.

Engagement through public events and online questionnaires with local businesses and the wider public.

Listen to people's thoughts, experiences and visions for the future of Cairngorm Mountain.

Distillation of the information from research, stakeholder, community, and business engagement to identify:

- National and local policy requirements
- HIE's core objectives for Cairngorm Mountain
- Recurring themes, ideas and aspirations
- Consensus statements, where common ground exists

The Process (2 of 2)



Summary of conclusions from analysis & research

1

Embrace the National performance Framework

The vision and masterplan will be aligned with National performance framework for Scotland:

- Create a more successful country
- Give opportunities to all people living in Scotland
- Increase the well-being of people living in Scotland
- Create sustainable and inclusive growth
- Reduce inequalities and give equal importance to economic, environmental and social progress

<https://nationalperformance.gov.scot/>

2

Learning from other Scottish mountain resorts

We reviewed activities taking place across the other mountain resorts in Scotland. The key learnings were:

- Be a leader in what you offer
- Make your message (and vision) clear
- The 'Experience' is critical

3

International mountain resorts are diversifying

Climate change, combined with the need for sustainability, is causing mountain resorts around the world to diversify. They are no longer focusing exclusively on winter sports but on creating a programme of diverse, year-round activities that range from sports to leisure, culture and education.

4

Build on good work of existing reports, guidance & policy

Sustainability (economic, community and environmental) was central to the majority of the documents reviewed.

We reviewed clear policy documents alongside numerous studies that have various aspirations and visions for the mountain. The documents reviewed included but were not limited to:

- Cairngorm and Glenmore Strategy
- Cairngorm Estate Management Plan
- CNPA Partnership Plan 2017-2022
- CNPA Local Development Plan (proposed Plan 2020-2025)
- Visitor Management Plan 2017
- SE Group Report 2018 addendum 2019
- Section 50 Agreement

5

Evolution of Visitor Management Plan (VMP)

For the vision and masterplan to succeed the VMP needs to evolve and adapt so that there is full alignment between the VMP and masterplan.

Recurring themes identified from the first engagement

From our first engagement with stakeholders and members of the community, we identified the following five recurring themes:



Cairngorm Mountain should have a leading role as an educator and interpreter of the unique, ever-evolving mountain environment and the story of climate change



Align uplift and service infrastructure for optimal use to become a year-round mountain sport centre for all. Promote excellence in teaching, training and experience



Sustain the environment, protect the flora and fauna, and become a leader in balancing activity and stewardship



Celebrate the people that made, and make, this whole area unique



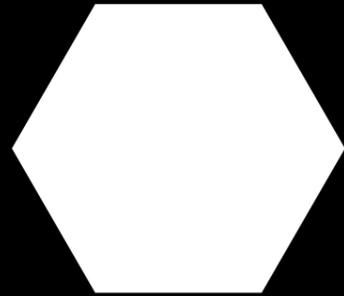
Build an economically sustainable community. Cairngorm Mountain is a vital part of the Badenoch and Strathspey community, a source of economic benefit, employment and pride

60+
Stakeholder
engagements

1504
Community
responses

217
School
responses

83
Business
responses



2.0

The vision and guiding principles

The online questionnaire
can be completed here

[Cairngorm vision
and strategies
questionnaire](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/cairngormvision)

[https://www.surveymonkey.
co.uk/r/cairngormvision](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/cairngormvision)

Vision statement

Highlands and Islands Enterprise



Cairngorm is an inspiring place and a unique Scottish asset at the heart of a local community.

How will we achieve our vision for Cairngorm?

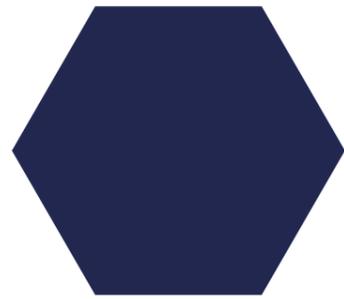
'We will respect, sustain and enhance Cairngorm as a world-class mountain environment where nature thrives and people of all ages and abilities enjoy access to outdoor sport, recreation and education opportunities in every season of the year'

The vision's guiding principles



The following guiding principles have been informed by research, analysis, engagement and a shared vision statement. It is envisaged that all future development of the mountain will be assessed against these principles:

- **Be a centre of excellence in education, research, mountain environment and sport**
- **Retention of snowsports**
(for as long as snow exists at Cairngorm Mountain)
- **Create year-round inclusive offerings for all users and all groups**
- **Uplift at the core**
Development of all activities (winter and summer) should be accessed using optimised uplift infrastructure i.e. uplift should serve multiple activities throughout the year.
- **Optimise rather than the maximise**
Development and Infrastructure to be optimal rather than the maximum possible
- **Respect sensitive landscapes**
The protection and enhancement of the landscape will be respected when assessing new activities
- **Avoid direct competition**
By focusing on activities that will complement, and not deliver direct competition to, existing operators in Badenoch and Strathspey.
- **Evolution of the Section 50 Agreement and the Visitor Management Plan**
Ensuring that there are no adverse effects from the activities within the present ski area on the adjacent mountain and moorland zones.



3.0

Key strategies created from the vision's guiding principles & HIE's core objectives

The online questionnaire can be completed here ...

[Cairngorm vision and strategies questionnaire](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/cairngormvision)

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/cairngormvision>

3.0 Key strategies created from the vision's guiding principles & HIE's core objectives

Creating key strategies

The key strategies are derived from the vision's guiding principles and HIE's core objectives for Cairngorm Mountain. Once the key strategies are agreed, a zoned masterplan that supports the key strategies will be created.

Vision's guiding principles

- **Be a centre of excellence in education, research, mountain environment and sport**
- **Retention of snowsports**
(for as long as snow exists at Cairngorm Mountain)
- **Create year-round inclusive offerings for all users and all groups**
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- **Evolution of the Section 50 Agreement and the Visitor Management Plan**
Ensuring that there are no adverse effects from the activities within the present ski area on the adjacent mountain and moorland zones.



HIE's core objectives

These core objectives are laid out in the introduction of this report

- **Operating model sustainability**
- **Financial investment at Cairngorm**
- **Visitor experience enhancement**
- **Local economy benefits**
- **Social / community development**
- **Promote education and research opportunities**
- **Environmental sustainability**
- **Ecology and habitat restoration**

Matrix of key strategies



**THE STRATEGIES ARE
NUMBERED FOR
REFERENCE NOT RANK**

3.0 Key strategies created from the vision's guiding principles & HIE's core objectives

01 KEY STRATEGY

DRAFT

An all year sustainable operating model

Create a sustainable operating model that is an economic driver



- ✓ Operating model sustainability
- ✓ Financial investment at Cairngorm
- ✓ Visitor experience enhancement
- ✓ Local economy benefits
- ✓ Social / community development
- ✓ Promote education/ research opps
- ✓ Environmental sustainability
- ✓ Ecology and habitat restoration

The current operating model's main focus is on winter sports. The strategy is to create a year-round offering that broadens the experience to a wider audience by providing activities that offer a diverse range of sports, leisure and educational pursuits that enhance the existing recreational activities of the larger Aviemore / Glenmore area. The ambition is to significantly improve the Cairngorm winter and summer experiences and expand revenue-generating opportunities for the business and the wider area.

A sustainable operating model is one which will match its long-term expenditure with its long-term income. This allows for both earned and unearned income (including public investment), as has been the case historically at Cairngorm Mountain with previous operating companies.

The operating company will seek investment opportunities that achieve positive, commercial rates of return. However, where such financial returns are not achievable and investment proposals can, potentially, create significant, measurable economic benefits for the national and regional economy, then the operating company would seek investment support in the form of capital and revenue that can be justified and attracted by the wider economic impact.

The expectation is that, at Cairngorm Mountain, the operating company will seek to deliver investment alone, as well as with partners and by partners.

Action: [HIE / CMSL]

- Review and consider options for future ownership and operating models.
- Prioritise and develop supporting strategies that address the diversification of activities and create a mountain for all.

3.0 Key strategies created from the vision's guiding principles & HIE's core objectives

02 KEY STRATEGY

DRAFT

Scottish Centre for the Mountain Environment

A new centre that will replace the day lodge



- Operating model sustainability
- Financial investment at Cairngorm
- Visitor experience enhancement
- Local economy benefits
- Social / community development
- Promote education/ research opps
- Environmental sustainability
- Ecology and habitat restoration

It is clear that education and experience are important to all stakeholders and the community. This is a key strategy that unites all and would involve the redevelopment of the day lodge. Creating a Scottish Centre for the Mountain Environment would place a new focus on Education and Research that would cover the Environment, Climate Change and Sports.

Research:

In addition to education / interpretation for the wider public, the centre could create research and education facilities for schools, universities and the private sector.

- Climate Change
- Mountain Environment
- Wildlife
- Caledonian Forest
- Local History
- Mountain Tourism

Education at all levels:

- Strengthen links to UHI, local schools and other institutions.
- Educate through activities.
- Focus the visitor experience on education and interaction.
- Provide facilities that tell the story of the area, and the changes that it is going through.

Sport / Activities

- Rather than focus exclusively on snow sports and activities, all mountain sports and activities would be supported.
- Engage and inspire: The centre would offer visitors an exciting and accessible first step into mountain activities

Potential Activities and Experiences:

- Enhanced arrival, interpretation, walking path links.
- Enhanced food and beverage offering.
- Beginner classes for a diverse range of mountain activities.
- Walking path links to new Allt Mor trail and mountain bike (MTB) link to logging way.
- Direct link through buildings to Windy Ridge path

Action: [HIE/ CMSL]

- Review previous commission and design of proposals for the Base Station. Publish lessons learned. Create a brief.
- Undertake feasibility study.

1. Messner Mountain Museum: Image: <https://archello.com/project/messner-mountain-museum-corones-mmm-corones> 2. CMSL previous proposals for a redeveloped Day lodge
 3 & 4: Tollymore (N. Ireland) National outdoor Centre - <http://www.tollymore.com/> 5 Local Olympian Lesley McKenna - <https://blog.visitcairngorms.com/snow-stalgia-remember-what-cairngorm-used-to-be-like/>
 6 <https://www.gov.scot/publications/protecting-scotlands-future-governments-programme-scotland-2019-20/> 7 <https://cairngorms.co.uk/national-survey-results-for-capercaillie/>

DRAFT

03 KEY STRATEGY

A mountain for all

1. Uplift: Modernise and optimise 2. Facilities: Actively cater for all user groups 3. Activities: Diversify offering



Currently the facilities and uplift focus on winter sports. The strategy is to provide diverse activities, uplift and facilities for all user groups, in every season.

To create a mountain for all, it is essential to establish efficient and reliable uplift for all winter and summer activities (snow sports, mountain biking, visitor access) to extend use to all seasons. All activities proposed for the mountain should be centred around the uplift strategy.

The facilities at Cairngorm Mountain should provide for all user groups. The focus should be on enhancing the three existing stations: Base Station and Day Lodge, Shieling and Ptarmigan. Key considerations include user experience, provision of dry / warm changing facilities, possible club spaces, enhanced food and beverage offering, future expansion.

- ✓ Operating model sustainability
- ✓ Financial investment at Cairngorm
- ✓ Visitor experience enhancement
- ✓ Local economy benefits
- ✓ Social / community development
- ✓ Promote education/ research opps
- ✓ Environmental sustainability
- ✓ Ecology and habitat restoration

Action: HIE / CMSL

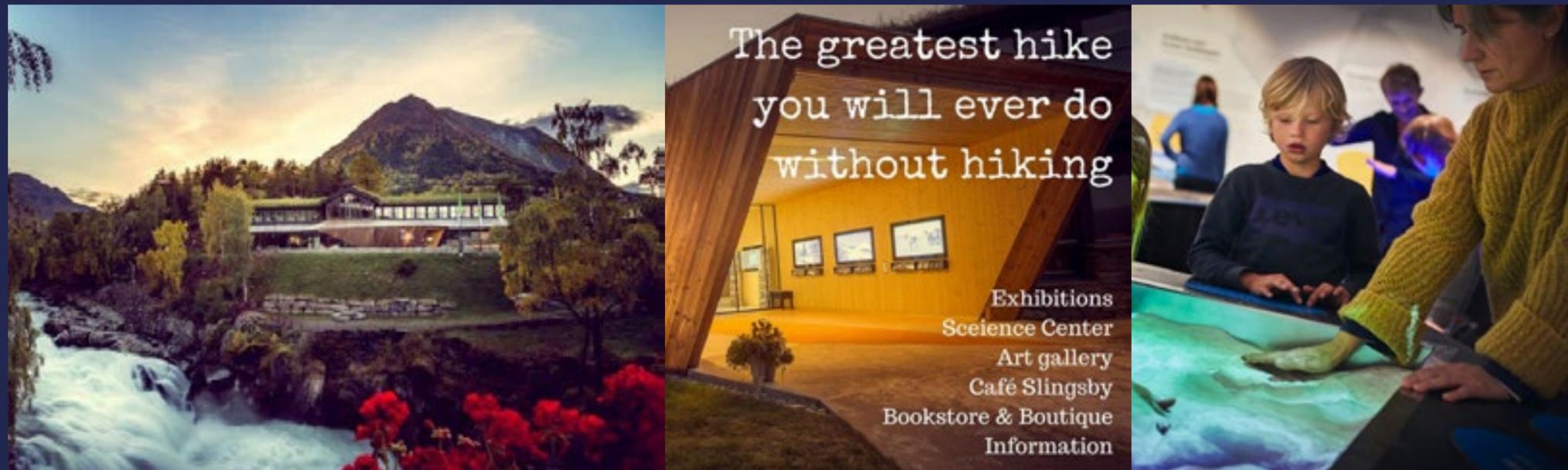
- Create a clear and defined brief for uplift and facilities development master plan
- Undertake feasibility study on agreed brief

Image 1&2 : <https://www.leitner-ropeways.com/en/products/ropeway-systems/bike-transport/>
 Image 3: <https://www.doppelmayr.com/products/detachable-chairlift/>
 Image 4: <http://www.dmbins.com/developing/news/consultation-on-the-scottish-mountain-bike-strategy-2019-2025>
 Image 5: <https://snowsportsotland.org/our-strategy/>
 Image 6: <https://www.the-soc.org.uk/>

04 KEY STRATEGY

DRAFT

Enhanced user experience Sense of arrival/ orientation/ experiential design



Create cohesive experience from arrival to departure. Sense of arrival/ orientation (Centre for the Mountain Environment) / Management of visitors through multiple and diverse experiences.

Integrate arrival, car parking, paths, bike network, base buildings, play structures, 24 hr toilets and changes in levels between the upper and lower Cas car parks to promote engagement with all visitors while key messages are viewed by all entering the Cairngorm Estate.

- ✓ Operating model sustainability
- ✓ Financial investment at Cairngorm
- ✓ Visitor experience enhancement
- ✓ Local economy benefits
- ✓ Social / community development
- ✓ Promote education/ research opps
- ✓ Environmental sustainability
- ✓ Ecology and habitat restoration

Action: HIE/ CMSL

- Feasibility study to investigate how the experience can be enhanced.

05 KEY STRATEGY

DRAFT

Access from Ptarmigan

Controlled access strategies for all to the mountain



Cairngorm Mountain's accessibility for all physical abilities is unmatched. Currently there is no unsupervised access permitted from the Ptarmigan to the mountain top/plateau. For environmental reasons this is controlled by an existing legal agreement between HIE, CMSL, CNPA, THC and SNH. During the consultation process, all the partners have confirmed they are open to re-evaluating this agreement. Together, they will review the visitor management arrangements at the Ptarmigan to investigate opportunities for improving the visitor experience whilst, critically, maintaining protection for the adjacent European sites.

- Identify management roles, then devise monitoring systems that will measure their effectiveness.
- Create a stepped plan and methodology to identify when and where monitoring is required
- Technology and apps could be the key to accessing the mountain in a managed and controlled fashion that respects and conserves the natural environment.
- To comply with legislation protecting European sites, robust measures must be in place from the outset to prevent permanent damage to habitats or significant disturbance to species.
- Any testing and monitoring of new approaches to visitor management needs to have built in 'fail safes'.

- ✓ Operating model sustainability
- ✓ Financial investment at Cairngorm
- ✓ Visitor experience enhancement
- ✓ Local economy benefits
- ✓ Social / community development
- ✓ Promote education/ research opps
- ✓ Environmental sustainability
- ✓ Ecology and habitat restoration

Action: HIE and SECTION 50 PARTNERS

- Creation of a stepped plan and methodology to identify when and where monitoring is required.
- Evolution of the Visitor Management Plan to make it more flexible.

06 KEY STRATEGY

DRAFT

Cohesive approach to ecology and habitat restoration



Since the opening of the railway, Cairngorm Mountain has been driving high level mountain woodland regeneration to accelerate species diversity through initiatives such as the creation of a high elevation plantation below the Ciste car park and above the Sugarbowl, both now well established. This has in turn led to increased pairs of nesting ring ousel and the return of threatened species including the water vole. This is complemented by the wild mountain garden which showcases the surrounding mountain habitats, wildlife and plants. Since 2004, primary school children have planted over 8,000 trees within the lower slopes of the ski area. These trees are now starting to transform the landscape at the base of the mountain.

Extensive path repair and maintenance, combined with reducing bare ground and path margins across the Cairngorm estate, have led to positive results for protected habitats, as seen in the detailed monitoring scheme which independently reports to SNH and THC. This has also seen protected species like dotterel raising chicks within the ski area, while sustaining stable numbers in comparison to lower hills in areas like Drumochter where they may be in decline and further threatened by climate change.

Continue to manage the altering tree line. A new phase of mountain woodland above the link road and into the lower Ciste gully should be undertaken to increase the number of trees and help accelerate their natural regeneration. This could mirror the success of the initial Ciste planting within the next 30 years. Regeneration around the Ciste car park will create a different environment to that of the Cas, and provide new opportunities. Progress and proposal markers on site will explain the process to visitors.

FLS as part of the Cairngorms Connect partnership is working towards similar goals creating opportunities to link the various habitat types from forest to mountain top.

- Operating model sustainability
- Financial investment at Cairn Gorm
- Visitor Experience Enhancement
- Local Economy Benefits
- Social / Community Development
- Education/ Research
- Environmental Sustainability
- Ecology and habitat restoration

Action: HIE / CMSL / THC / CNPA / SNH / F&LS / Cairngorm Connect

- Build on the positive work accomplished to date. Identify clear zones of ecology regeneration and define what should happen in these areas, and when.
- Review species and supporting landscape protection and monitoring as defined in the SSSIs, SAC and SPA.

07 KEY STRATEGY

DRAFT

De-carbonise the mountain Targeting net zero



Remove all carbon-based fuels from the mountain. HIE is currently undertaking a review of an options appraisal for renewable energy development by Cairngorm Mountain. Investigate all energy aspects of the wider area. Work alongside partners with common aims of energy use reduction, alternative transport and active travel, renewable energy sources, carbon offset and sequestration.

- ✓ Operating model sustainability
- ✓ Financial investment at Cairngorm
- ✓ Visitor experience enhancement
- ✓ Local economy benefits
- ✓ Social / community development
- ✓ Promote education/ research opps
- ✓ Environmental sustainability
- ✓ Ecology and habitat restoration

Action: HIE

- Renewable Energy Options Appraisal currently being undertaken by HIE

3.0 Key strategies created from the vision's guiding principles & HIE's core objectives

08 KEY STRATEGY

Mountain Biking

DRAFT



Feedback from the first consultation survey indicated that people and business owners were keen to see mountain biking facilities added. There is a clear alignment with mountain biking and the creation of a year-round offering on the mountain. Consideration should be given to the following:

- Connecting to the comprehensive network of paths linking all sites for walking and cycling including electric bikes.
- What happens to bikes when they leave the estate and how can they be managed?
- Provision of cycle hire, including electric bikes.
- Define the varieties applicable; downhill / enduro is offered elsewhere (Glencoe), so should XC / Trail be Cairngorm's focus?
- Integrate with uplift strategy.
- Mountain biking to be integrated into the Developing Mountain Biking in Scotland (DMBS) Highland Cluster. The area below the CMSL estate site is suitable for mountain biking. However, as it is off-site, this area will be left for other interested parties. From the DMBS consultation, it has been established that there is a lot of interest in constructing a loop of technical single track between Aviemore and Glenmore; this would likely include an extension to connect with Cairngorm.

- ✓ Operating model sustainability
- ✓ Financial investment at Cairngorm
- ✓ Visitor experience enhancement
- ✓ Local economy benefits
- ✓ Social / community development
- ✓ Promote education/ research opps
- Environmental sustainability
- Ecology and habitat restoration

Action: [CMSL/ CNPA/ SNH/ F&LS]

- Agreement with CNPA and F&LS regarding bikes leaving the estate.
- Create masterplan and mountain bike guidance.
- Support and engage fully with Developing Mountain Biking in Scotland (DMBS).

09 KEY STRATEGY

DRAFT

Promote active travel & sustainable transport



- ✓ Operating model sustainability
- ✓ Financial investment at Cairngorm
- ✓ Visitor experience enhancement
- ✓ Local economy benefits
- ✓ Social / community development
- ✓ Promote education/ research opps
- ✓ Environmental sustainability
- ✓ Ecology and habitat restoration

HIE/ CMSL will commit to promoting active travel and sustainable travel to Cairn Gorm

Rail

- Engage with Network Rail and Scotrail
- Promote the enhancement of local rail connectivity between Newtonmore, Kingussie, Aviemore and Carrbridge.
- Promote the enhancement of existing national (Perth to Inverness) provision.

Active & sustainable travel

- Publicise the Aviemore to Cairngorm route for road bikes.
- Work with all stakeholders and surrounding landowners to connect the Base Station with the Old Logging Way for mountain bikes.
- Provide facilities for active travel at Cairngorm
- Provide facilities for electric cars and bikes at Cairngorm

Public transport: integrated sustainable Badenoch and Strathspey Network

- It is our ambition that visitor circulation is achieved by carbon-neutral provision, connecting between visitor attractions, accommodation and local communities, thus displacing private car use and duplicated parking provision.
- Promote the enhancement of local bus services linking with Cairngorm Mountain

Parking provision through the corridor

- Engage with stakeholders to agree a parking strategy.

- Action: [HIE/ / CMSL]**
- Promote active and sustainable travel on website
 - Publicise the Aviemore to Cairngorm route for road bikes.
 - Provide facilities for active travel and sustainable transport

Image 1: Aviemore Rail Station
 Image 2: Potential mountain shuttle buses
 Image 3: Glenmore visitor centre car park

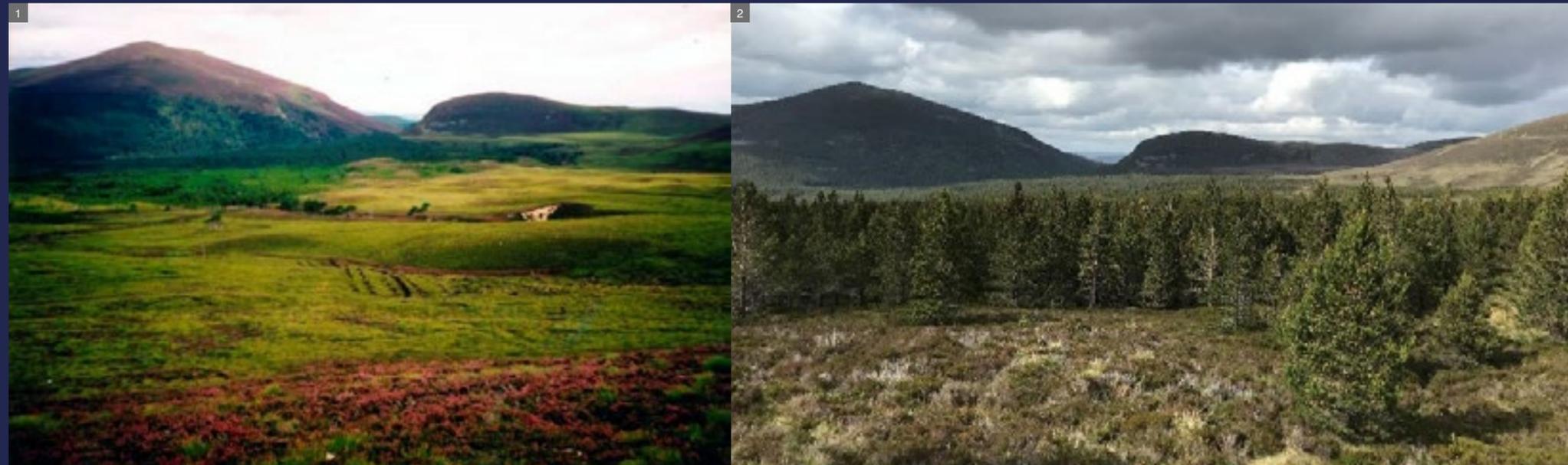


KEY STRATEGY



Monitoring implementation of new activities

Environmental and economic monitoring



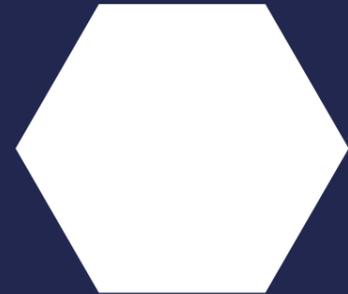
Diversification of activities on the mountain is key to the future economic sustainability and has to be balanced against the conservation of the mountain estate environment and restoration of ecology and habitat in surrounding areas.

- Work out proposed management arrangements, then devise monitoring systems that will measure their effectiveness.
- Creation of stepped plans and methodologies to identify when monitoring is required
- Technology and phone apps could be the key to accessing the mountain in a managed and controlled fashion that respects and safeguards the natural environment.
- Any testing and monitoring of new approaches to visitor management needs to have built in 'fail safes' to prevent any damage to habitats.

- ✓ Operating model sustainability
- ✓ Financial investment at Cairngorm
- ✓ Visitor experience enhancement
- ✓ Local economy benefits
- ✓ Social / community development
- ✓ Promote education/ research opps
- ✓ Environmental sustainability
- ✓ Ecology and habitat restoration

Action: HIE

- Consult with key stakeholders to create and agree a structure for monitoring



4.0

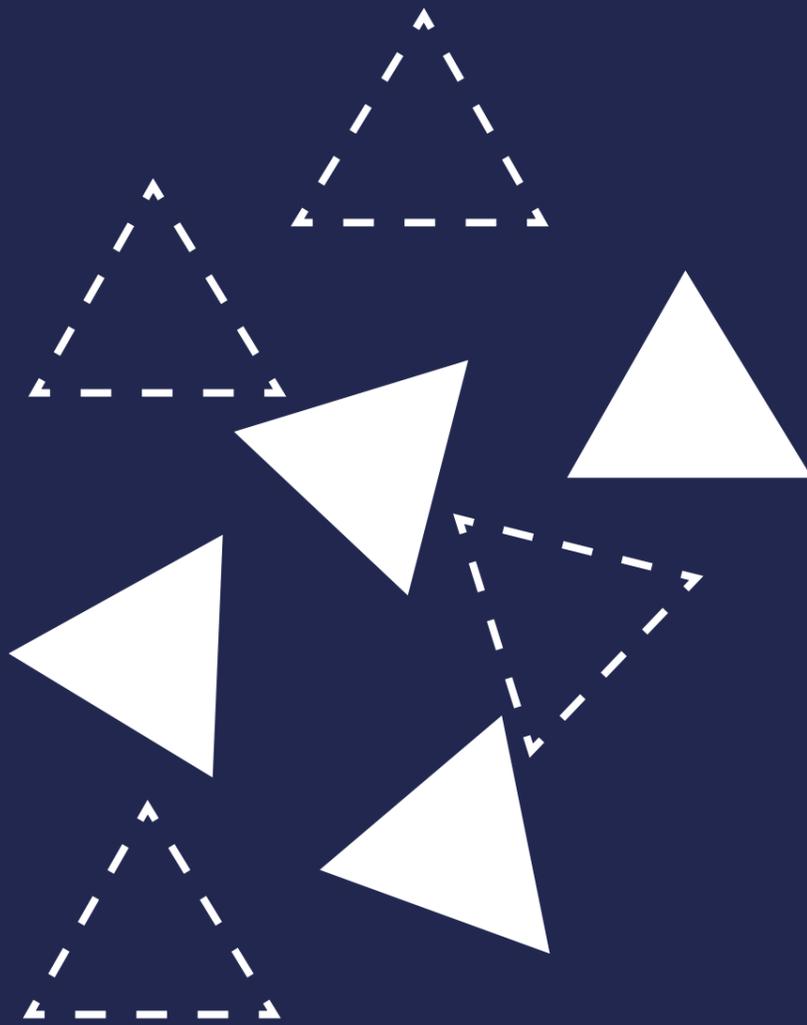
Creation of a zoned masterplan that supports the key strategies

The online questionnaire can be completed here ...

[Cairngorm vision and strategies questionnaire](#)

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/cairngormvision>

Masterplan concept



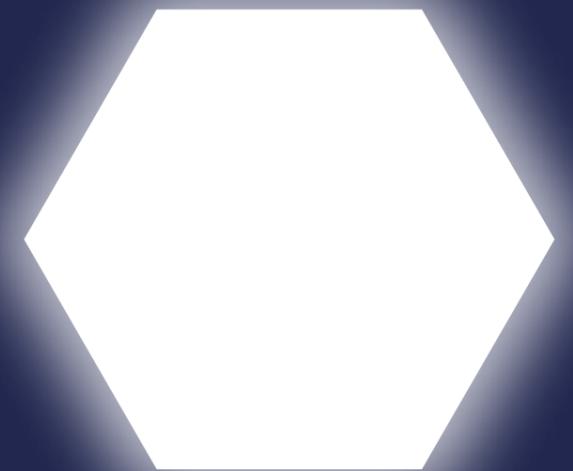
REVIEW AND RATIONALISATION

Review of inefficient uplift and infrastructure



CONSOLIDATION/ ENHANCEMENT FOCUS

1. Three Stations [Day Lodge & Base Station/ Sheiling/ Ptarmigan]
2. Funicular
3. Uplift System

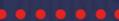


OPTIMISATION

1. Lean/ adaptable efficient operations
2. Uplift for all users & all seasons
3. Make all infrastructure work hard

Masterplan initial sketch **DRAFT**

[IN PROGRESS] This concept is to be developed with stakeholders

-  **Primary Activity Zone**
[Size & parameters TBC]
-  **Secondary Activity Zone**
[Size & parameters TBC]
-  **Arrival & orientation Zone**
[Size & parameters TBC]
-  **Ecology and habitat restoration Zone**
[Size & parameters TBC]
-  **Funicular**
-  **Review/ upgrade / Removal of dated uplift / unnecessary infrastructure**
-  **Proposed rationalised uplift (indicative)**
-  **Existing access road**
-  **Proposed active travel route to old logging way [parameters TBC]**

INDICATIVE LAYOUT ONLY: FINAL VERSION TO BE AGREED WITH STAKEHOLDERS

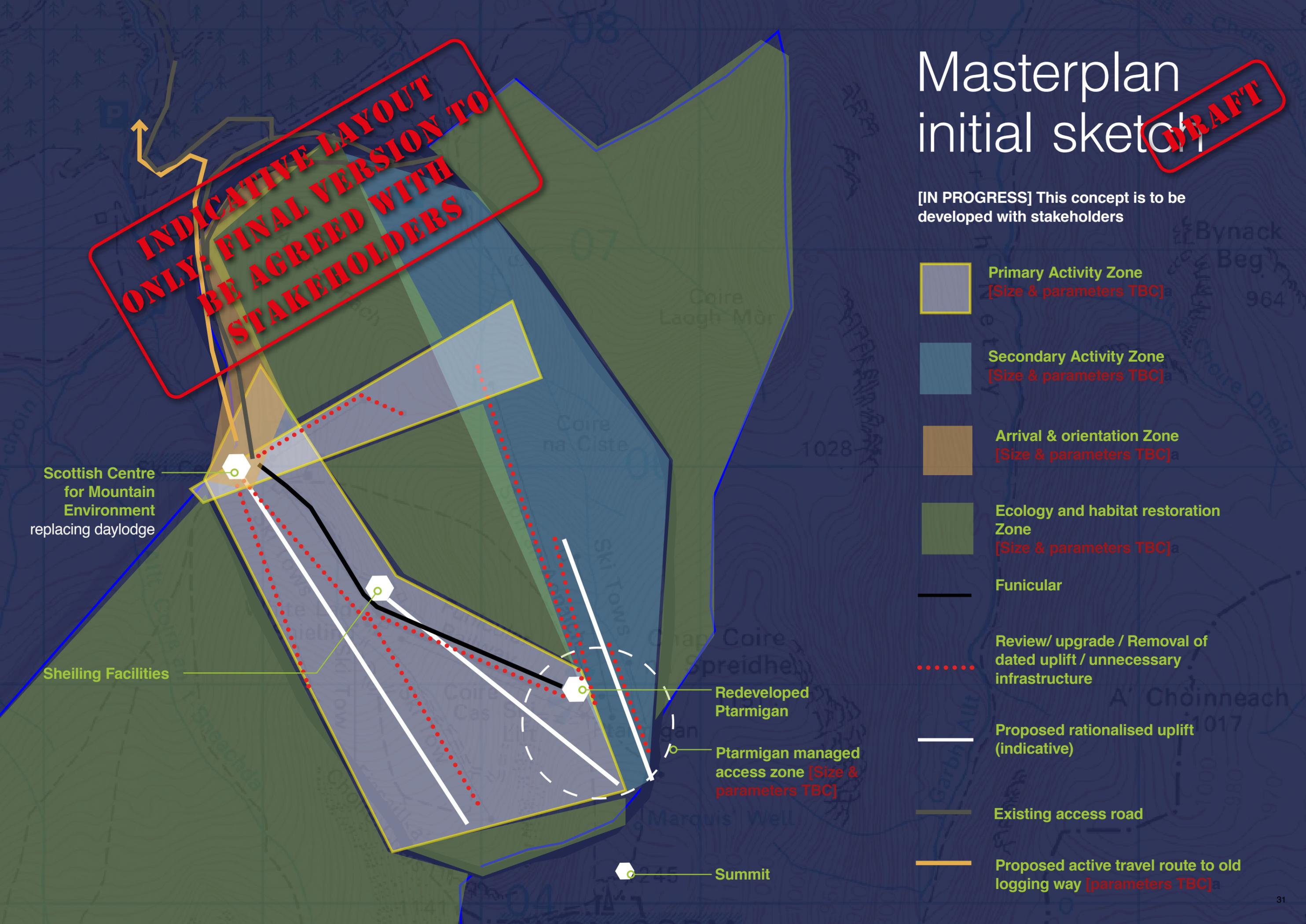
Scottish Centre for Mountain Environment replacing daylodge

Sheiling Facilities

Redeveloped Ptarmigan

Ptarmigan managed access zone [Size & parameters TBC]

Summit



Definition of masterplan zones



With the public sector stakeholders and CMSL, we are defining the different masterplan zones. The initial draft zones and definitions are as follows:

Arrival & orientation zone

- Create a sense of arrival at the mountain
- Clarity with way finding
- Guide visitors through the Centre for the Mountain Environment
- Promoted active and sustainable travel and provide facilities
- Introduction activities

Primary activity zone

- Uplift modernised and optimised for all activities
- Recreational access
- Diversification of activities accepted
- All activities (winter and summer) to be focused around the uplift system
- Development focused on existing stations

Secondary activity zone

- Uplift modernised and optimised for all activities and all seasons
- Recreational access
- Diversification of activities accepted
- All activities (winter and summer) to be focused around the uplift system

Ecology/ habitat restoration zone

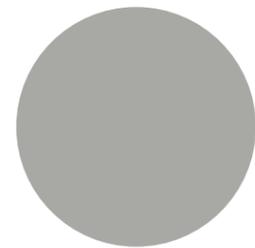
- Identified for ecology and habitat restoration
- Controlled and managed access

Ptarmigan managed access zone

- Controlled and managed access
- Work out proposed management arrangements, then devise monitoring systems that will measure their effectiveness.
- Creation of a stepped plan and methodology when and where monitoring is required
- Technology and apps could be the key to accessing the mountain in a managed and controlled fashion that respects and safeguards the natural environment.
- To comply with legislation protecting European sites, robust measures must be in place from the outset to prevent permanent damage to habitats or significant disturbance to species.
- Any testing and monitoring of new approaches to visitor management needs to have built in 'fail safes'

Next Steps

1. Review of the identified zones
2. Agree the definition of each zone and what development is acceptable/ not acceptable.
3. Agree the geographical areas of each zone



5.0

Potential or suggested activities
to be assessed

The online questionnaire
can be completed here

[Cairngorm vision
and strategies
questionnaire](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/cairngormvision)

[https://www.surveymonkey.
co.uk/r/cairngormvision](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/cairngormvision)

Suggested potential activities to be assessed

Assessing future activities at Cairngorm Mountain

All future activities and proposals for the mountain will be assessed against:

- The visions guiding principles and HIE's core objectives
- Key Strategies
- The Masterplan

Suggested activities from stakeholders and the community

During our consultation period, stakeholders including the local community suggested several activities that could happen on the mountain. From this feedback we have created a list of suggested activities that are potentially aligned with the vision's guiding principles and the key strategies.

Your views

As part of this consultation we would like to know your views on the suggested activities.

Categorising potential activities

We have divided potential activities into X-large, Large, Medium and Small. These are defined as follows:



XL SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES **National/ Scotland Wide Scale**

These overarching activities that can take place at national level.



L SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES **National Park Scale**

These activities focus on national Park surrounding areas (e.g. Aviemore).



M SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES **Mountain Scale**

These activities are specific to the Cairn Gorm Mountain estate



S SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES **Human Scale & 'Quick wins'**

These are highly localised activities and focus on self-responsibility at the scale of individual citizens.

5.0 Potential or suggested activities to be assessed

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR FEEDBACK



XL Activity 01: Aspiration for mountain learning in schools

Cairngorm Mountain and the proposed Centre for the Mountain Environment offer a variety of potential opportunities for education and research, including, integrating mountain studies and experiences with the school curriculum and further and higher education courses. Activities could include on-site learning, virtual tours, residential stays (overnighting) on the mountain.



L Activity 01: One Voice: A Community leader / Champion

In the first consultation several local people expressed the view that the community needed either someone or a group of people that everyone can support to represent all voices from across Badenoch and Strathspey. They would champion the area and promote the strategies, then oversee their implementation.



L Activity 04: Media strategy

Cairngorm has been increasingly used by television and film studios as a location for programmes. A strategy for enticing and promoting appropriate productions to be developed.



XL Activity 02: Build on collaboration with other mountain resorts

The mountain resorts succeed because of each other, not despite each other. Build on twice yearly ASSA meetings Compliment each other, agree what is the speciality of each, and support. Unified advertising, ticketing, work with tourist bodies. Co-ordinated events and tours.



L Activity 02: Change of culture building trust and buy in

HIE understand that Cairn Gorm is everyone's mountain and will strive for:

- Clarity of communication and transparent decision making
- Continued public engagement
- Increasing opportunities for the involvement of stakeholder, including the local community, businesses and sports people.



M Activity 01: Redevelop the Ptarmigan

In May 2019 planning was granted for the extension of the Ptarmigan building to make the internal layout more user friendly. Provision has been made for better toilet facilities and a larger restaurant and general improvements to the visitor experience on arrival at the top station. In addition, the plans propose extending the building, which will sit on stilts, with new wraparound viewing platforms.



XL Activity 03: Stimulate innovation (digital, cooperation, collaboration)

Innovation as a key driver of growth, creating employment and economic sustainability.

Cairngorm Mountain offers numerous opportunities for innovation in management, activities, monitoring and research.



L Activity 03: Build on collaboration with neighbouring estates

CMSL Ranger service currently meets throughout the year with Glenmore and Rothiemurchus Ranger services and CNP volunteer rangers to discuss updates and joined up work ideas across the estate boundaries.

Build on existing collaboration with the adjoining estates to create a series of educational experiences through the corridor, specific to each place, that complement each other, and present a cohesive narrative.



M Activity 02: Diversification: Integrated mountain coaster

SE Group's proposed coaster requires its own pulley drive system. This goes against the strategy of having all infrastructure based around the proposed uplift system. An alternative could be a linear mountain coaster using a new uplift system. This new summer activity doesn't impinge on winter snow sports but maximises a new chair both summer and winter.

5.0 Potential or suggested activities to be assessed

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR FEEDBACK



INTEGRATED INTO PROPOSED UPLIFT

M Activity 03: Diversification: Zip lining

'Customers can 'fly' over the steep bowls and off-piste resort terrain previously only accessible to skiers. It is a mountain experience unlike anything else. Parallel zip lines and the ability to control the speed of descent enhances the zip line ride experience.'

1. Text extracted from SE Group Report titled: Cairngorm Ski Area Feasibility Assessment & Strategic Plan Nov 2018



INTEGRATED INTO PROPOSED UPLIFT

M Activity 06: Best in class beginner experience

Provide a 'best-in-class' beginner experience is critical to attracting and maintaining the family snowsports market, as well as ensuring the future sustainability of the sport. Additional uplift would enable Cairngorm to offer a great beginner experience regardless of weather.



INTEGRATED INTO PROPOSED UPLIFT

M Activity 09: Cross country skiing

Improved provision of tracks around the Ciste zone (as Glenmore tracks have been inconsistent) where the topography allows for relatively flat circuits.



M Activity 04: Path network: Maintain, enhance, improve

Maintain and extend the path network with continued investment and action on path network. Additional paths should enhance, and work with, the proposed uplift system.



INTEGRATED INTO PROPOSED UPLIFT

M Activity 07: Artificial ski slope: Integrated and connected to uplift system

Located from mid-station to base, to use existing/upgraded lift system. A previous proposal was placed on the east wall of the White Lady, presumably to be clear of the snow on the piste. Shielling to base artificial slopes would be less intrusive visually, assist with reduced snow cover in winter and maintain the link from the upper slopes to the lower, as well as providing a year-round resource.



INTEGRATED INTO MOUNTAIN CENTRE

M Activity 10: Events and festivals

Create events that are key points in the year to publicise, creates focus, and could occupy normally inactive periods.

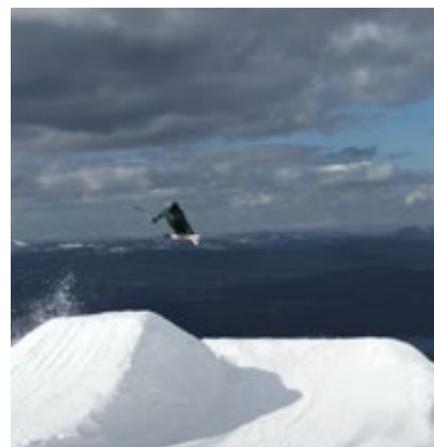
Events and festivals can appeal to wider public or specific interest organisations and clubs. Could utilise buildings or the car parks. Any events or festivals considered would have to compliment the local business.



INTEGRATED INTO PROPOSED UPLIFT

M Activity 05: Re-purposing the Shielling

Reopen the Shielling as a visitor resource; as a daytime picnic location with WC facilities, or an overnighting education facility to improve the visitor experience for skiers and non-skiers.



M Activity 08: Freestyle Park

A permanent fixture could be formed as part of the artificial ski slope. Located on the lower slope of the Cas.



M Activity 11: Enhance Snow making

The improvement of the existing snowmaking system and expansion would enable Cairngorm to ensure snow coverage on a significant portion of the runs for the entirety of the ski season, including the lower mountain and critical base area environment. This would enable the ski area to open and operate more consistently.

5.0 Potential or suggested activities to be assessed

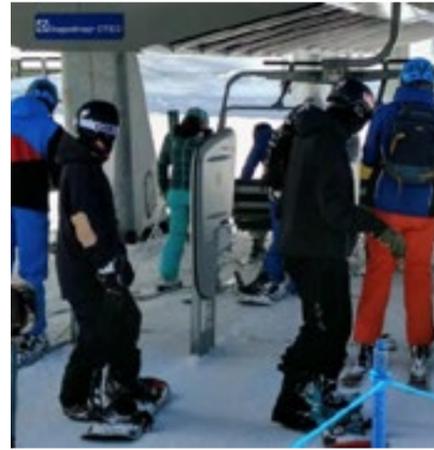
SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR FEEDBACK



S Activity 01: Celebrate pioneer culture & Olympic success

The Centre for the Mountain Environment should record the story of the mountain's history and development with the display of artefacts. The story of the past can also be a projection into the future, showing the evolution, and the engagement of the community.

Local Olympian Lesley McKenna - <https://blog.visitcairngorms.com/snow-stalgia-remember-what-cairngorm-used-to-be-like/>



S Activity 04: Electronic ticketing

This activity has been commenced by CMSL. Electronic ticketing allows certainty regarding access to the mountain before arrival via remote purchase combined with live updates on available capacity and status.



S Activity 07: Picnic facilities

Provision of picnic areas to suit all user groups.



S Activity 02: Re-purpose facilities at base of ciste

Car park maintained. Facilities provided for camper vans.



S Activity 05: Improve food / beverage / hospitality offer

Cairngorm Mountain has the potential to build on its food and beverage offerings including

- A Scottish Experience: promoting local produce.
- Excellent service
- Self-prep areas
- Extend reasons to stay at the end of the day; après-ski, evening dining.
- Create an offering that will attract diners in its own right



S Activity 08: Place-specific interpretation

Additional interpretation across the estate, tailored to its location. Use digital means where physical signs would be invasive.



S Activity 03: Improve digital connectivity

- Wifi connectivity enhanced across three existing stations.
- 4G/5G network connectivity enhanced across the estate.
- Live real-time information provided via a live app



S Activity 06: Wildlife viewing/ interaction

In addition to the viewing area for black grouse at the Ciste car park, place additional wildlife viewing areas in strategic locations. In progress: CMSL are implementing a bird hide within the camera obscura directed at viewing ring ousel for 2020. Further hides could be set within the ski area at lower elevations within the forest / mountain woodland.



S Activity 09: Campervan facilities

Provide hook ups (power, sanitary disposal). The two car parks could offer different experiences.

5.0 Potential or suggested activities to be assessed

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR FEEDBACK



S Activity 10: Overnighting

People wish to stay on the mountain for a number of reasons including hiking, education, training, aurora watching, sunrise yoga etc. No accommodation would be provided in any of the proposed facilities; camping would be the promoted option and the use of the refurbished Shieling, for education / school parties on a mountain experience.



S Activity 13: Reindeer grazing

HIE currently have a lease to allow reindeer grazing. This could be developed with the Cairngorm reindeer centre as a possible visitor attraction.



S Activity 11: Discount rate for local residents

Postcode based for all Badenoch and Strathspey residents, run as a club membership.



S Activity 12: Charging points for vehicles and e bikes

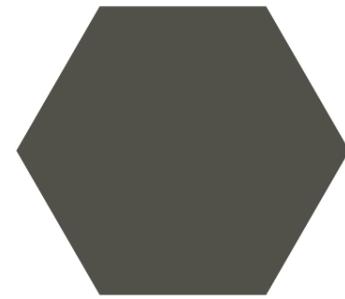
Electric car and e-bike charging points to be located in the Cas and Ciste car parks.

Thank you for taking the time to review this document and help shape the future of Cairngorm Mountain

The online questionnaire can be completed here

[Cairngorm vision and strategies questionnaire](https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/cairngormvision)

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/cairngormvision>



APPENDIX A

Context

Key assumptions & acknowledgements

The funicular railway will be operational

“HIE’s preferred option is to repair the funicular and bring it back into service as quickly as possible. However, a final decision will depend on approval of a business case that is currently in preparation and the works will also require planning consent and regulatory approval.”

Highlands and Islands Enterprise

We are in a climate emergency

“Scotland’s response to the climate emergency must be hardwired into our national psyche. We must take this journey together, seize the economic opportunities available to us and redefine what world leadership means, not just as a government but as a country. Scotland has declared a global climate emergency and now Scotland must act as one to safeguard our planet for future generations.”¹

Climate X Change’s Report ‘Snow Cover and Climate Change in the Cairngorms National Park’ 6th December 2019 recognises that snow cover is a key aspect of what defines the character of the Cairngorms National Park (CNP) and observes that warming trends and projected decreases in the spatial coverage and temporal duration of snow will have important consequences, for example on the ecology and hydrology of the Cairngorms National Park and surrounding areas

1. Climate Change Secretary Roseanna Cunningham’s statement to the Scottish Parliament on 14 May 2019

Cairngorm mountain sits within the context of Cairngorm National Park

It is recognised that the proposed vision and masterplan for Cairn Gorm mountain sits within the context of the national park and will sit aside existing documents such as the Cairngorm and Glenmore Strategy 2016 and the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan 2017-2022.

APPENDIX A

Aviemore and Glenmore corridor

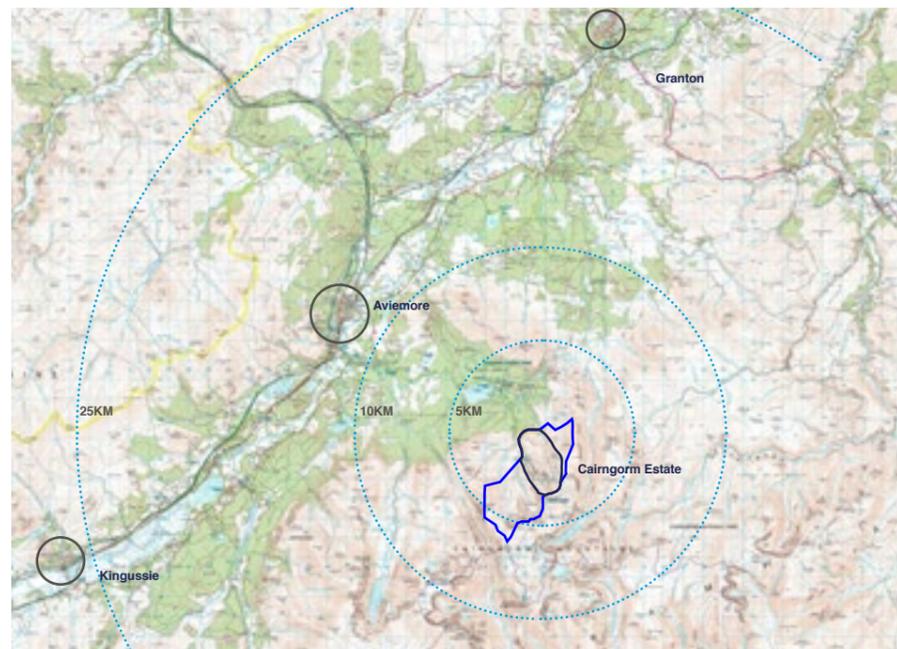
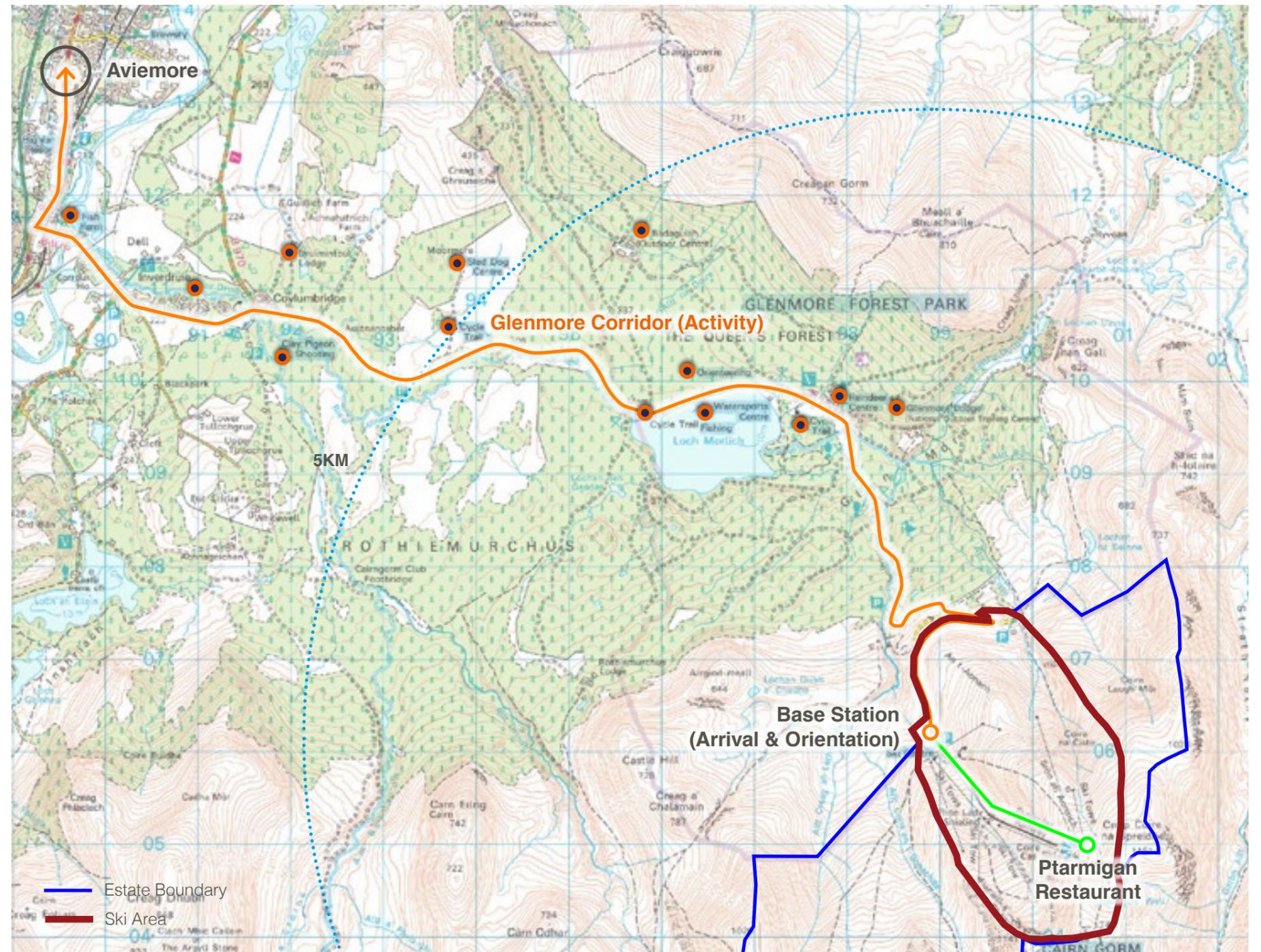
The Aviemore and Glenmore corridor is a destination and providing a focus for accommodation and leisure activity in the Strath. Together with Rothiemurchus, through which it passes, attracts 40% of all visitors to the National Park.

The corridor sits at the heart of some of Scotland's most important nature conservation sites and an expanding forest network and is central to the local economy. It is the starting point for many visitors as they head into the surrounding landscape, and the terminus of the road at Cairngorm Mountain's Base Station is a critical point of arrival and orientation.

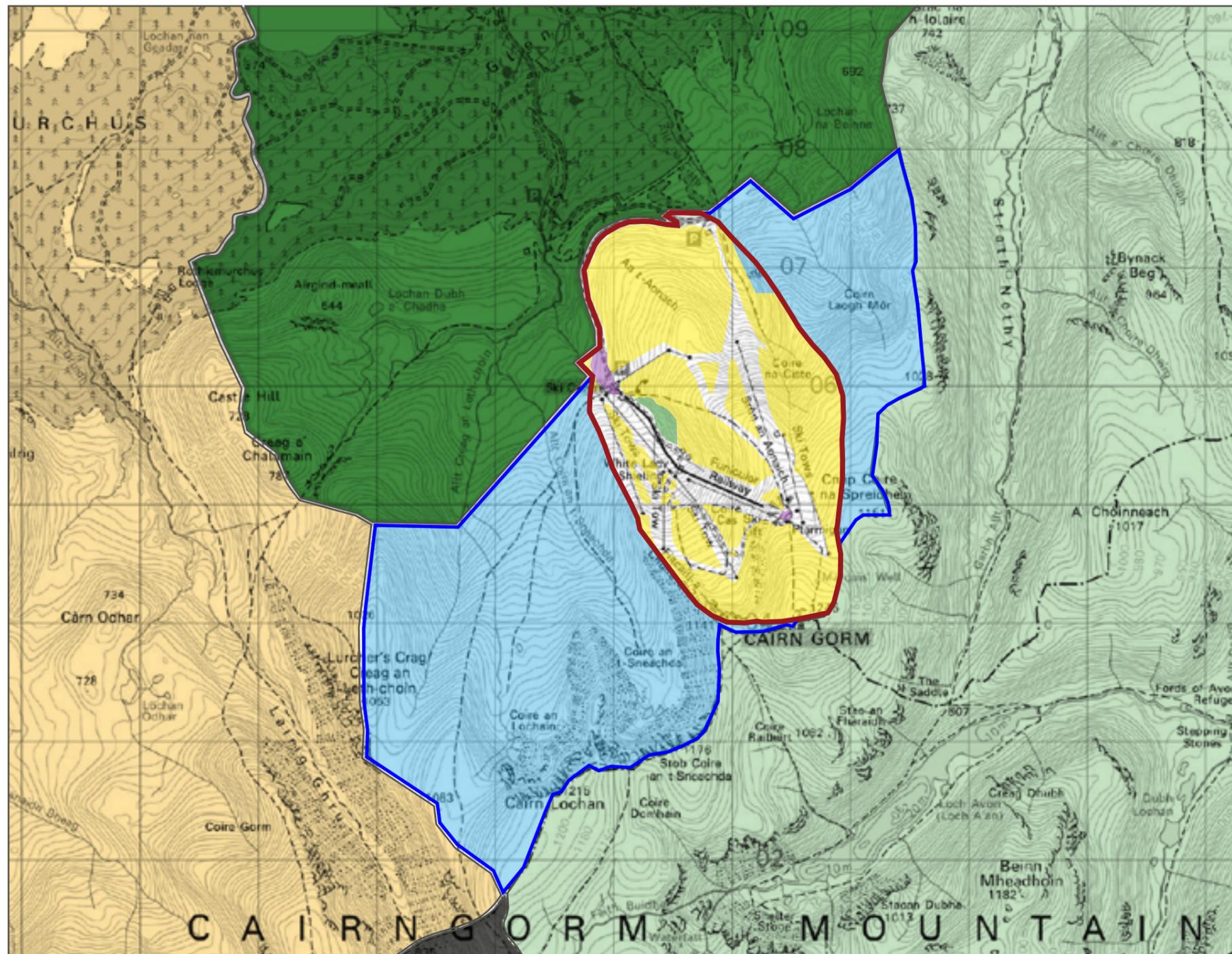
Visitors & Tourism

For this analysis, the local area has been defined as the Aviemore and Glenmore corridor. This is where most of the workforce is likely to be based and the majority of local impacts from the resort's activities will accrue.

There are an estimated 650 tourism accommodation providers in the Badenoch and Strathspey area, with 250 serviced accommodation providers (hotels, guests houses and B&B's) providing 5,000 bed spaces and 400 non-serviced accommodation providers (self-catering, touring and camping facilities) providing 9,000 beds.



Cairngorm mountain estate

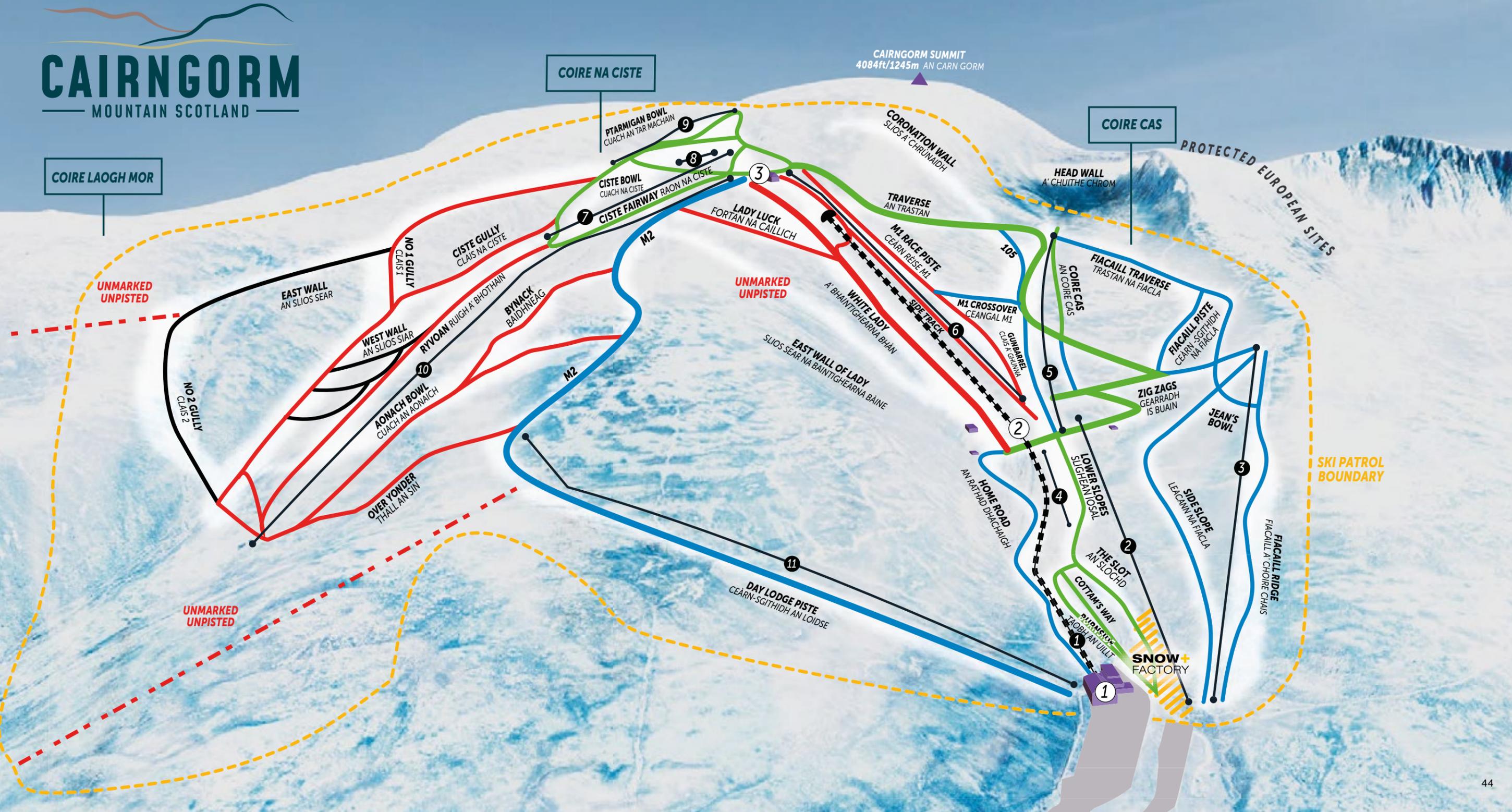


- Ski Area
- Estate Boundary
- National Trust for Scotland (Mar Lodge Estate)
- F.L.S. (Glenmore Forest Park)
- Rothiemurchus Estate
- R.S.P.B. (Abernethy National Nature Reserve)
- Mountain & Moorland Zone
Land protected by management, maintaining natural heritage and landscape value of the estate.
- Developed Area
Funicular railway, main ski tows, historical earthworks, pistes and associated fencing.
- Transitional Area
Remaining managed visitor zone, new infrastructure discouraged, low impact management (e.g. snow grooming) tolerated.
- Visitor Welcome Zone
Car parks, buildings and the approach road. Provides orientation and facilities to manage visitors requirements.

Piste Map

Cairngorm Mountain

LIFTS & TOWS	STATIONS	RUN DIFFICULTY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Funicular 2 Car Park T-Bar 3 Fiacail Ridge Poma 4 Shieling Sunkid 5 Coire Cas T-Bar 6 M1 Poma 7 Coire Na Ciste T-Bar 8 Polar Express Poma 9 Ptarmigan T-Bar 10 West Wall Poma 11 Day Lodge Poma 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Day Lodge & Base Station 2 Mid Station 3 Top Station 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> --- Unmarked Piste — Black Run (Very Difficult) — Red Run (Difficult) — Blue Run (Intermediate) — Green Run (Easy) — Ski Tows — Funicular Railway — Ski Patrol Boundary



APPENDIX A

Present and future Cairngorm Mountain

An experience that could be improved

The current winter guest experience is sub-standard and fails to meet market demand. Assuming the mountain is open (which as noted throughout the analysis of existing conditions is not a foregone conclusion), beginning of day lines are prevalent, forcing many guests to queue for tickets, ski hire, a cup of coffee, and to get up onto the mountain.

Once on the mountain the snow surface is unreliable, and many lifts are often closed. At lunch the queuing continues, and the chances of getting a seat on a busy day are slim. In the current competitive marketplace skiers will not tolerate such conditions, and once experienced are unlikely to return.¹

A future with less snow sports

There is a general trend of warming across the planet which is having implications for Cairngorm as a Ski sports resort

'In the near-term, estimates indicate the potential for a continuation of snow cover at the current range of variation, but with a substantial decline from the 2040s. These findings are in line with results from the UK Meteorological Office and Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC 2019). There will be some years in the future when the weather conditions create snow and enable lying snow that may be comparable to the past, but such occasions will become fewer. This applies to all elevations, but with larger proportional decreases at higher levels. Results indicate a likelihood of some years with very little or no snow by 2080.'²

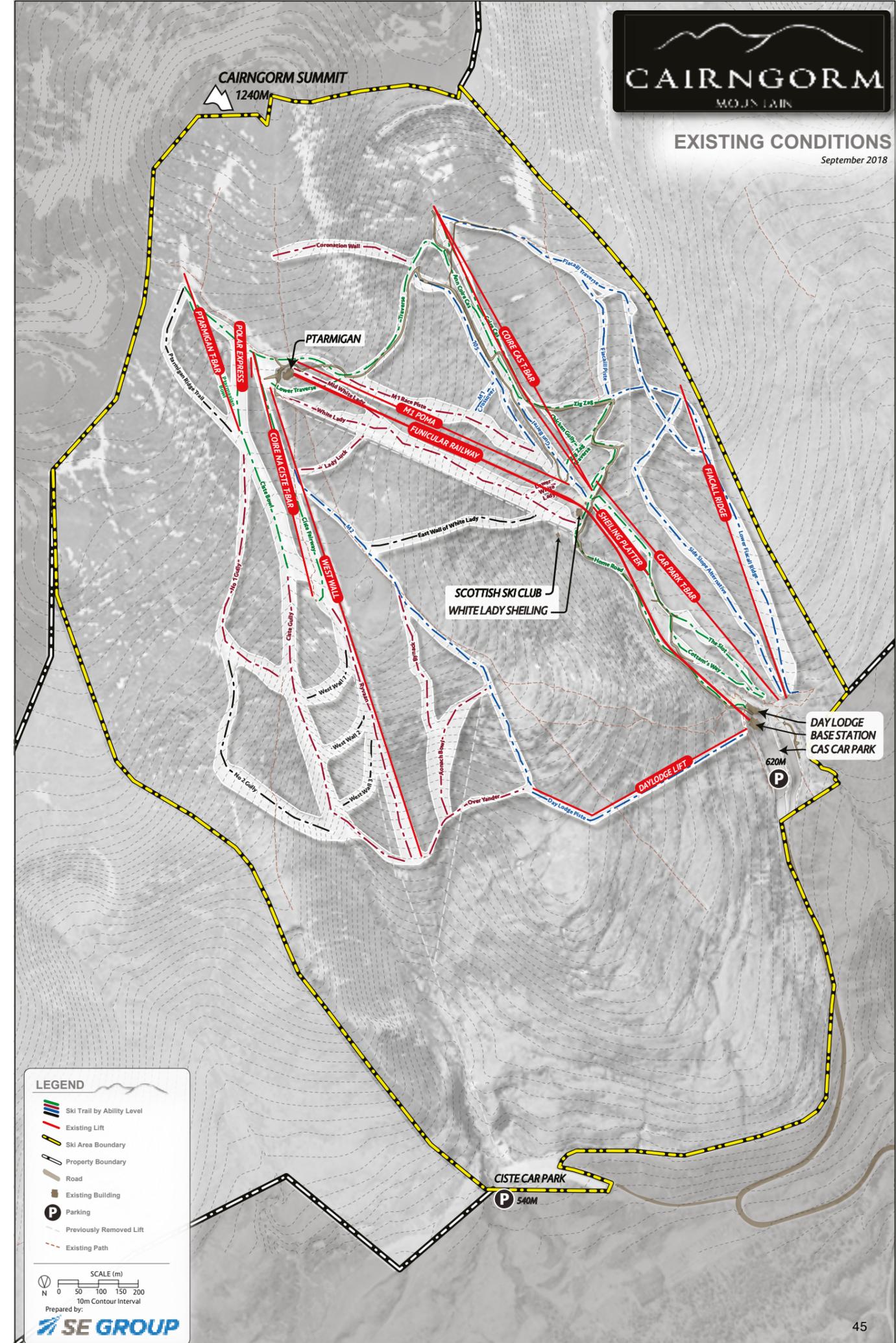
Sustainability and Viability

'The sustainability and viability of the operation rests upon a very delicate balance between measured and responsible investments, increased operational efficiency, and the need to elevate the guest experience at the resort.'³

1. Text extracted from SE Group Report titled: Cairngorm Ski Area Feasibility Assessment & Strategic Plan

2. Snow Cover and Climate Change in the Cairngorms National Park: Summary Assessment James Hutton Institute, November 2019 <https://cairngorms.co.uk/resource/docs/boardpapers/06122019/191206CNPABdPaper2Annex1CXCCairngormsSnowCoverReport-%20FINAL%20-%202022Nov19.pdf>

3. Text extracted from SE Group Report titled: Cairngorm Ski Area Feasibility Assessment & Strategic Plan Addendum June 2019



Harnessing the uniqueness of Cairn Gorm

It is important to recognise that there are many positives to build on and that HIE and operating company Cairngorm Mountain (Scotland) Ltd (CMSL) are continually reviewing what is happening and investing in Cairngorm Mountain. The vision and masterplan build on:

Accessibility

Cairngorm Mountain is arguably the most accessible Munro in Scotland. Nationally there are good road and rail links to Aviemore and locally the road infrastructure allows people to access the base station and car park (2,083 ft above sea level).

Once at the base station, access to the mountain summit is promoted through a series of paths, winter uplift and the funicular railway. This means that the mountain can be enjoyed by all users - hill walkers, downhill skiers, ski mountaineers, climbers, and nature lovers. However the most unique aspect of the mountain is the funicular allows people of all ages and a broad range of abilities to access levels of 3,599 ft and experience the mountain environment.

The funicular, base station, Shieling and Ptarmigan

The Funicular [Cairngorm Mountain Railway] opened in 2001 and is the highest railway in the United Kingdom. The base station offers access to the funicular giving year-round access for all to the Ptarmigan top station, that offers ski facilities and a restaurant. The Shieling mid station offers limited facilities. The funicular and stations are not currently operational.

Day lodge

The day lodge is next to the base station and offers a café, a bar, shop and equipment rental.

Existing uplift infrastructure/ facilities

In addition to the funicular there are nine surface lifts. There are currently no chairlifts in operation.

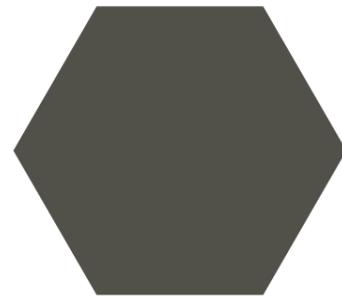
The people, experience and knowledge

There is a lot of knowledge, experience, and passion amongst the current CMSL team and the wider community.

Works currently underway or planned:

- Ground smoothing and grading works for beginners area at car park tow. Planning approved. application 2019 / 024 / DET. Supported by SE report to help improve snow sport potential.
- Adventure play piste machine zip line and tubing slide. Planning approved. Application 19/01765/FUL and 19/03944/S42. Tubing installed in August 2019. Piste machine and zip line installation delayed in 2020 by COVID-19. Improving guest experience for young families.
- 2 additional straight tubing slides to expand tubing for all age groups including toddlers. Planning application number 2020/0105/DET
- Automatic car park controlled entry. Planning application 2020/0097/DET. Money raised from the parking charges is directed into projects that benefit all visitors to the Cairngorm Estate and the improvement of the surrounding environment from path investment to car park renewal.
- Cas Car park improvements. Investment in Surfacing and drainage improvements scheduled for summer 2020.
- Electrification of snow fan guns to improve productivity and remove need for on-site power generation and fuelling fan guns. Designs completed, scheduled for summer 2020 subject to COVID-19 related issues.
- Snow factory relocation up-hill 300 metres in distance to maximise the potential of the single unit. Design work completed, planning application submission summer 2020.
- Two short hill track diversions to improve access to the Shieling building and enable future improvements both visually and operationally, helping to unlock further potential for the site.
- Installation of 4 river flow monitoring stations completed in May 2020, to provide comprehensive data for the projected tendering and design of future snowmaking phases.
- Beginners' snow sport conveyors and summer gravity biking. suppliers' design completed. Planning application scheduled for summer 2020. Recommended as improvement to beginners offering in SE group report.
- New piste machine garage. Cost appraisal completed. At design stage.





APPENDIX B

Summary of
analysis, research
and engagement

Stakeholder engagement

A number of stakeholders were identified, who have a relationship with the estate, or directly affect or are affected by the operation of the mountain. These include the neighbours of the estate, statutory authorities, conservation bodies, sporting organisations, and local business and community groups.

Stakeholders were invited to talk to the vision team within the same framework as the questionnaire that is available to the local community to participate in the process, asking them to help shape a shared vision of Cairngorm Mountain for the future.

Tier 1 engagement

The following bodies have been engaged with in person, expressing their thoughts and desires for the mountain estate, and have been requested to provide a vision statement to summarise these thoughts:

- **Cairngorm Mountain (Scotland) Ltd [Key stakeholder]**
- **Cairngorm National Park Authority [Key stakeholder]**
- **The Highland Council [Key stakeholder]**
- **Scottish Natural Heritage [Key stakeholder]**
- **Forestry & Land Scotland [Key stakeholder]**
- Scottish Government, Rural Economy and Communities
- Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
- Cairngorm Business Partnership
- Funicular Response Group
- Cairngorm Mountain Trust
- Snowsport Scotland
- SportScotland
- Glenmore Lodge
- Aviemore & Glenmore Community Trust
- Save The Ciste
- North East Mountain Trust
- Nethy Bridge Community Council
- Visit Scotland
- MacDonald Aviemore Resort

Tier 2 engagement

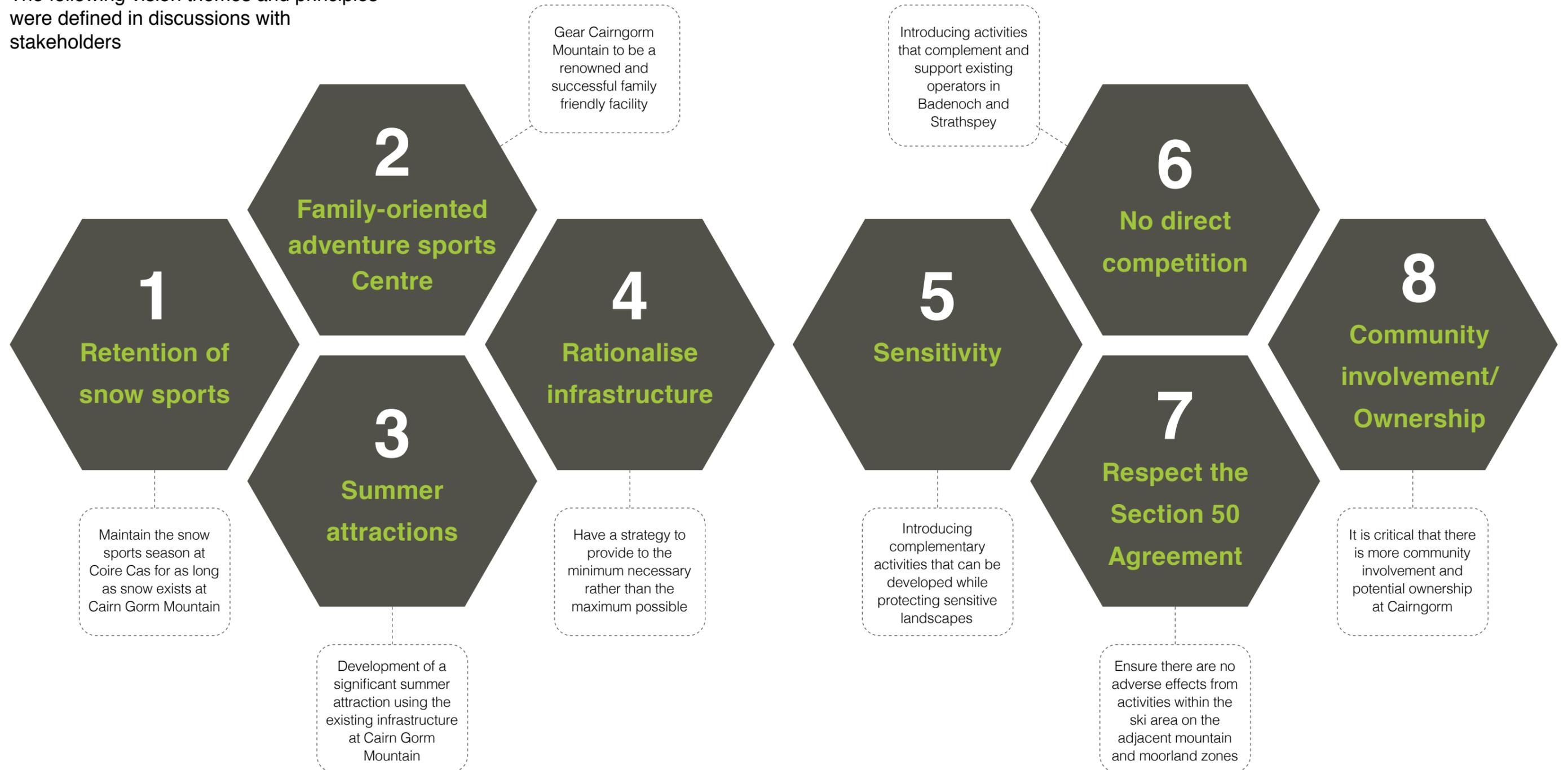
The following bodies were approached directly via e-mail, with a questionnaire to respond to anonymously:

- National Trust for Scotland
- HiTrans
- Transport Scotland
- Scottish Land Commission
- Scottish Ski Club
- Disability Snow Sports UK
- Cairngorm Mountain Rescue
- Cairngorm Ski Club;
- British Association of Snowsports Instructors
- Scottish Environment LINK
- Friends of the Earth Scotland
- John Muir Trust
- Mountaineering Scotland
- Scottish Mountaineering Club
- Developing Mountain Biking in Scotland
- Cairngorm Cycling Club
- Mountain Biking Scotland
- HIE Digital Network / Infrastructure
- Ice Factor
- Landmark Forest Adventure Park
- Strathspey Steam Railway
- Highland Wildlife Park
- Highland Folk Museum
- numerous UK snow sports societies

Stakeholder themes

60+
stakeholder
engagements

The following vision themes and principles were defined in discussions with stakeholders



Stakeholder statements

Cairngorm Mountain (Scotland) Ltd

“To become a world class visitor destination, ambitious to succeed.”

Cairngorms National Park Authority

“The Cairngorm and Glenmore Strategy 2016¹ sets out the vision for this area being at the heart of an ambitious collaboration to deliver a high quality visitor experience in an outstanding place for nature. We want Cairngorm and Glenmore to be recognised as an exemplar of managing conservation and recreation in a sensitive environment. On Cairngorm the CNPA agreed a set of ‘High level working principles’² which will guide our approach to developing the masterplan. ”

1. <https://cairngorms.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/161221CGStrategy.pdf>

2. <https://cairngorms.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Cairngorm-Mountain-CNPA-Working-Principles-converted.pdf>

The Highland Council

“We welcome the continued investment in what is a world class visitor destination and vital part of the economy of the wider Aviemore area. With proven success in habitat restoration, it has been demonstrated that the protection of the mountain environment at the same time as providing quality visitor recreational opportunities can be compatible aims of sustainable economic development. The Masterplan provides a positive framework for achieving this in our long term interests”

Stakeholder statements

Scottish Natural Heritage

“Cairngorm Mountain is an exemplar of sustainable, low-carbon tourism in an area of world class nature and at the heart of a thriving local community. Lost and damaged habitats have been restored, improving resilience to climate change across the wider area; and visitors enjoy top quality experiences, inspired by the outstanding mountain environment.”

Forestry and Land Scotland

‘Cairngorm Mountain works with partners to deliver inspiring visitor and learning experiences which support local businesses and communities, whilst protecting and enhancing the special characteristics of the montane habitat and surrounding areas.’

Stakeholder statements

Cairngorm Business Partnership

“Cairngorm Mountain operates within, and is surrounded by, areas of outstanding natural beauty in the Cairngorms National Park, of international importance for nature. As well as providing an environmentally and economically sustainable winter sports facility, underpinning the year round economy of the area, the estate, in 50 years’ time, should form a part of an environmentally sustainable high montane ecosystem and be a world class non snow attraction.”

MacDonald Hotel & Resorts

“An all year round visitor attraction for a wide audience in terms of age and interests which is financially viable and integrated into the wider Aviemore community.”

A Combined Vision

Cairngorms Campaign
Campaign for a better Cairngorm
North East Mountain Trust
Ramblers Scotland
Scottish Wild Land Group

“Five voluntary organisations have produced a ‘vision’ for the mountain (www.nemt.org.ukpublications section) in which skiing is ‘lean and light’ with modernised uplift. It makes the case for a ‘Centre for the Mountain Environment’.

Key points:

- Cairn Gorm should be considered in the context of Glenmore and the Speyside corridor.
 - Activities on the mountain should reflect only what its unique environment can offer. Zip wires, mountain coasters etc. are unacceptable.
 - Developments should not compete with what is available elsewhere on Speyside.
 - The designated areas must be protected.
 - Skiing infrastructure should be modernised.
 - The funicular is not meeting the needs of skiers and, if repaired, will consume large sums of money which would be better invested elsewhere on Speyside.
 - A ‘Centre for the Mountain Environment’ would provide a year round, sustainable educational, research and nature based tourism experience with wide appeal.”
-

Stakeholder statements

Aviemore & Glenmore Community Trust

“Aviemore & Glenmore Community Trust envisage a world class sport and, community village that relates to our pioneering heritage both reflecting our historic aspirational ski resort whilst combining modern day sport, training and, work facilities. We seek to encourage both the existing and, young community to support the future and, to benefit local business.

We see a legacy based on care, community and, a robust diverse economic future.”

RSPB Scotland

‘Cairngorm Mountain is a place that supports healthy populations of rare high-altitude wildlife and habitats. Low carbon tourism is operating alongside nature, in a way that protects the most sensitive areas. A wide range of visitors learn more about this special area and why it is so important, through a well-resourced ranger service and immersive interpretation at lower altitudes making the experience easily accessible. Depleted habitats, including montane scrub and degraded peatland have been restored, improving climate resilience and biodiversity. Cairngorm Mountain is well connected to its neighbours in its vision, continuity of habitats and day to day management. Accessible, green transport networks connect the mountain experience to a thriving community in the Strath.’

Stakeholder statements

Snowsport Scotland

“For the maximum number of people possible to be able to enjoy snowsports in a convenient, appealing and inclusive environment that is viable and capable of meeting future challenges and sustaining the growth of our sport.”

The Scottish Ski Club

“Winter sports on Cairngorm have been a key attraction for visitors to Strathspey for many decades and we believe it can continue to provide sustainable winter pursuits for years to come. Cairngorm has produced many world class athletes in the past and we, as a club, are dedicated to keeping youngsters active and enjoying winter sports as well as supporting our larger recreational membership. Fundamental to the future of the area is investment in the lift infrastructure which desperately needs restoration and modernisation. Not only has the Scottish Ski Club invested in building a hut on the mountain but the hearts and minds of our members are emotionally committed to the mountain and its development. We look forward to working with Cairngorm for the benefit of all winter enthusiasts.”

Mountaineering Scotland

“We anticipate that the masterplan or similar land use proposals will be sympathetic to the landscape and sensitive ecosystem of Cairngorm Mountain whilst creating a suitable ski area environment and self-sustaining tourist destination which contributes to the local green-tourism economy. The masterplan or similar plan or programme will demonstrate its fit within the current policy and legislative framework for landscape and wildlife in Scotland.”

Vision statement

Highlands and Islands Enterprise



Cairngorm is an inspiring place and a unique Scottish asset at the heart of a local community.

How will we achieve our vision for Cairngorm?

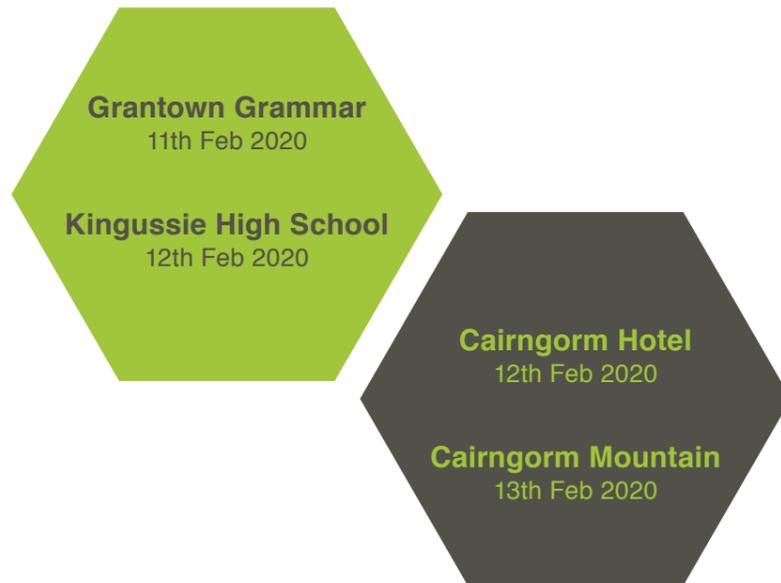
'We will respect, sustain and enhance Cairngorm as a world-class mountain environment where nature thrives and people of all ages and abilities enjoy access to outdoor sport, recreation and education opportunities in every season of the year'

APPENDIX B

Community engagement

Events were held in venues throughout Badenoch and Strathspey, to introduce the public to the process, inform them of the scope of the study, and to encourage them to play their part by taking part in an online survey.

The team attended each of the events with pop up banners. At the School venues additional presentations were given to the pupils and all venues the team discussed matters with members of the community.



1504
community responses

Individual questionnaires: key feedback

There were a total of 1,504 responses to the survey from individuals. 46% of these were aged between 45 and 64; and almost half of all respondents (48%) came from areas of the UK outside of the Cairngorms or the wider Highlands and Islands area. 51% of the respondents were regular but infrequent visitors to Cairngorm, visiting either annually or quarterly; 43% visited the Aviemore area with similar levels of frequency.

Current activities

Hiking is the most popular year round activity, undertaken by 48% of respondents; it is also the most popular activity undertaken in the summer only (by 25% of the respondents). Skiing was the single most popular winter only activity (undertaken by 56% of the respondents), while various related snowsports dominated the remaining responses (ski touring and snowboarding represented a further 42% of the responses). A number of other activities were mentioned in the additional comments, with biking/cycling being the most frequently cited, by 100 respondents (these were not separated into summer/winter activities).

59% of individual respondents considered that they had been impacted by the withdrawal of the funicular, with 52% considering its loss to have impacted their plans negatively. The main way in which this has manifested is that some respondents now no longer use Cairngorm for skiing, as there is no access to the top of the mountain.

More generally, when asked to give their opinion on a variety of topics individual respondents responded positively to:

- The path network, with 51% responding to that they found this to be Very Good or Good. 7% found it to be Poor or Very Poor.
- Provision of activities for adults, with 41% considering this to be Very Good or Good; 12% found it to be Very Poor or Poor.
- Wildlife conservation on the mountain; 41% of respondents considered this to be Good or Very Good; and 20% Poor or Very Poor.

Key weaknesses identified by individual respondents included:

- The lift system: 59% of respondents considered this to be Very Poor or Poor. 7% considered it to be Good or Very Good.
- Protection of the Landscape was considered to be Very Poor or Poor by 31% of the respondents (though 35% considered it to be Good or Very Good)
- Activities for the Elderly were considered to be Poor or Very Poor by 30% of respondents; only 12% thought they were Good or Very Good.

Individuals were asked to consider a range of facilities and identify those that they would like to see introduced.

The leading facilities requested were as follows:

- Mountain biking (43%)
- Additional lifts (43%)
- Wildlife education (40%)
- Replacement lifts (37%)
- Snowsports (30%)

When individuals were asked which facilities they would not like to see introduced the leading responses were as follows:

- All Terrain Vehicle Tours (55%)
- Ziplining (36%)
- Mountain Coaster (25%)
- More Paths (22%)

When individuals were asked which facilities they would like to see improved the leading responses were as follows:

- Cairngorm Café & Cas Bar (58%)
- Ptarmigan Restaurant & Top Station (53%)
- Improved Paths (49%)
- Snowsports (45%)

The additional comments captured by the survey indicated that people were keen to see mountain biking facilities added, along with facilities at the Ciste and an improvement in uplift.

Respondents remained keen to partake in hiking and related activities year round (67% selected hiking, 50% mountaineering, 48% rambling and 47% environmental education), focusing on mountain biking during the summer (31%), and snow sports in the winter (with 62% of respondents selecting this option).

Cairngorm Mountain's importance to the local area was assessed by inviting individuals to indicate their level of agreement with particular statements. The statements and responses were as follows:

Cairngorm Mountain plays an important role in the local economy: 87% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

Cairngorm Mountain plays an important role in the local community: 85% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

Cairngorm Mountain can play an important role in the future of the wider environment: 85% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

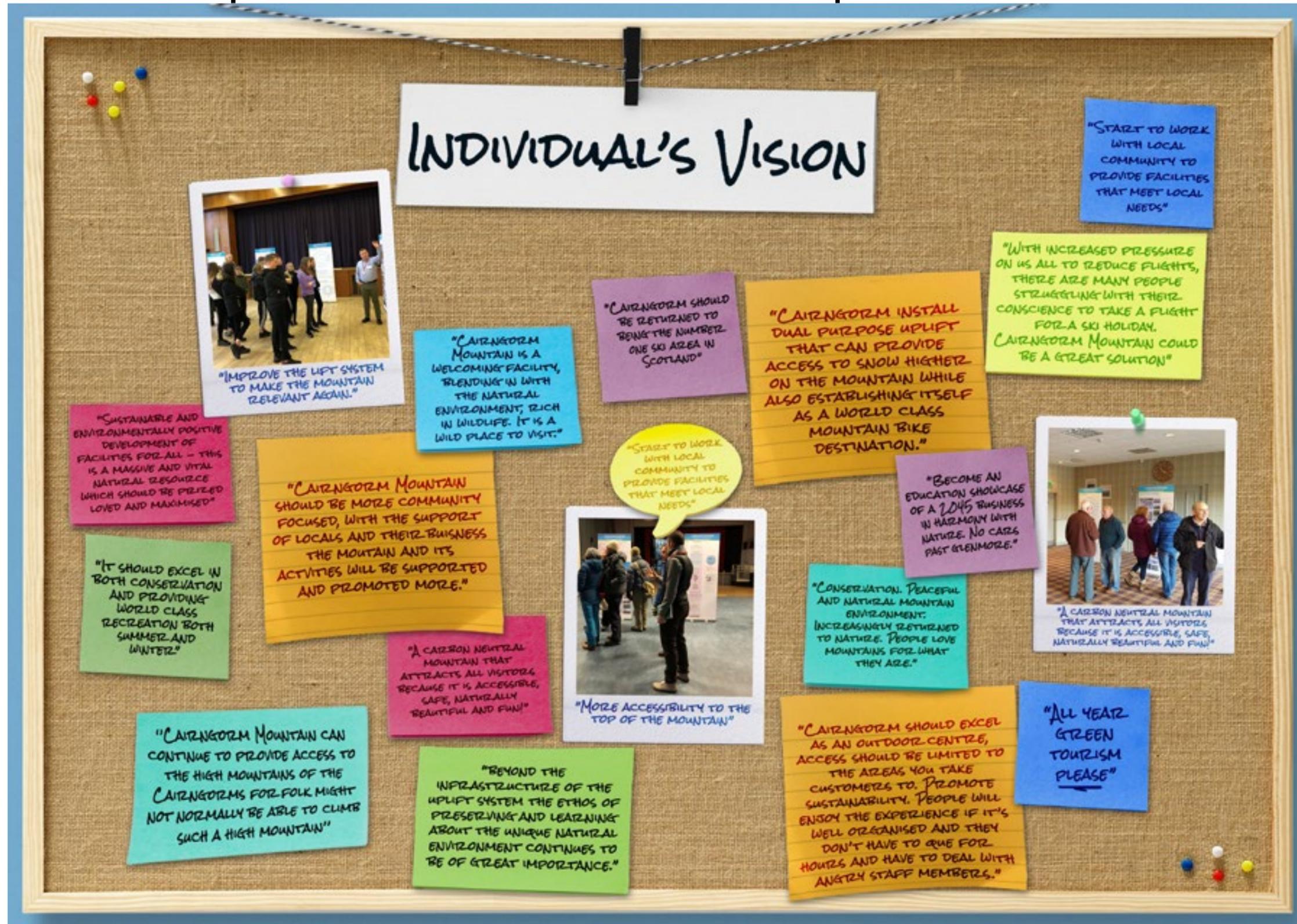
Cairngorm Mountain's importance in the Scottish Outdoor Activity scene is high: 83% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement

There is a future for snow sports on Cairngorm Mountain 70% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement

When asked to provide suggestions for a future vision for Cairngorm Mountain, themes which emerged included a more cohesive approach; sustainable, environmentally friendly management, both of natural and man-made resources; invest in the infrastructure; become a location for outdoor activities, year round; reinvigorate the snow sports offer; streamline the offer; provide education regarding nature; and to move past the snow sports model in deference to the undeniable impact of climate change.



Individual questionnaires: sample statements



Individual - schools questionnaires: Key Feedback

217
School
responses

There were 217 responses from schools; 94% were under 18. The remaining were adults associated with the school, or preferred not to say. 82% lived out with the immediate local area but within the Highlands and Islands. 74% visit the Cairngorm area annually or less (18% had never visited). 52% had never visited Cairngorm Mountain; 21% visited annually or more frequently.

Respondents predominantly spent their time mountaineering, hiking and visiting the base station throughout the year. Hiking, mountaineering and bird watching were the most popular activities in the summer; during the winter, skiing and almost equally snowboarding, as well as ski touring were the most common activities. 76% of respondents did not consider the removal of the funicular to have impacted on them. Of the 26 respondents who considered that it had, 69% said it had caused them to cancel plans.

When asked their opinion on various aspects of the Mountain, wildlife conservation was rated mostly highly; the lift system was rated most poorly.

When asked their opinion on what they would like to see added, removed or improved, the most frequent answer selected was 'not applicable' in deference to the limited number of those who had visited. Those that did were, as with the individuals and businesses, were keen to see improvements to the Cairngorm Café and Cas Bar and snowsports in general. Mountain biking, additional lifts and ziplining were the most popular suggestions for things to be introduced on the mountain.

When asked what activities they would like to take part in throughout the year, All Terrain Vehicle Tours, hiking and the mountain coaster were the most popular year round activities; snow sports the most popular winter activity, and mountain biking the most popular summer activity. School respondents predominantly agreed or strongly agreed with the statements that there is a future of snow sports on Cairngorm Mountain, that it plays an important role in the local economy or local community, and that it can play an important role in the future of the wider natural environment, and its importance in the Scottish Outdoor Activity scene.





Business questionnaires: key feedback

A total of 83 responses were received from businesses. The businesses represented a variety of sectors of activity with 87% self-identifying as being in tourism related sectors. Specific concentrations were from the tourist accommodation (39%), tourist services (30%), and food and beverage (18%) sectors. Nearly 80% were headquartered in the Moray, Badenoch and Strathspey area. The remainder were headquartered elsewhere in Scotland.

The business respondents are estimated to employ a total of 1,334 persons. An estimated 1,044 (78%) of these are employed in the Moray Badenoch and Strathspey area. The dependence on tourism varied across the sample with 42% considered between 75-100% of their turnover to be dependent on visitors to the area. 16% considered 0-5% of their business to be dependent on visitors. 54% of respondents considered that a majority of their turnover was dependent on summer visitors. 39% considered that the summer accounted for less than 50% of their turnover, and within that 23% thought that less than 25% of their turnover is dependent on summer visitors. When businesses were asked about their dependence on Cairngorm Mountain for turnover 33% thought that less than 5% of their turnover was dependent on the mountain. Only 7% thought that more than 75% of their turnover was dependent on the mountain and a further 7% thought that between 50% and 75% of turnover was dependent on the mountain.

Businesses were asked about the impact of the withdrawal of the funicular on their business turnover.

The majority of businesses noted a decrease or large decrease in turnover since the withdrawal of the funicular. 18% (16) felt that turnover had decreased a lot, with 33% experienced a decrease of between 0% and 24%. 31% thought that it had remained unchanged and 5% (4) felt that it had increased a lot.

Businesses were asked to comment on what aspects of Cairngorm Mountain they considered to be good and very good or poor and very poor. Key strengths were as follows:

- Wildlife conservation with 55% considering this to be good or very good and 20% considering this to be poor or very poor.
- The Path network with 48% considering this to be good or very good and 14% considering this to be poor or very poor
- Protection of the landscape with 47% considering this to be good or very good and 22% considering this to be poor or very poor

Key weaknesses were as follows:

- The lift system where 55% respondents considered aspects to be poor or very poor and 16% considering this to be good or very good
- Accessibility from the funicular where 50% of respondents considered this to be poor or very poor and 21% considered this to be good or very good
- Activities for the elderly where 47% considered these to be poor or very poor and 12% considered this to be good or very good

Businesses were asked to consider a range of facilities and identify those that they would like to see introduced.

The leading facilities requested were as follows:

- Mountain biking (66%)
- Additional Lifts (58%)
- Replacement lifts (48%)
- Wildlife Education (48%)
- Ziplining (40%)
- Transport links (39%)
- Snow sports (37%)
- More paths (36%)
- Mountain coaster (33%)

When business were asked which facilities they would not like to see introduced the leading responses were as follows:

- Ziplining (33%)
- Mountain Coaster (27%)
- Returning the mountain to its natural state (27%)

When business were asked which facilities they would like to see improved the leading responses were as follows:

- Cairngorm Café and Cas Bar (67%)
- Ptarmigan Restaurant and Top Station (66%)
- Snow sports (52%)
- Paths (47%)
- Transport Links (45%)
- The Shieling (45%)

Cairngorm Mountain’s importance to the local area was assessed by inviting businesses to indicate their level of agreement with particular statements. The statements and responses were as follows:

Cairngorm Mountain plays an important role in the local economy: 92% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

Cairngorm Mountain plays an important role in the local community: 88% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

Cairngorm Mountain can play an important role in the future of the wider environment: 87% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

Cairngorm Mountain’s importance in the Scottish Outdoor Activity scene is high: 83% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement

There is a future for snow sports on Cairngorm Mountain: 76% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement



Business questionnaires: sample statements

