

AGENDA ITEM 6

APPENDIX 2b

2017/0347/DET

**REPRESENTATIONS
OBJECTIONS**

Comments for Planning Application 2017/0347/DET

Application Summary

Application Number: 2017/0347/DET

Address: Drumochter Lodge Dalwhinnie Highland PH19 1AF

Proposal: Remove condition 3 of consent 2014/0339/DET at the retained track for Drumochter Estate

Case Officer: Katherine Donnachie

Customer Details

Name: Mr George Allan

Address: 7 Bothwell Terrace Pitmedden Ellon

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Member of Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I am writing on behalf of the North East Mountain Trust (NEMT), Scottish Charity SCIO 008783, which, through individual and club membership, represents the interest of around 1000 hill-goers.

NEMT objected to the original application for retention of this section of the Beauldy-Denny track; however, when a second, altered application for retention was submitted, NEMT felt that the road safety case had been made and the organisation did not object but strongly supported the idea of a belt of native tree species which was then made a condition of the consent.

NEMT objects to the removal of the condition to plant a belt of native tree species. The reasons for the application to remove the condition would seem to be primarily convenience and cost. It is also disappointing that raising this matter has been left until the autumn, thereby wasting a year in which the work should have taken place.

The application makes much of the suggestion that an additional tree belt would impact little on reducing the visibility of the track, particularly from the floor of the glen and from view points on the hills to the west. However, the phrase used in the Supporting Statement is that the existing conifer belt 'largely screens' the track, meaning that this does not provide complete or indeed adequate screening, given the length and width of the track.

In addition to this, an important point is that, as far as we are aware, there is no reason why the present conifer belt might not be felled at some point thus leaving the track highly visible from the west.

It is, of course, true that the Drumochter corridor displays a high level of human intervention but this is all the more reason to soften this, which native tree species would do, including from view points on the hills to the east.

The application does make the useful point that the condition for linear planting would create another unnatural looking line of trees and therefore NEMT supports the applicants proposal that

the planting should take place in 'localised copses'. These should be sited to achieve the greatest effects in terms of reducing visibility of the track from all points to the west. They also should be staggered on the east-west axis so as to create a more natural look and not a straight line. If the Park Authority decides to alter the condition to one of planting in 'localised copses', NEMT suggests that the new condition includes approval by the Park Authority of a new tree planting plan to ensure that the concept of 'localised copses' does not lead to a minimalist approach on the ground.

To summarise, NEMT objects to removal of the condition but supports the idea of 'localised copses' as long as the extent and layout of these is formally approved by the Park.

George Allan

Trustee- North East Mountain Trust

From: [REDACTED] on behalf of BSCG info
Sent: 16 Oct 2017 23:35:54 +0100
To: Planning;Emma Wilson
Subject: 2017/0347/DET

Badenoch & Strathspey Conservation Group

Fiodhag, Nethybridge, Inverness-shire PH25 3DJ

Tel [REDACTED]

Scottish Charity No SC003846

Email info@bscg.org.uk

Website bscg.org.uk

16 October 2017

Dear Emma Wilson

2017/0347/DET | Remove condition 3 of consent 2014/0339/DET at the retained track for Drumochter Estate | Drumochter Lodge Dalwhinnie Highland PH19 1AF

I am writing to object to the above S42 application to alter Condition 3. BSCG requests the opportunity to address the planning committee when this application is determined.

We consider that a planning condition for native planting should be upheld as part of the consent for the retained track. An area of native planting that is appropriately planned and maintained could provide landscape benefits.

However, we are concerned at some aspects of the current plans for the planting.

We are concerned that the 5m linear planting strip is less than optimal in terms of delivering landscape benefits. We suggest that the 5m wide linear strip that is shown on the plans should be modified so that the planting can achieve an end result more in line with the CNPA informative, that states: "Planting shall be in mixed species groups of variable size and density with areas of open ground located so as to give a feathered edge". In the present plans there seems little scope for creating a properly feathered edge or much variability in density.

We are concerned that Mountain Willow *Salix arbuscula* and Dwarf Birch *Betula nana* are inappropriate in this context and that it would be preferable to exclude these species from the planting mix.

We are concerned that the planting plans should take account of, and be responsive to local topography, drainage and soils; and take account of water dependent habitats, which are referred to in the CNPA Ecology Advisor's report.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if further clarification of any of these comments would be helpful.

Best wishes

Gus Jones

Convener