
CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Title: REPORT ON CALLED-IN PLANNING APPLICATION

Prepared by: NEIL STEWART, PLANNING OFFICER
(DEVELOPMENT CONTROL)

DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED: A SECOND POWER SUPPLY TO THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS MAST AT TOM A BURICH, ROUHPARK, STRATHDON

REFERENCE: 04/141/CP

DATE CALLED-IN: 26 March 2004

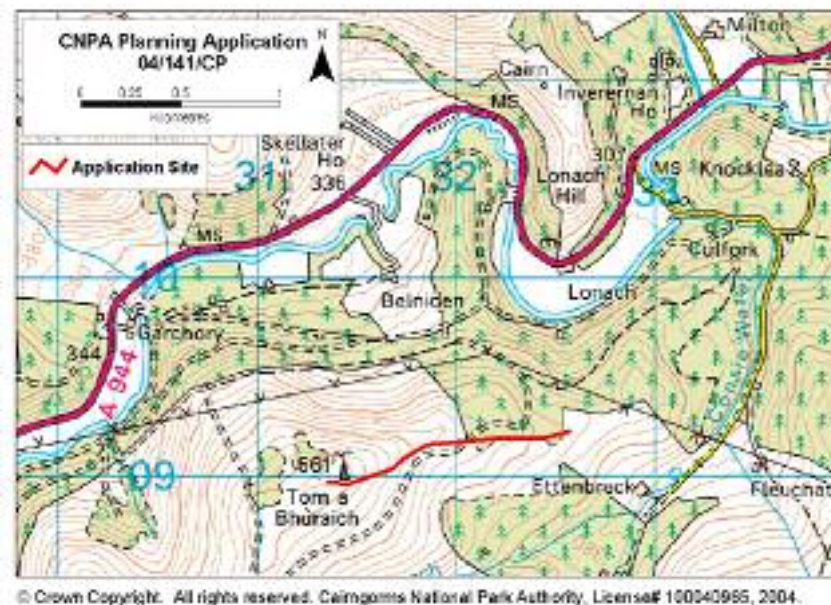


Fig. 1 - Location Plan

SITE DESCRIPTION AND PROPOSAL

1. This proposal is a notification to the planning authority for a low capacity power supply to a telecommunications mast at the top of Tom A Burich (561m) in Strathdon. The overhead 11kV power supply already exists to the

mast. The current proposal is for the provision of a second power supply for an additional user of the telecom mast, with the undergrounding of a second supply line to the mast from the end of the existing overhead 11kV line to the mast. As there is now to be 2 users supplied off this 11kV line, it is necessary for Scottish and Southern Energy to apply for a retrospective overhead line consent for the existing 11kV overhead line. This is a Section 37 consent under the Electricity Act of 1989, which is determined by the Scottish Executive Education and Industry Department (SEEID). Before submitting their application to SEEID, Scottish and Southern Energy are required to consult the local planning authority who can make comments on the proposals.

DEVELOPMENT PLAN CONTEXT:

2. Lower capacity power lines and under-grounded pipes and cables do not normally figure within **Development Plan policies** (unlike major infrastructure network routes e.g. major gas pipelines, national grid power lines, and some water and sewerage distribution systems). Where a planning authority is asked or given the opportunity to comment on such developments (permitted developments under the General Permitted Development Order), relevant considerations include the visual impact for over-ground systems, and the ground disturbance for access/construction works and for the undergrounding work itself.
3. The location of this development is not a sensitive one in terms of ground conditions (there are no special designations here). The power line traverses partly a woodland area and partly open moorland.
4. Within the **Aberdeenshire Local Plan** the site is within an Area of Landscape Significance, where issues of siting and design are of principal importance.

CONSULTATIONS

5. No consultations carried out.

REPRESENTATIONS

6. No representations received.

APPRAISAL

7. Some of the poles for the existing overhead line serving the mast on Tom A Burich are just visible on the skyline from the A944. The line has been in existence for some years now, and as it was originally for a single user, there was not the need to obtain any consent.
8. The existing telecoms mast is located within a group of conifer trees on the brow of the hill, as viewed from the public road to the north (A944). The result

of having a second user for the mast is that a new underground cable will be installed from the last pole of the overhead line, to the mast. There will be no visible change from the current situation. Other than undergrounding the existing line at the brow of the hill, there is not any improvement to the proposal that can be recommended. On this occasion and in this location it is not considered that undergrounding the complete 1250 length of power line is essential.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE AIMS OF THE NATIONAL PARK

Conserve and Enhance the Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Area

9. The retention of this overhead line to the existing Telecommunications Mast on the hilltop does not detract from or enhance the local natural or cultural heritage. Undergrounding of the whole line would be a visual improvement to this area, but the works of undergrounding would be disruptive to existing surface vegetation and root systems.

Promote Sustainable Use of Natural Resources

10. No effect.

Promote Understanding and Enjoyment of the Area

11. This proposal does not have any direct implication for this aim.

Promote Sustainable Economic and Social Development of the Area

12. The existing Telecommunications Mast contributes to the local economic and social life of this remoter area of countryside, and the provision of a second power supply, and additional user to the mast, adds to the facility.

RECOMMENDATION

13. That Members of the Committee note the proposal and agree to raise no objections.

Neil Stewart
29 April 2004

planning@ Cairngorms.co.uk