

AGENDA ITEM 7

APPENDIX 3C

2021/0112/DET

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PUBLIC COMMENTS
GENERAL

F.A.O. Stephanie Wade
Planning and Development
Cairngorms National Park Authority

10 May 2021

By email: planning@cairngorms.co.uk

Dear Ms Wade

2021/0112/DET Reconfiguration of existing car park and provision of infrastructure for campervan overnight facility
Cairngorm Mountain Ciste Car Park Glenmore Aviemore Highland PH22 1RB

Thank you for consulting RSPB Scotland on the above proposal.

Some additional detail regarding capercaillie is included in Confidential Annex 1 which can help inform a HRA. We request that this information is not placed in the public domain.

The car park is approximately 500m from the edge of the Cairngorms SPA which includes capercaillie as a qualifying feature and [REDACTED] There is good quality brood habitat [REDACTED] and this is reflected by the fact that it is included within [REDACTED] the latest Strathspey Land Management Plan (currently out for consultation). We note that the applicant has sought pre-application advice from NatureScot but no mention of the SPA, an appropriate assessment or capercaillie have been made in the application, but understand that CNPA will carry out a HRA as the competent authority.

We note that the proposal is to provide campervan facilities at the existing Ciste car park and there will be no overall increase in the number of parking spaces available or increase in the car park footprint. An online booking system vehicle registration and coded gate will be used for access.

The car park is already a busy and increasingly used site as demonstrated by the 'Visitor Management Plan' submitted with this application. The change in facilities available may not lead to an overall increase in activity in the area but may change usage [REDACTED] and increase disturbance to capercaillie at dawn and dusk. For example, visitors planning to walk up the hill may decide to do a shorter walk the evening before or following morning and therefore it could increase activity in the SPA at times that are usually quieter.

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Recommendations

In order for our concerns detailed above to be addressed, we advise that the following conditions are applied, should the Cairngorms National Park Authority decide to approve the application:

- **Campervan parking and facilities do not open until May each year**

Reason: To reduce the risk of dawn and dusk disturbance to lekking capercaillie

- That [REDACTED] is not actively promoted with signage from the car park
- That (in collaboration with FLS) signage is placed [REDACTED] advising that dogwalkers keep dogs on leads during the breeding season.

Molly Doubleday (molly.doubleday@rspb.org.uk) can provide advice on this as can FLS.

Reason: To protect capercaillie hens, nests and chicks.

- That a people counter is placed on this trail either on the HIE side or by FLS to monitor whether the change in available facilities has increased activity on this trail and this information is included in the CMSL visitor management plan reports.

Reason: to contribute to monitoring the effectiveness of the capercaillie refuge area and any changes to disturbance in this part of the SPA, allowing proactive management to be undertaken if required.

We hope you find these comments helpful. Should you wish to discuss any of the above please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely

[REDACTED]

Claire Smith
Senior Conservation Officer – South Highland

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