Invercauld Estate – "Home Beat" - O.S. Grid Reference NJ188016
Rationalisation of Hill Tracks
Construction Method Statement and Landscape Scheme – Version 1 March 2012

Contents

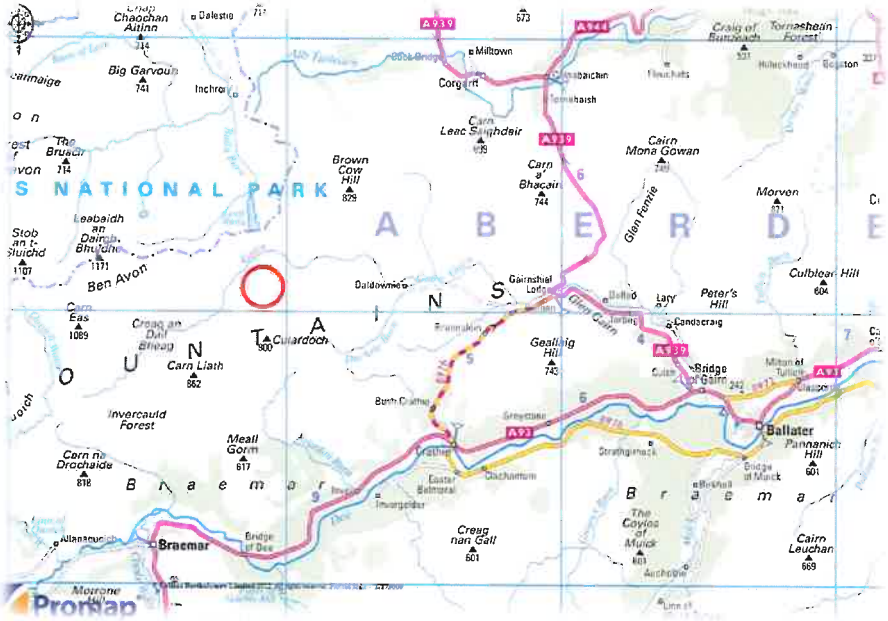
1. The Need for the Hill Track Rationalisation

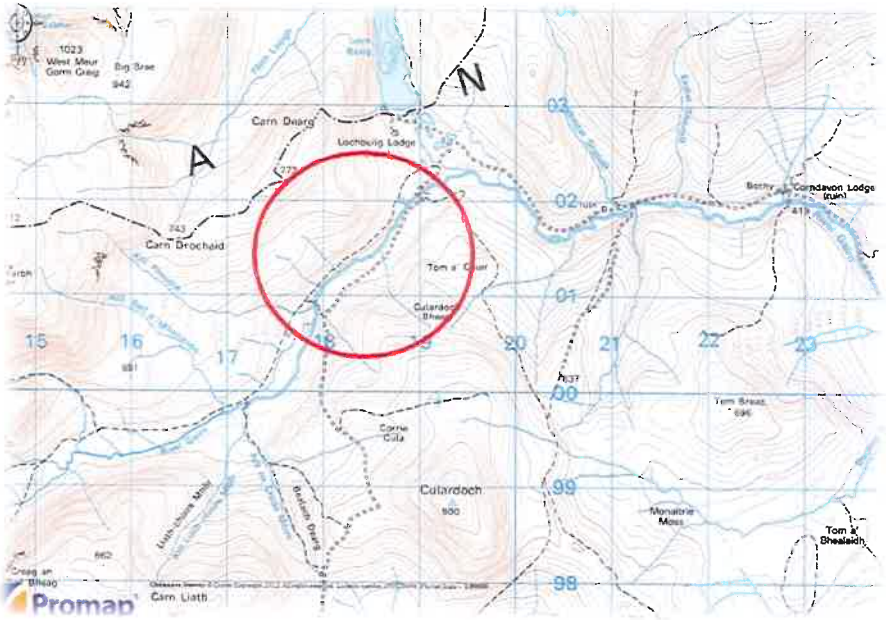
1.1 Outline of Proposed Works

The application has four elements and is for :

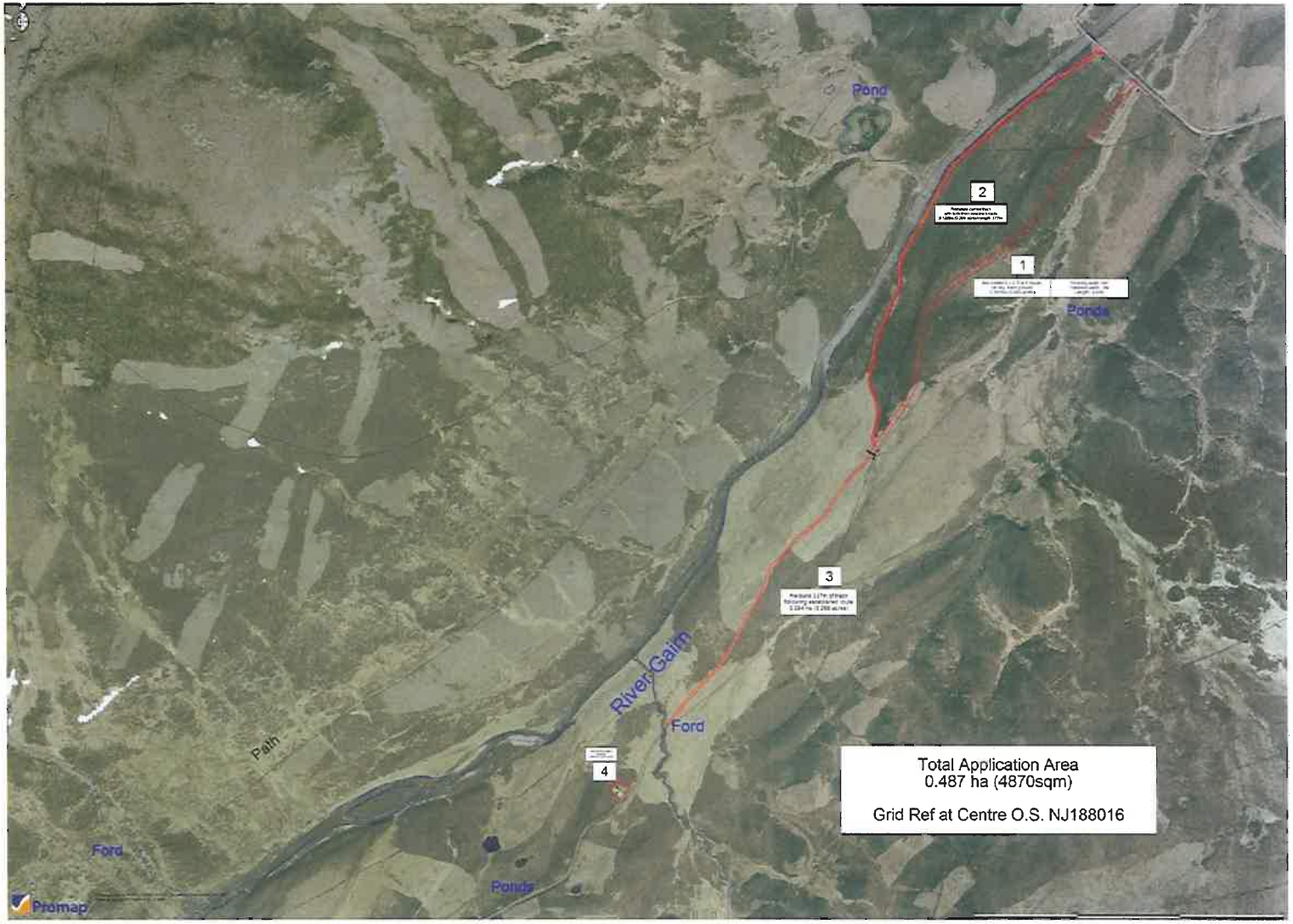
1. The re-routing of a 450m section of 4x4 hill track;
2. The reinstatement and restoration of an existing 477m section of 4x4 hill track;
3. The re-building of an existing 337m of 4x4 hill track following an established route;
4. The re-opening of an existing borrow pit to provide material for elements 1-3.

The location of the proposed development is shown on the 2 plans below:





The four elements of the development are shown on the diagram below. A scale copy of the plan at scale1: 2500 is attached at Appendix A.



1.2 Necessity of the Proposed Works

On an area by area basis the proposed works are necessary in order to:

Area 1

1. Re-route the track away from the River Gairn
2. Eliminate flood risk
3. Reduce the risk of run-off material flowing into the River Gairn during periods of heavy rainfall
4. Make the track safely passable by 4x4 vehicles
5. Protect the species of interest of the River Dee Special Area of Conservation

Area 2

1. In order to ensure that the proposed development as a whole results in no net loss of habitat in relation to the Eastern Cairngorms Site of Special Scientific Interest.
2. In order to minimise the landscape and visual impact of the proposed development as a whole.

Area 3

1. In order to provide an adequate defined running surface for 4x4 vehicles along an established route to stop the proliferation of ruts across a wide area.

Area 4

In order to provide a source of locally won road stone to service elements 1 to 3 above.

2. Strategic Design

2.1 The Presence of Designated Sites

The location of the proposed development is sensitive. The following designations affect the site:

1. Cairngorms Special Area of Conservation (SAC) – designated for a number of interests including habitat, birds, otter and open water.
2. Eastern Cairngorms Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – designated for a number of interests, including habitats, breeding birds and fish (Arctic Charr in Loch Builg)
   Cairngorms Special Protection Area (SPA) – Designation for a number of breeding bird interests
3. Cairngorms Massif Special Protection Area (SPA) – Designated for Golden Eagles only
4. River Dee Special Area of Conservation (SAC) – salmon, otter and freshwater pearl mussel.

2.2 Routeing

The routing of the proposed development has been designed to take into account the competing interest of the various designated sights. The first element of the work will re-route an existing 450m of track on dryer ground and away from the River Gairn Flood Plain. The ground conditions present within the first works area are of moraine with a very thing covering of peat. Therefor there should be little requirement to import fill material for this element of the work.

The second element of the work, the reinstatement of the track which is being replaced by the Area 1 works is designed to mitigate the loss of habitat caused by the Area 1 works. The third element of the works, the re-building of an existing track across wet ground is designed to contain vehicle traffic and stop the proliferation of ruts.

2.3 Landscape and Visual Impact

The location of the works is at 500m above sea level but is in a relatively protected area in terms of visual impact. All elements of the works are located within the River Valley of the River Gairn. In terms of the surrounding landform the development site is relatively low lying and hidden from public view.

3. Detailed Design and Construction

3.1 Detailed Track Alignment

The detailed alignment of the proposed works is shown on the plan at page 4 and Appendix A. The alignment of the first element of the works has been chosen to minimise the extent of required excavations along this section of the route and within the borrow pit at area 4. It is also on ground which is slightly elevated above the River Gairn floodplain but still low lying, near the bottom of the River Valley.

The construction works within area 1 will lead to a loss of habitat but this will be entirely mitigated by the reinstatement of the current track within Area 2 using turfs removed from Area 1. This strategy will result in long term benefits to the River Dee SAC.

The route of the track to be rebuilt within area 3 has been determined by the route of established use. This is considered to be the optimum route because it reduces the operational length of the track and is low lying and protected from sensitive public view points.

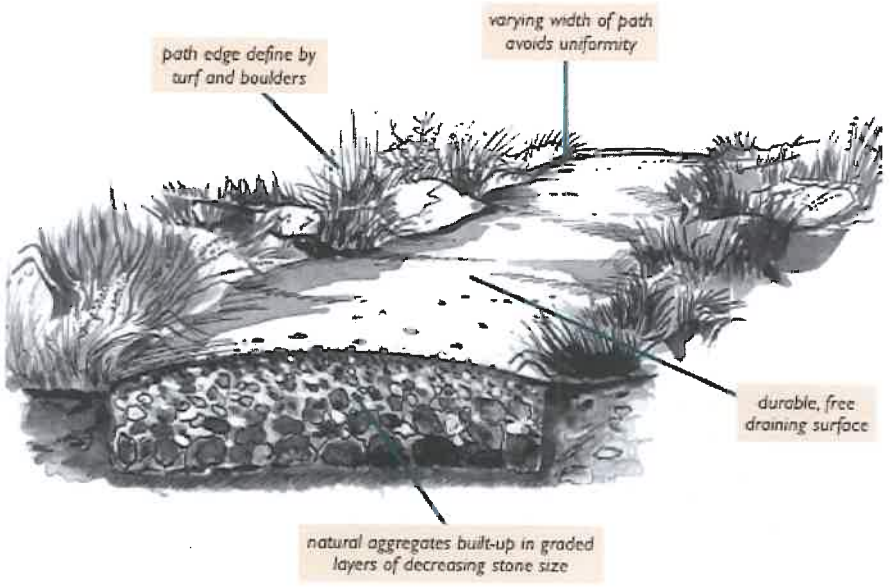
The location of the borrow pit within Area 4 has been chosen to provide material for the rebuilding of the track within Area 3. No material can be won from the track verge within this area. Area 4 is the site of a small existing borrow pit. The Zone of Visual Impact of the borrow pit is extremely limited due to its micro-siting within a small natural valley as detailed in the picture below:

3.2 Construction Type

Varying ground conditions across the site mean that 2 different types of track construction may have to be used.

3.2.1 Area 1- Track Construction

- Within Area 1 a Cut Track construction method will be used. This method is considered appropriate because the natural underlying solid substrate is present very close to ground level.
- The working width of the road during the construction period will be 6m. This is to allow material for the track build up to be sourced from the verge of the track wherever possible rather than from the borrow pit within Area 4. The working width is also required in order to install sufficient drainage measures.
- The turfs will be carefully removed from the track route and laid directly onto the existing track surface within Area 2.
- If there is to be a delay between the removal of the peats from Area 1 and their reinstatement in Area 2 they will be stored on timber pallets and kept watered.
- The finished width of the running surface will be 3m. The running surface will be cambered to allow surface water to drain into shallow ditches on either side of the track.
- A cross section of the finished track is shown below:



3.2.2 Area 1 – Drainage Measures

The ground upon which the track is to be constructed is relatively flat and falls away at the path edges. Ensuring that the track surface is on an adequate camber will allow surface water to drain into the shallow natural channels at the edge of the path which will be created by the excavation of materials to create the camber for the track surface

Although the majority of turfs removed will be reinstated within area 2 there will be a surplus: the working width of area 1 is wider than the working width of area 2. Therefor the surplus peats will be used to reinstate the verges of area 1 in order to soften the landscape impact of the new length of track.

3.2.3 Area 2 – Track Reinstatement

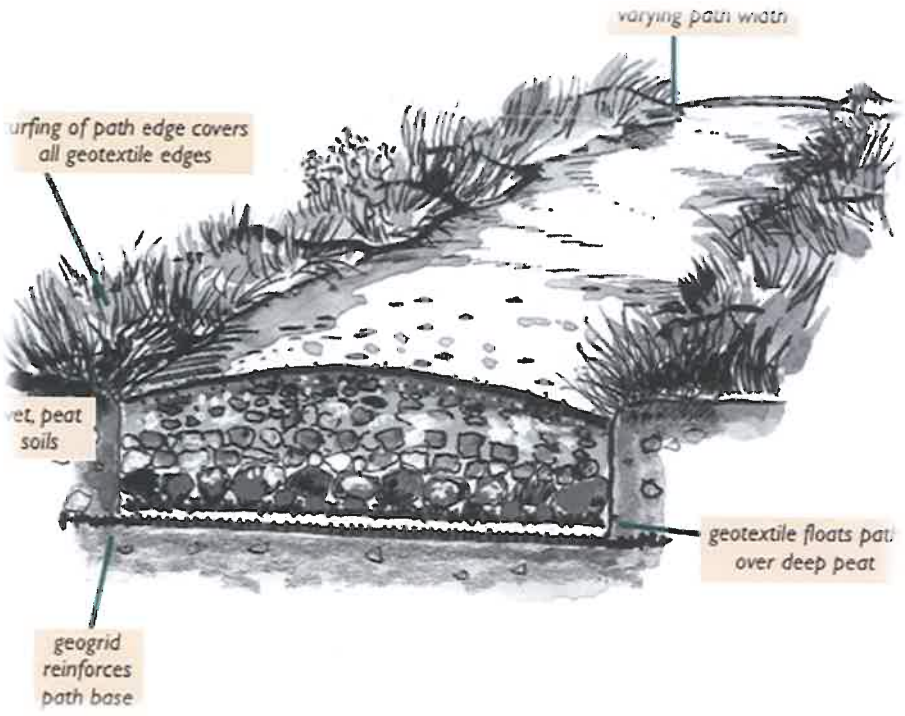
In order to ensure that there is no net loss of habitat within the SSSI the construction of a new track within Area 1 should be seen as a replacement of the current track in area 2. Cut peats will be carefully moved the short distance from one site to the other.

During this process care will have to be taken to manage any surface water run-off into the River Gairn, part of the River Dee SAC. This will be managed by careful on-site monitoring and the use of bales of hay as a physical barrier to sediment entering the river course.

3.2.4 Area 3 – Track Construction

The initial assessment of ground conditions within Area 3 suggest that there is a greater over burden of peat on top of the solid substrate compared to Area 1. The intention is still to use the Cut Track method. However, it might be that the necessary excavation and back-filling operation required in order to use this construction method is too large.

If this is the case then a geo-textile membrane might be used to contain the extent of ground works. The track is to be designed to carry 4x4 vehicles. The geotextile membrane construction technique is considered suitable for dealing with this level of occasional vehicle traffic.



3.2.5 Area 3 – Drainage Measures

The presence of a deeper peat over burden within Area 3 will necessitate that the track surface is cambered and that there are ditches on either side of the track. Surface water will naturally percolate through the peat and down to the substrate but ditches are required to act as shallow holding areas.

3.3 Sourcing Materials – Borrow Pit

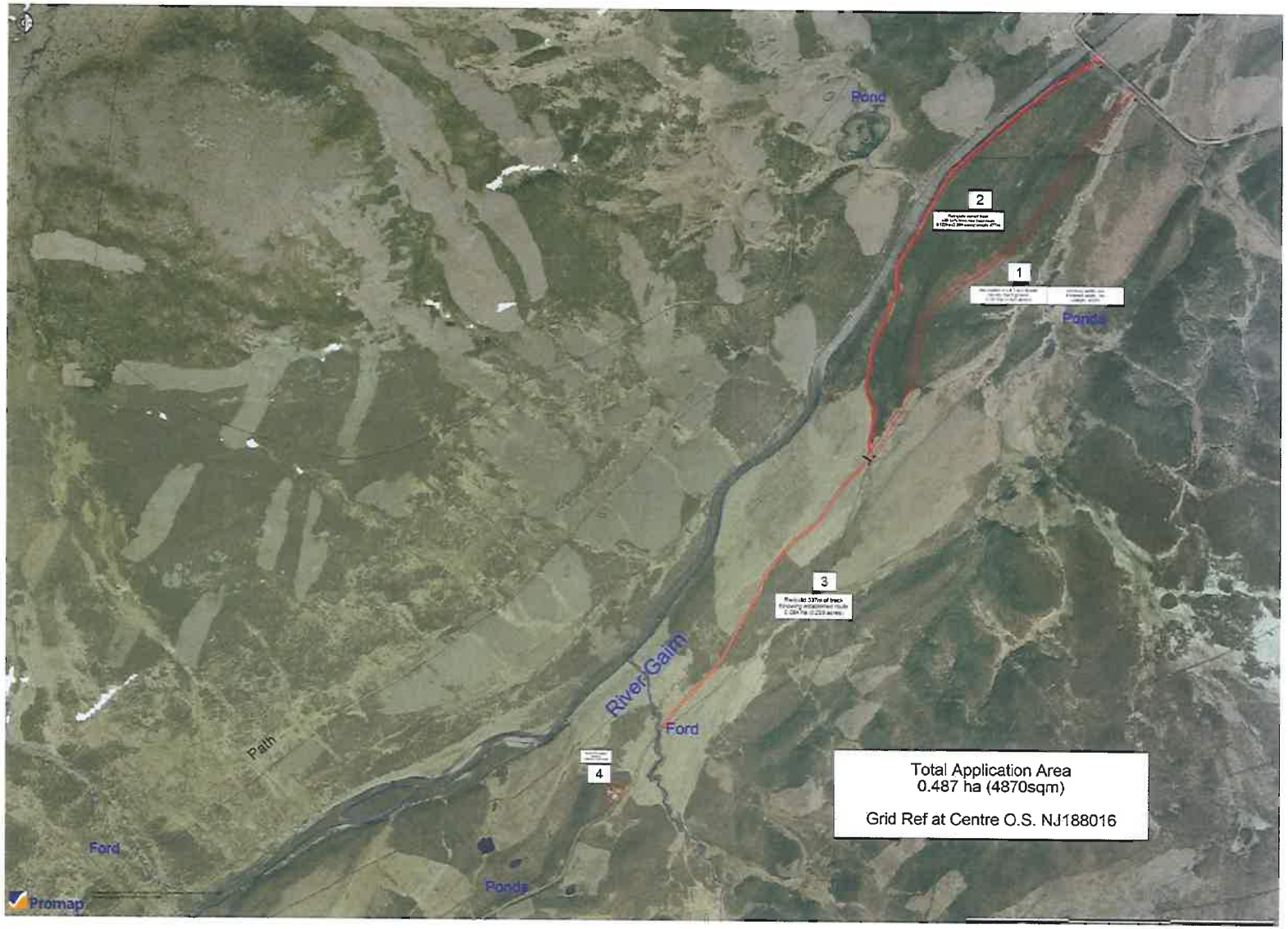
The proposed borrow pit location has been chosen because it is out-with the boundaries of the Eastern Cairngorms SSSI. Furthermore it is a pre-existing borrow pit and is in a well hidden location.

The borrow pit can be re-covered with a peat excavated from the re-building of the track within Area 3.

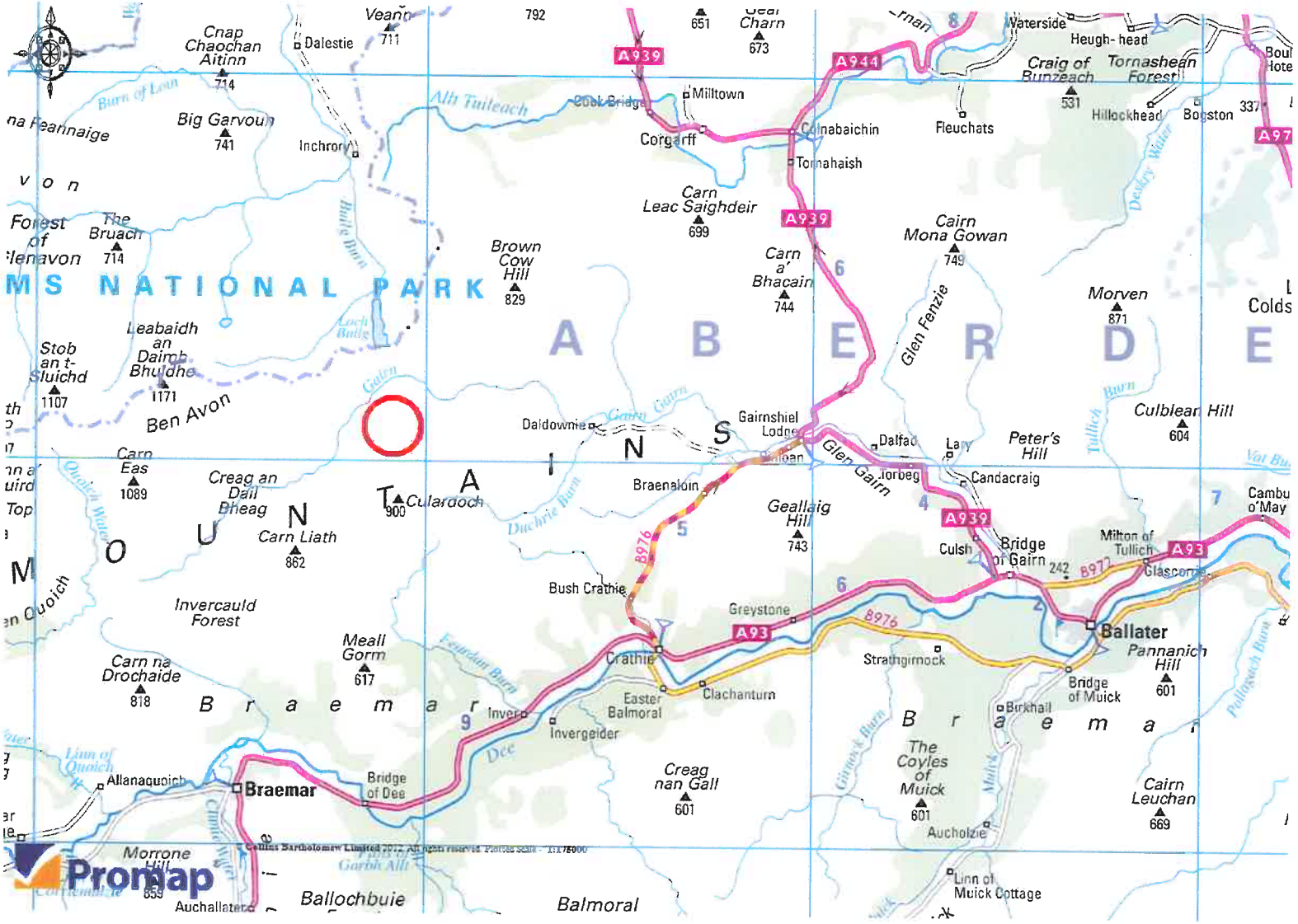
4. Construction Period – Timescales

It is intended to undertake the works during June 2012. The anticipated construction period will be 21 days.

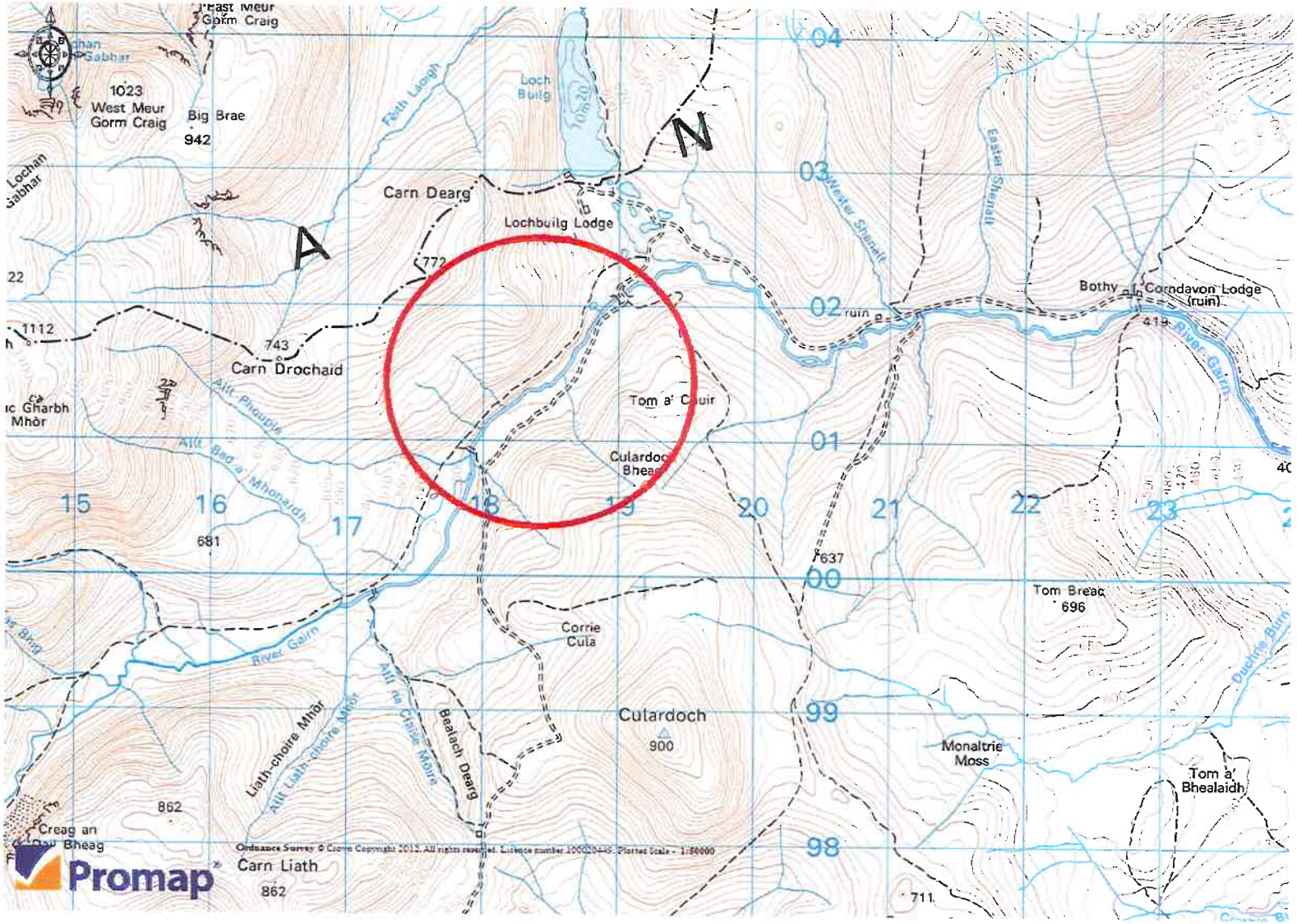
APPENDIX A


Pond
2
1
Ponds
3
River Gaim
Ford
4
Path
Ford
Ponds
Promap
Total Application Area
0.487 ha (4870sqm)
Grid Ref at Centre O.S. NJ188016

APPENDIX B


A939
A944
A93
B976
B977
Cnap Chaochan Aitinn
714
Dalestie
Veann
711
792
Burn of Loin
na Fearnaige
Big Garvoun
741
Inchrory
Allt Tuileach
Cock Bridge
Milltown
Corgarff
651
Geal Charn
673
Waterside
Heugh-head
Craig of Bunzeach
531
Tornashean Forest
Hillockhead
Boston
337
Colnabaichin
Fleuchats
Tornahaish
Carn Leac Saighdeir
699
Carn a' Bhacain
744
Cairn Mona Gowan
749
Morven
871
Glen Fenzie
Deskry Water
Forest of Glenavon
The Bruach
714
Brown Cow Hill
829
Loch Builg
Builg Burn
Leabaidh an Daimh Bhuidhe
1171
Stob an t-Sluichd
1107
Ben Avon
Gairn
Daldownie
Gairnshiel Lodge
Dalfad
Lary
Peter's Hill
Culblean Hill
604
Tullich Burn
Glen Gairn
Torbeg
Candacraig
Braenaloin
Carn Eas
1089
Creag an Dail Bheag
Carn Liath
862
Culardoch
900
Duchrie Burn
Quoich Water
Geallaig Hill
743
Culsh
Bridge of Gairn
242
Milton of Tullich
Glascorrie
Cambus o'May
Bush Crathie
Greystone
Ballater
Pannanich Hill
601
Strathgirnock
Bridge of Muick
Birkhall
Invercauld Forest
Meall Gorm
617
Carn na Drochaide
818
Crathie
Easter Balmoral
Clachanturn
Invery
Invergeldie
Fearnan Burn
Dee
Braemar
Allanaquoich
Linn of Quoich
Creag nan Gall
601
The Coyles of Muick
601
Aucholzie
Cairn Leuchan
669
Linn of Muick Cottage
Pollagach Burn
Morrone Hill
839
Auchallater
Ballochbuie
Balmoral
Garbh Allt
Ordnance Survey Limited 2012. All rights reserved. Licence Scale - 1:175000
Promap

APPENDIX C


East Meur Gorm Craig
1023
West Meur Gorm Craig
Big Brae
942
Loch Builg
Fiith Lairgh
Carn Dearg
Lochbuilg Lodge
772
A
743
Carn Drochaid
Allt Phuipple
Allt Bad a' Mhonaidh
Tom a' Chuir
Culardoch Bheag
Bothy
Corndavon Lodge (ruin)
River Gairn
637
Tom Breac
696
Corrie Cula
Allt Liath-choire Mhor
Allt na Criche Moire
Bealach Dearg
Culardoch
900
Monaltrie Moss
Tom a' Bhealaidh
Duchrie Burn
Creag an Dubh Bheag
862
Carn Liath
862
711
Promap
Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright 2012. All rights reserved. Licence number 100020449. Plotted Scale - 1:50000