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## CAIRNGORMS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

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### FOR DECISION

**Title: CNPA RESPONSE TO TRANSPORT SCOTLAND A9  
DUALLING - KILLIECRANKIE TO GLEN GARRY  
SECTION PROPOSALS**

**Prepared by: Gavin Miles, Head of Planning and Communities**

#### **Recommendation**

#### **That the Committee:**

- i. Withdraw the CNPA's objection to the A9 dualling proposals on the Killiecrankie to Glen Garry Section.**

#### **Background**

1. In January 2018, the CNPA objected to Transport Scotland's proposals for dualling the A9 Killiecrankie to Glen Garry section on the basis that there was insufficient information available to assess potential impacts on the nationally important Killiecrankie Battlefield site. It followed Historic Environment Scotland's (HES) objection that there was insufficient evidence to conclude that impacts on the battlefield of widening on the northbound side of the existing road were less significant or equal to widening of the southbound side of the existing road. Otherwise, the CNPA was satisfied that the proposals had taken account of relevant considerations, had accurately assessed impacts and provided sufficient mitigation.
2. During 2018, Transport Scotland commissioned further archaeological investigations across the battlefield. Transport Scotland have taken account of the new survey information and HES' comments on alterations to the scheme to produce revised proposals in the vicinity of the Killiecrankie Battlefield site.
3. The revised proposals continue to adopt widening along the northbound side of the existing A9, often on ground that was previously disturbed during the construction of the existing route. The refinements to the scheme aim to reduce further disturbance to the battlefield, with steeper slopes created by the roadside and a reduction in the overall land used. The revised proposals are available at:  
<https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/exhibition-materials-public-information-events-october-november-2018-killiecrankie-to-glen-garry-a9-dualling/>.

4. HES have considered the revised proposals and are satisfied that sufficient information is available to assess the impacts of the scheme. HES have now withdrawn their objection to a number of significant elements of the scheme but have retained an objection to a small area of proposed woodland planting that they consider will mask the landform and obscure the relationship between different parts of the battlefield. HES' formal response to the revised proposals is available here: <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/about-us/news/a9-dualling-proposals-our-response/>.

## Analysis

5. The revised proposals attempt to minimise significant impacts on the Killiecrankie Battlefield site and take account of new archaeological information on the battlefield. The amended scheme will be slightly more visually intrusive from downslope than the previously proposed scheme due to steeper slope profiles. The amended scheme also has fewer impacts on the historic landscape of the battlefield than the previous scheme because it will disturb less ground.
6. Officers are satisfied, the revised proposals are a reasonable response to the constraints of the battlefield site. In this location, the nationally important historic battlefield is one of the most significant elements of the landscape and overall, officers consider the amended proposals have a similar impact on landscape character and the special landscape qualities of the National Park as the previous scheme. The existing A9 created the most significant impact on the battlefield that the proposed scheme will add to.
7. The main EIA for the scheme considered other reasonable options for widening the road in this location. Widening on the southbound side was considered and not preferred because of the more extensive earthwork cutting that would be required in some locations, creating very significant landscape impacts upslope of the existing road. Widening on the southbound side would also be across more ground that appears not to have been significantly disturbed in the original A9 construction, leading to more significant impacts on the battlefield site. CNPA officers continue to be of the opinion that widening on the northbound side minimises impacts on the battlefield, wider landscape character and special landscape qualities of the National Park.
8. HES' remaining objection is in relation to a small area of proposed woodland planting that the CNPA does not consider essential to the scheme. We do not consider it merits objection by the CNPA but would encourage Transport Scotland to take account of HES' objection and remove or relocate the planting outside the battlefield site.

## **Conclusion**

9. Any expansion of the A9 through the battlefield would have impacts on it, but CNPA officers consider that in taking account of additional archaeological information, the revised scheme proposals minimise impacts on the historic Killiecrankie Battlefield site, on the landscape character and special landscape qualities of the National Park sufficiently.

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