

# **AGENDA ITEM 6**

## **APPENDIX 4B**

**2018/0177/DET**

**REPRESENTATIONS  
GENERAL**

Cairngorms National Park Authority

By Email: [planning@cairngorms.co.uk](mailto:planning@cairngorms.co.uk)

[Date: 11<sup>th</sup> June 2018](#)

**2018/0177/DET | Renovation and erection of extension to building | Ptarmigan Restaurant Glenmore Aviemore**

Dear Sir/Madam

As you will be aware RSPB Scotland is the area's neighbouring landowner. Our Abernethy Reserve is the second largest nature reserve owned by the RSPB, and its spectacular scenery and wildlife make it very popular with our members and the wider public.

I write on behalf of RSPB Scotland in response to the above application for the renovation and erection of extension to the Ptarmigan Restaurant on Cairngorm Mountain. Our main concern with regard to the proposal relate to its potential effects on the nearby Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), which are protected by European and Scots law.

We are reassured to see that the majority of our previous comments have been incorporated into the mitigation plan for the development. RSPB has **no objection** to the application but wishes to make the following comments.

**Increased visitor numbers**

We previously raised concerns over the increased numbers of visitors to Cairngorm Mountain resulting from a development which has a greater emphasis on summer/all-year round activities compared to the current focus on winter recreation. We are pleased to see that Natural Retreats are still committed to the 'closed system' which is paramount to ensuring the continued protection of the special wildlife and habitats of the Cairngorm Plateau.

The plan to extend viewing platforms will enable more visitors to experience being outdoors on the mountain than previously however the application does not include any information regarding estimated changes in visitor numbers and so it is difficult to conclude that this will reduce pressure on the 'closed system'. Changes in visitor numbers and infrastructure need to be reflected in the visitor management plan.

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The RSPB is part of BirdLife International,  
a partnership of conservation organisations  
working to give nature a home around the world.

**Patron:** Her Majesty the Queen **Chairman of Council:** Professor Steve Ormerod, FIEEM **President:** Miranda Krestovnikoff  
**Chairman, Committee for Scotland:** Professor Colin Galbraith **Director, RSPB Scotland:** Anne McCall **Regional Director:** George Campbell

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### Increased bird strikes

The design includes a large amount of new glass and a high glass tower. We previously raised concerns over the potential for a large increase in the number of bird strikes to the windows of the building, including those by rare and vulnerable bird species. Given the great sensitivity of bird populations on the plateau we feel this could be very detrimental.

The use of anti-glare, or anti-reflective film or glass is recommended in the application as suitable mitigation to reduce the occurrence of bird strikes however there is no detailed information provided regarding the measures and design principles considered determining this measure to be the most effective form of mitigation. We would have liked to see further information regarding the designs and measures considered to be reassured that this mitigation will be sufficient.

After the selection and installation of new glass is complete the long-term monitoring of bird strikes will be essential so that additional or alternative measures can be adopted should a problem arise.

Should CNPA be minded to grant planning permission, we recommend that suitable conditions are imposed, covering the following requirements:

1. The use of suitable anti-glare film/glass to reduce birds colliding with the building's windows and long-term monitoring of bird strikes to determine effectiveness of mitigation.
2. Mitigation regarding vehicle movements to prevent disturbance to the black grouse lek adjacent to access.
3. Provision of screening shades to artificial lights used during construction to reduce disturbance to breeding birds within the vicinity of works.
4. Covering and capping all exposed pipes and holes when unattended to prevent trapping of ground nesting birds and their chicks.
5. Fencing around construction areas to reduce mortality of ground nesting birds and hares.

RSPB Scotland would be happy to meet the developer and CNPA on site to discuss mitigation measures, should planning permission be granted.

If you regard any further clarification on the above, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours Faithfully,

**Phil Dowling**

Assistant Conservation Officer, North Scotland.

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