



The Granary
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By email to
planning@cairngorms.co.uk

1 June 2018

Dear Sir/Madam

**Planning Application for the Recommencement of Mineral Extraction and for an Extension to Dalwhinnie Quarry on Land at Carn Dhomhnuill Bhain, Dalwhinnie
Planning Reference: 2018/0151/DET**

Mountaineering Scotland is the only recognised representative organisation for hill walkers, climbers, mountaineers and ski-tourers who live in Scotland or who enjoy Scotland's mountains, and acts to represent, support and promote Scottish mountaineering. Mountaineering Scotland also acts on behalf of the British Mountaineering Council (BMC) on matters related to landscape and access in Scotland, and provides training and information to mountain users to promote safety, self-reliance and the enjoyment of our mountain environment.

Mountaineering Scotland **objects** to this proposal to extend the quarry at Dalwhinnie on the grounds that the applicant has failed to take properly into account the visual impact of the proposed quarry extension on the perceptions of walkers accessing the hills on either side of the A9, and especially from Wild Land Area 14 Rannoch-Nevis-Mamores-Alder.

We recognise the sustainability argument to quarry aggregates at Dalwhinnie Quarry for the A9 dualling project, to reduce pollution and carbon emissions from transporting in aggregates from the central belt, and also to support employment in the area.

Our concern is that the applicant hasn't taken seriously the sensitivity of the development in views from the hill, and especially from WLA 14 Rannoch-Nevis-Mamores-Alder, and specifically from the vicinity of the Corbett, The Fara, and the north-easterly ridge descending from it. We are of the opinion that the sensitivity of a large industrial development in the eyes of hillwalkers who are appreciating the wild qualities of the National Park landscape has been downplayed in the application. Hill walkers move slowly through the landscape and will be more attuned to such visual intrusion in a National Park than visitors travelling along the A9 at speeds of up to 60mph.

It is this sensitivity that is the basis of our objection and the lack of any mitigation measures in the application to potentially reduce the impact.

We would expect CNPA to request more viewpoints from where the sensitivity of the receptor is high, ie hillwalkers. Also to ensure that the assessment fully takes into account any mitigation and restoration proposals which are also lacking in any detail in the application. It is difficult to see how any meaningful assessment of the proposals can be made in its current form.

The 35-year timescale that the applicant is proposing is another concern for Mountaineering Scotland and consider it a very speculative timeframe, finding it difficult to directly relate to the time it would take to complete the A9 project. We suggest that this time period is excessive for the requirements of aggregate for the A9 project. It will also have an impact on the perception of the

National Park by hillwalkers, for more than a generation. We find this an unacceptable period of time to quarry without any mitigation works to reduce visual impact from higher elevations.

We would expect the applicant to have produced a detailed phased restoration plan to address this issue of sensitivity in the National Park. Ideally each phase of quarrying would not be consented to start until the previous phase had been landscaped to reduce visual impact from the hills.

The current visual state of Dalwhinnie Quarry is a failure to implement the previously agreed restoration plan and we request that CNPA not let this happen again. The placing of financial bonds to cover each extraction phase would be a welcome planning condition to prevent this occurring.

We understand that this will be an iterative process and the final plan may be different from the application as submitted. Mountaineering Scotland requests from the Cairngorms National Park Authority that the we are sent a copy of the final agreed statement as it will be placed before the Planning Committee.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. Black". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'D' and a trailing flourish.

Davie Black
Access & Conservation Officer
Mountaineering Scotland