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24 December 2004

Mr Gavin Miles
Planning Officer (Local Plan/Policy)
Cairngorms National Park Authority
Ground Floor
Albert Memorial Hall
Station Square
Ballater
AB35 5QB

Dear Mr Miles

**CONSULTATION ON CNPA INTERIM PLANNING POLICY No.4:
MINERAL WORKINGS**

Preface

The Scottish Council for National Parks (SCNP) was formed originally in 1943 and operated until 1967, when it was stood down as a result of the setting up of the Countryside Commission for Scotland. It was reconstituted in 1990 following the publication of the CCS's report on the 'Mountain Areas of Scotland' for Government, which recommended the creation of National Parks in Scotland. The SCNP's primary aim is to promote the protection, enhancement and enjoyment of nationally outstanding areas that are National Parks, or are appropriate to be designated as such, or are of sufficient merit to warrant special protection. This is manifest in our support for good stewardship of the country's best environmental assets and encouragement of sustainable methods of development, particularly within areas of national park potential. SCNP is a registered Scottish Charity.

Response

The Scottish Council for National Parks (SCNP) is glad to have the opportunity to comment on the Park Authority's consultation paper on an Interim Policy for Mineral Workings. Our overall reaction is to support this thorough document which seeks to bring a consistent approach throughout the National Park thereby addressing the potential problems created by differing approaches in the four local authorities' Structure and Local Plans.

In particular, we welcome the clarity of the policy statements, the detailed criteria against which any applications will be tested and the conditions on restoration involving the provision of a bond and tight timetables for both working and restoration. We consider that it is correct to make it clear that :

- * the environmental and visual impacts which result from quarrying and processing minerals makes this an undesirable form of development in CNP;
- * EIAs will be required for all applications;
- * there should be a strong presumption against further incursions of man-made developments within the Park, outwith established settlements and other clearly defined development centres;

* new proposals for commercial mechanised peat extraction will not be permitted within CNP.

We also consider that the future policy should lay emphasis on the Sandford principle whereby conservation has primacy in all cases of an irreconcilable conflict between conservation and development.

I apologise for the late submission of this response for reasons explained over the telephone.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Maud". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the printed name "Chairman".

Chairman