

National Park Authority Board Meeting

Agenda Item 9

Hearing for Cononish planning application



Paper for decision

1. Introduction

1.1 A planning application, with the reference of 2017/0254/MIN, was received in August 2017 for the development of an underground mine to extract gold and silver with associated service and production building, plant, storage areas, Tailings Storage Facility (TSF), settlement pond and gauging station, bridge and car parking at Cononish Road, Tyndrum. This application is a further revision of 2014/0285/DET. The application is approaching determination and this paper seeks Board agreement to the process to be adopted to determine the application. It does not consider the merits of the case. Three previous related applications were determined by the full Board rather than the Planning and Access Committee by virtue of the complexity, public interest and significance of the application being defined as a 'Major' development in the Hierarchy of Developments Regulations 2009 and being subject to Environmental Impact Assessment.

2. Recommendation

Members are invited to:

- 2.1 **agree** that the planning application relating to the Gold Mine at Cononish will be brought to the full Board at a future meeting;
- 2.2 **agree** that a special meeting to consider the planning application should be arranged and should take the form of a hearing and a site visit. The hearing and site visit would be held in early 2018, at a date to be advised.

3. Background

- 3.1 The application is for an underground gold mine. The proposal involves boring ore to extract the gold and silver and involves associated surface workings including a processing building and associated waste storage. The site is located approximately 3km south west of Tyndrum in Cononish Glen. The site consists of an area both over and underground workings. The extent of surface operations on the application site, (excluding the access track) is approximately 40 hectares.
- 3.2 The site has been the subject of a number of related planning applications stretching back to 1988 with Stirling Council before the National Park was created. The most recent applications were for the temporary bulk processing of the previously extracted ore which is lying on the surface – determined under delegation. The permission for this processing ends in the next months.

National Park Authority Board Meeting

Agenda Item 9

Hearing for Cononish planning application

- 3.3 Hearings are aimed at making the planning system even more inclusive as there is an opportunity for applicants and a greater number of those who submitted representation to request to be heard before a planning decision is taken. A site visit is a matter of course in the case of a hearing and would provide the best opportunity for members to fully understand the context and characteristics of the site. The site visit would take place before the hearing and only those who attend the site visit will be able to determine the application.

Author: Amanda Aikman, Governance and Legal Manager

Executive Sponsor: Stuart Mearns, Director of Rural Development and Planning