

CairnGorm Daylodge Environs – Maintenance Issues

Description



The Day Lodge – HIE and Natural Retreats original plan, now abandoned, was to demolish it and replace it with another building

Stakeholder Groups continue to view the ongoing situation on CairnGorm Mountain with dismay. This post takes a further look at how Cairngorm is being managed according to the lease agreement between Highlands and Islands Enterprise and their tenant, CairnGorm Mountain Ltd, a.k.a Natural Retreats. The lease contains this clause:

Section 2: Maintenance Works to Premises.

2.3.1 At the start of the year, the tenant will provide to the Landlord for approval [not to be unreasonably withheld or delayed] its plans and projections [and where applicable, specification and other supporting documentation] for all maintenance works that it intends to carry out in that year, with any quotes, estimates or other supportive evidence to show that the tenant will spend at least the minimum for that year.

Parkswatch has seen copies of the lists of maintenance works as provided to HIE by their tenant for each year since they were given the lease in 2014. These maintenance lists were obtained, via FOI requests, for the purpose of determining just exactly why there are maintenance issues on the hill that are not being addressed.

What follows is a series of pictures which were taken from around the Daylodge building in Coire Cas. These pictures reveal a shocking lack of any obvious maintenance which is very concerning particularly given the fact that the tenant must supply the Landlord with a list of all proposed maintenance works each year.

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This picture is of the area at the corner of the Daylodge closest to the CarPark T-Bar. There has been no maintenance done here for several years and it is clearly in a state of collapse. A large granite block has fallen out of the wall which could have seriously injured any child who had been climbing on it, as children do.



Someone clearly thought that tying on a piece of rope where there should be a barrier, would do the job!



There are dilapidated areas all around the Daylodge.



Pieces of walls that have fallen out and just lie where they fell. No remedial work has been done and it's very obvious that there is the complete absence of any planned maintenance regime.



The dwarf wall has more or less completely collapsed and fallen down the slope towards the burn.



Can that be considered to be safe? The grating is loose and the edging has fallen apart

Walking around the building.....







.....the flashing on the walk ways is in a state of disintegration.

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There is rotten wood that should have been replaced long ago, and.....





.....yet more collapsing granite walls with no sign of anything having been done by way of repair or maintenance for some years

Notably, the maintenance lists for each year are just notes of the standard maintenance that is scheduled to be done in that year which, for example, would include the external consultancy reports with respect to ski tow tower foundations. There is no reference to any maintenance work identified by Natural Retreats that might be in addition to the standard jobs.

The broken loading area at the Ciste T-Bar ([see here](#)) is a case in point.



This was highlighted in the ADAC structures report in 2015 ‘‘A review of the access platform is recommended’’ and the again in the 2016 report ‘‘The timber platform was seen to be broken, possibly due to vehicle access – this needs to be replaced before the coming season. This was discussed with CML (Cairngorm Mountain Ltd) staff at the time and assurance that this would be done were received’’.



This

picture shows how the burn that runs down from the Zig Zags to the Pump House [known as ‘Chicken Gully’] has been bridged.

It is in an undeniably dilapidated condition and requires to be replaced. Natural Retreats, as the tenant, avoids this expense by continually omitting it from the annual maintenance lists and HIE remain blissfully unaware of the degradation because they conveniently never have anyone walk around the mountain to check on the condition of the infrastructure.

It's very clear from the pictures around the Daylodge that the tenant has avoided any general maintenance work that may be necessary here by simply excluding it from the annual lists that they supply to their landlord. Examination of the maintenance lists for 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018 revealed that there is no mention anywhere of any plan to undertake maintenance work around the Daylodge.

HIE have some explaining to do. It is clearly obvious that they are not bothering to make any site visits to satisfy themselves that their tenant is properly maintaining what are public assets. Why are they failing to check that their tenant is fully compliant with the terms of the lease that requires them to undertake maintenance work as necessary? The pictures do not lie and there has been little to no

maintenance done around the Environs of the Daylodge since the present tenant was given the lease in June 2014. That's something that is very clearly in breach of the lease condition in relation to Section 2: Maintenance works to premises.

What needs to happen

The Cabinet Secretary with responsibility for HIE, Fergus Ewing MSP, must now intervene and order the Board of HIE to put their house in order.

With every passing week it becomes ever more apparent that HIE simply do not understand the CairnGorm Mountain business and lack the expertise to manage the CairnGorm Estate effectively. The local economy in Badenoch and Strathspey has been very negatively affected by HIE's failure with over £3m of spend lost just last winter alone. The impact on employment levels is now considerable. Their long-term strategy of concentrating on the Funicular business while reducing the other uplift infrastructure has now been proved to be a complete and utter failure. The inoperability of the Funicular railway has left the mountain business with nowhere to go and if that continues into the winter then economic disaster for the local economy is assured

Positive change must be brought into effect now. Open and transparent discussions with the Aviemore & Glenmore Community Trust must be speedily brought about as a pre-cursor to transferring the estate and assets into Community ownership. HIE must be ordered to provide the Community Trust with the assistance that it requires to take ownership, quickly.

Category

1. Cairngorms

Tags

1. Freedom of Information
2. Governance
3. HIE
4. natural retreats

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