

Openness and transparency or lack of it in Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park

Description

Following the parkswatch post on the illegal felling of trees at Carrbridge, in the Cairngorms National Park ([see here](#)), here is an example of a felling application of trees with Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs)

The following are extracts for TPOs from LL&TNPA's weekly planning list:

Ref No	2019/0017/TRE	Officer	Simon Franks
Date Valid	29 January 2019	Telephone	01389 722635
Proposal	Works to trees covered by TPO - Fell and chip 2no Willow trees		
Location	Drumkinnon Promontory National Park Gateway Centre Ben Lomond Way		
Applicant	Mr John McQueen Carrochan 20 Carrochan Road Balloch Scotland G83 8EG	Agent	

Application Type	Tree works application
Expected Decision Level	DEL
National Park Ward	NP Ward 5 (south west Loch Lomond)
Community Council Area	Balloch And Haldane CC
National Grid co-ordinates	238364 E 682219 N
Advertisement Type	

The second extract is the Decision:-

Ref No 2019/0017/TRE
Date Valid 29 January 2019
Proposal Works to trees covered by TPO - Fell and c
Location Drumkinnon Promontory National Park Gat
Applicant Mr John McQueen,
Carrochan
20 Carrochan Road
Balloch
Scotland
G83 8EG

Application Type Tree works application
National Park Ward NP Ward 5 (south west Loc
Community Council Area Balloch And Haldane CC
National Grid Co-ordinates 238364 E 682219 N
Date Decision Issued 19 February 2019
Decision Approve

I note that 29 Jan - 18 Feb = 15 working days inclusive is a very rapid application turnaround.

I am not saying that the application/decision is illegal but what is of particular note, however, is the address of the applicant which just so happens to be the Headquarters of LL&TNPA! Why not say so? Why has the LL&TNPA hidden behind the undisclosed identity of an employee? This encourages one to think that there must be some hidden agenda, particularly as the accompanying map would seem to indicate that the trees in question are not actually on the promontory itself but appear to be near the top of the footpath beside the wooded area leading from Old Luss Road to Lomond Shores. Confusing or what?? This again begs the question why!!

The Tree Report Assessment states *“The proposed works are minor required to improve clearance over the walkway”*. Why, then is it necessary to fell the trees and not just lop them? Why is there no photographic evidence to support the justification for felling? The Report goes on to state *“no replacement planting is required”*. How does this support the importance and contribution of trees to biodiversity?

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Map from planning application with red arrows added, one to highlight where felling took place and the other to show the promontory area. •Corider• appears a spelling mistake for •corridor•.

Given the past illegal fellings in this area ([see here](#)), which as far I can find, has never yet been resolved by Police Scotland, it is surprising that LL&TNPA have not submitted this application in their business name and that it is a delegated (DEL) decision. Particularly when the TPOs were only applied last year by LL&TNPA after the illegal felling event.

[Further statement on unauthorised tree felling](#) (*NEWS LL&TNPA*). Following the statement issued on Wednesday 21st March on the unauthorised felling of trees on the north side of Drumkinnon Bay near Loch Lomond Shores, we have now also taken action to put in place a Tree Preservation Order. [Read more](#)

The main thrust of this article is that to the uninitiated the Application could be interpreted as coming from a private individual as opposed to a Park employee. Surely, given the sensitivity and recent history of the area concerned, openness and transparency should be of paramount importance.

LL&TNPA Board members complain at Board meetings about the number of Freedom of Information Requests (FOIs) they get and how time consuming they are for their staff. No wonder there are so many!!

Category

1. Loch Lomond and Trossachs

Tags

1. conservation
2. LLTNPA
3. planning

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