

BY EMAIL

Dear Pete

The Campaign for National Parks (CNP) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the consultation on relaxing the restrictions on the deployment of overhead telecommunications lines. CNP is the national charity that inspires people to look after and enjoy National Parks.

CNP welcomes the confirmation in paragraph 3.5 of the consultation document that the relaxed restrictions on the deployment of overhead telecommunication lines will not apply in National Parks, the Broads and other protected areas as defined by the Electronic Communications Code. It is appropriate to retain strong controls in areas nationally designated for their landscape and scenic beauty due to the fact that overhead lines can have an adverse impact on these special qualities.

However, lines outside nationally designated landscapes can have an adverse impact on their setting. Defra has clarified^[1] that National Park purposes are an essential consideration in reaching decisions that may have an impact on National Parks, even if those decisions concern development proposals that would be outside the Parks. National planning policy currently recognises the importance of the setting of nationally designated landscapes – for example, PPS 22 states that the potential impact of renewable energy developments close to the boundaries of designated areas will be a material consideration^[2], and paragraph 5.9.12 of the Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) recognises the importance of the setting of nationally designated landscapes by providing advice on projects outside the boundaries of these areas that may have impacts within them. The importance of the setting of nationally designated landscapes should therefore be reflected by Government through an amendment to the Electronics Communications Code and the proposed relaxed restrictions should not apply to lines that would be near to or cross the boundary of nationally designated landscapes such as National Parks.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require clarification of any of the above.

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The Campaign for National Parks is registered charity number 295336 and company limited by guarantee number 2045556, registered in England and Wales at 6-7 Barnard Mews, London SW11 1QU.

^[1] Defra guidance note on duties on relevant authorities to have regard to the purposes of National Parks, AONBs and the Broads, 2005

^[2] Planning Policy Statement 22: Renewable Energy

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