MOUNTAINEERING SCOTLAND WALKCLIMBSKI

The Granary | West Mill Street | Perth | PH1 5QP
T: 01738 493 942 **E:** info@mountaineering.scot
www.mountaineering.scot

By email to: admin@treestory.org.uk

22nd October 2026

Dear Nick, Ken and Elanor,

Re: Dorback woodland creation proposals

Thank you for your email of 29th September and for the opportunity to comment on this project. Mountaineering Scotland is a membership organisation with 16,000 members and is the only recognised representative body for hill walkers, climbers, mountaineers and ski-tourers in Scotland. We represent, support and promote Scottish mountaineering, and provide information and training to mountain users for safety, self-reliance and the responsible enjoyment of our mountain environment.

Our primary interest in this proposal is ensuring continued access for hillwalkers. The main hillwalking objective within the project area is the Corbett[1] of Geal Charn. I note that the proposed new deer fence passes close to the most popular descent route, the track on the east side of the Dorback Burn. It's not clear from the map provided if this fence would cross the track or not. If so, a gate should be provided. A self-closing gate with a minimum clear width of 1500mm to accommodate all non-motorised users, including walkers with heavily laden packs, would be ideal and in line with the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003. Deer grids can be difficult to cross safely on foot, especially with a heavy pack or in wet or icy weather.

Mountaineering Scotland supports the re-establishment of native woodland in areas where it would naturally occur. We favour natural regeneration as it helps to establish a species mix that best fits the site and creates high quality habit that integrates seamlessly with the landscape, whilst supporting increased biodiversity. However, we do support planting in areas where key native species are no longer present and need to be reintroduced to help create an optimum species mix. However, it is important that existing path corridors are left unplanted. In addition, inverted mound planting should be avoided in the vicinity of formal and informal recreational routes, to minimise the likelihood of the corresponding pits becoming a hazard to walkers.

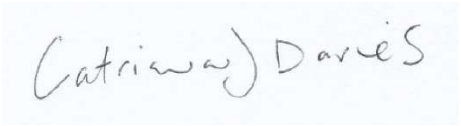
My understanding is the current guidance for Caledonian Pinewood Inventory (CPI) sites is to leave a 100m Regeneration Zone and an additional 500m Buffer Zone unplanted to allow natural expansion of the pinewood. However, I note this proposal will between leave 85m and 310m from the edge of the CPI unplanted. There is a concern that this will impede the natural expansion of the pinewood, which runs contrary to the stated design principal of this project of *"No planting within the CPI regeneration zone"*.

[1] *Mountain in Scotland between 2500and 3000 feet high, with at least 500 feet of descent on all sides.*

Mountaineering Scotland is a registered trademark of the Mountaineering Council of Scotland Limited. Company No: SC322717

I trust these comments are useful.

Kind regards,



Catriona Davies
Access & Environment Officer
Mountaineering Scotland

Email: access@mountaineering.scot