

By email to: panda.cons@forestry.gov.scot

21st July 2026

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Glenfalloch Native Woodland Restoration

Thank you 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 objectives within the project area are the summits of An Caisteal and Beinn A'Chròin, which are often climbed together as a circuit from Glen Falloch. I am therefore pleased to note that there are no new deer fences, which can pose barriers to access, planned.

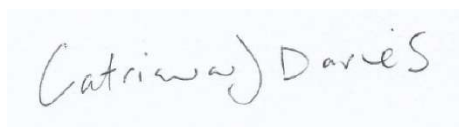
However, it is important that existing path corridors are left unplanted. In addition, inverted mound planting should be avoided in the vicinity of formal and informal recreational routes, to minimise the likelihood of the corresponding pits becoming a hazard to walkers.

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 habitat 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.

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 to allow natural expansion of the pinewood. However, I note this proposal will only leave 50m 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 objective of this project to “... *protect and expand existing native woodland remnants, including the remnant Caledonian pinewood...*”.

I trust these comments are useful.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink on a light blue rectangular background. The signature reads "Catriona Davies" in a cursive, slightly informal script.

Catriona Davies
Access & Environment Officer
Mountaineering Scotland

Email: access@mountaineering.scot

