

By email to: [Jonathan.Hart@jahamaestates.com](mailto:Jonathan.Hart@jahamaestates.com)

Jonathan Hart OBE  
Liaison Manager  
JAHAMA HIGHLAND ESTATES  
Estate Office, Killiechonate  
Spean Bridge, PH34 4EY

21<sup>st</sup> August 2025

Dear Jonathan,

**Re: JAHAMA Highland Estates - Project to naturally regenerate native woodland at landscape scale**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project. Mountaineering Scotland is a membership organisation with around 16,000 members and is the only recognised representative organisation for hill walkers, climbers, mountaineers and snow-sports tourers in Scotland. We represent, support and promote Scottish mountaineering, and provide training and information to mountain users to foster self-reliance, responsible access and safe enjoyment of our mountain environment.

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 is well suited to the site and creates high quality habitat that integrates seamlessly with the landscape, whilst supporting increased biodiversity. We also support the re-establishment of natural treelines in the mountains and I am pleased to note that this is a feature of this project.

Mountaineering Scotland advocates for land management infrastructure, including fences and tracks, to be kept to a minimum in mountain landscapes. I am therefore pleased to note that you plan to allow natural regeneration of native woodland through a substantial reduction in deer numbers, rather than extensive deer fencing. When fences are needed, they should be carefully sited to minimise their visual impact, and to avoid fence-lines standing out against the skyline.

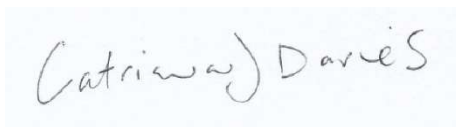
The Ben Nevis massif, the Mamores and Killiechonate Forest are of huge significance to mountaineering in Scotland and it is imperative that access to the numerous summits and crags for walkers, climbers and snow sports tourers is maintained. Most people will follow established paths

and routes described in guidebooks and on websites but others will choose to follow their own routes. Extensive fencing can be an obstacle to recreational access in the outdoors, especially where there are insufficient access points or locked gates with no side gate. Your approach of reducing deer numbers, rather than putting in lengthy deer fences, avoids this risk and allows the regenerating woodland to be fully permeable to access takers, which is welcomed.

However, it should be noted that, as the natural process of woodland regeneration progresses, it may begin to encroach on both formal paths and more informal routes. I note that you have recognised this risk in *“Table 2b Overview of key benefits and potential sensitivities of the project, with likely areas where JHE may need to adapt their design or mitigate impacts.”* We would welcome more detail on how this risk will be monitored and managed to ensure vegetation is cut back at appropriate intervals to maintain access, encouraging users to stay on route and avoid path braiding and erosion. We would be happy to work with you as your plans develop to ensure that all relevant routes are identified.

I wish you every success with this project, to demonstrate that regenerating native woodland, without fences and whilst maintaining excellent public access, is achievable.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Catriona Davies". The signature is written in a cursive style and is set against a light blue rectangular background.

Catriona Davies  
Access & Environment Officer  
Mountaineering Scotland

Email: [access@mountaineering.scot](mailto:access@mountaineering.scot)

