



**Press Release**

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**For immediate release**

## **Decision looms over future of iconic glen Mountaineers hopeful over Highland Council visit to Glen Etive**

Mountaineers have welcomed news that councillors are to visit one of Scotland's most iconic glens before deciding on potentially damaging developments.

No less than seven applications have been submitted to build hydro schemes on both sides of Glen Etive – which is currently designated as a National Scenic Area. Each of the schemes will involve new road construction, bridge-building, trench digging, cement-pouring and power cabling, for a relatively low power output.

Members of The Highland Council's Planning Committee are now to visit the glen for themselves, following in the footsteps of Daniel Craig and Dame Judy Dench as James Bond and M in the movie Skyfall.

Mountaineering Scotland has welcomed news of the visit and says it shows councillors are seriously considering the impact the schemes will have on a nationally significant landscape which is a major attraction for hillwalkers and climbers as well as other outdoor enthusiasts and tourists.

Stuart Younie, Chief Executive Officer of Mountaineering Scotland, said: "We challenged The Highland Council on its stewardship of Glen Etive and urged them to look at the whole picture of development in the glen rather than treating each application in isolation, so it is encouraging to see them visit the glen in person rather than relying on individual applications on paper."

Davie Black, Access and Conservation Officer with Mountaineering Scotland, said: "There is development already along the glen floor, with roads, forestry and cottages, but having construction work spill up the slopes will damage the wild qualities of the mountainsides. This is a National Scenic Area – the top accolade for landscape in Scotland – but once the wild feel of the landscape is gone, it is gone. We believe it is in the national interest to maintain its value for generations to come."

Mountaineering Scotland has objected to the hydro schemes up on the open hillside to the east of the River Etive, but not the ones that lie within the existing forestry plantation. The seven proposed schemes straddle both sides of the glen.

Mr Black continued: "It makes a real difference to see the actual location of developments, rather than sitting in a room looking at paperwork. Once the members of the planning committee see this glen and the mountains, they will surely see that the impact of the hydro pipeline and access tracks here are both unnecessary and unwelcome in this environment."

“The Highland Council has the stewardship of this scenic glen and mountains in its hands. We trust that the committee members will appreciate the value of our wild mountain landscapes and reject development that damages the integrity of that landscape.”

The Planning Committee will meet on 20<sup>th</sup> February to decide on the applications.

## Ends

### Notes for editors:

**Image:** Wild and beautiful Glen Etive. An iconic glen threatened by development. Photo by Tim Parkin (onlandscape.co.uk)

[http://www.mountaineering.scot/assets/contentfiles/media-upload/Glen\\_Etive\\_-\\_hydro\\_press\\_release.jpg](http://www.mountaineering.scot/assets/contentfiles/media-upload/Glen_Etive_-_hydro_press_release.jpg)

### Further information contact:

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### About Mountaineering Scotland:

- Mountaineering Scotland is the only recognised representative organisation for hill walkers, climbers and ski-tourers who live in Scotland or who enjoy Scotland's mountains.
- Mountaineering Scotland provides training and information to mountain users to promote safety, self-reliance and the enjoyment of our mountain environment.
- The Mountaineering Scotland is a membership organisation with over 14,000 members representing hill walkers, climbers and mountaineers, funded through a combination of membership subscriptions, non-governmental grants and investment from sportscotland, which supports public initiatives and services in mountain safety, mountain training and the development and promotion of mountaineering activities.
- Mountaineering Scotland also acts for 75,000 members of the BMC or British Mountaineering Council on matters related to Landscape and Access in Scotland.
- Mountaineering Scotland landscape and access work is supported financially by the Scottish Mountaineering Trust and the BMC
- Mountaineering Scotland has launched the ClimbScotland initiative to encourage young people to participate in climbing and support their progression. It offers a dedicated website and a development team, which will introduce young people to climbing at schools, climbing walls and via youth organisations with a range of activities and events, while developing kids clubs and providing specialist support to parents, volunteers and teachers.
- Mountaineering Scotland is the national governing body for sports climbing. It offers pathways to climbing coaching, organises and promotes a range of regional and national climbing competitions, and manages the Scottish climbing and bouldering teams. It contributes to the management of the GB teams with the ultimate aim of seeing a Scottish athlete achieve a podium position in the Olympic Games.
- The MCofS is a not for profit company limited by guarantee and incorporated in Scotland. Company number SC322717.

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