

**Steve Murphy**

Forestry and Land Scotland  
Aberfoyle Office  
Aberfoyle  
FK8 3UX

11 June 2021

Dear Mr Murphy

**Achray Land Management Plan Revision and Scoping**

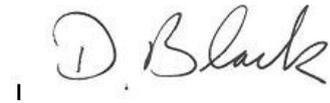
Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the revision of the Land Management Plan.

1. Our interests lie with access through the Forest blocks to climbing routes and the open high ground, and the visual implications of restocking and other management on the landscape.
2. Mountaineering Scotland is a membership organisation with over 14,000 members and is the only recognised representative organisation for hill walkers, climbers, mountaineers and ski-tourers who live in Scotland or who enjoy Scotland's mountains, and acts to represent, support and promote Scottish mountaineering. Mountaineering Scotland also acts on behalf of the 80,000 members of the British Mountaineering Council (BMC) on matters related to landscape and access in Scotland, and provides training and information to mountain users to promote safety, self-reliance and the enjoyment of our mountain environment.
3. Access to recreation locations is important, with the main walking destinations in this area being Ben Venue and Ben A'an. We would appreciate the main routes from car parks to the summits be maintained, and with tall conifer species kept well back from the route. Native broadleaf tree and shrub species along the route can soften the visual impact of dense Sitka plantation.
4. A small number of documented locations for rock climbing lie within the plan area. They are not major climbing venues but do receive a small but steady stream of climbers through the year and we would appreciate maintaining informal access to them. These are: Creag Mhor, off the Ben A'an path - previously hidden crag, revealed due to tree felling approx 5 years ago; Achray Blocks - by Achray Water and the A 821; Ben Venue car park rocks – scattered buttresses on the hillside near the car park; Craigmore slabs – approx. 500m west of A821 by DM Lodge.
5. The provision and maintenance of parking areas at appropriate points would be a useful facility for hillgoers and climbers. Most visitors here will come by car, as public transport is very limited.
6. We support your intention to modify the commercial treeline and expand native woodland onto open ground whilst retaining the element of wildness associated with the higher hillsides and

craggs. Our preference would be to encourage natural regeneration by maintaining the deer population at a level that allows this. This could also facilitate the removal of extensive deer fences which can sometimes be an impediment to access.

We hope that these comments on the Achray Land Management Plan are helpful, and we will be pleased to assist Forestry and Land Scotland with any of these points above if we can.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. Black". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small vertical line to the left of the first letter.

**Davie Black**  
**Access & Conservation Officer**  
**Mountaineering Scotland**

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