

Mr James R MacKay
Dellside
Blairdaff
Monymusk
INVERURIE
Aberdeenshire

6 October 1993

North
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Regional Director
Graham J Hamilton

Our ref AD 2/5

Your ref

Dear Mr MacKay

BENNACHIE

Thank you for your letter of 21 September.

I fully appreciate your concern about the future of Bennachie and I fully agree with the point you make about its value in terms of recreation.

You will know that we currently have a disposal target, set by Government, of 100,000 ha by the end of the decade, for UK as a whole. The selection of areas for disposal is a matter for us, but we have been set a number of guidelines, which include a reference to access and public recreation. In that connection we are not proposing to include Forest Parks and Woodland Parks on our list of areas for disposal. While Bennachie is in neither of these categories, there is no intention on our part to sell it under the present disposal programme.

Regarding the current review of ownership of Forest Enterprise woodlands, I'm afraid I can not predict what policy the Government will choose to adopt, given the many options available to them. Clearly there can be no guarantee that Forest Parks or Woodland Parks would be exempted if a policy of privatisation were to be adopted. Actually, Bennachie would not fit into either of these categories in any case. We have plans to create a number of new Woodland Parks within the Region, but Bennachie is not one of them. I should emphasise, however, that this is not to say that we don't recognise its importance for recreation, and you will of course know about the present plans for a visitor centre, at Bennachie.

What are the criteria for creating a Woodland Park?

Can I suggest that, if you haven't already done so that you convey your views on the question of ownership to the Secretary of the Forestry Review Group:-

Mr G S Pearson
Room 6/61
New St Andrew's House
Edinburgh
EH1 3TG

Additionally, if you think it would be helpful I would be happy to meet you next time I am in the Buchan Forest District.

Yours sincerely

G J Hamilton
Regional Director

GJH/FEM

incl C. Walker video

Forest parks - none installed recently - Argyll, Tay, Dundee (Shorehaven)

Woodland parks - smaller woodland close to town - Kelso, Colly, (Shorehaven)

Gray Phedrus, Kew, Queen's Wood, Ulling

no woods

presentation - show group next month

- include - produce leaflets

AGENCY Forest parks as old concept

Waleside Burn contact to Hector Mann

Lots of places - same situation

See Hector Mann's open Centre?

SNH Sponsorship

Azure plateau area - hike 200 x

Graham Hamilton

interest in access

in case of private

pros of access tops

M. P

See Hector Mann

SNH Ian Jardine

Tribute to Denny