

F.A.O

Mr James Mackay



8/1/53

Forestry Commission
Scotland

With Compliments

If possible would you please return the consultation documents if you no longer require them

Many thanks
Linda Widdowson
Administrative Officer
www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Grampian Conservancy

Ordiquhill
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Conservator
Douglas Clark



8/1/53

Forestry Commission
Scotland

Mr James MacKay
Baillies of Bennachie
Dellside
Blairdaff
Inverurie
AB51 5LT

Date: 26 January 2004

Our ref: 0319/00040

Dear Mr MacKay

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FOREST PLAN APPLICATION – FORBES ESTATE

I am enclosing details of this application and invite you to submit comments which will be taken into account before a decision is reached the archaeologist has been notified of this proposal.

A "no comments" tear-off slip is provided below and its use, where appropriate, and early return would be much appreciated.

However, if you do have any comments please remember that they should be submitted within 28 days of this letter. If I have not heard from you by 23 February 2004 I will assume you are content with the proposals. Should a site visit or meeting be considered necessary please contact Mr Gavin Legge prior to any arrangements being made.

Yours sincerely,

Linda Widdowson
Administrative Officer

Enc.

Ms Moira Greig, Archaeologist
Aberdeenshire Council
Woodhill House, Westburn Road
Aberdeen, AB16 5GB

(LW)

After careful consideration I confirm I have no comments to make on the **Forest Plan** application reference **0319/00040 FORBES ESTATE**

Signed.....

Date.....





Bailies of Bennachie

James and Mary MacKay
Dellside
Blairdaff, Inverurie
Aberdeenshire AB51 5LT
Tel. Monymusk (01467) 651243

Charity Number: SCO ~~2541~~ 13298

20 Feb 04

Linda Hiddowson
F.C.S.
Huntly

you ref 0319/00040

Dear Linda,

FORBES PLAN APPLICATION - FORBES ESTATE

Many thanks for the details of the application

I have asked for and received from, comments of three knowledgeable members of the Bailies Council viz Dr Colin Miller, former lecturer in Forestry, Mr Fred Gordon Head Ranger Aberdeenshire Council and Mr Gordon Cowie former Chief Executive of Forest Enterprise. I enclose their letters to me

The only other comment I would make is that

I was amazed (looking at the Constraints map) of the number of archaeological features - it would be interesting to have some indication of their degree of importance. In the "Countryside" Bennachie written in 1890 there is reference to Garrauld Ford and the Peaked Stone mentioned in connection with the Division of the Community - we must not lose sight of features such as these

As we would expect from Forbes Estate it is a very well produced plan and we are entirely in agreement with the Estate attitude and approach

With all good wishes

Yours sincerely,

James Chrackar

Wed 12 noon

Dear James,

I have read through the Forest Estate Plan 0319/00040 and find little to challenge in the proposals. A lot of attention seems to have been given to landscaping and conservation issues & we have to remember that they are running a business, albeit with quite a lot of public money.

One could question the lack of proposals for keeping continuous cover & the lack of specific proposals for using natural regeneration in some areas. However, natural regeneration may be required by the FC Forest Practice Guidelines on the Management of Semi natural woodland - which the Estate intends to follow.

On the Corrie Hill proposals 0319/00070, sufficient comment seems to have been made. Elsewhere it is noted that no mention is made of the SWS site, but this is included in the Forest Plan which I think predates this application. I would have liked to see collaboration with the neighbouring estate to re-route the W&W a little higher up the Brunday where there is an existing Car Park.

Hope this helps. PR.

Dear James,

6/2/01

Having looked at the plans I must say that by and large, I agree with them. I too would have liked to see more continuous cover plan, I think, some time left to reach biological maturity.

I think that these proposals have also to be seen in the context of the wider forestry picture of the Benmore/Knack Scaul ridge. Both FC and large parts of Towleys farm have to be considered in the wider picture as both have large areas of forestry to the west of the Keeg - Auchleven road.

I am also glad to see that increased public access has been considered. This is particularly important given the provisions of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act and the Scottish Outdoor Access Code (SOAC). I suspect that there will be, certainly initially, an increase in the numbers of people seeking access off the more traditional tracks, if only to show that they can.

Attempts to protect, and increase, wildlife habitat for the red squirrel is good to see but I haven't seen, unless I missed it any reference to *copescailthi* which is a pity. Are the Estates to make positive attempts to conserve/attract these and black game in general of course? I have in fact just re-read, and found the bit on black game, and am glad they have been included.

I'm not sure about the 15 year absence of the *copescailthi* however. I think that about as much as I feel confident to comment on James but I hope it's useful. It's a very well presented proposal.

Regards
Les.

Tel: 013397 55080

Email g.cowie@tinyworld.co.uk

Garden House
Morven Way
BALLATER
Aberdeenshire
AB35 5SF
19 February '04

Dear Jim,

Forbes Estate Forest Management Plan

I enjoyed my visit last week and welcomed the opportunity to read through the Forbes Estate 20 year Management Plan. My comments on the Plan are:

1. This is a very professionally produced Plan, which addresses all the issues I would expect to be relevant to the area.
2. I was particularly impressed by the willingness to adopt current standards regarding landscape issues, access by the general public, conservation and the growing of quality timber.
3. Within this however, the plan could perhaps be improved, particularly with regard to conservation of squirrels, and indirectly capercailzie. At present, the Plan is working on the assumption of standard rotations of 40 years for Spruce assuming a Yield Class of 18 and 60 years for Pine. If the Yield Class is correct, and I would be surprised if it were as high as 18, then the 40 year rotation is probably appropriate and with Spruce, because of its growth pattern, financial yields are sensitive to age at felling.
4. However, with Pine, 60 years is a short rotation if quality sawlogs is the primary aim and unlike Spruce, the financial return is not affected significantly between rotations of 60 -90 years. Extending the rotation towards 90 years would be most beneficial in retaining red squirrel habitat and would encourage the development of a field layer conducive to capercailzie. It would also allow consideration of continuous cover forestry systems, which in turn would be beneficial to the landscape, assuming that the quality of the Scots Pine is good enough to encourage its use as a "mother" crop.
5. The Plan makes little or no reference to protection. It would be safe to assume that the control of Roe Deer is tied in with the sporting but what steps are proposed to control weevils at restocking - insecticide? What about weed control - herbicide?

However, if all plans were of this standard, we would have little to complain about! I presume that the system of approval requires a 5 yearly review. If not, the Plan will quickly become meaningless - nothing ever goes according to plan for much longer than 5 years!

With best wishes,

