

# INVERURIE HERALD

9/162

**Mortgage funds  
available now!**

Fast personal service  
Competitive rates

CHARLES  
HENDERSON

Tel: (0224) 638563

HILL SAMUEL

INVESTMENT SERVICES  
LICENSED CREDIT BROKER

MEMBER OF LLOYD'S BANKING GROUP  
Loans secured on property  
and appropriate life  
assurance cover. Written  
quotations available on  
request.

FRIDAY, JUNE 16, 1989

PRICE: 22p

## BAILIES HIT BACK OVER TREE PLAN

By DAVID MCKAY

THE Bailies of Bennachie hit back this week at Sir Archibald Grant's defence of his plans to plant sitka spruce trees in the Monymusk Triangle on the mountain.

Sir Archibald claimed in an article in last week's Herald that his scheme would help save lives and fight the dangerous greenhouse effect.

He added that the Bailies' objections to his plans were little more than details when compared with the global importance of planting trees that will soak up potentially harmful carbon dioxide gas.

But Bailies' council member James Mackay told the Herald on Wednesday:

*"The planting of seven hectares of trees on Bennachie is not going to affect mankind one way or another."*

The Bailies are strongly committed to keeping sitka spruce out of the triangle, and they have objected to Sir Archibald's application for a grant from the Forestry Commission.

Gordon District Council and the North-east Mountain Trust are also against the laird's plan.

The Bailies argue that the area provides a great deal of enjoyment for the public, as well as a valuable habitat for plant and animal life.

Planting sitka spruce, they say, would ruin the triangle, both as a place for people to relax and as a haven for wildlife species that need places like this to survive.

*"When an area is planted with sitka spruce you are virtually sterilising that area for 40 to 50 years," said Mr Mackay.*

A former head of Inverurie Academy's biology department, Mr Mackay argues that the sitka spruce tree grows so thick and so fast that absolutely nothing can grow under it.

This would put in danger several plant species that grow in the triangle and are not found any-

**Laird's statements  
were "misleading"**

where else on Bennachie, as well as destroying the habitat of grouse, deer and birds of prey.

The Bailies are also worried about the effect that Sir Archibald's plans could have on the footpath that runs through the triangle.

Council member Mr Algy Watson describes the triangle path as one of the traditional routes up to the Mither Tap.

"We want to fight to keep as many approaches to the peaks as we possibly can," he explained.

Sir Archibald plans to plant lines of European larch trees at each side of the path to stop the sitka spruce from growing across it, but the Bailies want to see a more landscaped barrier made up of broad-leaved trees.

They are also worried that the views from the path might be lost if the planting goes ahead.

But Sir Archibald argues that there are only two or three real viewpoints from the path anyway.

The Bailies say they are not against tree planting in the triangle, but they want to see a traditional Caledonian type forest, made up mainly of Scots pines, which they feel would enhance the natural beauty and appeal of the area.

And they stress they are not looking for a confrontation with the laird.

*"Sir Archibald is a member of the Council of the Bailies of Bennachie as a landowner, we have had co-operation from him in the past, and we do not want to turn this into too much of a conflict," says Mr McKay.*

If Sir Archibald fails to come up with a plan to satisfy the objectors, the Forestry Commission will have to make a decision on whether or not he should have the grant aid he is asking for.

● See letter on page 22.