

# WILD LAND NEWS 59

Winter 2003/4



## COMMENT

*Article*

### *Holyrood inquires into renewable energy*

We learned in October that the Parliament's Enterprise Committee is to hold an Inquiry into Renewable Energy, prompted on one side by MSPs' bulging postbags on wind farms, and on the other by industry pressure to speed up the approval process.

SWLG had earlier signed up to a joint statement on this issue by Scottish Wildlife and Countryside LINK. This however is couched in the broadest terms, in order to accommodate the views of those organisations whose priority is the prevention of global warming at all costs, and those, such as ourselves, who argue that this must be achieved without destroying our finest landscapes.

A recent meeting of LINK agreed that delegates from both camps should give evidence to the Inquiry, but that individual groups should also be free to develop their own viewpoints. We are naturally concerned that with an Administration firmly in favour of wind farms, for employment creation and local spin-off 'inducements' as well as for green reasons, the Inquiry will concentrate on how to cut corners in pursuit of fast-track approvals. Note too that the Enterprise Committee, not the Environment Committee, is conducting the Inquiry, since energy applications do not go through the well-understood Planning process that any other development in the countryside has to.

We are of course fully in support of meeting emissions reduction targets. The climate has oscillated violently enough over the last million years without us giving it a big and unpredictable shove. We realise the government will always prefer the easiest and cheapest fix: it needs continually goaded to reduce energy consumption by anti-waste incentives, including making electricity dear enough for us to bother switching lights off. We see the current rash of onshore wind farm proposals as a short-term expedient, and expect offshore wind farms and marine hydro (tidal currents as well as wave) to become the best bet very soon. We feel that intrusive large commercial windfarms on our hills and mountains will be looked back upon as a crass folly within ten years - and of course there are no funds being set aside to restore the sites, so the access roads and concrete foundations will blight the landscape for generations. We accept that there are some locations where commercial windfarms will be tolerable, and will support small-scale installations serving rural communities.

We have drafted an eight-point statement which we hope to submit to the Inquiry, and also to circulate to MSPs and the media:

1. The Scottish Highlands has already borne a disproportionate share of UK renewable energy, much of it visually intrusive and environmentally damaging, and practically irreversible. Very large areas have been 'municipalised' by energy developments, including access roads, transmission networks, dams, and catchment enlargement works, and have thus lost their 'wild' character.
2. Large-scale wind energy developments should be encouraged close to areas of consumption (especially in the Central Belt). There should be a very strong presumption against them in the highlands and islands (broadly defined), and a

moratorium there until any areas where they may be acceptable have been determined and agreed by open and accountable planning processes.

3. Small-scale energy developments meeting local requirements should be encouraged within strict planning criteria.
4. Off-shore energy developments should be encouraged in principle, within a planning framework that addresses transmission landfalls, shore stations, and views out to sea from 'heritage coasts' and wild areas.
5. It is understandable that some environmentally concerned people should regard the landscape heritage of Scotland as sacrificable to the greater cause of arresting global warming. They display an almost hairshirted virtue in welcoming the industrialisation of the mountains. In fact, energy development is now a purely commercial activity driven by the profit motive: if government decided to allow energy prices to rise, or to redirect financial incentives to fit the planning criteria applied to all other forms of development, there would be no need to accept any more obtrusive energy schemes in our valued landscapes.
6. Offshore hydro schemes (tidal current as well as wave) are likely to become successful large-scale baseload energy providers within 10 years, as with offshore oil before. Large-scale onshore wind will then be seen as a short-sighted aberration - and on peat moorlands may release more CO<sub>2</sub> from carbon sinks than is saved during the initial gap-filling period.
7. Any large onshore schemes that are approved should have reinstatement bonds lodged at the outset, covering complete removal of access tracks, concrete founds, and transmission lines. This will underline their full economic costs and make them less economically attractive to developers or landowners.
8. The prime landscape heritage, scenery, and wild land of Scotland are an irreplaceable asset to be safeguarded for future generations. They are sufficiently unique within Britain and Europe, in both natural and cultural dimensions, to be one of Scotland's most valuable economic assets, as a key attraction for long-term residential and business investments and for discerning visitors. To trade their remaining integrity for modest short-term advantages would be both morally and practically misguided.

We would very much appreciate hearing from any members who would dissent from this 'manifesto' or who would like to refine it. This will greatly strengthen our hand in deploying it in the public arena.

*November 2003*

## **Harris Superquarry threat continues**

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As we went to press, a decision is awaited on a Court hearing that took place in November between Redland / Lafarge and the Scottish Executive Inquiry Reporters Unit. This is the latest twist in the long running saga whereby Redland (and now its new parent company Lafarge) wish to establish a superquarry on the Isle of Harris.

Redland / Lafarge, if you remember, , were notified in November 2000 by Sam Galbraith, the new Scottish Environment Minister, that he was refusing their application to build a superquarry at Lingerbay in south-east Harris. This decision took place following a very long public inquiry after which the Reporter had recommended approval be granted.

Redland /Lafarge still have an appeal pending on that decision; however this case in the Court of Session in Edinburgh last November concerns another potential superquarry (on the same site).

## **Not a golden hit from the 1960s**

Redland / Lafarge claim to have an old planning permission for a quarry in this vicinity, approved in 1965 by Inverness County Council. Redland / Lafarge argued that this permission could allow a quarry of 600 hectares, even bigger than the 459 hectares proposed in the Lingerbay application above. Western Isles Council refused to add this planning permission to the list of such old permissions every Council is required to draw up. Redland / Lafarge objected to this decision of the Council, and a Public Inquiry was held, adjudicated by the Scottish Executive Inquiry Reporters Unit.

### **A mini quarry is all that's allowed!**

The Reporter's Unit concluded that the 1965 permission was valid, but only for 5 hectares. Redland / Lafarge are appealing this decision and this is the case just heard in Edinburgh. The decision on this is not likely until the New Year 2004.

### **Further delay and yet more appeals**

If Redland / Lafarge lose this Court of Session action on the 1965 permission, then they could appeal to the House of Lords. If they lose that.. then they still have the appeal against the decision of Sam Galbraith in November 2000. The big winners are the lawyers; the losers are the people of Harris with yet more indecision, plus the Scottish Executive which has to defend its decisions in court (paid for out of our taxes) against the huge multi-national firms.

### **Outrageous**

The Wild Land Group feels it is outrageous that the legal system is being used by a rich and powerful company to undermine the democratic decisions of a local authority and the Scottish Executive, and the independent planning decision of the Reporter's Unit. The demand for aggregate and the market has changed significantly since the original Lingerbay superquarry inquiry. In addition there is now even more awareness that the fine landscape features of South Harris, the Minch and the setting of the Outer Hebrides needs to be protected from these sort of intrusive developments.

### **Campaign**

Friends of the Earth Scotland have continued an excellent campaign against the activities of Redland / Lafarge, and their website [www.foe-scotland.org.uk](http://www.foe-scotland.org.uk) has much more information on this topic. Other NGOs like us have been keeping a concerned watching brief on the matter, hoping that the Scottish Executive and its Reporters Unit will stand firm on their previous decisions. It seems highly unjust that a potential legal technicality could allow this huge intrusion to go ahead, and we urge Redland /Lafarge to withdraw their appeals immediately.

### **Final thoughts**

I remember being on South Harris for a holiday when the Lingerbay Public Inquiry was sitting there, and going along to watch proceedings being held in the village hall. The image of lawyers and advisers with endless files sat uneasily with the breath-taking scenery around and about, and of the Community, wishing to have some employment, yes, but also wishing to have some control over their local resources and how they are exploited.

Perhaps in 10 years time planning students at Universities round the country will be studying the South Harris superquarry case as an example of complicated planning issues overlain by legal appeals and technicalities. Unfortunately the best resources of Scotland - its landscape, its character and its setting could well be squandered by then, at the altar of filling the voids below miles of tarmac on ever expanding roads and motorways.

*Dr. James Fenton warns against complacency when development, even in the name of renewable energy, threatens our precious peat reserves.*

We are all familiar with peat - especially when a hill path deteriorates into a morass of black gunge! Peat consists of the undecomposed remains of plants, and it is often possible to see remains such as leaves and roots within the body of the peat and in some cases, of course, tree stumps. However, where there has been significant decomposition then all plant structures are lost - try the squeeze test: grab some wet peat in your hand and squeeze, and if it comes out between your fingers as a smooth paste then you are dealing with a highly humified (highly decomposed) peat.

Peat is found throughout the world, barring hot deserts, and occurs in any situation where dead plant material is produced faster than it can decompose. Generally, but not exclusively, these are situations where the soil is waterlogged, resulting in anaerobic conditions inimicable to decomposition. Peat tends to be common in cool climates and also in areas of acid soil, where again decomposition is low; for example, peat is common in the Falkland Islands where the climate is not particularly wet, but it is cool and the rocks are acidic. There is also moss peat up to three metres thick and five thousands years old further south in Antarctica, here, unusually, forming in aerobic conditions.

Cool temperate regions such as the British Isles provide ideal conditions for peat formation, and where it covers the landscape it is, unsurprisingly, called blanket peat! In fact, conditions are so good here that peat can blanket the landscape even in the relatively dry Caithness and over the Carboniferous limestone of central Ireland (although there is virtually none left there). Likewise, Flanders Moss west of Stirling is one of the few 'mosses' remaining that would once have covered much of lowland Scotland, most of which have been cut for fuel or drained for agriculture. How common peat bogs once were can be seen by the frequency that the words 'moss', 'bog', or even 'muir' still occur in place names in the lowlands.

However, the greatest extent of peatland occurs in Arctic Russia, Canada and Alaska where permafrost results in waterlogging of the ground, although the deepest peats are found in the coastal tropics adjacent to subduction zones - areas where the earth's crust is sinking down at the same rate as the peat is accumulating above. Borneo is an example, although many of the peatlands here are on fire and could remain burning for years.

Where peat becomes protected by overlying sediment, particularly in these coastal swamps, then it can be protected for millions of years, eventually metamorphosing into coal. It can be seen that both peat and coal are in effect stores of carbon - carbon taken out of the atmosphere by photosynthesis and stored in the ground as plant remains. Recent research has indicated that 90% of all carbon stored in soils and vegetation in the UK is in the form of Scottish peat; i.e. there is considerably more carbon stored in peatlands than in trees, woodland or other vegetation.

Global warming is mainly caused by the release of such stored carbon back into the atmosphere, whether from coal, oil, peat or vegetation loss. Where peat is actively accumulating (getting thicker) then it acts as a carbon sink, i.e. taking carbon out of the atmosphere; even where it is no longer actively accumulating, it still represents a significant store of carbon. However, peats, through their anaerobic nature, can also be a source of methane, itself a potent greenhouse gas; there is debate at present about whether the deeper Scottish peats are actively accumulating carbon year by year, or are now a net source of methane.

What is incontrovertible, though, is that Scottish peats are an important store of carbon and we should be making global warming worse if we caused them to erode so that all their carbon was oxidised back into the atmosphere. As a rule of thumb, Scottish peats get thicker at about one foot per thousand years, making them in effect a non-renewable resource. We should be conserving bogs and be wary even of siting renewable energy schemes on them: calculations suggest that at one proposed wind farm site there is of the order of 1.5 million tonnes of stored carbon in the peat. Bogs are very sensitive to changed hydrology, and it would be ironic if a renewable energy scheme, designed to slow down global warming, instead made it worse in the long term by being sited on a peat bog and helping to cause its long-term demise. Likewise, planting trees on peaty soils can, in the long term, cause oxidation of the peat, resulting in more carbon being released into the atmosphere than fixed by the trees.

It can be seen that peat bogs are a valuable global resource with an important role to play in carbon cycling. And I have not even talked about the nature conservation value, archaeological value, or wild land value of bogs.....

*Dr James Fenton is an ecologist who started his career studying peat in Antarctica. He is now the Nature Conservation Adviser in the Highlands and Islands for the National Trust for Scotland.*

## Who owns Scotland?

Article

It was in 1996 that Andy Wightman published his book *Who Owns Scotland*, in which he identified the ownership of some 65% of Scotland and explored the complex power structures that derive from the ownership of land. Since then, Labour has taken over from the Tories at Westminster, the Scottish Parliament has been established and a range of land reform measures are in place for Scotland. The feudal system has been abolished, the right of access to all land is to be enshrined in law and wider community ownership of land is to be facilitated.

Yet despite this trend towards recognition of the public interest in the land resource, the Scottish Executive seems reluctant to improve public access to information about land ownership. The subject is often shrouded in secrecy, and for anyone wishing to find out just who owns what, a visit to the archives in Edinburgh is usually necessary together with one-to-one assistance from specialist staff.

So Andy Wightman has started afresh, this time taking advantage of the advances in information technology since 1996. Under the auspices of the Caledonian Centre for Social Development he has embarked on another project, again entitled *Who Owns Scotland*. A web-site has been established and this time the target is to identify ownership of 75% of Scotland, with the information freely available over the internet.

The project has been running since 2001, and so far the ownership of more than 6 million acres is published on the web-site, representing 37% of the privately owned rural land in Scotland across seven counties, mainly in the Highlands. Over 90% of ownership in Nairn and Sutherland has been identified, with over two-thirds in the remaining five counties. Kincardine and East Lothian are next on the list for inclusion, and an Ordnance Survey map-based system has been implemented for navigating the site.

### A perfectly legal tax dodge

Although far from complete, the project came under the spotlight last October when the Sunday Herald newspaper exposed the perfectly legal means by which large landowners are able to dodge tax, under the anachronistic system of beneficial ownership. Much of the 3-

page investigation was based on Andy Wightman's research, which has shown that it can be impossible to trace the true identities of the actual owners of huge chunks of Scotland who lurk behind nominee companies based in offshore tax havens.

Such companies can deal in British land and property without paying a penny in tax, while simultaneously receiving handouts of taxpayers' money in the form of development grants. This system is exploited by many large estates, while a further 2.5 million acres (13.1% of Scotland) is held in private trusts which allow the owners to avoid capital gains and inheritance taxes and stamp duty.

According to the study, an estimated £72m is lost annually to the Treasury through offshore ownership of rural Scotland alone. The figure would be much higher for the whole of Scotland, and for the entire UK would run into billions of pounds. If this sort of money were being lost through, say, benefit fraud, the Government would put on a public show of strength to bring the offenders to heel. But with characteristic British deference to landed power, any such toughness dissolves and no-one in authority shows serious interest in stemming the haemorrhage.

### **Clean energy - "dirty" profits**

Although much of this is beyond the scope of SWLG's campaigning remit, we are well aware that wealthy individuals or corporations holding land primarily as an investment or tax dodge are unlikely to be the best custodians of our heritage. It was interesting that the same edition of the Sunday Herald carried an article about the "dirty" profits from clean energy. Highland Council has produced a document complaining of "super profits" going to the developers of renewable energy schemes, and demanding a levy to re-direct far more of the gains into local communities.

The document states "Energy companies and landowners should share with communities the profits they reap from the Highlands' natural resources to generate power". Perhaps the key word here is "landowners". The landowner per se makes no contribution - not even the most presumptuous landowner would claim the credit for the way the wind blows over Scotland - yet he happily reaps the benefit in enhanced land values.

We have long had our suspicions about the readiness of some landowners to open their doors to renewable energy companies. We have also noticed in general that when our wild land heritage is threatened by inappropriate development, the proposals are usually driven by the promise of hefty profits to landowning interests, often from outside. Land-use patterns are undoubtedly distorted by the promise of financial gain to landowners.

Renewable energy projects are just the tip of the iceberg - a relatively new and currently high-profile example of the way land values are enhanced as a result of social and economic trends. Land has no cost of production, and its value is simply a scarcity value reflecting public demand for a finite resource to which we all have an equal right.

Highland Council's proposal is for a levy of £5000 per megawatt instead of the small goodwill handouts currently on offer to communities. As the developers point out, however, the idea of a blanket charge is fairly crude as it takes no account of the fact that some locations are more productive and therefore more valuable than others. Nevertheless, the Council's awareness of the underlying principle is encouraging, but the same logic needs to be applied to all aspects of land use. Land values are generated by the needs and activities of society as a whole, and it is society as a whole that should reap the benefits, not the individual landowners.

But first we need to know who all the landowners are - we really do need to find out Who Owns Scotland.

For more information, go to [www.whoownsscotland.org.uk](http://www.whoownsscotland.org.uk).

*The SWLG has donated £100 to the project. Members wishing to do so can use the online form on the web-site or send a cheque payable to [Caledonia Centre for Social Development](#) to Andy Wightman, 9 Inverleith Terrace, EDINBURGH, EH3 5NS.*

## Mountain access? Trust us!

Article

*David Jarman reports on an unwelcome intrusion*

One not very fine day this summer, my new daughter-in-law from Lincolnshire demanded to be taken up her first Munro. Where better to start than the Tarmachans? And ignore the guidebooks, much the best way to tackle the Tarmachans is from the actual pass at the far end of Lochan na Lairige. This lets you do a proper horseshoe round the main tops, with no retracing of steps. For an appetiser, you get the pleasant ridge of Creag an Lochain, which has the merit of being almost pathless, so that you can gain the Munro without feeling you are doing Ben Lomond from Rowardennan. The ridge is grassy but quite well defined, and it has impressive views from the dentillated rim.

Or it did have. We parked at the lairig, set out into the driving rain, and soon found ourselves marching side by side with a bizarre double electrified stock fence, freshly installed by proud new owners, the National Trust for Scotland. We had no option but to keep this contraption close company, and I apologised to Louise for the visual intrusion, which hadn't been there on my last visit. I fondly imagined that, if its purpose was to keep deer off the broken crags and allow woodland to regenerate, the fence would soon deviate off across the slopes. But it didn't. When the going got tougher, it transmogrified (a word which scarcely does justice to the elaborate engineering involved) into a deer fence, still electrified, and proceeded to march along the crest of the ridge, straddling its several sharp dips with massive underplankings. Only when we bore away into the broad col to Meall nan Tarmachan did we escape an edifice so baleful as to have us wondering if Group 4 had won a contract for a new private prison camp here. The only other electrified fence over a mountain ridge I have ever come across was a long-abandoned knee-high experiment by the Agricultural College hillfarm at Tyndrum.

Now the summit of Creag an Lochain (842m) is, if not a Munro Top, certainly in the ticklist for those so inclined, and for the sane amongst us an undoubtedly attractive place of public resort. Access to it had been severed by the National Trust in its wisdom - but not for long, for the direct action brigade had already been out with their wirecutters, thus rather defeating the point of the whole exercise.

The point of the whole exercise being what exactly? Not just to restore native woodland with tall herb vegetation, which is of course incredibly scarce in the Southern Highlands, but to attempt to regenerate a natural treeline at the highest altitudes to which trees can grow in Scotland. Here this might mean birchwood thinning out to montane scrub, especially ground-hugging dwarf willow. A natural upper treeline can still be seen in Norway and the Alps, but nowhere in Scotland except possibly on the Scots pine-covered crags at the foot of Glen Feshie.

I asked NTS Property Manager David Mardon why the fence had to be electrified? - to let black grouse and ptarmigan fly through it without breaking their wings as they do in rylock mesh (a pioneering experiment, laudable if perhaps excessive). And why did it have to follow the crest? - because this is the ownership boundary, but in any case to run it downslope would risk burial by deep snowbanks which would let the beasts over it in winter. And (bottom line) how long would the fence have to be there? Decades, he candidly admitted, perhaps indefinitely - an issue for a future generation. By contrast, JMT expect to remove

their enclosure fences on Knoydart sooner rather than later, despite concerns that this will severely check the regenerating woods.

So what would happen if and when the fencing is removed? A Big Free Picnic for the deer? Seriously, two of Scotland's leading woodland ecologists have expressed their doubts to me. They suggest that montane scrub would never have been extensive in terrain populated by agile herbivores, and would always have been restricted to inaccessible cliffs, or to creeping beneath the shelter of the heather. So prison-camp fencing might be futile, really, for species that never grow above browsing height.

Indeed some purists would argue that all fencing is misguided and unsustainable, even temporary enclosures, and that natural woodland can only be recreated by restoring natural ecosystem dynamics, with browsers and predators in balance. I can sympathise with David Mardon - life is too short for counsels of perfection, and if we want to save dwindling stocks of marginal montane plants and habitats, with constraints of tenant sheep farmers and neighbouring deer-stalking estates, perhaps we have to manage our land more artificially. I have walked through lush tall grasses in the highest fringes of the birchwoods and out onto the tundra in north Norway, and it would be remarkable to do this closer to home. But I cannot get away from the shock I felt and Louise shared at this appallingly intrusive fence - especially now I know it will be there for my lifetime.

Apparently there was extensive consultation with hillwalking interests (including SMC, McofS, SCAC) on the principle of this fence and its general location, and the consensus despite some anguish was that the conservation aims should prevail. SNH cofunded the £70K cost along with Millennium Forest and Europe.

The NTS has achieved many wonderful things on the wild land it owns - foremost being the delicate undoing of the excrescent bulldozed track up Beinn a' Bhuird, as SWLG members witnessed a couple of years ago. Here I fear the wrong signals are being sent out. With the new access legislation about to go live, electric-fencing a whole mountain ridge is a precedent that hostile landowners could easily seize upon to frustrate hillgoers. Restoring this rare habitat is undoubtedly worthwhile, but it needs to be addressed much more holistically, by managing browser levels down over a much wider area, and by insisting that any fencing is unobtrusive and short-life. If this site is of such international importance, then SNH or someone should have acquired enough extra land to make a proper sustainable go of it.

As for our walk, Louise kept up the family tradition of first Munros being cold, wet, windy and no view; I divested myself of mitts and overtrousers to keep her in the family; and we were rewarded with a fine wild land prospect of the northern corrie as the cloudbase lifted late on - including the extensive landslip that has shaped the arête of Meall Garbh. A prospect untrammelled by impedimenta such as fences.

## Proposals for Renewable Energy Developments since June 2003

*Article*

*An update by Fiona Anderson*

A rush to off-shore wind developments, heralded by the Robin Rigg proposal (in Last Wild Land News), looks set to follow the on-shore wind farm revolution. In July the Government announced a new round of offshore electricity developments, after rigorous environmental assessment - 2,000 turbines in 3 strategic areas: the Thames Estuary, the Wash and the North West coast. In September the Scottish Executive gave a research grant to offshore oil operator Talisman and Scottish and Southern Energy to fund a study to design the World's first deep offshore wind farm. The companies envisage building up to **200 turbines linked to the existing Beatrice oil fields** which could generate up to 1,000 MW, or about half of



the capacity needed to meet the target of 40% generation of all electricity from renewables by 2020. In October six locations within the English strategic areas was announced. Each will have 30 turbines and together they will provide energy for 350,000 homes.

In August a 29 turbine wind farm was proposed by an Irish company on the **M8 at Blackhill**, "the most visible in the UK". The same company is also seeking consent for a 200-turbine farm adjacent to the **M74 at Crawford**, South Lanarkshire.

At the end of August a Scottish Executive poll of public support for wind farms found over 80% in favour of increased generation.

In September Highland Council recommended approval of the controversial hydro scheme at **Shieldaig**, Wester Ross against the advice of their officials. The Scottish Executive will decide the case. Over 800 objections were received. **Aberdeen** City Council announced a proposed wind farm of 20 turbines just off the coast as part of an energy futures centre on the beach front.

In October **Loch Lomond/Trossachs** National Park Authority opposed 2 hydro schemes proposed in **Glen Falloch** - a 6m high dam at Allt Fion Ghleann, a weir at Ben Glas and 2 power houses. The Scottish Executive will decide. Mohammed el Fayed also proposed a 50 turbine windfarm on his **Invercassley Estate** between the rivers Cassley and Oykel.

In October also **Highland Council** are pressing the Scottish Executive to set a realistic and enforceable level of community benefit from developers of wind farms. The market average is £1,000 per MW - they claim a fairer figure would be £5,000 MW. **Borders Council** also announced they are preparing a Vocational strategy for wind farms.

A reported RE seminar in the Central Belt indicated that with 180 MW installed wind generating capacity, the same again being built, 1400 MW in planning and more than 4000MW "in development", the Scottish renewables target of 3520 MW by 2020 could be comfortably met from onshore wind alone. But the government clearly thinks this unlikely! Environmental appraisals of visibility are now being widened from 25 km radius to 60km as structures now often exceed 100m in height, and concern was expressed at the astonishing amounts of aggregate required for access roads to many turbines.

## Shieldaig Hydro Scheme Update

*Article*

Highland Council, at its full Committee on 11 September 2003, decided not to oppose the hydro scheme at Shieldaig by a narrow majority (32 votes to 27), against the recommendation of its Director of Planning. The final decision is with the Scottish Executive.

If the matter is not decided by the time Wild Land News is published, members are urged to write to their MSPs and to Lesley Thomson, The Scottish Executive, Enterprise and Lifelong Learning Department (Energy Consents), 2nd Floor, Meridian Court, 5 Cadogan St., Glasgow G2 6AT or e-mail [lesley.thomson@scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:lesley.thomson@scotland.gsi.gov.uk).

This is a crucial test case on whether there are to be any constraints on unlimited hydro schemes anywhere in wild land, and we are keeping our fingers crossed that the Scottish Executive decides the right way.