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Árd-Oifigear/Chief Executive  
**Simon Hodge FICFor**

Our Ref: SEC-17-56

25 October 2017

Dear Mr Kempe

## **WORKS IN COILESSAN GLEN, ARGYLL FOREST PARK**

Thank you for your request for information on the above which we received on 2 October 2017 and your subsequent request dated 17 October.

### **Information Requested**

You have asked us for information held by Forest Enterprise Scotland connected with the above.

Our review and appeal process is detailed at the bottom of this letter.

### **Information released**

Following a search and review of the information held by Forest Enterprise Scotland we have established that we hold information that is relevant to your request (the "relevant information").

## **Right to Review**

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request you may make a complaint or appeal against our decision under section 17(7) of the FOIA within 40 working days of the date of this letter. Should you wish to complain about the way your request has been handled please contact:

The Head of Corporate Services

Forestry Commission Scotland

Silvan House

231 Corstorphine Road

Edinburgh

EH12 8RP

Tel: 0300 067 6000

E-mail: [FCScotlandenquires@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:FCScotlandenquires@forestry.gsi.gov.uk)

Complaints regarding non-compliance with the open access legislation obligations should initially be made to Forestry Commission Scotland itself. We aim to resolve any complaints with you directly. However, should the matter fail to be resolved, you may make an appeal to the Information Commissioner's Office at:

FOI Compliance Team (Complaints)

Information Commissioner's Office

Wycliffe House

Water Lane

Wilmslow

Cheshire

SK95AF

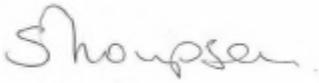
Tel: 01625 545 700

Fax: 01625 524 510

E-mail: [mail@ico.gov.uk](mailto:mail@ico.gov.uk)

Finally for information, please note that Forest Enterprise Scotland forms part of the wider Forestry Commission, which is a cross border organisation. For this reason we operate under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 as opposed to the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

Yours sincerely



**Siobhan Thompson**  
**Secretariat Officer**

## **An explanation of why these works were need to prevent the spread of *Phytophthora ramorum*.**

These works are part of a wider approach involving a number of forest districts, the objective of which is to enable affected larch trees to be felled, extracted and hauled from site in the event that an infection of *Phytophthora ramorum* is detected in a forest block.

Felling in these circumstances is normally carried out under a Statutory Plant Health Notice (SPHN), which compels a landowner to fell the infected tree(s) and all other larch within a 250 metre radius of the infected tree within a specified period (normally up to six months, depending on the date of confirmation of the presence of the disease).

In the east side of Ardgartan Forest, there are approximately 53 hectares of larch, 6 ha of which are in Coilessan Glen, which will be more accessible once the road works are complete. In addition, the improved forest road network will facilitate the haulage of timber from other felling areas in the forest block.

## **Notification to the Loch Lomond and Trossachs Authority**

The track works shown in your photograph were carried out as part of the wider road maintenance, with a Prior Notification approved by the Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2016 (copy attached). During construction, the location of the extension was moved approximately 250 metres away from the original position to achieve a more effective access with no adverse environmental effects. We are currently discussing with the National Park how best to retrospectively address this issue.

In your photo showing the reinforcing of the bank, the original banking had suffered extensive damage from erosion and the works shown were carried out to stabilise the banking to prevent the road formation from "slumping" into the river. A site visit has been arranged with SEPA to discuss whether any additional mitigation works need to be carried out at this location.

In the photo on the right, the slope of the ditch has been cleared of vegetation as part of the standard specification for drain maintenance.

A significant amount of material has been imported to create the road formation, as described in my original letter. This is normal practice where there is insufficient

stone to produce a robust, deep foundation for the running surface and this was the case for the Coilessan Glen section.

Material excavated from the borrow pit illustrated in your photograph has been used solely for the works carried out in this operation. It is not a "private way" as defined in the legislation, and therefore does not require a Prior Notification. Under the Environmental Impact Regulations (EIA) however, a determination was required to be submitted for an increase in the quarry footprint to the Forestry Commission Scotland Conservancy, and was duly approved on 6 January 2012.

The work is not yet complete, with addition of surfacing material and final grading yet to take place. As part of the remaining work, protruding culverts will be cut back, new track sides stabilised, and any required landscaping completed.

In our experience, natural vegetation will colonise the "shoulders" of the road and the exposed batters, reducing the visual impact of the road for recreational users.

The maintenance carried out in Coilessan Glen is to a standard specification applied to similar roads throughout the National Forest Estate, including within the National Park. This specification has also been used to construct new roads elsewhere in the National Park to the satisfaction of National Park Officers, and was deemed acceptable when viewed recently as part of a joint site visit.

The Forest District are familiar with the Prior Notification system, and submit such notifications to the National Park when required (19 have been submitted during this calendar year to date, for construction of forest roads, ATV tracks and forwarder tracks).

Finally, the Ardgartan Land Management Plan is due to be added to our web page when this plan is next re-submitted for approval (in 2018/19). The Forest District have both digital and hard copies of the plan, however at 56 Mb the plan is too big to email. I will, therefore, ask for the plan to be sent to you by "wetransfer", if that is acceptable to you.

In response to the questions in your email of 17<sup>th</sup> October –

PN 2017/0324/NOT does describe access for timber lorries – as explained earlier in this letter these lorries will require access to the area to remove larch felled as a result of any SPHN being served in the event of an infection being detected.

The "old" track will be retained to assist the haulage operation, by acting as an additional passing place for lorries or as a stacking area for logs or other materials.

In your photo of the bridge, the new track will start on the far side of the bridge to allow lorries a straighter approach to the bridge, removing the bend that can be

seen in your photo. On the near side of the bridge, your photo shows a road junction with a separate forest road joining the main forest road from the left side of your photo. Material has been used here as part of the road maintenance operation, but has been contained within the original road footprint.

Your other photograph showing road widening is removal of vegetation from the existing slope of the roadside drain, carried out as part of our normal road maintenance operation.