

Minutes of Trustees Meeting held on Monday, 25th August 2003, at Duireaskin, Aberfeldy at 7.15 p.m.

Present: Paul Jarvis (chairman), Ruth Atkinson, Beryl Coope, Marjory Finlayson, Julie Gardiner, Bill Hoare, Robin Hull, Hamish Nicholson, Andrew Pointer, Innes Smith, Margaret Jarvis (minutes secretary).

1. Apologies: none

2. Minutes of previous Trustees meeting of 8th July 2003: Approved. No comments.

3. Matters arising: All included as agenda items.

4. Hydroscheme: BH, AP, PJ, had made a site visit on 17th July in the company of Alastair Henderson and Jimmy Stewart of Keltneyburn Hydro Ltd to view possible changes in the weir and pipeline on HPCLT ground, because the land owner on the other side of the Allt Mor is uncooperative. Copies of a map of the scheme as now proposed on HPCLT ground and profiles of levels were available. BH explained that the weir position will be unchanged but the buried intake chamber will now be on the north side of the burn rather than the south, the pipe will be buried in the riverbed or in the bank to the corner and then will be under grass and heather vegetation parallel with the river. The pipe will then go under the river below the falls to continue on the south side outwith our ground, as previously planned. There are no trees along the route and regeneration on the disturbed ground is to be expected from the nearby seed source in the gorge. BH, AP and PJ were in favour of acceptance. The pipe will run for 165 m on HPCLT land, well to the south of the existing path. Access for vehicles would be from the south side of the burn. PJ pointed out that the engineering would be more difficult than before but this was not our problem; we should be concerned primarily with the additional disturbance. The general conclusion was that the end result of the overland work will be acceptable although there will be considerably more initial disruption

BC expressed the view strongly that the initial disturbance to be caused by installation of the weir was bad enough and that the additional disturbance caused by crossing the burn would greatly increase the amount of sediment which is likely be substantial. On her suggestion, it was agreed that there should be invertebrate surveys of the burn itself to enable the consequences of the disturbance to be evaluated. It was further agreed that Keltneyburn Hydro should be required to minimise the amount of sediment and debris going down the burn as a result of the work.

RH reported that he had been asked by Keltneyburn Hydro to carry out a bird survey for which he will receive a fee that will go towards the publication of his book. He is recommending that all work be done outside the breeding season.

PJ had been asked for a written confirmation of agreement in principle to the modified scheme. A new draft contract for our consideration would follow. BC had personal reservations on the grounds that the previously unspoilt Allt Mor would inevitably be desecrated. RA wanted to know more about the benefit to HPCLT. A

figure for wayleave mentioned by Keltneyburn Hydro was briefly discussed, and will be subject to serious negotiation at a later stage. BH recommended agreement in principle to the new pipe route, provided that our concerns are met (both those expressed above and those defined earlier in our letter of 27th February) and this was agreed unanimously. **ACTION PJ**

5. Deer management: Although 25 to 40 red deer, including a white stag, had been counted on the property in the spring, IS reported that he had seen only 7 deer on 15th July and the head stalker of the Atholl estates had reported 7 to 10 deer on 12th August. It is not known where the others have gone. IS has contacted two reliable and fully insured professionals who will shoot any excess deer when required in exchange for the carcasses. They would work unobtrusively, from the roadside at daybreak. All trustees and members are asked to report deer sightings to IS. **ACTION ALL**

6. Car park: IS regretted that he had been overoptimistic at the previous meeting since the Roads Department insists on the full specification for the entrance from the road, including tarmac surfacing. The cheapest job would be about £10,000. We could have preparatory levelling done for a few hundred pounds. MF suggested the possibility of free transport, for a community project, of hardcore from Sheerglass quarry at Blair Atholl. RH offered to contact MI Great Britain about this. (He is in contact with their geologist, Dr Nick Butcher, who is helping with the geology for RH's book). **ACTION RH**

IS will continue negotiations with his contact about the entrance from the road. Willy Grieve could also be contacted again. **ACTION IS**

7. Woodland: Maps of possible areas to be planted were circulated. JG, HN and PJ had walked in from White Bridge, with RA's revised map, and agreed that it makes a good starting point. Their comments on site had been of the nature of fine-tuning. They felt that a larger area than marked around the limestone exposures, at least five in number, should be left unplanted. The wet area should also be left unplanted and maybe be made wetter by having the drainage ditches blocked. JG pointed out that the areas to be planted need to be well defined because the WGS allows 20 percent of open space within them and if they are not well defined initially, that component of internal open space could be lost. RH mentioned that there had been Scots pine on the area above White Bridge - tree trunks were still visible there - and this might be replanted with pine. In answer to a question from BH, RA pointed out that no grant for planting under pylons is available. BH emphasised that the route down between the two tops should be left open, to preserve the views. He also thought that the planting should not go too high up under the crags. PJ suggested that everyone should go, with the current map in hand, and check on the proposed planting areas as soon as possible. HN, JG, AP and PJ will then meet with RA and produce a modified map **ACTION ALL**

PJ will contact Mike Strachan to confirm the date when we need to have made up our minds. **ACTION PJ**

8. Reports:

a. RH would like more records passed to him. **ACTION ALL**

b. PJ had been at the visit of the Deputy First Minister, Jim Wallace, to Schiehallion. This was good publicity for the area.

c. PJ reported that the new JMT Chairman was Dick Balharry

d. RH will be taking the final version of his book to the publisher tomorrow. He hoped it would be ready for the AGM. His idea of asking J. K. Rowling to write a Foreword was welcomed and he will contact her PA. **ACTION RH**

e. IS had sent in JG's report on the ESA. This recommended that grazing is not desirable this year. If this is accepted, we should receive a payment of £1600 shortly.

f. BH had taken a total of 35 people on walks through the summer. Feedback was positive - all were surprised and delighted by the variety of the terrain. This variety needs to be preserved and enhanced. It was suggested that BH write a report for Comment etc, with quotes from participants, if possible. **ACTION BH**

g. The 'A Better Place to Live' exhibition is to take place on 20th September in Aberfeldy and 27th September in Pitlochry. It was decided that we should take part this year. **ACTION BH, MF, BC, RA, JG, [RH, AP materials]**

h. MF wondered if the game-keeping class at Breadalbane Academy could somehow be involved with Dùn Coilich. BC will approach Alec Towns about this. **ACTION BC**

9.A.O.B.: PJ had talked to Andrew Campbell, JMT Conservation Officer, and Charlie Taylor, Forest District Manager, on the Schiehallion Ministerial visit about a connected path network between Schiehallion and Dùn Coilich through the plantations. We need to consider paths from the Schiehallion car park and the Dùn Coilich car park, cutting a route through the pinewood by the Schiehallion car park, and construction of kissing gates through the existing fences. BH, AP and HN will do this in the last week of October. **ACTION BH, AP, HN**

Date of next meeting: Monday 10th November at Duireaskin at 7.15 p.m.