

Ms Catherine Stewart

By email: [catherine.stewart@lochlomond-trossachs.org](mailto:catherine.stewart@lochlomond-trossachs.org)



Dear Ms Stewart,

**Re: 2013/0120/DET CONSTRUCTION OF A HYDRO SCHEME (1,350KW) AT LOCHGOILHEAD**

The Scottish Wildlife Trust<sup>1</sup> has the following comments regarding the above planning application.

**General:**

The Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park was designated primarily because of its outstanding natural and cultural heritage. The National Parks (Scotland) Act 2000 requires that the Park is managed in such a way so as to fulfil the four aims of the Act which are:

- to conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage;
- to promote the sustainable use of the natural resources of the area;
- to promote understanding and enjoyment (including enjoyment in the form of recreation) of the special qualities of the area by the public; and
- to promote sustainable social and economic development of the communities of the area

Where there is a conflict between the conservation aim (first aim) and any of the others aims, **the first aim takes precedence.**

The Scottish Wildlife Trust believes that the aims of the Act, with the conservation aim (i.e. the first aim), having priority above all others, should set the context for any development that occurs within the park.

**Red Squirrel**

The local Argyll & Trossachs, Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels Project Officer visited the site on 12/08/2013 and confirmed that there appear to be active dreys at the location.

Appropriate surveys should be carried out on site if there are any plans to remove trees which have a reasonable chance of supporting dreys. This includes conifer species, broadleaf and mixed woodland (including community woodlands and parklands). In areas with both red and grey squirrels, red squirrels are more likely to be found in areas of small-seeded species (including conifers).

If the site surveys also identify red squirrel dreys appropriate mitigation should be carried out, this could include adapting the plans to avoid the need to fell trees with red squirrel dreys and implementing a buffer zone around each tree to minimise disturbance. It would also be preferable to see connectivity between dreys maintained within the woodland.

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<sup>1</sup> The Scottish Wildlife Trust was founded in 1964 to take all appropriate measures to conserve the fauna, flora and all objects of natural history in trust throughout Scotland. With over 35,000 members, several hundred of whom are actively involved in conservation activities locally, we are proud to say we are now the largest voluntary body working for all the wildlife of Scotland. The Trust owns or manages 120 wildlife reserves and campaigns at local and national levels to ensure wildlife is protected and enhanced for future generations to enjoy.

## Protecting Scotland's wildlife for the future

The creation of new habitats, suitable for red squirrels, could also be considered. Any work carried out during the construction phase should avoid the breeding season (February to September).

I hope these comments are helpful.

Yours sincerely,

Bruce Wilson  
**Living Landscapes Policy Officer**