

From: Shaw K (Karen) **On Behalf Of** Cabinet Secretary for the Rural Economy and Connectivity

Sent: 26 June 2018 09:57

To: Callaghan, Brendan; Cabinet Secretary for the Rural Economy and Connectivity

Cc: Taylor, Jonathan Michael; Kirk, Liz; Smith, Keir; Risby, John; Hubert, Jason; Dewar, Jim; Jo O'Hara; Connal K (Keith); Campbell B (Bridget); Director of Environment & Forestry; Higgins K (Kate); Miller D (David)

Subject: RE: Protect: Official : Carrbridge Hotel

Brendan

Mr Ewing would like to have a phone conversation with you about this – we will be in touch to arrange in due course.

Ellie – grateful if you could set up a call with Brendan.

Thanks

Karen

Karen Shaw

Deputy Private Secretary to Fergus Ewing MSP

Cabinet Secretary for the Rural Economy and Connectivity

2N.11 St Andrew's House | Regent Road | Edinburgh | EH1 3DG

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From: Callaghan, Brendan [<mailto:Brendan.Callaghan@forestry.gsi.gov.uk>]

Sent: 20 June 2018 16:12

To: Cabinet Secretary for the Rural Economy and Connectivity

Cc: Taylor, Jonathan Michael; Kirk, Liz; Smith, Keir; Risby, John; Hubert, Jason; Dewar, Jim; Jo O'Hara; Connal K (Keith); Campbell B (Bridget); Director of Environment & Forestry; Higgins K (Kate); Miller D (David)

Subject: Protect: Official : Carrbridge Hotel

Hi Lauren,

Having reviewed the e-mail exchanges below between Mr Ewing and Colin Watt, I wanted to advise Mr Ewing that FCS (Highland Conservancy) have recently taken action against Mr Watt in relation to a small area of semi-natural woodland that was felled without a licence and deforested in CarrBridge. Mr Watt has also stated to FCS staff that the intention is to deforest the site and develop for hotel parking and housing.

Summary

- o The land is owned by a company of which Mr and Mrs Watt are the sole directors.
- o It lies on the main road in from the north to the village immediately adjacent to the golf course.
- o The semi natural woodland including a 140 year old Scots pine were felled on a Sunday in January of this year.
- o Mr Watt refused to be interviewed so FCS cannot be certain who instructed or undertook the felling.
- o Mr Watt has set out plans for hotel parking and housing on the site to the CNPA and has engaged a firm of architects.
- o As no licence or permission was in place, nor was the felling exempt under the Forestry Act, FCS referred the matter to the fiscal. If successful this would enable FCS to serve a restocking notice on the company (Mr & Mrs Watt).
- o FCS staff have liaised with CNPA in order to confirm that no planning permission had been granted or applied for, and seek their view on the impact of the woodland removal.

The key points are as follows:

The case has been reported to the procurator fiscal as an illegal felling under the Forestry Act(1967) and is awaiting consideration by them.

FCS has also issued an EIA enforcement notice on Mr and Mrs Watt, the owners of Carrbridge hotel, requiring the replanting of the site. The notice was

mentioned by Mr Watt in his email to Mr Ewing. The EIA enforcement notice was issued because the plan for the site was complete deforestation, including removal of ground flora and stumps as opposed to replanting with young trees. The EIA notice is separate from action under the Forestry Act and any decision to prosecute. The EIA appeal process is to Scottish Ministers.

Recommendation

To note that this is an active case with the Procurator Fiscal and subject to an EIA enforcement notice, which could be appealed to SMs.

To advise that in these circumstances Ministers should take into account the live enforcement actions before the engaging with Mr Watt at this time.

Please let me know if you require anything further.

Regards

Brendan

Brendan Callaghan
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Forestry Commission Scotland

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brendan.callaghan@forestry.gsi.gov.uk
www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland

From: Lauren.Wilson@gov.scot [<mailto:Lauren.Wilson@gov.scot>] **On Behalf Of**
CabSecREC@gov.scot

Sent: 19 June 2018 12:25

To: Hubert, Jason

Cc: CabSecREC@gov.scot

Subject: FW: Carrbridge Hotel

Jason

Mr Ewing would be grateful for urgent advice on the below.

Secondly, is this something you would like added to MACCS?

Thanks

Lauren Wilson
Assistant Private Secretary
Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Connectivity
CabsecREC@gov.scot

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From: enquiries <enquiries@carrbridgehotel.com>

Date: 19 June 2018 at 10:44:17 BST

To: "Ewing F (Fergus), MSP" <Fergus.Ewing.msp@parliament.scot>

Subject: Re: Carrbridge Hotel

Good morning Fergus, we have just received a letter from FC which has just added another tier of complexity on our current situation, we will have to give a considered response within 28 days.

Can I ask if you have any further advice since your meeting with the Minister for Tourism Fiona Hyslop and others.

Currently our expansion plans for the Carrbridge Hotel business is in mortal danger of having to be withdrawn due to CNPA constraints.

Thank you for your continued support

Best wishes

Colin Watt

From: enquiries <enquiries@carrbridgehotel.com>
Date: Monday, 18 June 2018 16:48
To: "Ewing F (Fergus), MSP" <Fergus.Ewing.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Re: Carrbridge Hotel

Good afternoon Fergus, just a quick email following on from last week's email and my meeting with Grant Moir of the CNPA.

There would appear to be a disconnect between the CNPA and the sustainability needs of our business and employees who live and work in the park.

The Scottish Office for National Statistics are projecting that, the 65 year old and over demographic within the CNPA will increase by a staggering 75 percent by the year 2031. See attached graph

The demographic time bomb, will then lead to high value housing being eventually re-sold, which in turn will be bought by high net worth individuals as retirement homes or second and holiday homes. It will also lead to chaos within the park for employers who need a balance of youth within their work force.

A further multi-million pound investment which is planned by our good selves, has been put at risk by CNPA over a piece of land measuring 65 meters by 38 meters for key parking infrastructure requirements, to allow us to ease the construction phase pressure during a planned extension and also target off season conference and events markets.

Unless there is clear direction or intervention then the development to create further job security and much needed infrastructure and amenity along with an uplift in economic activity will be put at serious risk.

Any advice or update after speaking with the minister for tourism would be welcome, we thank you for your continued support.

Best wishes

Colin Watt, MD, Carrbridge Hotel

From: "Ewing F (Fergus), MSP" <Fergus.Ewing.msp@parliament.scot>

Date: Thursday, 14 June 2018 20:47

To: enquiries <enquiries@carrbridgehotel.com>

Subject: Re: Carrbridge Hotel

Colin

Leave it with me - I am meeting Fiona Hyslop Tourism minister tomorrow in Edinburgh at a meeting so can mention it to her then. I have also sought advice from others.

It is a shocking indictment of the approach the UKG take - very anti Scotland

F

Sent from my iPad

On 14 Jun 2018, at 19:10, enquiries <enquiries@carrbridgehotel.com> wrote:

Yes Fergus you can make our staffing issue public. We are not alone, it effects the whole service sector.

The Westminster government are sleepwalking the country into a disaster in terms of staffing shortage. I keep thinking they have a plan B but to be honest I don't even think there is a plan A.

As I say once the tax take drops due to low productivity and lack of staffing then Westminster may realize the issue. The fiscal quarter VAT returns should tell the tail after Brexit if nothing is done.

Also did you have a chance to review my meeting with CNPA. We just seem to be getting hit from all angles just now, any help or advice you can offer will be greatly received

Best wishes

Colin

From: "Ewing F (Fergus), MSP" <Fergus.Ewing.msp@parliament.scot>
Date: Thursday, 14 June 2018 18:33
To: enquiries <enquiries@carrbridgehotel.com>
Cc: "Kate.Higgins@gov.scot" <Kate.Higgins@gov.scot>
Subject: Re: Carrbridge Hotel

Dear Colin

Thanks for sending me this. I wonder if you are willing to make this public or allow us to do that. It is a quite shocking position we are in and we have raised this in Holyrood just this week on more than one occasion.

Fergus.

Sent from my iPad

On 14 Jun 2018, at 16:46, enquiries <enquiries@carrbridgehotel.com> wrote:

Nicola, please note the start of the service sector staffing crisis due to EU BREXIT. Our agents are reporting no EU students for the first time in 18 years. The Company is Twin International and Twin UK, they are based in London and we have used them for the past 18 years.

Bring on Independence and EU membership! We do not want to leave the EU so Westminster can plunder Scotlands wealth.

Westminster may start to listen once the Tax take starts to drop off dramatically as a direct result of national staffing issues in the service sector, but it may be too late for some businesses.

Best wishes

Colin Watt

From: enquiries <enquiries@carrbridgehotel.com>
Date: Thursday, 14 June 2018 16:12

To: "Fergus.Ewing.msp@scottish.parliament.uk"
<Fergus.Ewing.msp@scottish.parliament.uk>,
"drew.hendry.mp@parliament.uk" <drew.hendry.mp@parliament.uk>
Cc: "Sturgeon N (Nicola), MSP" <Nicola.Sturgeon.msp@parliament.scot>
Subject: Carrbridge Hotel

Hi Fergus and Drew, I know you have a lot of important matters on going just now – The sooner Scotland has Independence the better!

BREXIT is a disaster zone, our agent are reporting for the first time in 18 years they have no EU students looking to work in the UK.

Westminster may start to listen once the Tax take starts to drop off dramatically as a direct result of national staffing issues.

Anyhow, please see the attached report on our meeting with the CNPA, I have highlighted the main point in red for easy reading.

Matters did not go well, any advice or help you can offer will be greatly received

Best wishes

Colin Watt
Carrbridge Hotel
<mime-attachment>
<Fergus and Drew.docx>

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