

PE1474/D

Our Ref: CPP123440

Andrew Howlett
Assistant Clerk to the Public Petitions Committee
T3.40
Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

05 July 2013

By email to: petitions@scottish.parliament.uk

Dear Mr Howlett

CONSIDERATION OF PETITION PE1474

Thank you for letter of 17 May 2013, which asked SNH to respond to the above Petition.

Much of SNH's role in these developments has been as advisers to other regulators, such as Aberdeenshire Council. While some of our involvement has been directly with Trump Golf Links Scotland, most of our involvement has been via, or in conjunction with others.

If required, we can provide further information and/or detail on any of the following summary by providing copies of our consultation responses, copies of our comments on various reports, or copies of our responses to requests for advice.

Our first involvement in the proposal for a golf resort at Menie was in 2005. As is customary with planning proposals, we attended pre-application meetings with the applicant and Council. We provided advice on the scope of the environmental impact assessment and said that our major concern was the potential effect on the Foveran Links SSSI.

When subsequently consulted on the planning application for the golf resort, we objected due to the adverse impacts it would have on the SSSI. We followed up our objection by providing evidence at a public local inquiry. Having received the Inquiry

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Reporter's recommendations, the final decision was made by Scottish Government Ministers and, as with most planning consents, it had a number of conditions attached. Some of these conditions required SNH to give advice on specified matters to Aberdeenshire Council as the development progressed.

Examples of the conditions we provided advice on included matters such as details of a restoration bond, identification of the coastal dune ridge, goose management scheme, and the appointment of ecological clerks of works. We also commented on drafts of various plans that were required by the planning conditions. For example, the environmental management plan, habitat management plan and habitat mitigation compensation plan, to name a few. We attended a design review meeting.

While the golf course was being constructed, our advice was also available to the ecological clerks of works and we attended two site visits with them. One of these site visits was in response to a complaint received by Aberdeenshire Council that there had been fencing and marram sprigging on the coastal dune ridge – an area identified where there was to be no development.

The ecological clerks of works copied us into reports which they sent regularly to Aberdeenshire Council on behalf of Trump Golf Links Scotland. On one occasion we queried a point in the report with Aberdeenshire Council and, where appropriate, we would also raise matters in Menie Environmental Management Group (MEMAG) meetings. We have attended regular meetings of MEMAG since its inception.

We have been consulted by Aberdeenshire Council on subsequent planning applications at the Menie site. These include an application for marram grass planting, a full application for the championship golf course, five additional areas to be included in the golf and leisure resort and construction of a golf maintenance facility. We have also been consulted on related applications by Marine Scotland and SEPA. These include a retrospective application for bank stabilisation works at the Blairton burn and a Controlled Activity Regulations licence application for discharges from the temporary clubhouse at Menie.

In March 2012 we were contacted by the police about a report they had received that a bat roost may have been disturbed by works at MacLeod House. The police wished to establish whether or not an offence had been committed. We provided advice to the police and the conclusion, following a survey commissioned by Trump Golf Links Scotland, was that there was no evidence to support the claim.

We hope you find these comments helpful.

Yours sincerely

Ewen Cameron
Operations Manager – Tayside & Grampian