

# **Response to 30<sup>th</sup> June letter regarding Scottish Ministers' purchase and ownership of Glen Prosen estate**

## **Letter from Edward Mountain MSP to Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands, 9 July 2025**

Dear Mairi,

Thank you for your letter (attached) that I received in my capacity as Convenor of the NZET Committee in response to my remarks during the 22nd meeting of the Committee.

My comments were made as a committee member, and I respond in that capacity.

The purchase of the 16,500ac Glen Prosen Estate, by Forestry Land Scotland (FLS), for £17.6m has been veiled in the cloak of 'commercial confidentiality' and every attempt to 'winkle out' the details of the purchase have been rebuffed. All we have been told is that the justification for the purchase was because the land was of strategic importance.

I accept the fact that the previous owners ran the Glen Prosen as a sporting estate and that when FLS purchased it that would not continue to be used for sport. I also accept that the five employees were made redundant by the seller before the sale.

My comment however remains correct.

When the Scottish Government's agents, FLS, bid for the business they made it clear that the sporting business would not continue. Thus, the seller, in making FLS the preferred bidder, made the employees redundant to facilitate the sale. The fact that the seller did the deed is frankly irrelevant. The Scottish Government effectively made the employees redundant when they moved to purchase the Estate. By saying otherwise is 'dancing on the head of a pin'.

Of course it remains open to you to publish all sale documents, draft missives and final missives and letters to prove this is incorrect, until you do, I am content to hold my position.

I would also be pleased to see the justification that was submitted to the Scottish Government for the purchase of this estate so that I might understand what 'strategic importance' means. I would also be grateful to receive the management plan, which must now surely be complete.

I have copied this letter to NZET Committee, so it is available to the Committee and on the Committee website.

Kind regards,

Edward Mountain MSP | Highlands and Islands Region