

**RESPONSE TO ARGYLL & BUTE COUNCIL'S STATEMENT OF CASE  
APPLICATION 08/01119/OUT – ARDORAN WOODLAND  
ERECTION OF DWELLINGHOUSE**

Firstly, the Council's statement does not address the failure to process the application within a reasonable timescale. Seventeen months to process a straightforward small-scale application is not acceptable and the applicants require an explanation.

Secondly, forestry is a very important part of the economy in Argyll & Bute in the rural areas which dominate the Council area. The sector contributes £1 billion to the Scottish economy and employs 10,000 people. The locational and operational need is overwhelming. I have listed the work that has to be undertaken when felling and restocking commences:- Road improvements, harvesting and timber dispatch, traffic management, fencing, deer control, ground preparation, etc.

The forest is fenced and admittance by vehicles to the forest is through a locked gate. It would be extremely difficult to operate if the applicant had to travel every day from outwith the woodland. Unnecessary vehicular movements should be discouraged.

Does the Council wish to encourage development? Is it a priority? The Council relies on the Forestry Commission for a response which is very brief and does not deal with the application at all. The Commission are not familiar with the management of this particular forest. The email is dated 23 November 2009 and is included after the appeal was lodged and was not part of the original report. The application was validated on 19 May 2008.

The Planning Officer appears to have telephoned the Commission and as a result a brief email was sent. No contact was made with the Company Tilhill which is currently looking after the woodland.

Even the Forestry Commission state that it would be beneficial to have a resident on site. It appears that forestry owners are being penalised by having to undergo a far stricter test of operational need than these in other industries e.g. farmers, crofters, self catering operators, etc.

Thirdly, I request a Hearing because this is an important application. I believe the Review Panel should hear what the Deputy District Manager for Tilhill, Mr John Little, has to say about the locational and operational need and the way a forest is managed.

There are no objections from third parties and I earnestly believe that the application should be granted and treated as a "special case".