

**Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform  
and Islands**

Rùnaire a' Chaibineit airson Chùisean Dùthchail, Ath-  
leasachadh Fearainn agus Eileanan  
**Mairi Gougeon MSP/BPA**



**Scottish Government**  
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Dan Paris

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Our Reference: 202500473219

Your Reference: Scottish Environment LINK letter to the Cabinet Secretary regarding the 29th May  
National Park announcement

15 July 2025

Dear Dan,

Thank you for your correspondence of 25 June 2025 regarding the Scottish Government's decision not to proceed with the designation of a new National Park in Galloway and Ayrshire and your suggested amendments to Part 3 of the Natural Environment (Scotland) Bill.

NatureScot's assessment of the National Park proposal and its analysis of the consultation findings resulted in its recommendation as Reporter not to proceed with designation and instead to strengthen a range of existing arrangements in the area.

To reach our decision, the Scottish Government carefully considered the consultation findings, the Reporter's conclusions and recommendations and the potential social, environmental and economic impacts of a new National Park in Galloway and Ayrshire. NatureScot's advice in its role as Natural Heritage advisor was also taken into consideration.

While we have decided not to proceed with a National Park in Galloway and Ayrshire, the Scottish Government remains committed to National Parks in Scotland and we remain open to proposals for new National Parks in the future. We are also giving consideration to the recommendations in NatureScot's report for potential alternatives to a National Park.

Thank you for your suggestions regarding possible amendments to the Natural Environment (Scotland) Bill. We have taken note of the evidence given by stakeholders in relation to the National Parks provisions and we will give careful consideration to any recommendations that the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee may make in its Stage 1 report before considering whether any amendments to the Bill are required.

In order to discuss your suggestions in more detail, can I suggest that in the first instance you contact my officials who are leading on the Natural Environment (Scotland) Bill, who would be happy to meet with you. Please email them at [nebill@gov.scot](mailto:nebill@gov.scot) and they will be happy to arrange a meeting.

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I would like to thank you again for your correspondence.

Yours sincerely,



**MAIRI GOUGEON**

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