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Finlay Carson MSP  
Convener Rural Affairs and Islands Committee  
c/o Clerk to the committee  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP  
By email to: [rural.committee@parliament.scot](mailto:rural.committee@parliament.scot)

7 November 2024

Dear Finlay,

## **Launch of statutory public consultation on proposal for a new National Park in Galloway**

Following the Government's proposal to establish a new National Park in Galloway, NatureScot – in its role as reporter – has been engaging with communities, businesses, public bodies and other interested parties in the Galloway and South and East Ayrshire area in order to seek initial views and develop more detailed proposals for consultation.

Today [7<sup>th</sup> November], NatureScot has launched a formal statutory public consultation on the proposal. As well as gauging whether or not there is support for the proposal, the consultation will seek views on options for the possible area, functions, powers and governance of a new National Park in the area.

The consultation process will include a full consultation paper and survey available via the [NatureScot website](#), a survey available both online and distributed to households and businesses in, and near, the area proposed in the nomination, a series of independently facilitated public meetings and drop-in surgeries across the area, as well as events for businesses including agriculture, forestry and other land-management sectors and activities; and events for under-represented groups and young people. Information about the consultation surveys and events will be published today on [NatureScot's website](#) and the dedicated [online engagement hub](#).

It is extremely important that we hear from people living and working in the area and that the people of Galloway and South and East Ayrshire have the opportunity to discuss the issues, consider the content of the proposal including the desirability of a National Park in their area and suggest any alternatives.

I recognise the significant public interest in this proposal and am aware that there is both support and opposition. Everyone's views will be listened to and taken into account and I

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would encourage everyone with an interest to engage with the consultation process in a constructive and respectful way.

The 14 week consultation period will start today and it will conclude on Friday 14 February. As I announced last week, the consultation period has been extended to take account of the festive period and to enable as many people as possible to respond.

We will carefully consider the outcome of this public consultation and NatureScot's report before taking any further decisions on the proposal for a new National Park in Galloway.

I have written to the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee and the Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee to inform them of the launch of the consultation.

Yours sincerely,

«Signature»

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