

-----Original Message-----

From: Doug Wentworth [mailto:doug.wentworth@taylormadetimber.co.uk]

Sent: 21 January 2009 13:10

Subject: Forestry Commission Scotland Consultation

Dear Ms Kirk

I refer to to above consultation and wish to protest in the strongest possible terms.

1) There is insufficient information for our industry to make a proper assessment.

2) My view is that government is tinkering with an industry that is working pretty well for all of the stakeholders involved. Martians looking down from above must think what are these people doing. This proposed sale is similar to the situation in Ireland and more recently Wales, where the industry was tricked into investing on the back of phoney information about log supply. Subsequently the forecasts were conveniently reduced with a shrug of the shoulders but no apology.

If we made obscene returns on capital employed I could understand your concerns but I don't believe such an accusation is valid and could not be proven.

I have thanked FE on numerous occasions, both privately and in public, for continuing to bring timber to market when log prices were poor. In the late 1990's and currently, FE have been very helpful both on price and credit management to give the more marginal businesses the chance to survive. The present mix of public and private sector forest ownership provides an effective instrument for a government to intervene at times of national interest. I cannot see any scenario of private ownership that would allow such a long term approach to be applied.

We are professional businessman trying to do our best and in recent years have presided over the modernisation of our industry and deserve to have our opinions listened to.

If this sale proposal was to go ahead, we will look back in future years and realise that this was the moment in history when the Scottish Timber Industry took its biggest backwards step.

I have made representation to our trade associations that this is the most significant threat to the future of our industry. Hardly a month goes by without some ill conceived proposal emanating from the public sector. You have to realise that your actions have/are undermining the investment intentions of businesses throughout our sector.

My own business has invested significant amounts in recent years and we are now the second largest mill in England. More recently we purchased Kerr Timber Products Limited in Annan but our investment plans at Kerrs are now on hold. This is partly due to the current economic climate but also due to the uncertainty surrounding this recent consultation. You run the risk of encouraging managers and owners to run our businesses for cash and looking short term only.

Government's role is to create the environment in which businesses will invest for the future prosperity of the people. Recent government actions in Ireland and Wales have engendered a feeling of mistrust and lack of confidence and you run the same risk of alienating the wider timber industry with this ill-thought and poorly presented proposal.

Yours sincerely

Doug Wentworth

Managing Director

Taylormade Timber Products Limited

and Kerr Timber Products Limited

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