

## LAND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Improvements to agricultural buildings at Colwall Lands

DATE: 09/02/2022

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### Introduction

To supplement Paper B this paper provides a short explanatory note of the power which the trustees might use to erect buildings on its land, such as that proposed in the paper.

### Background

Under s4(d) of the Malvern Hills Acts (1930) the Trust has a power to erect sheds on its land as stated below.

***They may on the Malvern Hills erect sheds for tools and materials and may maintain and repair such sheds.***

As detailed in the paper, the proposed sheds would serve both as shelter for livestock (sheep) and for the storage of materials, tools and equipment.

In the past, the position has been taken that the operation of conservation grazing is a key management tool used as part of the overall care and maintenance of the Hills, and that livestock (sheep) are part of the toolkit used for that purpose.

The following facts support this approach:

- the use of grazing as a management tool for conservation landscapes is widely recognised and documented across both academic literature and practical guidance, both in the UK and internationally. Managed grazing helps to create and support biodiversity, archaeology and landscape character.
- the sheep are essential to manage and control vegetation growth on the Hills in areas that are inaccessible for machinery, (the only alternative being clearance using hand tools with an unrealistically high labour cost).
- the use of sheep is the most sustainable way to manage vegetation.
- grazing undertaken by the Trust comes at a net cost to the organisation rather than being carried out for profit, as it would with a commercial enterprise. Managing grazing on the Hills cannot be carried out on a commercial basis as evidenced by the decline in the use of common grazing rights over the years. Appropriate built infrastructure is essential to support the use of conservation grazing on the Hills.

It is inevitable that a charity governed by legislation which has not been updated to meet 21<sup>st</sup> century needs has to take a wider interpretation of that legislation, and this issue highlights the need to update the Trust's Acts. When considering the proposals within Paper B, trustees need to satisfy themselves that the approach set out above justifies the use of this power.

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