

Press Release from *Save Gillies Hill*

*Save Gillies Hill* campaigners returned from the Scottish Parliament last Tuesday delighted by the reception given to their petition to preserve the historic Hillside.

A spokesperson said: “We couldn’t have asked for a more positive response. Every member of the Petitions Committee supported our stance, and although Holyrood has no power to intervene directly in this matter, the moral weight of the Scottish Parliament coming down so emphatically on our side of the argument is immense.”

After the petition, ‘to preserve historic sites such as the Gillies Hill’ was introduced by former minister and Petitions Convenor Frank McAveety, Stirling MSP Bruce Crawford, a present minister, spoke powerfully in its support. Mr. Crawford outlined the history of the planning application, emphasising Stirling Council’s minimalist ‘consultation’ with the Cambusbarron community when permission to extend quarrying had been granted in 2002: even Cambusbarron Community Council had not been consulted. He stressed the outstanding natural beauty of the area, and the danger to wild life and trees. Gillies Hill, of course, was also the historic site from which the ‘sma’ folk’ of Bruce’s army had descended onto the Field of Bannockburn.

All of this must be taken into account, as should the material changes in the Cambusbarron area since the original consent had been granted: the village had doubled in size, and 25-ton lorries passing past possibly four local schools – one every 12 minutes - was a “disaster waiting to happen”. These changes, Mr. Crawford, claimed would allow the revocation of planning permission under recent Town and Country legislation, and he called on the Petitions Committee to work with the local community to help them preserve the Gillies Hill.

Mr. Crawford was supported by fellow MSPs Rhodda Grant and John Farquar Munro whose support - “I welcome this petition coming to this Committee” - was founded on its calling for the preservation of *all* endangered historic sites; “Many MSPs,” said Mr. Munro, “Would have such sites in their constituencies.”

The Petitions Committee resolved unanimously to continue consideration of the Gillies Hill petition by ascertaining the current views of Stirling Council, COSLA, Historic Scotland and Archaeology Scotland.

The attached photograph shows *SGH* supporters outside the Parliament.

Meanwhile *SGH*’s calendar of beautiful photographs of the Hill is now available, price £7, and the group’s next meeting is tomorrow (Thursday)

Peter Paterson

01786 463098

[ptpaterson@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ptpaterson@hotmail.co.uk)