

DRUMPHIN FARM

FOWLIS WESTER

CRIEFF

PERTHSHIRE

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The Pow of Inchaffray Drainage Commission
Per Ian & Hazel Roy
7 Turretbank Place
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24th April 2025

Dear Sirs

POW OF INCHAFFRAY DRAINAGE COMMISSION

An inspection of the Pow was carried out on Thursday 24th April 2025. The inspection was carried out by the writer. The inspection was limited to key viewing points below Dollerie Bridge from which point the inspection was carried out mainly on foot up to the Newmiln ditch.

General Comments

On the day of inspection, the Pow was running at a low level. The water was fairly clear so the bed of the Pow and the revetting could be observed. The general condition of the Pow was generally adequate although the section from Dollerie Bridge to Woodend is requiring early attention following many years of little maintenance work since 2014 when work started on the new Pow Act. Other sections have smaller areas with significant problems as described in this report.

River Earn Confluence

Not inspected.

Powmill Farm

There is a significant bank slippage below Powmill Farm with the Pow channel blocked and a section of the right bank and field fence collapsed.

Millhills Bridge

The condition of the Pow appeared satisfactory at this point.

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Southwood Bridge

The condition of the Pow appeared satisfactory at this point.

Dollerie Drive Bridge

The general condition of the Pow at this point is good.

Dollerie Road Bridge to Muckle Burn

This section was generally in good order although some small areas require maintenance.

Beavers have been active damaging trees on the left bank immediately above the bridge. This has not however affected the Pow channel.

Some revetting on the left bank approx. 50m upstream from the triangle wood has moved and needs to be repaired although this does not seem urgent.

There is a major deposition of gravel immediately downstream of the Muckle Burn confluence which needs to be removed.

A section of the concrete revetting in the Pow Burn just above the confluence with the Pow has been dislodged and should be repositioned when the excavator is next working in this area.

Muckle Burn to Auchlone Bridge

The condition of the Pow on this section has deteriorated to the point where maintenance work is required to prevent more costly repairs being required in the future.

A section of the left bank just upstream of the Muckle Burn confluence has collapsed and needs to be made good before it becomes a significant blockage to the Pow.

The profile of the left bank (opposite side to excavator track) has deteriorated and is starting to disturb the revetting and needs to be reshaped off the south bank.

A tree on the left bank below Auchlone bridge is leaning over the Pow and another has fallen across the Pow probably due to beaver activity. Both require to be removed.

The inlet to the culvert on the ditch from the wood by Auchlone Lodge under the Pow track on the right bank has been partly blocked and needs to be cleared before water undermines the culvert and collapses the track at this point.

Immediately below Auchlone bridge the fibre optic cable previously suspended off poles across the Pow by Gialloch has now been fixed to the west side of the bridge.

The Red Burn

Viewed from the excavator track the Red Burn appears to be in acceptable condition.

Auchlone Bridge to Woodend

This section of the Pow has deteriorated to the point where bank maintenance is required to prevent further damage to the revetting and more costly work if delayed.

There is a significant slippage below the Littlefold Wood on the left bank which needs to be made good.

The Ardbennie ditch culvert under the Pow track has largely collapsed probably due the inlet being blocked by fallen branches resulting in a large bank collapse.

The Pow between the Littlefold Wood and the Woodend footbridge is in good order except for a small slippage on the right bank which could be cleared by the excavator form the left bank.

No works have been carried out by the council to replace the former foot bridge at Woodend although it is understood that a Madderty Paths Group is seeking to raise funding for a new bridge. The design of a new bridge will need to be approved by the commissioners and consent to carry out work obtained from the riparian owners of the banks. There have been several recent site meeting of the group but no action to date.

Ardbennie Burn

The Ardbennie Burn was last cleaned in the Autumn of 2013 and the lower sections remain in fair condition. As mentioned above the large diameter culvert under the Pow road has collapsed and needs immediate repair.

Drumphin Burn

The Drumphin Burn is in good condition.

Woodend Bridge to Abbey Bridge

The general condition of this section of the Pow is good from the Sweepstank confluence downstream as this section was cleaned in 2020. The Pow from the Sweepstank confluence upstream to Abbey Bridge was cleaned in 2024 and is in good order.

A contractor is working on behalf of Scottish Water to renew the water main which crosses this section of the Pow and the Sweepstank. No statutory notice has been received from Scottish Water and the contractor is now working immediately adjacent to the two crossing points. Repeated requests have been made for details of how the crossings will be carried out so that they do not obstruct maintenance of the Pow. At the time of writing we have been informed that the contractor is carrying out surveys and will be in touch with more information shortly.

Sweepstank

The Sweepstank ditch is overgrown and silted up so that it is blocking drainage of the ditch to the east of the Madderty road.

Abbey Bridge to Newrow

This section of the Pow was cleaned off the left bank in 2024. During early 2025 the right bank from Abbey Bridge to the Carsehead Mile was cleaned by the heritor of Nethermaines of Gorthy prior to erecting new fencing. The work was carried out by Ian Ralston.

Carsehead Mile

The Carsehead mile was cleaned in early 2025 by the heritor of Nethermaines of Gorthy prior to erecting new fencing. Trees on the west bank were limbed and bushes cleared away. The work was carried out by Ian Ralston.

The Gorthy Mile Burn

The channel appears in good order when viewed from the Pow.

Newrow Burn

When viewed from the left bank of the Pow the Newrow Burn appears in adequate condition.

Newrow to Balgowan Bridge

This section of the Pow is in fair condition having been cleaned in 2021.

Further recent beaver damage to the large oak trees on the south bank was noted. These trees will be ringbarked in the foreseeable future and require to be removed before they collapse into the Pow.

Balgowan Bridge to confluence with Jessie Burn

This section of the Pow including the confluences with the Cowgask and Jessie burns is in reasonable order having been cleaned in 2019.

There are several large hardwoods on the Jessie confluence which have been ring barked by beavers which will require to be removed in due course.

Cowgask Burn

The Cowgask Burn has recently been cleaned and is in good order.

The Jessie Burn

The Jessie Burn viewed from the Pow appears to continue as a fast flowing stream requiring no active maintenance.

Bachilton Pow

The Bachilton Pow was cleaned in 2021 but already has significant weed growth.

A number of young trees have been planted on the excavator track adjacent to the Balgowan houses and will continue to be an obstruction to the excavator until repositioned. Several of the trees have been damaged by beavers.

Numerous trees including large poplars on the left bank adjacent to the Balgowan houses have been damaged or felled by beavers. One large poplar has been felled by beavers so that it is now caught by another large poplar which when it falls will result in both trees falling across the Pow.

The condition of the trees would appear to pose a significant hazard to the houses and walkers in the area but this would not appear to be a liability for the Commission to address.

There is a beaver dam across the Bachilton Pow below the Balgowan Houses which has raised the water level upstream by approx. 1ft. The Bachilton Pow is therefore more than usually overgrown and with a static flow. The condition of the Pow and drainage of the adjacent land will not be improved until the beaver dam is removed which is not permissible until the end of the beaver breeding season. .

The gravel deposit on the bed of the Bachilton Pow below Bachilton Bridge has reoccurred and requires removal again.

Balgowan Ditch

The Balgowan ditch running down the east side of the housing was recently cleaned and is in good order. However the water is held up by the beaver dam on the Bachilton Pow and the ditch will not run until the beaver dam is cleared. The ditch was cleaned at the request of adjacent Balgowan occupiers to improve the drainage of their properties.

Newmiln Ditch

The Newmiln ditch has been blocked by a metal dam as a component of the farm environmental scheme. The dam has restricted flow and encouraged weed growth and unless the dam is removed and improvement of the drainage of the adjacent field required there is no maintenance required.

Photographs

Photos of the inspection are circulated with this report.

2025 Maintenance programme

The maintenance works recommended for consideration by the commissioners are noted below:

1. Repair bank slippage at Powmill Farm.
2. Reshape left (south) bank of Pow from Muckle Burn to Auchlone Wood including removing gravel at Muckle burn confluence and making good slippage above confluence.
3. Reshape the left bank of the Pow from Auchlone Bridge up to the Ardennie burn including making good sections of bank collapse and the Ardbennie ditch culvert.
4. Clean the Sweepstank including flailing the overgrown hedge on the North bank to gain access.
5. Remove beaver dam and beavers at Balgowan

Yours faithfully

Jonathan Guest