

## TOWN & COUNTRY

### Elk land for wilderness project

**H**ERCULES and Hulda (see facing page), a pair of hand-reared elk—or moose—have arrived from Sweden as part of a long-term project to create the first wilderness reserve in northern Europe. The pair are settling in with wild boar and roe deer in a 440-acre trial reserve at the 23,000-acre Alladale Estate and Wildlife Reserve, Sutherland, and will be observed by a research

team from Oxford University. Paul Lister, the philanthropist estate owner, hopes eventually to import wolves, bears and lynx, species that have not been seen in Britain for centuries. The news has prompted local debate; one hurdle is open-space policy and the rights of the Ramblers' Association. Hugh Fullerton-Smith, estate manager explains: 'Our purpose is to turn the clock back, bring back

lost species and replant native pine forests. There is local trepidation about wolves, but we don't support reintroduction *per se*—that's folly. We want a controlled, enclosed environment, to boost the local economy and educate children. Local networking is a big part of my job, persuading neighbours to contribute land so that we can build up to 50,000 acres.'



View of the week

It's a been a long time: Hulda and Hercules, the first elk in Scotland for about 3,000 years, settle in placidly. They will be mated next year as part of a new wilderness project (see facing page)