

**From:** Dave Craig [mailto:davecraig1@btinternet.com]  
**Sent:** 26 June 2008 23:30  
**To:** Fran Potheary  
**Cc:** mike Dales  
**Subject:** River Spey ~ Core Path Status

Dear Ms Potheary

### **River Spey ~ Core Path Status**

I have had an ongoing close personal and professional connection with the River Spey for more than forty years. Through that time I have developed a huge respect and passion for this river. I first launched a lathe and canvas kayak on the Spey in 1964 and have completed, with clients in open canoes, over sixty full descents of the river from Kincaig to the sea. I have been the Scottish Canoe Association River Adviser for 27 years, during which time I have listened to, interacted and worked with paddlers, land-managers, councillors and local authority officers. With the help of the Spey Fishing Trust and now the CNPA I have helped set up the river liaison forum now known as the Spey Users Group, which brings together those who follow their interests on and along this wonderful river.

There can be no doubt that, of all major Scottish 'river pathways', The River Spey is the most obvious and appropriate to be given 'Core Path' status under the terms of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003.

Having been used as a natural waterway by the logging companies in previous centuries and its legal navigable rights confirmed in modern times by the House of Lords via the Wills vs. Freshwater case in the early 1970's, the river can be negotiated by small boat, canoe or kayak with relative ease and immense pleasure for over 70 miles of its total length (~ even by two windsurfers in the early 1980's!). Thus, it is a path in the true sense of the word ~ "course, route, line along which anything moves". Certainly open-boaters refer to the Spey as the 'Classic Descent' river ~ 70 miles travelled on Scotland's most beautiful and ideal of open-canoe touring rivers ~ fantastic scenery and especially in its lower half, fairly big water with exciting Grade II rapids negotiable by any proficient paddler possessing elementary, white water skills. I attach an up to date copy of the Paddlers Spey Guide which provides information on paddlesports protocols and guidance as to use of the Spey, as well as listing main locations traditionally used for access and egress.

One of the major difficulties along the Spey is lack of facilities, including a dearth of public toilets, camping areas and very limited safe parking opportunities. With the increase of public use of the outdoors ~ and on the Spey, not just paddlers but also large numbers of walkers and cyclists on the Speyside Way, 'wild-toileting' is causing an increasing problem. Wild toileting is not appropriate on these well used parallel land and water paths. Additional toilet and indeed camping facilities are required, such as the excellent facility at Cragganmore and that provided (for a reasonable fee) by Mr. & Mrs. Macpherson at Boat of Balliefurth.

Enlarged lay-bys and car-parks are also urgently required to safely accommodate those going into the outdoors, not just for those partaking in physical outdoor activities but also for tourists to picnic or simply view the river. Currently those looking to paddle the Spey, often with trailers to carry boats have, for the most part to park quite precariously. Apart from areas such as that recently constructed by Tulchan Estate approx. 1 mile below Advie Bridge, at Grantown, Knockando Station and public car-parks at Aberlour and Speybay there very few areas of safe, ample parking along the river. The Spey's main traditional access point at the Ballindalloch March Pool was blocked off some years ago when the Estate had a machine drag, right to the roadside, the huge boulders originally used to denote the previously ample lay-bys, once used by tourists and paddlers

alike. With Core Path status for the Spey, funding would be available for the construction and upgrading of such, much needed roadside facilities. Presently there is ongoing a plan, steered by the Scottish Canoe Association to create, pending final agreement of the Estate, a parking and launching area within a field at Ballindalloch to provide safe, ample parking. Although SNH and SportScotland are fully supportive of this project, with present arrangements or rather lack of, it has been difficult to locate full funding for such a project. However, if the Spey were a designated Core Path, then a clarity would be introduced and created a more direct route to attract Central Government funding for such essential projects, than if were not a Core Path. Such facilities interspersed along the length of this Core Path are required now and would help ensure a spread of accessing along its length rather than, as at present, at the small number of better locations available, in places leading to 'pressure points'.

I am acutely aware that some land-owners and managers view Core Path Status as a threat, believing Core Path status will attract huge numbers to Core Path locations. Some believe that outdoor enthusiast will start to 'tick-off' Core Paths as hillwalkers do Munros. These fears are completely without foundation. Indeed any 'flood-gate' bringing enthusiasts tumbling into the outdoors would have (but did not happen) immediately following the implementation of the Land Reform Legislation. I am certain that the Spey being a Core Path will not increase paddlesports' numbers beyond the natural, healthy trend of more folks finding enjoyment and relaxation in the outdoors ~ which can only be a good thing in our age of health problems such as obesity, 'computer junkies' and the like. Core Path status will simply mean that a clarity and priority with regard to appropriate development projects will be bestowed upon main routes. To the average paddler negotiating this wonderful river, apart from enabling the creation of better, safer access points, the Spey being a Core Path will be of little consequence. Somewhat ironically, it is the land-mangers who are fearful of and vehemently agin Core Paths' status for the Spey who are most likely to benefit from Core Path status in the increased availability of funding for development projects along the river, especially those linked to the growth of tourism, upon which communities along the length of the Spey are increasingly dependant for their existence and to which outdoor activities, available to the public at large, contribute hugely.

Your sincerely,

David M Craig.

Scottish Canoe Association River Spey Adviser.

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Highland. PH20 1AR  
Tel: 01540 673826/07870 338110  
[davecraig1@btinternet.com](mailto:davecraig1@btinternet.com)

Paddlers' River Spey Guide available at ~ [www.speyguide.co.uk](http://www.speyguide.co.uk)

For full details of Outdoor Access in Scotland ~ [www.outdooraccess-scotland.com](http://www.outdooraccess-scotland.com)

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## Form for supporting or objecting to the Draft Core Paths Plan

Please note that all responses will be made public and are not valid without a full name and postal address.

Please read the explanatory notes inside the front cover and in Section 4 (see page 12) of the Draft Core Paths Plan before completing this form and return it by **30 June 2008**. Please use this form to set out your objections to or comments in support of the draft Core Paths Plan quoting the path reference number where appropriate. Further copies of this form can be photocopied, obtained from the CNPA offices or printed from our web site where you can also complete it electronically.

[www.cairngorms/access/corepaths](http://www.cairngorms/access/corepaths)

### 1. Your Details (\*indicates a compulsory field.)

Title	MRS	First Name*	LORNA	Last Name*	CRANE
Responding on behalf of:	(if applicable)				
Postal Address*	4, LYNSTOCK PARK NETHYBRIDGE				
Postcode*	PH25 3EL	Telephone			
Email	Lorna.crane@grantowngrammar.hIGHLAND.sch.uk				

2. Do you think that the proposed core paths network is sufficient to give people reasonable access throughout the area?	Please tick one			
	Yes		No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

3. Please state clearly and fully the grounds of your objection or support to the Draft Core Paths Plan, continuing on a separate sheet where necessary.

LBS1 - As a local teacher of PE and Outdoor Education, I regularly use the River Spey for canoe & kayak journeys with local young people - it is a fantastic 'water path' and arguably the best towing river in Britain. I am fully supportive of the River Spey being a core path.

**Form for supporting or objecting to the Draft Core Paths Plan (continued)**

4. If objecting, please indicate what change (s) you are seeking to the Draft Core Paths Plan which could resolve your objection, continuing on a separate sheet where necessary.

LBS116 - I support this being a core path but would like to see a commitment to upgrading it so it can be a multi-use path. If cycling access were made easier it would be a safe and enjoyable commute from Netley Bridge or Groundale to Grantown-on-Spey; for adults and young people.

\* Drove Roads / Trad. Routes

I would like to see the Gaick pass (Dalnacardoch -> Kingussie) added to the through routes Draft Plan. This popular route gives access to the Eastern area of the National Park - important as Highland Perthshire is being added to CNP.

Signature		Date	30/6/08
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**Please return your completed form to:**

Cairngorms National Park Authority  
FREEPOST NAT 21454  
GRANTOWN-ON-SPEY  
PH26 3BR

Forms should be returned no later than **30 June 2008**. After that date you will be contacted by a representative of the Cairngorms National Park Authority with regard to your objections.

OFFICIAL USE ONLY	Reference: 3/62
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From: automailer@cairngorms.co.uk  
Sent: 30 June 2008 08:05  
To: Core Path Planning  
Subject: Core Paths Planning Comments

Name: Mark Hagger

Address: Birkhead of Collonach

Strachan

Banchory

Postcode: AB31 6NL

Email: brachmont@yahoo.co.uk

Phone: 01330 823418

Responding on behalf of: CTC-Grampian

1. Do you think that the proposed core paths network is sufficient to give people reasonable access throughout the area? No
2. Please state clearly and fully the grounds of your objection or support to the Draft Core Paths Plan: CNPA CPP Comments/Objections

Map 2: CC7: EXTEND along Glen Avon to Fords of Avon to connect with CC4. This is a popular route used to link the east to the north/south sides of the Cairngorms.

Map3: ADD: route on north side of river Muick from South Deeside Road to Spittal of Glen Muick. This route is a waymarked route on the local walks leaflet for Ballater, and is popular with cyclists.

Map4: ADD: route through Ballochbuie Forest linking old Invercauld bridge to Crathie. This is a popular route for cyclists and indeed walkers and wheelchair users.

Map5: There is a notable absence of circular routes in this area. Whilst some can be formed using local roads, the route over Clais Fhearnaig would form a useful addition to the network, linking CC5 to UDE56.

Map7: Why is UDE62 separate from UDE25? Also route to Ballochbuie noted at Map4 above.

Map8: ADD: Mounth road to Glen Mark. The Mounth is used more than the Firmounth by cyclists.

Map9: EXTEND UDE31 on existing road to Pass of Ballater Road, cross road and create new path on north side of road under power lines to join waymarked route up Sgor Buidhe [this is an improvement on the earlier CPP proposals]

Map10: EXTEND UDE40 from Cambus o'May through to Boggerfool on old drove road. This is a popular route for cyclists, and links up with various historical features.

Map10: ADD: Mounth road from St.James to Tarland. This is a popular route for cyclists and walkers, linking to other parts of the proposed CP network, albeit suffering water damage and locked gate obstruction at certain points; and links to communities.

Mark Hagger

CTC-RTR AberdeenshireS

Birkhead of Collonach

Strachan

Banchory

AB31 6NL

Tel: 01330 823418

Mob: 077 4917 8854

Email: brachmont@yahoo.co.uk

3. If objecting, please indicate what change(s) you are seeking to the Draft Core Paths Plan which could resolve your objection: see above

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From: automailer@cairngorms.co.uk  
Sent: 29 June 2008 23:09  
To: Core Path Planning  
Subject: Core Paths Planning Comments

Name: Mr Simon Hicks

Address: Dinnet Manse,

Dinnet,

by Aboyne

Postcode: AB34 5NT

Email: hicks.s@btconnect.com

Phone: 01339885314

Responding on behalf of:

1. Do you think that the proposed core paths network is sufficient to give people reasonable access throughout the area? Yes
2. Please state clearly and fully the grounds of your objection or support to the Draft Core Paths Plan: Objection to the proposed path UDE63 at Dinnet Bridge.

a)The proposal will compound access issues to my property.

b)The proposal is adjacent to a popular fishing hut & will create inevitable conflict between fishers & paddlers. The hut / proposed access point is also adjacent to a recognised salmon pool & will lead to disturbance of the fish (further conflict with fishers).

c)Increased traffic, parking & pedestrians on the narrow bridge, used by heavy lorries from Burnroot Sawmill is a hazard.

While the proposed location of this path may be convenient & so currently popular with paddlers for the above reasons it is not a "good" point of access to the river.

3. If objecting, please indicate what change(s) you are seeking to the Draft Core Paths Plan which could resolve your objection: The proposed path UDE63 be removed from the plan.

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From: automailer@cairnngorms.co.uk  
Sent: 29 June 2008 20:47  
To: Core Path Planning  
Subject: Core Paths Planning Comments

Name: Mr Ken Macdonald

Address: Mains of Cromdale

Kirk Road

Cromdale

Grantown on Spey.

Postcode: PH26 3LQ

Email: ken@mainsofcromdale.co.uk

Phone: 01479 870466

Responding on behalf of:

1. Do you think that the proposed core paths network is sufficient to give people reasonable access throughout the area? No
2. Please state clearly and fully the grounds of your objection or support to the Draft Core Paths Plan: We object to the inclusion of path LBS3 "Old Railway Line to Lower Campbrae Woods" on the following grounds:-

a. The track does nothing to meet Core Plan Objectives and is inappropriate for access to "all users"

LBS3 meets very few of the selection criteria, does not appear to address the requirements of the community as stated in all CNPA studies to date and very little to meet the Outdoor Access Strategy for Cromdale.

The plan fails to provide sufficient safe access around the Cromdale area with LBS3 included simply to disguise this failure.

LBS3 provides no added benefit to the community but adds an unnecessary cost burden to the National Park.

In addition, we would like to point out that access to LBS3 at the Cromdale end is from a section of the Speyside Way widely recognised and even advertised as unsuitable for bikes or horses. LBS3 is therefore not suitable for "all users"

b. Two Core Paths on our property has a disproportionate negative impact on our farm business and our privacy.

Part of our smallholding has already been turned over to the Speyside Way. Adding a further "Core Path" onto a smallholding such as ours means that a significant portion of our overall property would become "Core Path" and would be overly intrusive. The Scottish Government should be encouraging small farms and businesses not making them unviable. This is a classic example of a " barrier to new entrants to farming" that the current administration is trying to overcome.

Business Diversification plans would be disadvantaged and possibly no longer viable due to the close proximity of LBS3 to farm buildings.

The existing signposting of the Speyside Way at our property is so poor that users take the wrong route on an almost daily basis. CNPA were informed over a year ago of this problem and have not yet taken any remedial action. We have no faith in CNPA's ability to implement LBS3 in such a way that it would prevent users following the predominant track through the curtilage of our farm buildings and our garden. These area's are both protected under the Land Reform Act.

Finally, we would like to reiterate our objections made in an earlier stage regarding the possible adverse affect to our existing business with the track running through what is currently open grazing and to security in general due to the close proximity of the track to open farm buildings. CNPA we would suggest, dismissed these objections out of hand - contrary to the "Core Paths Plan Guide to Good Practice" - without a site visit or even discussion with ourselves.

In summary we believe the continued inclusion of LBS3 does nothing to meet the community requirements while having significant detrimental impact on ourselves and our business.

3. If objecting, please indicate what change(s) you are seeking to the Draft Core Paths Plan which could resolve your objection: Remove LBS3 from the Core Path Plan.

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