

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

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

Title	Mr & Mrs	First Name*	Donald & Jackie	Last Name*	Murray
	Mr		Graham		Frost

Responding on behalf of:

Mr Keith & Mrs Katherine Frost, 5 Barnton Grove, Edinburgh, EH4 6EQ
Mr Robert & Mrs Margaret Murray, 11 The Scores, St. Andrews, KY16 9AR
Mr Donald Frost, 10 Royal Terrace, Edinburgh, EH3 6PZ
Mr Mark & Mrs Susan Beaumont, 12 Greenbank Row, Edinburgh, EH10 5SY
Mr Peter & Mrs Kate Beaumont, 4 Helensburgh Drive, Glasgow, G13 1RS

Postal Address*

Knock Cottage
Boat of Garten
Inverness-shire

Postcode*	PH24 3BY	Telephone*	01479 831309
Email	Donald@Murrays.org.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

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.

This objection relates to the network shown on Map 20, Boat of Garten, and the comments thereon on page 36; and also to Map 28, proposed core path GR6.

The proposed network leaves the communities to the south of Spey, from Mulingarroch through Street of Kincardine to Auchgourish (Kincardine Church) essentially cut off from the core paths network - apart from LBS 121, which is itself a mere connecting

track. The B970, although a designated cycle route, is narrow, winding and (given the speed of traffic) in places dangerous for walking. The estate road/track along the Spey from LBS 121 to Auchgourish (ie opposite Kinchurdy, not the Gardens), however, is both well maintained and well used by local inhabitants; and has been well used by local inhabitants for many years.

This objection therefore considers that the proposals on Maps 20 and 28 fall short of the objectives of the Core Paths Plan because ...

1. See para. 1.5, page 06: *Core paths will provide opportunities for everyone, including walkers, cyclists, horse riders and canoeists. The core paths network will enable people of all ages and abilities to move around their area whether it is for getting to the shops, walking the dog or enjoying the outdoors. Most core paths will be located on the lower ground and there will be especially good provision close to communities. Rivers too can be designated as core paths. This paragraph specifies the main objectives of the entire project. It suggests a plan that is comprehensive, referring to “everyone”, “people of all ages and abilities”, with “especially good provision close to communities”. Yet the residents of our particular small community appear not to need to “enjoy the outdoors”.*
2. It is not an adequate fulfilling of the objectives of the Plan to limit the Core Paths Network, as Map 20 does, to a) long distance connections between main settlements and b) loops leading to and from Boat of Garten itself. The settlements south of Spey, though small, may be expected to grow by 33% within the 5 year span of the Deposit Local Plan, and provision needs to be made for their inhabitants. The prime purpose of giving the public reasonable access throughout their area simply has not been met on this side of the Spey. See the Outdoor Access Strategy 2007-2012• Cairngorms National Park - Action Area F, page 83:
6.36: There is an inconsistency across communities in the provision of path networks. Some communities have well developed and promoted networks within and between them while others, eg Cromdale and Dulnain Bridge/Skye of Curr, have none. The opportunity to remedy this inconsistency has not been taken.
3. Circular or long distance routes clearly create what may be described as a ‘network’; yet to use the word ‘network’ to insist that all Core Paths must inter-connect is an unnecessary limitation on the essential objectives of the scheme - which is to offer outdoor access to people where they are. The Plan as it exists accepts that a Core Path may not connect with the others - see LBS 121; and also that it may run along a road for a short section - see LBS 64.
4. Draft Core Path, LBS 65, from the Spey Bridge along the Spey to Auchgourish, as shown on Map 17 of the Draft Core Paths Plan, has the virtue of connecting the south of Spey settlements to Boat of Garten itself (and hence to the ‘network’). It is recognised that from LBS 121 to the Bridge the track is less well maintained - in places non-existent - and that it may have been concluded, as under 3.3, that *it cannot be made ready within two years of the Plan being adopted.*

The worst section of path, however, could be bypassed by running the path from

LBS 121 along the road within Street of Kincardine itself (where traffic may be expected to observe the existing 40mph speed limit), thus crossing the Mullingaroch Burn on the road, and rejoining the current riverbank path to the Spey Bridge via the existing stile at OS 948 182.

5. From LBS 121 to Auchgourish (opposite Kinchurdy), OS 938 159, the track is very well maintained and no objection under 3.3 could credibly be entertained.
6. This hard-core track is, of course, well maintained because of its use to support fishermen, and by the Kincardine Lodge estate for its own purposes. Nevertheless these estate interests should not override all other considerations.
 - a. The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 offers a presumption of right of access to all inland water, whether or not there are established fishing rights. The key is that this right of access is to be used responsibly.
 - b. It is submitted that designation of this track as a Core Path would enhance and not diminish the responsible exercise of access to the Spey at this section of its course - where a good and broad private road already exists, suitably set back from the river bank itself. Designation would mean appropriate signage to assist walkers to understand the needs of any fishermen. We argue that, despite any fears to the contrary, this route would fit well with the aspiration in 1.5: *Core paths will also have a very important role to play in ensuring that people can easily experience the special qualities of the Cairngorms National Park in a way that reduces the potential for conflict with those who manage the land.*
 - c. Kincardine Lodge is a newly built property, and access along this bank has traditionally been exercised by local residents.
 - d. The views from this open bend of the Spey, particularly in the directions of Craiggowrie and Cairngorm, are particularly fine and fit very well with the objective of *paths that are easy and attractive to use* [1.6], *high quality opportunities for outdoor access* [1.7].
 - e. Kincardine Church, set in its graveyard, is a particularly scenic small Church; its door is open to visitors and the Visitors' Book shows that over the year people from all over the world come in and leave their name. It is a *place of local importance* [Objective 3.1 (g)] to which the track offers easy and safe access via a final few yards of road.
 - f. Further, supposing the River Spey core path LBS 65 ends opposite Kinchurdy, it would connect after only a short road-walk to Map 28, GR6 - The Sluggan Pass to Glenmore - thus offering access from Boat of Garten and the Speyside Way direct to the heart of Cairngorm via established traditional routes, ie the river and the hill-pass. There is a golden opportunity for joined-up thinking here that the Draft Plan has overlooked.
 - g. It is submitted that, due to the existing level of development of this track, no negative environmental impact would result from its inclusion in the Core Path Network; and cost etc implications would be very limited.
 - h. Insofar as the Objectives specified for Core Paths serve as selection criteria, we therefore argue that this section of draft track LBS 65 meets all tests and ought to be added back to the Plan:

Objectives The core paths network will:

- a) *Help to conserve the Park's natural and cultural heritage and encourage people to enjoy it in a responsible way: YES*
 - b) *Help those living and working on the land: YES*
 - c) *Help to deliver the priorities for each area identified in the Outdoor Access Strategy: YES (see i below)*
 - d) *Provide for a wide range of activities: YES - from LBS121, LBS65 is also suitable for gentle cycling.*
 - e) *Provide for a wide range of abilities: YES*
 - f) *Include a wide range of popular routes: YES*
 - g) *Include paths within, around and between communities and to public transport connections and places of local importance: YES*
- i. Adding back this Path and connecting it to GR6 would help to fulfill one of the priorities of the *Priorities for Action Area F* specified on page 84 of the Outdoor Access Strategy: *Identifying the need for and developing better path networks around communities and links between communities through the Core Paths Planning process*. Why else did the Sluggan Pass exist unless to link Glenmore with Kincardine (Boat of Garten)?

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.

1. The inclusion of LBS 121 is warmly supported, but ...
2. We object to the omission of draft LBS 65, as on map 17 of the first draft of the Plan.
3. This objection would be resolved by the following actions:
 - a) Restoration of LBS 65 from the south end of the Spey Bridge at Boat of Garten (junction with the Speyside Way) to OS 948 182; then along the B970 within Street of Kincardine to join LBS 121.
 - b) Restoration of LBS 65 from LBS 121 to the B970 at Auchgourish (opposite Kinchurdy), OS 938 159.
 - c) Run LBS 65 along the B970 to connect with GR6, the Sluggan Pass to Glenmore, at OS 934 153.

Signature

Date

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:

Cairngorms Campaign Office,
PO Box
Alford,
Aberdeenshire

Sandra Middleton,
CNPA,
The Square,
Grantown on Spey,
Inverness-shire

Dear Sandra,

Response to Consultation on Proposed Core Path Plan

The Cairngorms Campaign as a voluntary organisation has at its heart both i) the enjoyment and increasing understanding of the special natural heritage qualities, and ii) supporting and recognising the informal recreational value of the wider Cairngorm Area. This is a unique position and it embraces both local and national interests.

We applaud the efforts that have produced such a comprehensive and positive document. We have looked through the Final Draft Core Paths Plan and would suggest the following comments which include both statements of support and objection which we hope will be useful in adopting this plan. We recognise the statutory status of objecting and supporting comments and as such have sought to be clear where we support or object to the plan as currently presented. We also matched some of the strategies and proposals with the Local Plan to satisfy ourselves of consistency in approach between the two plans.

We are very happy to meet to discuss any details should you wish to clarify our position.

Where we make statements of support we do expect to be consulted if the action or strategy in the adopted plan is altered from this draft as we may wish to object to the subsequent proposed alterations. As objections would need to be resolved by public enquiry process it seems valid that an alteration affecting a statement of support should also similarly be agreed with the supporters.

Our comments are general in nature rather than being specific to community areas and individual routes.

We really do congratulate the CNPA on all the good hard work that has gone into this initiative. We find it is a very comprehensive coverage and is a good systematic effort at taking a park wide view of the scope and extent of key paths that support and allow access. Our comments are given recognition of these efforts and with the hope that they may contribute positively to further strengthening this Plan.

COMMENT 1:

We find evidence of a mechanistic view of a concentration on access management techniques and the absence of an overarching recreation policy: this, we find, results in a somewhat partial treatment. The evidence for our view is given in the Introduction on page 4 where the strategy suffers from a vagueness e.g. Para 1.2 quotes the act as requiring access "---sufficient for the purpose of giving the public reasonable access throughout the area." But there is a lack of a definition

of reasonable within the Core Path Plan: we **object** to this lack of definition. To judge the plan one surely needs to be able to judge "reasonable"? In the section on Loch Kinnord it even talks about the request for access by pushchairs – But is this the sort of place one should be able to take pushchairs? At present the Core Path Plan does not allow this judgement to be made. This means that the plan and specific paths may well be difficult to defend during the lifetime of the plan.

COMMENT 2:

Similarly on page 5, the "Aim of the Core Paths Plan" is meant to be defined, and says it must "meet the needs of residents and visitors by providing a range of high quality outdoor access opportunities." Yes but which needs, and what is the definition of "high quality"? In USA the forest service etc are far more specific about defining peoples' recreational needs and being specific as to which facility meets which need.

Specifically it is not possible to assess on the information presented whether the provision of access encompassing a range of restricted and specific abilities and giving a quality experience is adequately met, or similarly whether the provision for horses or for cyclists is adequately met across the area of the plan.

Given that the plan is GIS based it should have been possible to provide the information on a whole area basis of the provision for cycling, specific abilities and horse riding to allow assessment of the adequacy of the network.

We therefore object to this omission.

COMMENT 3:

In the provision of infrastructure for people with a wide and varying range of mobility needs we feel the opportunities need to be assessed more fully. In Glen Roy the interpretative boards outline the nature of the access to the parallel roads and ask people to assess their own capabilities. This does not exclude them and allows them to determine the character of access infrastructure they are comfortable with using. We would like to see a similar approach being developed in the provision of information about the access infrastructure. One a related issue is that if all access infrastructure is of such an engineered standard to meet the needs of those with highly restricted mobility budget constraints start to limit the more general access provision for the wider public. This issue is tackled recently in an American book "The Death of Commonsense".

COMMENT 4:

In the section on Developing the Core Paths Plan (page 6) we find little evidence of consulting Communities of Interest e.g nothing of the people/NGOs with a strong interest in protection of its wildlife, other than landowning conservation bodies. It is just another example of a persistent problem about the lack of an interface with the national community in general and the classification of anyone who is not a local resident as simply a "visitor" which hardly captures our relationship with the Cairngorms – or that of many of our members! We object to this limited view of non-resident recreational users. Again these users are more likely to take a park wide view of the Core Path Network, and their interests are more likely to be served by the analysis required in Comment 4 above.

COMMENT 5:

We generally support the objective and selection criteria so long as **high quality does not mean highly engineered**. We argue that designation of core path status does not mean that the linear route in its entirety has to be engineered. The higher quality, most natural routes may well only be maintained in short sections to protect vulnerable ecosystems. A wet section across a bog (if not a rare or protected habitat), or an un-bridged burn act as natural barriers for some users & tend to protect those people from straying to area that could be hazardous to them. Our contention is that high quality recreational enjoyment relies on the retention of a sense of naturalness that is destroyed by engineered paths and access infrastructure. We therefore **object** to the lack of definition in "High Quality" and would like it to be clarified that a smaller or more remote access route may be designated as a core path, but may not be engineered, may in fact be an informal way that people naturally tend to follow.

COMMENT 6:

We support the selection criteria, but feel there should be a definitive statement of treatment of potential negative impacts from the presence of a core path – such as "... Should not cause undue disturbance of wildlife or irreversible damage to habitats"?

COMMENT 7: CENTRAL CAIRNGORMS (page 13)

We should strongly support this caveat that people need to be self-reliant in the mountains of the Central Cairngorms, but also consider there should be an equivalent caveat for the Mounth and the Monadh Liath with similar routes identified (eg Firmonth Road in the Mounth; the Old Military Roads Slochd to Carrbridge & Kinveachy , and Slochd to Aviemore via Upper Dulnain & the "Burma Road"): furthermore there is a need to define areas where such a caveat applies firstly in terms of vulnerabilities and of what an area is appropriate for, and thereafter in more detail geographically. This then provides clarity in the implementation of the plan and the management of core paths.

Comment 8: BRAEMAR (page 18)

We have been alarmed to observe how a combination of actions without thought to their overall impact, has created new problems. For instance on Marr/Invercauld

- 1) Path construction up Glen Quoich to watershed with the Gairn.
- 2) Construction of bulldozed track by Invercauld Estate from the fairy glen over into upper Glen Gairn
- 3) Provision of car park at Invercauld

In combination has lead to increased ease of gaining access to the central montane core. The result is that people are now getting on their mountain bikes at the Invercauld car park west of Braemar and getting off of them on the slopes of Ben Avon!

We therefore **object** to the provision of any bridge over the Dee in the vicinity of Braemar unless it has been very carefully sited to serve the sole function of providing a round route close to the village. We do not see how it cannot but result in increased access to the montane core by mountain bikers, and in direct conflict with the "long walk in " principle promoted by NTS on Marr Lodge Estate, especially given the bike hire businesses in Braemar.

There must be a mechanism to ensure it will not have negative impacts on the less resilient and more fragile montane habitats and not cause disturbance to the

wildlife from knock on impacts. We **object** to the lack of reference to such an assessment procedure.

COMMENT 9: River Spey Core Path.

We welcome and **support** this bold move to designate the River Spey as a water based core path. This move recognises the National importance of the Spey for canoeing and kayaking, especially given the potential for multi-day voyages. This is exactly the benefits we expect from a National Park, would like to see contiguous sections of the Dee similarly designated in the next version of the Plan.

COMMENT 10:

We **object** to the underlying assumption in the text of section 3.3 that existing paths may be only "upgraded". We argue that some may need to be "downgraded" ie where such paths lead through or to particularly fragile habitats, or where a high quality naturalness exists paths may well need to be taken back or re-instated from bulldozed tracks to foot paths. To maintain a high quality outdoor experience some paths may well need to be downgraded! The evidence of a quality and improving recreational experience provided by such work is that undertaken by the RSPB on Abernethy on the tracks leading to Geall Charn.

COMMENT 11:

Our final comment on the strategy / objectives section is that we find the Plan weak in defining the protected aspect of the designated core paths. We **object** that there is a lack of a defining statement that a core path should not generally be removed, re-routed or closed. Designated core paths should only temporarily and in the exceptional circumstances be closed for justified for reasons of safety or wildlife protection. We understand that as Core Paths will carry a similar level of protection as the existing rights of way the conditions of closure and re-routing should be unambiguously laid down in this plan. The Aviemore Orbital Path shows the importance of clearly defining the limited conditions by which a path can be closed or re-routed: in this example the two areas where the encircling route breaks is through the commercial developer sites of Dalfaber and MacDonald Highland Resorts. To carry weight in planning procedures and to avoid path creation orders we feel the protection aspects of the Core Path designation needs to be clearly laid out.

COMMENT 12: Map 2 Central Cairngorms

We **strongly support** the intention of not waymarking of core paths in the montane core and that promotion of these will be restricted to roadside signs identifying access points to these routes. Similarly we **object** to possible linear or continuous path maintenance on routes such as the Lairig Ghru: the Old Grey Main is quaking in his boots that the way through the boulders at the Linn will be bulldozed and made "safe" for ill-shod feet! We wish to see wording that clearly reflects that the quality and rugged nature of the ways in the montane core will be safeguarded.

COMMENT 13: Match to Local Plan

In the -latest version of the Local Plan, para 4.41 on page 23, refers to the wild qualities of parts of the park and the need to assess development for its impact on these. Policy 7 on page 22 lays down conditions for any development on features such as its qualities of wildness. We **object** that evidence of this cross correlation is not presented, and therefore have to presume it has not happened. This policy is very relevant to the Core Path Plan when considering the positioning and extent of signposting and waymarking of routes. Similarly, engineered paths are definitely an intrusion in wild areas and the rationale for working on paths in these areas should be clearly stated as simply for control of erosion and emphatically to not ease access. It is imperative to remember that, in many circumstances, it is not the ease of access that attracts people but the difficulties and challenge.

Yours sincerely,

On behalf of the Cairngorms Campaign,

Drennan Watson (Convenor)
Brig o Lead,
Forbes,
Alford AB33 8PD

3/81.

Proposed safe, flat route for
wheelchairs, etc., from Ballater,
approx. 2 miles.

Elaine Potter
Vellare village cottage
6 Hawthorn Place
Ballater
013397 55568

Core Pathways consultation



ABERDEEN

A 93

PASS OF BALLATER

PASS BURN

PROPOSED NEW FLAT, SAFE ROUTE.
AVOIDS STEEP SLOPE, A93, PASS OF BALLATER

MORVEN WAY

STEEP SLOPE
NOT SUITABLE
FOR WHEEL CHAIRS

CINDER PATH

OLD RAILWAY LINE

A 93



CAIRNGORMS
NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Draft Core Paths Plan

Map 9
BALLATER

Proposed Core Paths Network
- for Consultation

Map Legend

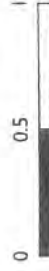
Cairngorms National Park

Proposed core path

Exists on ground

Proposed new path

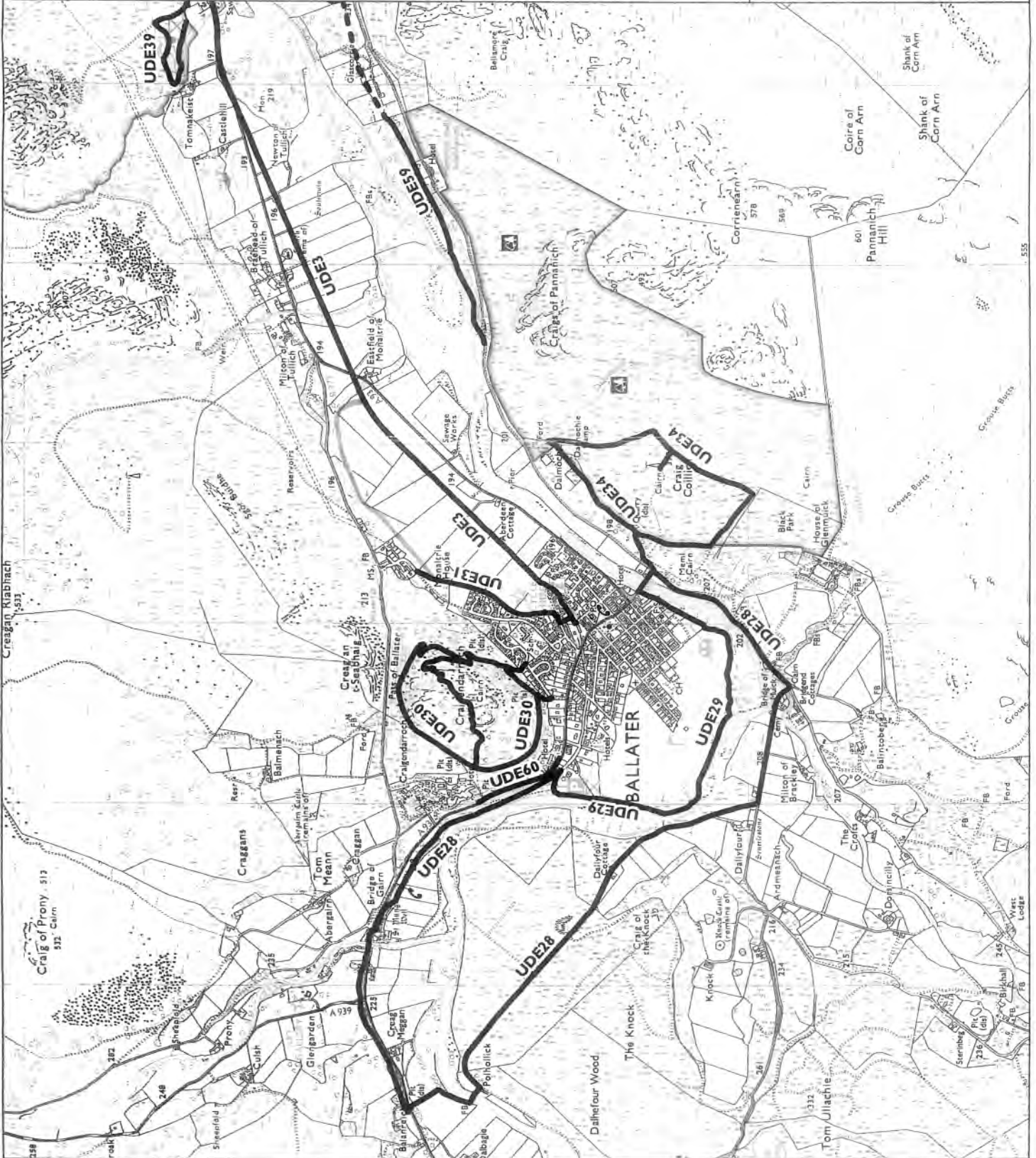
UDEI Path Reference Number



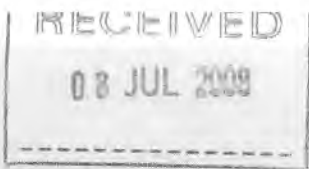
Kilometres

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This map must not be used for navigational purposes.



Sign: 24-b-06
disp: 25-b-06



Form for supporting or objecting to the Draft Core Paths Plan

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

Title	MAT	First Name*	ROBIN	Last Name*	MCLAREN
Responding on behalf of:	KINRARA ESTATE				(if applicable)
Postal Address*	KINRARA AVIEMORE				
Postcode*	PH 8 2 1QA		Telephone	(01479) 810 240.	
Email					

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

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.

Given that the Spay is an SAC it does NOT make sense to make it a core path, as this will have the opposite effect to that intended. Encouraging even more people to use the river commercially will lead to overuse and thereby damage that which the SAC designation is designed to protect. Furthermore the CNPA will presumably become liable for the £2 million per annum administrative costs, currently borne by the Spay Board on behalf of the riparian owners. Not to mention compensation for loss of fishing rights.

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

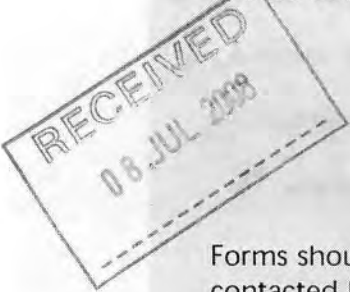
4. If objecting, please indicate what change (s) you are seeking to the Draft Core Paths Plan which could resolve your objection, continuing on a separate sheet where necessary.

Remove the Spey from the draft Core plan.

Signature	<i>Ray Linn</i>	Date	<i>24-6-08</i>
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Please return your completed form to:

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



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OFFICIAL USE ONLY	Reference: <i>3182</i>
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