

Cairngorms National Park Core Paths Plan

Consultation and Engagement Process – Stage 2

Public Consultation Meeting – **Ballater**

Date: Tuesday 15 May 2007

Time: 7:30pm

Venue: Albert Memorial Hall

Location: Ballater

No. Attending: 14

Introduction

This report details the feedback obtained at a public meeting where people were asked to give their views on the Interim Draft Core Paths Plan.

Summary

During the meeting the following issues were raised:

- Funding & Maintenance
The question of who will pay for the core paths was raised with the emphasis on the key role of the Scottish Executive in ensuring access authorities have the funds to be able properly implement and maintain networks, **in partnership with** other public agencies and communities
- Timescale for adopting the Plan
It was pointed out that the timescale for actually adopting the Plan may well extend well beyond February 2008, due to the heavy workload that will be placed on Scottish Ministers when all park and access authority plans are submitted for approval.
- Future of the Upper Deeside Access Trust (UDAT)
It was asked what the future of UDAT in the Park will be and the plans of the Park Authority to set up a Park wide access trust. It was also queried whether the Park

Authority will take on UDAT's commitment to 10 years maintenance on the paths it has established. It was also noted that UDAT had been successful in providing paying car parks and re-investing the income into the network and it was queried whether this will be rolled out across the Park.

- The River Dee as a Core Path

It was queried whether there was still scope for the River Dee to become a core path given that it was not currently identified on the plan.

- Potential impact of designating core paths

It was queried whether, in selecting paths, note is taken of the potential detrimental effect (on environment or other peoples' enjoyment) that increased numbers might have on a path or path network.

- The Justification for Core Paths

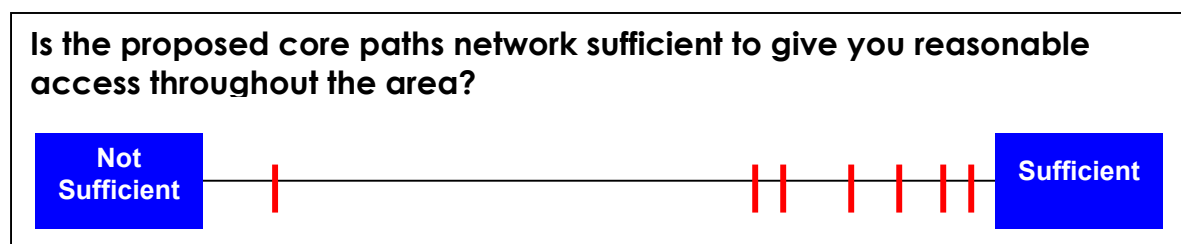
There was a feeling expressed that paths did not need designating, they simply needed maintenance and restoration.

- Public expectation of surfacing standards for CP's

Concern was expressed about poor path standards e.g. muddy sections on some paths in community networks, and what the visitor and residents will think of this. But there was also a comment that some people don't like uniform high quality path surfaces and prefer 'rougher' surfaced paths even around communities.

- Sufficiency of the network

Participants were asked to score the proposed core paths network in relation to its sufficiency to give reasonable access throughout the area by placing a mark on a line from 'sufficient' to 'not sufficient', the results are as follows:



All comments made on maps and diagrams at the event have been recorded in Annex 1.

Next Steps

The comments and issues raised at this meeting will inform revisions to the Interim Draft Core Paths Plan as part of the wider consultation process. A revised version will be considered by the CNPA Board in December 2007 and the revised Plan will then be submitted to Scottish Ministers in February 2008.

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18 May 2007
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Annex 1

Comments made on maps and diagrams are shown below and have been recorded exactly as written by participants:

Comments on Maps

- Park is far too big!
- Pathway to east of W. Kinord – was it necessary to move path from mid field to close to shore? Will it not cause a disturbance to breeding wildlife?
- Aboyne to Glen Tanar Park/Shire collaboration please!
- There should/must be a route between Aboyne & Glen Tanar: along the river bike/horse/walker
- UDE4 – a better alternate route exists
- Walkers must do their share by taking home litter, including dog excrement, and by controlling dogs, especially where there are ground nesting birds
- (Torphantick Wood riverside path) Very popular path with an issue at the Glascorrie end
- CP from Cambus O'May to Ballater on south bank of river
- Why path up to Loch Brandy but not up the Glen?
- The River Dee from Linn of Dee is a classic touring river for 8 months of the year. The River Dee has good white water at the Invercauld Bridge when the river is up. The main sections are from Invercauld to Ballater, Ballater to Cambus O'May, Cambus O'May to B9158 and then on to Aboyne.
- A Dee User Group should be established (similar to Spey S.U.G.), current user types on the River Dee are local paddlers, visiting paddlers on multi-day trips e.g. college touring groups. Note that the Dee features highly in the new SCA guide to touring water.
- Better provision for parking required for access to river at lower Ballater by woollen mill shop, at Cambus O'May Bridge and at the Old Brig O'Dee at the Keiloch.
- I think the Dee should be a core route/path so....an example on the east of the Cairngorms can be as how magnificent resources can be managed for 'watersports'. The Dee could be managed easily and sensitively so canoeists can get on and off with ease. This would also provide a platform for a local forum between fishers and paddlers.
- UDE2 – Oath round Loch Muick very sensitive on southern side of loch!
- UDE2 – Black grouse lek site on lawns of Glas alt Shiel. Not seen for some time.
- Track to Morven through Tomnakeist is fenced off at the old quarry
- Propose core paths from bridge at Cambus O'May pass Glascorrie under crags of Pannanich (line of the Old Deeside Road)
- Bellamore Crag is a point of interest close to Ballater with interesting geological features e.g. rocking stone and Roche Moutonnees.
- Country roads do not have pavements. They do have heavy lorries. Off-road walking is therefore essential.
- Need for a car park & circular at Cock Bridge/Corgarff – an obvious tourist stopping point, + inn as a tourist base.

Comments on what is good about the network

- Encourage visitors to get out of villages
- Good intentions
- Making connections

Comments on what is bad about the network

- Gap between Ballater & Crathie
- Not enough funding
- Too many close to traffic
- Grants for funding?

Comments on how the network could be improved

- Can we have the Dee as a core path from Invercauld Bridge or White Bridge
- Walk from Ballater Bridge going eastwards to Community Woodland strip should be included. Important link from golf course to old line.
- Link Cinder Path to old railway at Eastfield to give easy flat circuit. Take walks away from traffic.
- Consider various health questions – heart, asthma etc. - wind

Participants were asked to evaluate the event, the results are as follows:

	% of Participants Responding			
	Very Useful	Useful	Not Useful	Waste of Time
Location	100%	0%	0%	0%
Venue	100%	0%	0%	0%
Timing	100%	0%	0%	0%
Presentations	100%	0%	0%	0%
Information Available	100%	0%	0%	0%
Opportunity to speak to staff	100%	0%	0%	0%