

Cairngorms National Park Core Paths Plan

Consultation and Engagement Process – Stage 2

Public Consultation Meeting – **Newtonmore**

Date: Thursday 26th April 2007

Time: 6:30pm

Venue: Newtonmore Village Hall

Location: Newtonmore

No. Attending: 17

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

There was concern that there may be a lack of funding for maintenance work on core paths and existing paths. It was suggested that Land Management Contracts may not be available to new entrants in the current year.

- Involving Farmers & Crofters in the process

It was suggested that the term 'land manager' makes most people think of large estates rather than farmers and crofters etc. and that there is a need to ensure that all parties are engaged in the core paths planning process. It was noted that all land managers, including farmers and crofters have been sent a letter advising them of the current consultation and that where a core path has been proposed across a piece of land, the owner of that land has been sent a full copy of the Interim Draft Core Paths Plan. There was concern that the timing of the event in lambing season may have prevented some farmers from attending. It was commented that whilst the benefits of core paths for land

managers have been stressed, core paths may not be a good thing for farmers, in particular in relation to the loss of land for a path and the need to manage potential disturbance to animals and their young.

- Strathmashie

The construction of the new off-road route on Forestry Commission Land from Laggan Wolfrax to the Gorstan car park was raised. There is an aspiration in the Interim Draft Core Paths Plan to extend this route right up to Laggan, however, it was noted that there are potential issues in relation to construction of the path including feasibility, privacy and land management operations.

- Liability

There was some discussion on the subject of land manager liability and public liability insurance in relation to people taking access to land. It was noted that liability lies with the land manager and it was clarified that this would remain the case on core paths. The need for people to take responsibility for their own actions when taking access to land was also raised.

- Land Ownership and Path Agreements

There was some discussion as to who would take responsibility for issues such as ownership of land, liability, maintenance of paths, erection of fences etc. on core paths. It was clarified that this would be established through path agreements with land managers.

- Multi-use paths

The potential for issues to arise when different types of user e.g. cyclists, horse-riders, walkers, wheelchairs etc. are using the same path was raised.

- Ordnance Survey mapping

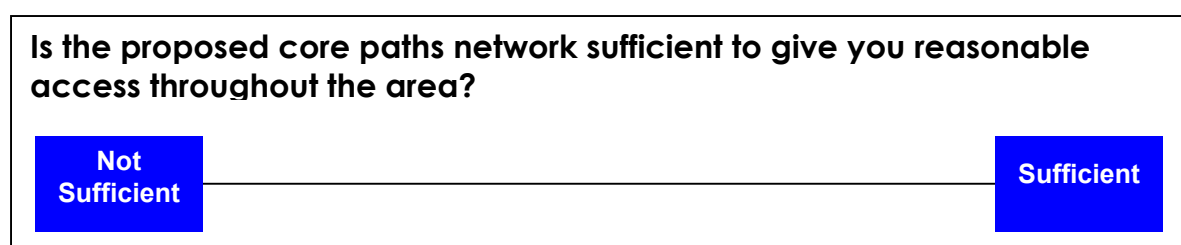
The inclusion of core paths on Ordnance Survey mapping was raised and it was clarified that the timescale for this is at present unknown.

- River Spey as a core path

It was noted that the River Spey has been proposed as a core path. There was some interest in the requirement for the Core Paths Plan to include opportunities for different activities, including watersports.

- Sufficiency of the network

In general participants at the event felt that the proposed core paths network is sufficient to give reasonable access throughout the area. 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:





Over all attendees were happy with the sufficiency of the network although there is a need to engage with farmers and crofters in particular to make sure that any potential issues can be resolved.

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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27 April 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:

- Should clarify some difficult access issues
- Pretty good – Glenmore but need to get routes clarified
- The proposals are looking really good
- As far as we can tell so far paths in Newtonmore are working well. Just need to be sure no new paths on croft ground and common grazing.
- Need a path through to Laggan from above Cluny with alternative route that avoids Cairnegie Bothy (*near Dalballoch*).
- Perhaps a little ambitious in terms of No. of paths and total length. Questions of finance.
- I am concerned about some access through farmland.
- There are enough paths throughout the Park already. Hills are more enjoyable when walked about without paths. Sheep tracks are very handy.
- UBS8, south end at Cluny Castle – Dangerous place to end a path
- UBS8 – avoid bog at Dalballoch by crossing at GR663 984 to use harder ground
- New Path – How about something from Strath Eilich below Stac Buidh and Gergask Crag to Gergask?
- Newtonmore-Kingussie via Loch Gynack
- Paths on Creag Bheag – poorly aligned and will be very expensive to maintain in a safe condition
- Why not take UBS8 through to Laggan? Benefit both communities! Along the 320m contour?
- Be careful not to extend path to wild monuments e.g. Dun Da Lamh (Strathmashie)
- West Loch Morlich – Existing cycle track goes up Sluggan & crosses to Badaguish Road. Does not follow main road.
- Why not round loch Gamhna?

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

	% of Participants Responding			
	Very Useful	Useful	Not Useful	Waste of Time
Location	83%	17%	0%	0%
Venue	83%	17%	0%	0%
Timing	60%	20%	20%	0%
Presentations	80%*	20%**	0%	0%
Information Available	71%	29%	0%	0%
Opportunity to speak to staff	83%***	17%	0%	0%

Comments made: *'Excellent', ** 'Good' *** 'V.good, excellent'.