Cairngorms Local Outdoor Access Forum

Core Paths Plan Review – update and discussion

Update

1. Formal consultation

The amended Core Paths Plan has been consulted on including landowner notifications and a 12-week public consultation which closed on 21 August 2026.

The consultation received 67 comments, of which 55 were treated as formal representations. Twenty-five different people submitted representations. There were 24 objections received, relating to 13 paths.

Annex 1 sets out the objections received on the amended Core Paths Plan and the access team's initial opinions on those objections.

2. Assessment of objections

Section 20A (2) of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 allows for negotiation on an objection which may or may not lead to the withdrawal or an objection. Section 20A (4) further states that the Park Authority may **modify** the amended plan to secure a withdrawal of an objection. In doing so, the Authority must notify and consult with such persons as they consider appropriate on the modified amended plan.

Discussions and negotiations are now underway regarding the objections, with modifications to the Plan being proposed to resolve several of these. Such modifications will be subject to a short consultation with relevant stakeholders and appropriate landowners.

3. Next steps

- LOAF consultation on modifications (*likely Nov / Dec / Jan 2026*) see point 5.
- Next LOAF meeting (*February 2027*). LOAF to discuss any outstanding unresolved objections and give a formal position on these.
- Core Paths Plan presented to National Park Board (*19 March 2027*) to adopt, if no objections, or submit to Scottish Ministers with outstanding objections.

Discussion

4. Review of objections

LOAF members are invited to comment on the access authority's current position and any likely modifications that are currently being proposed (see annex 1).

Maps / images relating to objections will be shown during the meeting and further information can be provided during the discussion session.

5. LOAF as a consultee on modifications

It is anticipated there will be modifications made to the Plan. The LOAF will have a role as a consultee on these modifications. The consultation is expected to be between Nov – Dec 2026.

The LOAF is requested to confirm how they would like to be consulted. Possible options are:

i) Members review modifications individually and send their views back to the Chair who will collate into a single response

ii) An additional short online meeting is hosted to discuss as a group and formulate a response

Annex 1 – Summary of objections

Amendment	Objection	Raised by	Access Authority opinion	Status
ADD31 Birkwood to Road, Braemar	Creates a hazard as links to a road and doesn't link to other paths.	Land agent (Mar Estate)	**Reject**, route adds to network, links directly and indirectly to other core paths and a parking area.	
ADD30 Docharn link, Boat of Garten	Support for link, but suggestions to remove core path dog-leg through Docharn House.	1. Landowner of link (Seafield Estate) *2. Owner of Docharn House (comment)* *3. RSPB (comment)*	**Make modification** to remove section of core path through Docharn House, property now being developed into residential home.	Resolved though modification – remove dog leg
ADD14 Capercaillie trail, Boat of Garten	Not necessary for reasonable access, doesn't meet criteria, leased to community group till 2037.	1. Landowner (Seafield Estate)	**Reject**, key recreational access route, close to community and one of few wheelchair accessible routes in Park.	
	Already a loop route and core path in wood. Would remove future option to close this route re- Caper disturbance	2. RSPB		

ADD32 Slochd XC route	Conflicts with Schedule 1 species. Will add complexity to forest operations.	1. Landowner (Seafield Estate)	**Make modification – remove from plan** • On further consideration only provide additional network benefit re additional recreation on few days of year. Other core paths, RoW and NCN provision in area. • Not local to a community • HRA considered and decision was "no likely significant effects but potential minor residual effects." RSPB provided further data about Capercaillie	Resolved through modification – remove from Plan
	Breeding Capercaillie population and is with two known leks less than 400m away from the proposed additional route.	2. RSPB		
ADD12 Laundry path, Dulnain Bridge	Existing core path network is adequate	Landowner (Seafield Estate)	**Reject,** while is a network of paths in area, this forms key loop for recreational purposes from community. One of the promoted community paths.	
ADD38 High Burnside link, Aviemore	Impact on Schedule 1 species, access well served by core paths in the NNR	Landowner (Seafield Estate)	**Make modification** to reroute as aspirational path closer to A9. • Link would provide route from north of Aviemore housing to NNR and wider network of paths.	
	Route requires work to ensure meets acceptable standards of	NatureScot		

	health & safety. Possible alternative routes		• HRA considered and decision was "no likely significant effects but potential minor residual effects."	
REA227, Aviemore orbital	Route crosses unfenced livestock field, puts access users at risk	Landowner (Seafield Estate)	**Reject**, existing core path is already in field, just re-aligning route with gates and access points. No alternative route option alongside field.	Resolved with modification – landowner agreed with fenced-in option
ADD2 Bellabeg shop to Lonach hall, Strathdon	Part of route is forest road in use for forestry operations, creates a health and safety risk to public during operations / timber haulage	Land agent (Gordon Woodlands Ltd)	**Reject**, this is a key path linking two settlements (Bellabeg and Forbestown) to each other and to local facilities and to the village hall	
ADD44 / ADD45 Speyside Way, Ruthven barracks to Kingussie	Making objection to encourage construction of off-road routes to complete path network with safe route away from road. Inclusion as	1. Member of public *2. KCDC (comment)*	**Reject**, Speyside way is long distance route and key part of core path network. Already plans being developed to take ADD44 off-road. Unrealistic to take ADD45 off-road due to ground conditions, but this stretch is straight, 40mph and has shared use signage.	Resolved – objections withdrawn on provision of further info

	core paths suggests 'paths' are finished.			
REM245 Private level crossing, Dalnaspidal	Object to removal of core path designation from level crossing, since it is a recorded public right of way	ScotWays	**Reject.** Instruction from Scottish Ministers to remove core paths from private level crossing.	
ADD13 Tulloch to Glencairn	• Objection to promotion and ensuing greater access, leading to increased risk of irresponsible use; livestock worrying, wildlife disturbance, wildfires, increased camping, • Very important wildlife habitats / species, risk of disturbance • Question over ownership and responsibility for road	7 x objections from members of public *NatureScot (comment)* - advised *to consider wildlife interests*	**Reject** **Action** - Undertake further investigations into potential wildlife conservation impacts. • Missing link for cycling routes, takes cyclists off the B-road and provides link from the NCN route to Nethy Bridge. • Access being taken already, core path status unlikely to cause an increase in recreation and subsequent perceived issues. Often used as an alternative to Ryvoan pass. • HRA considered and decision was "no likely significant effects but potential minor residual effects."	

	condition, risk of accident due to vehicle use • Doesn't link to other routes, potential that other routes, currently only used by locals might get busier • Risk of opening up one of the few remaining quiet places in the Park to the wider public			
New suggestion: Docharn N link	Missed opportunity to add link northwards from Docharn towards Carr. An objection on the grounds of omission.	ScotWays	**Reject.** Route is an existing right of way and core path connects to right of way. Sufficiency of core paths in area connecting to Docharn to Carr.	
New suggestion: Carrbridge end of Burma road	Re-enters CNP west of Carrbridge, additional link required. An objection on the grounds of omission.	ScotWays	**Reject.** Sufficient core paths and links to Rights of Way in area. Any addition wouldn't link to any other core path.	