

The message reflects the incoherence of the byelaws

Description



The road sign that the LLTNPA has designed, apparently in conjunction with Transport Scotland, to mark the boundary of the proposed camping management zones

After yesterday's post I have been reflecting on the proposed signage that the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Board is being asked to approve on Monday.

The message given by the sign above is that there is a zone where camping is managed. Nothing else. So if you drive by in a campervan or in your vehicle planning to pull off the road and sleep in your vehicle you have been given no indication that if you do so you will commit a criminal offence and £500 fine to boot. None of the other signage in the Board paper says anything to indicate that campervans, sleeping in a vehicle, bivouacking or staying overnight in any form of shelter (eg an upturned canoe) will be banned and if undertake any of these activities outside permitted areas in the zone you will become

a criminal. This is very very wrong. People need to know where they stand. I met someone last year who driving down from Skye pulled into the Falls of Falloch carpark for a sleep – he had no idea the byelaws banned him from doing so. He still won't if this signage goes ahead and that I think is a major legal and civil liberties issue.

The sign also says nothing about the extent of the camping management zone. So, if you are a camper entering one of the zones in your car it would be reasonable to assume that camping is banned everywhere. Parkspeak claimed the zones were only 3.7% of the area of the Park, a claim which is now under 4%, but there is no mention of that here. The impression you get is that camping is managed everywhere and if you are aware is banned except in permitted places the message will be get through this zone as fast as you can – a disaster for tourism. Communities like Arrochar are already suffering, with a number of shops closing in the last year and unable to gain from the many walkers and climbers who visit. These messages will make it worse.

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Note the bare ground behind the sign on the right. The Park claim they need to manage camping to

There are signs that tell you where you can camp. Nothing though to tell you where you can stay overnight in a campervan, neither for the grand total of 20 places where campervans will be permitted to stay, nor for the Transport Scotland or Council laybys where it may still be legal to stop off overnight in vehicles.



Nothing in this message for campervans or people thinking of staying overnight in their vehicles who will also face £500 zones. Nothing to tell them they might need to find out more.

What these signs tell me is the camping byelaws, which were totally incoherent, are already collapsing. Without signage, any attempt to enforce the byelaws against people who stay in vehicles will fail and is open to legal challenge.

You might ask, but what about the byelaws on east Loch Lomond where these issues haven't arisen. Well the reason they have no arisen is there is a clearway order along the road to Rowardennan which prevents any vehicle stopping at any time. It was this that stopped the problems caused by roadside campers coming out to party not the byelaws.

The Board on Monday really does need to start thinking about this instead of following the lead of its leader, Linda McKay. The Scottish Government meantime should make it clear that any breach of the byelaws will not result in criminal offences unless the person is committing another criminal offence. That would give time to come up with an alternative plan that puts people's rights rather than NIMBY prejudice back at the centre of what the National Park does.

Category

1. Loch Lomond and Trossachs

Tags

1. access rights
2. camping

3. Camping bye laws
4. LLTNPA
5. Scottish Government

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