

Are broken down former camping pitches the best LLTNPA has to offer?

Description

By Ross MacBeath

It is now clear that much of camping provision intended as replacements for camping by our loch shores banned under the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority Byelaws is little more than a collection of undesirable areas with little or nothing to offer families or groups of visitors as a camping experience.

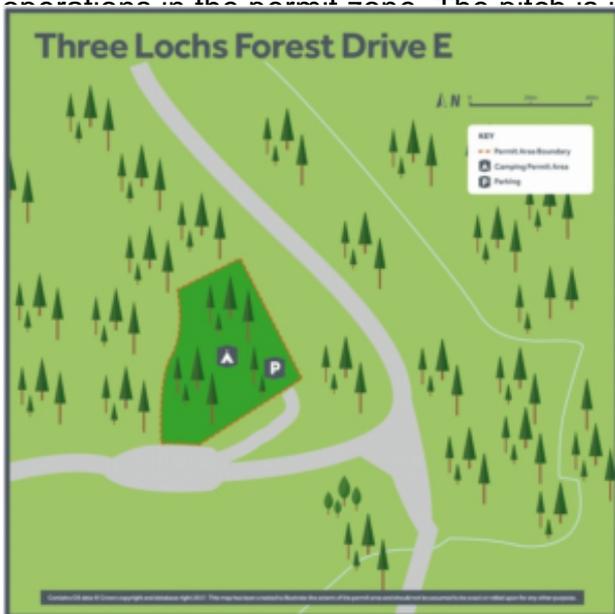
With the exception of the yet unfinished site at Loch Chon and pitches at Rowardennan little else if anything is new. The Park Authority is just issuing paid for permission slips to camp in the same areas that were free to campers previously, without the benefit of toilets or drinking water, or in the case of many permit zones, places you would not want to camp, or even be able to pitch a tent.

Forest Drive Zone - no more than a collection of broken down pitches

Forest drive Zone supposedly providing 4 camping pitches, has a trio of broken down pitches, created by the forestry commission many years before with the 4th to be selected from the greater camping zone.



The first formal pitch has been destroyed by a forestry vehicle crossing it to access active forestry operations in the permit zone. The pitch is unusable.



As you might expect from an existing Forestry Commission

site, this location is rather desirable at least as a view point and picnic spot. It has a true feel of a mature forest with pine needles softening the lines of the car park. However forestry operations and

tree felling is putting this at risk.

The area overlooks the westerly reaches of Loch Drunkie. It is therefore a very popular spot with drive through visitors for both photo stopovers and extended stops for picnicking which means there is high demand for the limited space at the view point overlooking Loch Drunkie, marked 'P' on the map.

It is clear these pitches have not been used for camping in recent years and resurrecting them brings 8 to 16 additional visitors who will remain on the site with their vehicles. This number of visitors using such a small area is as detrimental to the forest drive experience, as it is to the camping experience where a continuous flow of drive through visitors in search of picnic spots, disturb peace and quiet of the 3 pitches sited at the car park. The campers in turn block the use of the desirable location at the view point with their own picnics and recreational use.

No work has been done in this zone other than the erection of a sign and some posts

The Forestry Commission's original 3 camping pitches have over the years fallen into disrepair through lack of maintenance and other damage.

That said, the LLTNPA have adopted this site as a camping permit zone and seen fit to do no remedial works whatsoever leaving the area in a state not fit for pitching tents. Toilets for this zone are a 14.4 km round trip by car taking around 45 minutes.

The second of three pitches has a tree stump in its centre making it impossible to use as a viable camping pitch. How does the Park Authority expect anyone to sleep on this?



Again the National Park Authority have show their utter contempt for visitors at this site



The third pitch is a little better insofar as it is undamaged and you could pitch a small tent, but it does have borderline issues with slope which makes it undesirable from a comfort and sleeping perspective. It would also be far more flexible without the wooden border and like the others, it is somewhat overgrown and does not provide a good "paid for" camping experience.

The fourth pitch does not exist in any formal form and it appears you are expected to select a place to camp in the greater area that forms Zone "E". Some of the pine needle covered spots near the car parking looked promising but they turned out to be on hardcore that has become overgrown meaning there is no way to pitch a tent.



Looking back into the zone from the boundary opposite the car park we find what has now become a typical LLTNPA NON-solution, with active forestry work in progress within an area that is generally unsuitable for pitching tents. Wet, un-even ground with vegetation and forestry debris makes it an impossibility for camping as well as undesirable for visitor access. Could another tent pitch be found? Yes if the debris from forest operations was removed, but the question remains, why would anyone want to?

Besides the one place identified above, could 3 other pitches be found to camp? That's a definite no at the moment. So the LLTNPA need to remedy the problems with the existing three faulty pitches and clear the ground for a fourth.

Another failure to provide the required number of pitches advertised

Like so much of the camping provision this zone is not family friendly due to pitch size which are too small for 4, 6 or 8 man tents. a lack of space to host 4 families and the drive through visitors at this popular spot with a likely conflict for both seating and car parking spaces.

This makes zone "E" unsuitable as a replacement for the previous camping provision by our loch shores and with the limitation on erecting only one tent per permit it is difficult to see how a family could use this area even if the pitch issues were resolved.

See also

[Forest Drive Zone B](#)

[Loch Lomond Suie Field & Cuil](#)

[Forest Drive Zone C](#)

[Loch Lomond Inveruglas \(2nd h](#)

[Forest Drive Zone D](#)

[Forest Drive Zone E \(this Post\)](#)

[Loch Lomond Firkin Point \(1st](#)

Forest Drive Zone F (to follow)

[Loch Earn South](#)

Forest Drive Zone G (to follow)

Forest Drive Zone H (to follow)

[Forest Drive Zone L \(coming soon\)](#)

[Forest Drive Zone M](#)

Category

1. Loch Lomond and Trossachs

Tags

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