

Destruction of a core path and right of way in Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park

Description

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This is the first of a sequence of reports focused on access around Glen Finart in the Argyll Forest Park, which is part of the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park.



The path was a traditional route, and Right of Way, that has existed since at least the 1940s, but possibly much longer.



An indication of the permanence and investment in the route, possibly dating back to when the bay was a camp used for training Beach Commandos, and subsequently by Forestry Workers recruited from the unemployed of Glasgow.



This can hardly be regarded as a dispensableâ??desire lineâ?? that does not need to be preserved if it causes inconvenience to felling operations.



The track is signposted, part of the core path network, and is the route from the bay carpark to Loch Goil, following the shore of Loch Long. It joins two communities.

The pedestrian sections are scenic, and relatively non-strenuous. It is a popular and historically important "transhumance" route, that used to connect farms and holdings, now disappeared due to forestry operations.



The path ascends through

pleasant natural woodland, and is well established but not over engineered and badly aligned as is the current practice. It has the gradient of a route that was used for carrying goods and probably used by pack animals.



Then this! Despite years of use and in an area of heavy rain, with almost no maintenance, it shows almost no sign of erosion. The resilience of the path testifies to the poor understanding of those responsible for aligning and constructing recreational paths today.



Leading to this. Over the years, I have cleared the path on a number of occasions of wind blow, minor obstructions arising from the growth of commercial forestry, and encroaching Rhododendron, but clearing this would be a monumental task.



And, to add insult to injury, this!

Needless to remark nothing has been done to clear the path, presumably its open for access, but users will need to clear the route and re-establish a viable track, as if it were merely a "desire line".

There is no indication that the path will be reinstated, just that access will be restored, if one can find one's way.



The obliterated path runs up the shoulder between the two burns above the end northern end of the beach.

The scenic impact of the clearfell, with the progressive degradation of the landscape quality by the patchwork of "industrial" forestry operations, that will continue as the cycle progresses. Scenes like this are very unusual in other Western European National Parks.

The Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority, as Access Authority, at the very least needs to ensure Forestry Commission Scotland restores this path.

Category

1. Loch Lomond and Trossachs

Tags

1. access rights
2. Forestry Commission Scotland
3. landscape
4. LLTNPA
5. paths

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