

The destructive impact of hydro schemes – Gleann Casaig four years later

Description



View across Gleann Casaig from Stuc Odhar 8th January. Photo credit Jane Meek.

Snow enhances the beauty of our hills but it can also highlight the destructive impact that human developments have on the natural landscape. The hydro path, picked out by the snow, has disfigured Gleann Casaig and destroyed the sense of wildness in the Ben More and Ben Ledi wild land area. Once, from viewpoints on the edge of the Highlands like Stuc Odhar, the difference between looking south and north was fairly distinct. In one direction an intensively used landscape, in the other something that felt wild and untamed, even if it had been used by humans for centuries. Those differences are now being steadily eroded as humans consume the natural world.

I last blogged about the Gleann Casaig hydro scheme, just north of Brig O'Turk in the Trossachs, two years ago ([see here](#)), when I described the cumulative impacts that hydro schemes have had on the landscape around Ben Ledi. It is now almost three and a half years since I first blogged about the scheme ([see here](#)). The evidence shows that the landscape damage caused by the track is, as far as one can say anything lasts, permanent.

This was not meant to be. The Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority was set up to protect the landscape within its boundaries. It has failed to do so. Its planners granted consent for the hydro construction track to be retained permanently as a path. They did this without giving due consideration to whether the construction track could be properly restored or converted into a path.

Some time ago the Woodland Trust, who own the property, were good enough to meet me and others to discuss the damage. It was clear from our visit that their staff were as dismayed as we were by the result. Rather like the community hydro scheme at Braemar ([see here](#)), it appears the Woodland Trust made the mistake of trusting the developers and contractors who said the landscape impacts would be minimal. They shouldn't be blamed for that. We should not be relying on the good intentions or the expertise of landowners to ensure the landscape and the natural environment is protected. That should be the job of our Planning Authorities. The photo shows how the LLTNPA has lamentably failed to do this. It is time they were held to account.

Category

- 1. Loch Lomond and Trossachs

Tags

- 1. hill tracks
- 2. LLTNPA
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Author

nickkempe