

Visitor mis-management in Strathard – the LLTNPA’s manipulation of the law and another inappropriate development

Description



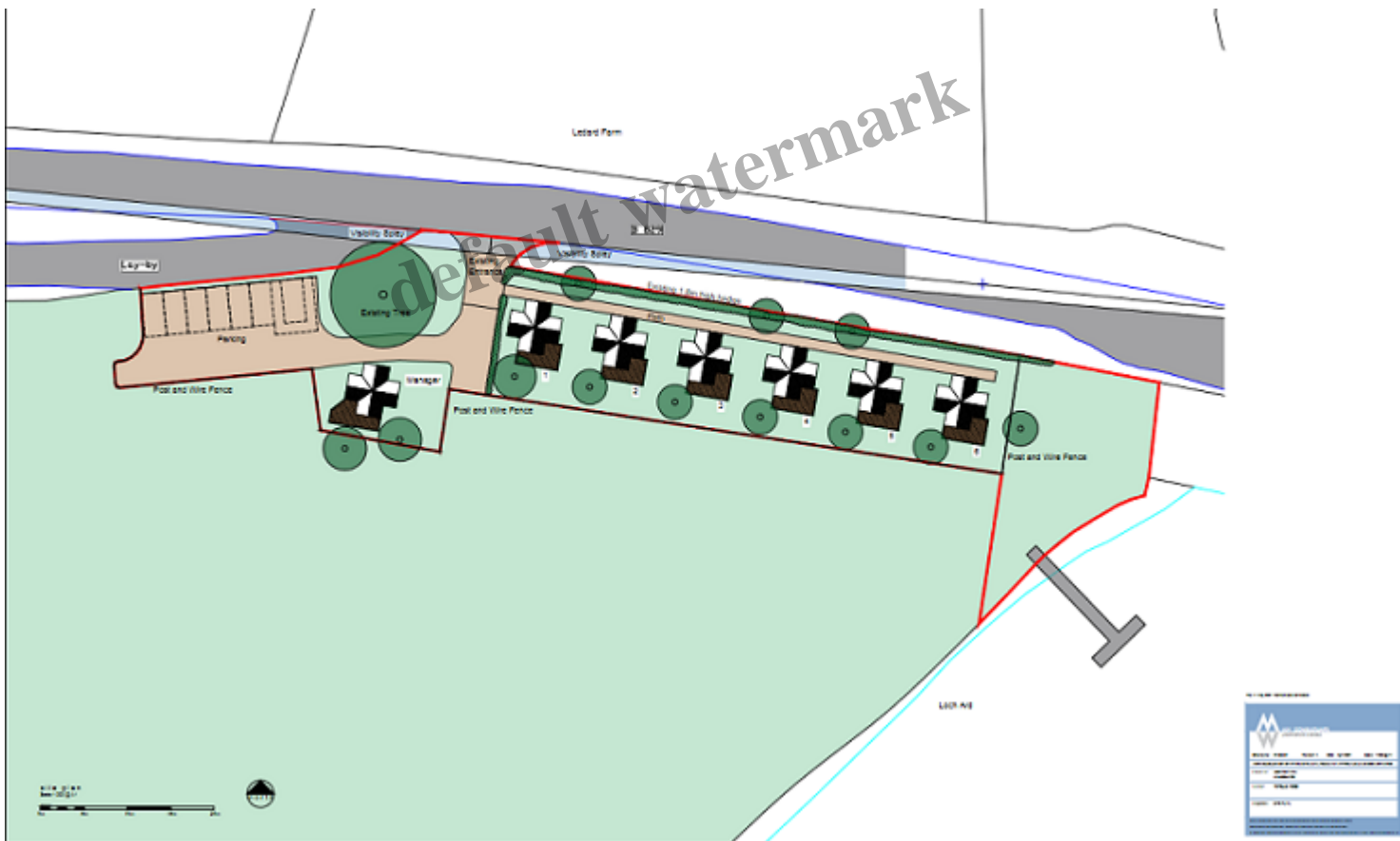
The sign behind on the shut gate says “Covid-19. Day visitor vehicles not permitted”

Last week I was sent this picture of a sign spotted outwith the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority Loch Chon campsite ([see here](#)) in Strathard. It is a con. The Scottish Government stated right from the start on the pandemic last year that our access rights as set out in the Land Reform Act were unaffected by the Covid regulations ([see here](#)). It was the liberty to travel that was

severely curtailed and those restrictions of course have now been lifted. The Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority, however, still appears to be trying to use Covid-19 to make access to the National Park harder, not easier.

This would be indefensible at any time but with the large increase in visitors to the countryside is even more short-sighted and counterproductive. The Forestry and Land car park – the one behind the gate – used to provide the largest public car park in Strathard, ideally suited to campervans but also the best place to stop if you wanted to enjoy Loch Chon. Strathard lacks public toilets – although toilets are available at Stronachlachar Pier – but having installed flushing toilets in the campsite at great public expense, the LLTNPA wishes to deny these to other visitors. The LLTNPA Convener, James Stuart, used to be a Director of Enterprise Scotland. It is valid to ask just what enterprise this public authority has shown since he assumed the reins?

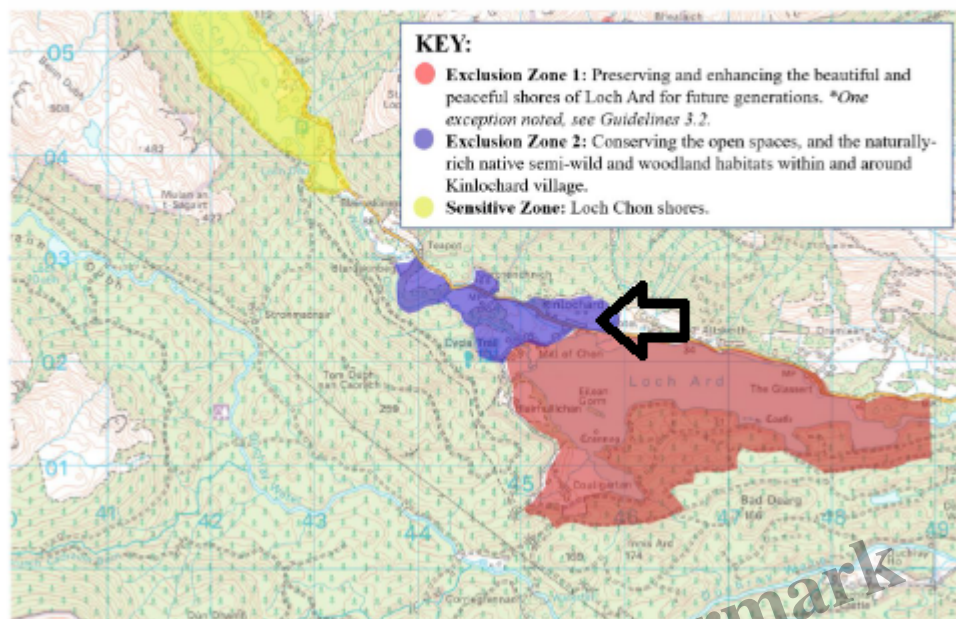
Meantime, down the road at Loch Ard, former Councillor and LLTNPA Board Member Fergus Wood has submitted a planning application ([see here](#)) to erect six “holiday” pods and accommodation for a site manager just before the main layby used by walkers up Ben Venue.



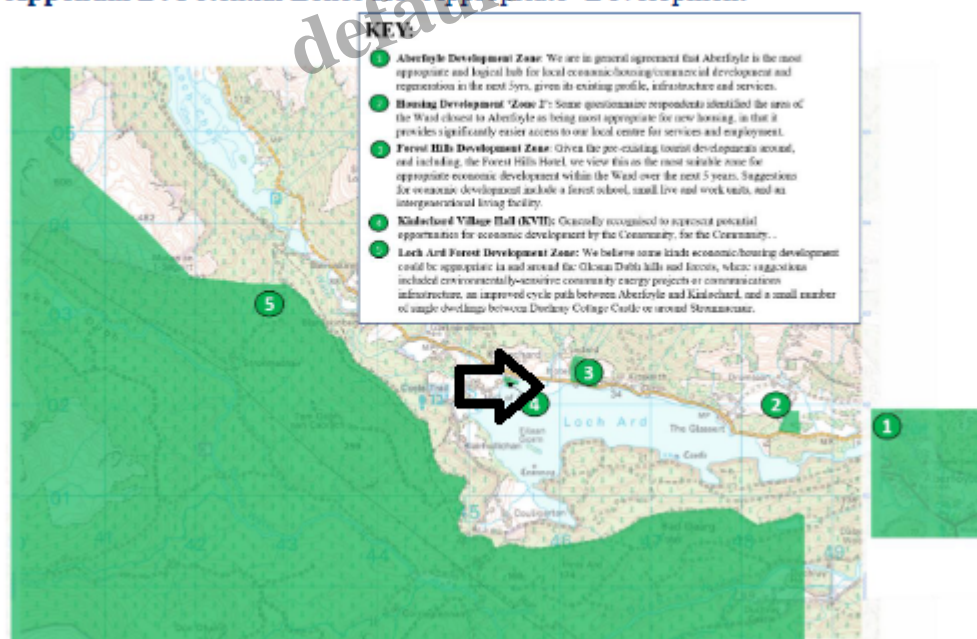
Five years ago, when a Board Member, Mr Wood had been in discussion with planning officials to create a campsite in this field ([see here](#)) but backed off the idea after considerable opposition by local people concerned about the impact on the landscape of the loch shore. The Planning Application states that in the pre-application discussion the agent acting on Mr Wood's behalf was advised to refer to the Kinlochard Life Plan ([see here](#)). This plan was produced by the local community after a great deal of consultation in 2019. It contains zones where the local community believe that development might be appropriate and where it would not:

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Appendix C: Exclusion Zones



Appendix D: Potential Zones for 'Appropriate' Development



The holiday pods would be within the area around Kinlochard village which the local community believe should be excluded from development

It appears that Mr Wood's agents have ignored the plan completely and there is no justification for this that I can see. It will be interesting to see how the LLTNPA planners respond.

If I have one criticism of the Kinlochard Life Plan it is that it says little about infrastructure for visitors which I believe needs to be improved in Strathard and would help mitigate visitor impacts. Those improvements should include better parking, litter collection (which was identified as a major issue by the local community) and toilets but also more provision for overnight stays, whether for

campervanners, campers or people wanting to stay in camping pods. There is still a need for a plan which does that, but I believe the local community is right, there has been enough development around the loch shore and Mr Wood needs to think again.

Category

1. Loch Lomond and Trossachs

Tags

1. access rights
2. camping
3. LLTNPA
4. planning
5. visitor management

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