

The unlawful access track to Conachra farm â?? the LLTNPA is aiding and abetting the developer to play cat and mouse with the public

Description



Heavy good vehicle with Honeypot branding on the minor C118 leading to Honeypot Farm. Note the size of the passing place behind. Duncryne, Tom Weirâ??s best wee hill in the world, visible behind

After the retrospective planning application for the unlawful new access track to Honeypot Farm had been withdrawn and the planning documents had disappeared from the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority (LLTNPA) â??s planning portal ([see here](#)) I submitted a Freedom of Information request to them on 7th October. Two weeks later, at the end of last week, the LLTNPA replied saying:

â??In order to facilitate access to the information you have requested, we have made the planning documentation relating to this application available until 6 November 2026. This will allow you to search for the application and download any documents that you require through our Planning Portal, using the reference 2026/0077/DET.â?•

It appears the LLTNPA never removed the documents from their planning portal but rather removed them from public view and then, with a flick of the switch, have now made them available until 6th November ([see here](#)) because that's much easier than downloading them and sending them out. It begs the question why the LLTNPA, along with the CNPA ([see here](#)), both help developers to play cat and mouse with the public by removing the bulk of the documentation about planning applications when they have been withdrawn. Both the CNPA and the LLTNPA do this even when, as in this case, it is clear the developer intends to submit a new planning application.

While the CNPA and LLTNPA retain all the planning documentation on the system for their own use, enabling them to track what has changed between applications and how the developer has responded to objections, they do not wish the public to do the same. There is no justification for this and, since the information is still on the private systems of public authorities, it does not save data storage costs. Indeed it serves to increase costs and CO2 emissions because if you are concerned about a planning application, you cannot trust our planning authorities to keep the information public and therefore need to store all the records yourself.

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In the last two weeks large Honeywagon vehicles have been trundling down the C118 to Honeypot Farm which they can now access because of the new entrance and access track which were subject of the planning application. This confirms the fears of local residents that the real purpose of the unlawful new entrance was to enable the applicant, Mr Sam Newall, to use the farm for his Honeywagon business.

The responses from the two roads authorities, Stirling and West Dunbartonshire Council, which are now back up on the planning portal are both extremely pertinent to what is now happening. The last sentence of the objection from Stirling Council, which is the roads authority, reads as follows :

It is recommended that the Planning Authority use their statutory powers to ensure the removal of the access, with the adjacent road and verge being reinstated to match the historic arrangements.

West Dunbartonshire Council, as the closeby neighbouring local authority, were also consulted by the LLTNPA about their views on the development:

WDC Roads would have concerns about a development of this nature and scales impact on our network. We would ask that prior to any determination that the National Park satisfies itself on the following intended use of the access and nature of traffic generated, the suitability of the wider road network, including within West Dunbartonshire, to accommodate commercial vehicles and the concerns raised by Stirling regarding visibility requirements.

It should be clear to the LLTNPA from the Honeypot vehicles the C118 that the intended use of the new entrance to Honeypot Farm does not appear linked to farming. The objections which you can once again read on the planning portal provide further evidence for that. So why isn't the LLTNPA taking enforcement action as advised by Stirling Council? And why did the LLTNPA remove documentation, from both the public and other local authorities, that supported the need for enforcement action?

It is worth noting here that Mr Sam Newall, the applicant in this case, is being advised by Michael Hyde, of Michael Hyde Associates. He used to work as a Planning Enforcement officer for the LLTNPA. Although that is a long time ago, as a planning consultant who regularly represents developers in the National Park, he will know how to exploit all the loopholes in the LLTNPA's planning system, including how to stop them taking enforcement action.

Category

1. Loch Lomond and Trossachs

Tags

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