

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

Client - Balavil Estate

Site Address – Balavil Estate, Kingussie, Inverness-shire, PH21 1LU.

Project – Resurfacing, repair & maintenance of existing estate tracks

Background

Balavil estate extends to approximately 7500 acres (3000 ha), access across the estate is served in the main by a single spinal hill road/private way of approx 12 km (7.5 miles) in length from the main estate holdings to the River Dulnain in the north west of the estate.

Permission was granted by Highland Council in November 2016 by way of Prior Notification & Prior Approval (Ref No 16/04569/PNO) that approx 7 km (4.4 miles) be repaired and improved. This work has now successfully been completed. Further works to improve the same track extending to the River Dulnain are now underway, working closely in conjunction with the CNPA.

As part of the estate managements long term plans to overhaul and improve the estate as a whole, the intention is to carry out resurfacing, repair and maintenance works to a number of tracks within the lowland areas within the estate which primarily service the agricultural and woodland management needs.

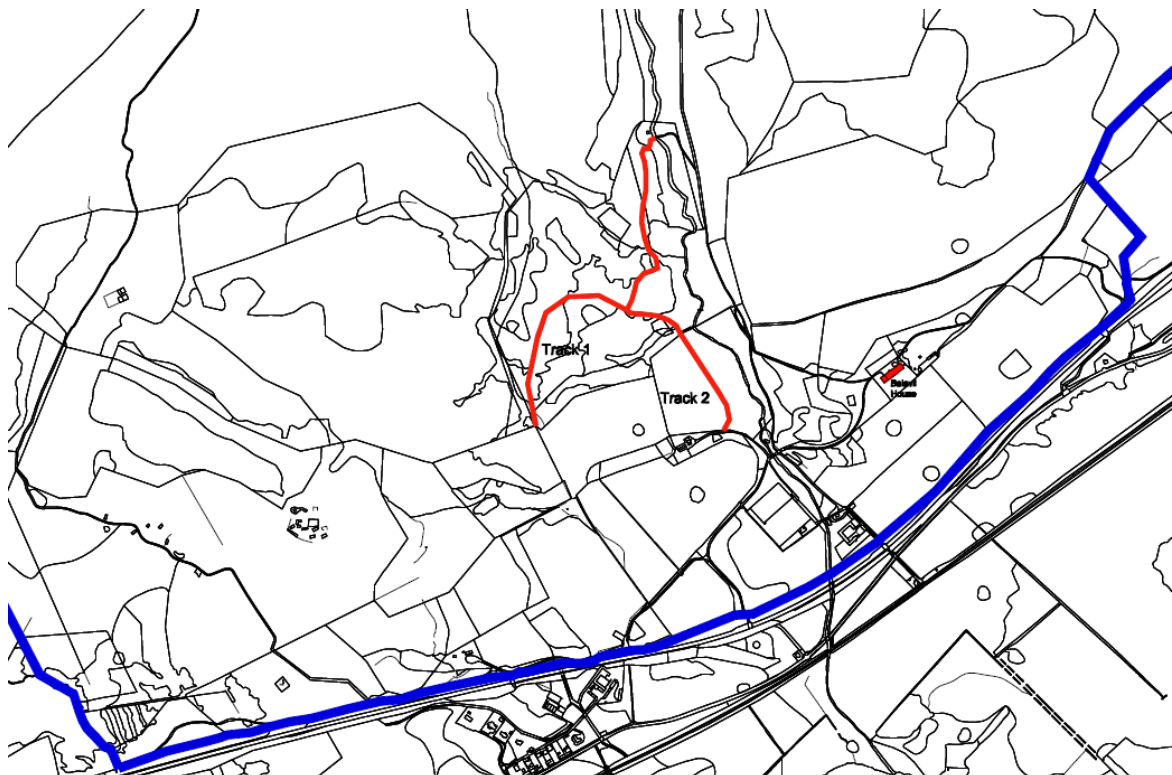
Description

2 no sections of existing tracks are primarily identified as requiring works, ranging from 294m in length to 1900m. Total distance – 1.49km or thereby.

These are as follows:-

Track 1. Track 2. Juniper – 1200m

Track 2. The kennels woodland – 294m



Track 1 - Juniper

Where Raitts woodland track terminates, Juniper is accessed via another gated entrance and heads in a northern direction over a steep knoll before diverting west, the track leads to a fork, which either lead to the kennel woodland (track 3) in a northerly direction towards the local watercourse. Although the track carries on over the watercourse via a ford crossing, the upgrading works would cease prior to the watercourse.

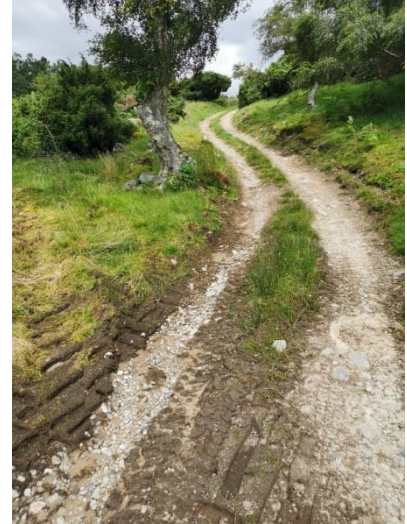
Juniper track serves as a mixed use, allowing cattle and other livestock to be transferred into the juniper woods from the adjacent fields to the south and also gives access northern access point into kennel woodland for management/forestry operations.



Access Junction between Raitts & Juniper



Track rising away from Raitts junction



Juniper track falling towards river

Track 2. – Kennels Woodland

This small section of woodland can either be accessed from the north or south entrances with a relatively short 294m section of track. The existing track serves as access that the woodland can be managed appropriately and access/egress is available for any forestry operations.

Right to Roam – Public Access

Balavil openly encourages members of the general public to enjoy the open countryside which the estate has to offer, it is also the Scottish Governments intention to uphold the right to roam the Scottish countryside and landscapes.

Repairs and improvements to a further 7.75km of existing track would result in providing an extension to the accessibility which is to be provided by the main hill road accessing the River Dulnain to the north of the estate.

Methods of Construction

The guidelines as set out by Scottish Natural Heritages Constructed Tracks in the Scottish Highlands (2015 edition), also Good Practise in Design, Construction & Use of floating roads in Peat (Aug 2010) and SEPA advise on Pollution Prevention and Environmental management. Flood risk, surface water drainage and water engineering works. Borrow pits and Restoration and habitat enhancement are to be followed during the planning, design and construction phase of the works.

Works to repair and improve the track would require the use of a 13 tonne tracked excavator to minimise wheel markings and assist compaction, a 10 tonne wheeled dumper and a vibrating roller. A stone crusher may be required on a loader for grading material onsite.

All plant and vehicles will be refuelled using on board pumps from bunded grab tanks to eliminate the risk of spills. A spill kit will be carried on site at all times.

For the most part of this existing track material will be obtained from 'winning' on site, from shallow borrow pits which run parallel to the upper most side of the track or from the material currently contained within the existing tracks. This method efficiently removes the requirement for hauling large quantities of imported material long distances from the public roads into the site.

Culverts may have to be installed/reinstated at various locations to take draining water away from the track. These will be placed at existing surface water crossings to improve and maintain the surface of the track by the use of large diameter piping. Twin walled pipe at either 450 or 600mm diameter with silt trap and splash stone detailing at each ingress and outlet. All carefully uplifted turfs will be laid aside for reinstatement onto bare surfaces to encourage regrowth. Parallel borrow pit drainage crossings will be installed at max 150m centres at locations to suit the existing topography.

All new borrow pits will be shallow dish shaped excavations and will not be cut into the hill, as per the recommendations set out by SNH 'Constructed Tracks in the Scottish Highlands'. All uplifted turfs will be laid aside for reinstatement over the surface of the borrow pit immediately after excavation.

Note – All uplifted turfs should be reinstated within 72 hours of excavation otherwise a method of hydration should be used to maintain sufficient moisture content in the turf.

Proposed Materials

- Onsite materials won from parallel borrow pits; generally all won, graded and worked within the circumference of the excavator.
- Subsidiary materials from saucer borrow pits.
- Larger boulders brought up and laid aside for use at watercourse culverts.
- Culverts – 450/600/900mm diameter twin wall plastic pipe.

Design – Associated Documents

- 1:25000 location plan
- 1:7500 site plan – inc delineation of the track and areas of specific features
- Construction Detail – Typical profile of repair to existing track inc. shallow borrow pit channel