



THE MOUNTAINEERING COUNCIL OF SCOTLAND

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Planning Forester
West Argyll Forest District
FCS

Dear Mr Wilson

The MCoS welcomes the opportunity to comment on this new track proposal at Cadderlie and Barrs as this is an important mountaineering area. In the case of this specific track, we welcome efforts to regenerate the native woodland in the adjacent SAC. The general MCoS position statement on vehicular tracks should give you a flavour of the mountaineering view on track construction, and the relevant sections are copied below.

- “Tracks have a detrimental effect on the landscape and wild land qualities. This negative impact is irrespective of purpose of the track. Repeated use of vehicles over the same ground erodes the soils, and can result in what is effectively, in terms of damage to these features, equivalent to track construction. Construction or upgrading of vehicular tracks should be avoided in remote areas.”
- “MCoS believes that unnecessary tracks should be removed, and that this be a requirement of construction when the purpose for which the track was constructed is no longer applicable.”

The MCoS notes that it is to be a construction along the line of a regularly used route that has suffered damage due to that use. Our first comment would be that it is unfortunate for the condition to have reached the state requiring track construction, and would suggest that all possible other alternatives be considered beforehand. An alternative option to consider would be to use small tracked vehicles rather than those used as indicated by the proposed 2.5metre width track. Such vehicles are regularly used successfully in other locations for deer control. This change of vehicle may avoid the need for track construction, the latter being the preferred option.

Should it be shown necessary to construct the proposed track, the major impact of concern is to the visual amenity and landscape of a new man-made feature. Such additions should always be avoided unless absolutely necessary. Although the track would be shielded by the forest block, the indication that felling may occur at some time would need planned for in terms of the track. At that time re-profiling and treatments to encourage re-greening would be necessary to reduce the visual impact. This should be built into any felling plan.

The MCoS position is that all tracks must only be constructed with a specific purpose and should be reinstated in the event of that purpose no longer being applicable. In order to deliver this, the track should have a reinstatement plan that would come into effect should the need for it no longer exist.

With the above provisos, the MCoS has no objection to the track being constructed.

Please do not hesitate to contact me to discuss these issues further.

Yours sincerely

Hebe Carus
Access & Conservation Officer