

Review of Single Core Path – SU06.02

SU06.02 Loch Brora – West Track, Sutherland

This core path is no longer accessible at Kilbraur due to the loss of a suspension bridge across the River Brora. Section 20C of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 permits The Highland Council to make a single amendment to its core path plan where they consider it appropriate.

This document sets out some of the options which may be taken to amend the core paths plan with particular regards to the directions set out in Section 17(3) of the same act;

(3) In drawing up the plan, the local authority shall have regard to—

(a) the likelihood that persons exercising rights of way and access rights will do so by using core paths;

(b) the desirability of encouraging such persons to use core paths; and

(c) the need to balance the exercise of those rights and the interests of the owner of the land in respect of which those rights are exercisable.

This document is not a formal consultation for the purposes of Section 20D of the 2003 act, it is a starting point for discussion with the Sutherland Local Access Forum and interested parties.

Outline Options

1. Divert the core path

Most obvious option is to divert the core path so it leads from the track at Kilbraur to the Strath Brora public road by Ascoile via another route. There are limited options for this as the River Brora is a significant width, the fords that exist are only suitable for vehicles. An existing bridge is available at Dalvaich but the longer term use of this bridge for public use is unknown. If not needed for land management purposes there is again the possibility of this bridge being removed.

2. Realigned the core path to terminate in a different locus

If a route from Kilbraur to the Strath Brora public road is not achievable then an alternative terminus point for the core path could be considered. For example terminate the core path at Kilbraur, Loch Brora, Carrol or Farlary via the Kilbraur Wind Farm track. This later route was considered during the early stages of the previous review of the Sutherland Core Paths Plan

3. Remove the section of core path no longer accessible

Similar to the railway level crossings the lost bridge section could be removed from the core path plan and the remainder which is still accessible be kept. Not a very attractive nor practical option given a level crossing can still be accessed by the public, though the river is not accessible.

4. Remove the whole core path

As the title suggests removed all of SU06.02. Unlikely to satisfy wider access authority considerations as set out elsewhere in Section 17 of the 2003 act.

Other Considerations

The core path past Carrol farm is not clearly defined, the old road (which the core path used as a base line) passes along fencing and across open fields with little evident path/track formation seen on the ground. There is an opportunity to look at this section of the core path SU06.02 whilst undertaking this review.

