



From Julian Paren, Convenor of Transition Black Isle 22 June 2022

Councillor Sarah Atkin
Councillor Lesley Johnston
Councillor Morvern-May MacCallum

A short briefing on the Avoch to Munloch Active Travel Route and the involvement of Highland Council

First attempt

An Active Travel Route is proposed beside the B9181 and A835 from the Munloch War Memorial below Drumderfit Hill, through Munloch to Avoch. Transition Black Isle started campaigning for the adoption of an Active Travel Route in 2014, but, after securing funding from Sustrans and commissioning surveys, the project was dropped because of land manager opposition.

Revived project

This project was revived in 2019 with new funding from Sustrans and with new consultants, Pell Frischmann. In 2020 the active travel route became an objective in the Draft Inner Moray Firth Local Development Plan. In 2021 there was a public consultation and the concept of an off-road route received the backing of the two local community councils. After the public consultation Pell Frischmann, were employed to scope the route and drew up preliminary plans. All along, the land managers have opposed the plan because of the loss of agricultural land amongst others. Officers in Highland Council have joined meetings of the team and also attended meetings with NFU officials who were brought in as facilitators by the affected land managers. All the contact with Highland Council was carried out by Councillor Gordon Adam and by Pell Frischmann. Latterly Sustrans has taken a more direct approach with Highland Council which has led to the requirement to prepare an official Participation Request to Highland Council. This has been submitted recently. Transition Black Isle has asked Highland Council to continue the negotiations with land managers, and ultimately to shoulder the responsibility for further planning and commissioning the construction work should that stage be reached.

The Black Isle and Highland Council

I hope this brief introduction will allow you to understand the current status of Transition Black Isle's aspiration for a Multi-purpose Path between Avoch to beyond Munloch. It is the relationship with Highland Council that will develop in the months ahead as the terms of the Participation Request are deliberated and then jointly agreed between Transition Black Isle, Sustrans and Highland Council. The final text has to be agreed. I hope in whatever way you can you will like to see this path come

to fruition during your first tenancy on Highland Council. The path had the unwavering support of Craig Fraser, Jennifer Barclay and Gordon Adam, your predecessors.

I attach an article from the Spring 2021 Chatterbox magazine which gives the position at that time. Things have moved on, but this gives more background should this interest you. I am also more than happy to give you a fuller account should you wish to know more specific detail.

Yours sincerely

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