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From: Tarwinska, Rena [mailto:rena.tarwinska@forestry.gsi.gov.uk]

Sent: 24 April 2006 15:46

To: niall

Subject: RE: Carron - outstanding issues

Niall

Thanks for this. I'll tackle the various aspects as per your numbering:

1) The side pieces are for any notices/events FCS, or perhaps Clanranald, or CVDG want to put up. I didn't specifically request them - they were made in response to discussions between Andy G & the supplier.

2) I've spoken to Alan Chalmers about progress on branding. He's writing up report from our end Feb meeting, with the various threads of discussion suggesting ways forward. He'll finish by beginning of May. If you want, I could order a digital print run of 500-1000 of the temporary A3 maps as supplied for the launch. Andy G could have some at CV to give out too. Let me know. You are right that it makes sense to sort out the branding before producing permanent versions. The photomap is because of requests by walkers & horseriders on where the roads were in CV. I still want to get these deadend roads linked by all-user trails.

3) The FC website now has a blurb on the trails. I'm hoping you guys can send me a few action pics to put on it? The main issue with putting the map pdf on the website is that it is designed to be used as A3 & v few folk have A3 printers at home. But it will go on website, accessed via the mtb portal. It's been confirmed that FC cannot supply pdfs of maps to 3rd parties, because our licence with OS doesn't cover such use. But the CVDG website can link to the map on FCS site, which is nearly as good.

4) FCS said that its contribution to this project would be repairs to the road & carpark. CVDG do not have the responsibility for how FCS makes its contribution. CVDG drafted a specification and obtained a contractor's quote, but FCS had already made arrangements with its Civil Engineering department to carry out the works. This is the main forest entrance for a very large commercial forest and has to carry HGVs throughout the year. It is notoriously difficult and expensive to maintain due firstly to the heavy traffic that has to use it, and secondly its alignment is almost level so it does not drain well and is prone to pot-holing.

In the professional opinion of the FCS Civil Engineering department (which builds and maintains thousands of miles of forest road throughout Scotland) the road is fit for its prime purpose, which is timber haulage. Throughout the country, recreational facilities are often accessed along timber traffic roads. FCS endeavours to maintain the roads in a condition more suited to light, road-going passenger vehicles but cannot give a complete guarantee. In this case, after the FC maintenance, the failure of the Kirk 'O Muir public road bridge meant that unusually large tonnages of timber had to be diverted through the forest during the winter months. This resulted in accelerated deterioration. Whilst unfortunate, this was both unavoidable and in keeping with the prime function of the road itself.

FCS will endeavour to maintain the road to a higher standard than required for timber traffic but we do not have unlimited resources to apply to any one section of road.

This issue of forest roads being deemed unsuitable by recreational users is an issue in many places. The remit of the Civil Engineers is to produce roads to haul timber. Motor rally organisers/entrants have been dismayed at the development of techniques (as result of legislation re quarries, economics, environmental considerations) which often don't suit their sport. But these techniques & practices are good for timber haulage which is the purpose of all forest roads.

5) This is in hand, & delay is due to internal FCS issues, rather than anything to do with the trail or CVDG.

6) Power barrow - v sorry - it's been forgotten. Pl phone Andy direct to organise. He's expecting your call. We are short of trailers just now, so can either offer it to you now with no trailer, or if you wait till June, you can use it with trailer. Can you make sure Andy gets a copy of the operator's cert of competence pl.

7) noted

8) Since this was sent out, we've had a bit of a rethink, and are looking at the idea of a Concordat between the various partners looking to develop CV. So NLC, StCo, CVDG, and FCS would have a setup & a platform from which to base future plans & work. I'm just about to send a draft version to you, NB it is very much a draft. Once we all had the chance to think about any changes, we can have a meeting of all the parties to discuss & agree way forward.

9) This is a clearfell that is part of a parcel of timber, going up for sale in Sept. The entire sale will take from Oct to Feb to work, but the section at C'ball Run will be about a month. I've just spoken to the Forester managing it, and he reckons it would be worked about Xmas, which probably means Jan 07. He's writing into the sale details that the trail must be protected and undamaged by the work. The felling will visually link the trail with the burn much better, and although the site will look raw for a year or two, the end result will be a big improvement.

For information, there will also be a clearfell from summer to Feb, at the end of the middle road that Eas Dhu joins. So there will be timber traffic from there out past the carpark for the period. All par for the course I'm afraid. Forests are not the unchanging entities many folk think they are.

10) Do you mean finishing the rest of the ascent? And/or the round the loch route? Sorry I'm not sure exactly what you mean. Neither is contentious, but pl clarify. How much funding have you got this time & who from?

11) Can be included in the Concordat.

12) see 8)

From: niall [mailto:niallt@████████████████████]
Sent: 05 April 2006 13:21
To: Tarwinska, Rena
Cc: group@carronvalley.org.uk
Subject: Carron

Rena

Thanks for your letter 21st March received 28th March in respect of FCS National Cycling Strategy. With no disrespect to yourself, we remain unhappy about the veracity of this process at a strategic level and we will be writing to Michael to that effect. I will copy you in on this letter.

The launch has passed now and it will be for others to decide the fallout from the events leading up to this. Despite all this, and the weather of course, the day was a huge success and I'm sure that you at least will have seen the huge cross section of support for further development at Carron Valley. You have stated a willingness to move forward and experience has shown that CVDG can do business with you. Both parties need consensus on the way forward and to pick up where we left off. I'd like to start by listing all of the outstanding issues, some of which are obviously contentious however, they need to be resolved and we don't see any of them

as being remotely insurmountable.

1. We take it the A1 sized laminate trail map and satellite image were temporary. Can you confirm when the full sized permanent versions will be affixed or are you awaiting resolution of the branding issue? Obviously we are very concerned now that we now have 'a product' but one with some vital missing ingredients. We were also wondering what the purpose of the 'side boards' were?

2. What now on Branding? We are stalled again pending Allan's deliberations and we are very concerned that this will just continue to drag on. CVDG are not wedded to the name Kelpie if a more suitable alternative exists. We know Fiona Murray was displeased with 'our name.' We wondered if she had some suggestions of her own?

3. Similarly re the Trail Leaflet. Can we at least get the temporary leaflet up on your website along with something about the trails?

4. Re 'the potholes': I regret having to put this in such blunt terms but we'd like to see closure on this. The de facto position, is that FCS are disbursing funding on CVDG behalf to rebuild the road. It follows that CVDG have a public duty to demonstrate the same level of probity with this as it would with any aspect of it's project management (Grieves, for instance, were instructed to return to rectify one section of the trail.)

Both CVDG and FCS recognised the need to rebuild the road - your email 19/04/05 refers. To that end, CVDG drew up a specification, Grieves tendered against this and they could in fact have continued seamlessly on site concurrent with their work on the trails. We passed the pricing information to FCS however, FCS took the unilateral decision to employ another contractor and the road was simply patched and rolled. The issue of which contractor undertook the work whether FCS paid them £5300 and the subsequent deterioration of the road due to diverted traffic is not relevant. What we have on site is a job that does not meet the specification and is not fit for purpose. I'm sure you can understand our position - particularly within the overall context of the project: FCS listed a number of rectification issues regarding trail construction - all of which were addressed by CVDG to the letter and at not inconsiderable time and expense. There cannot be one rule for CVDG and another for FCS. As you know, every aspect of CVDG work has been treated with equal rigour therefore, our position should come as no surprise. That is our problem with the road.

5. During the meeting of 8th November you indicated that FCS would be signing both the forest roads and in particular the Funpark. Given the attention the FP received from your colleagues, the discord this then caused and the considerable period of time elapsed since, CVDG are very surprised that the FP signage wasn't in place for the launch?

6. Power Barrow ETA mid Feb?

7. In terms of the launch, your points below were noted at the time and if that was the state of play which had remained - so be it. For the record, and as you state yourself - this project was community led. It is therefore both incredible and highly distasteful to witness the cynical use of 'the protocol hand' by FCS. I gave you my personal assurance that we would check this first with both Ministers directly and I delivered on this undertaking. You were the first person to be called

when this had been checked and the date confirmed by The Minister. I take exception to the contempt with which CVDG was subsequently treated by your colleagues. The timing and nature of events that unfolded in the few available hours leading up to the launch are not lost on us - they are quite simply beyond the pale.

8. FCS draft agreement per Helen Kennedy 14/03/06. As promised, this was reviewed at the monthly committee meeting on 4th April. Helen described this as being based on 'the draft agreement that you agreed with Rena' and 'a fairly straightforward permission.' CVDG current agreement runs into 2007. Helen's draft bears little resemblance to this or the discussions we had with yourself and CVDG cannot sign it, in it's current form. We need sight of the plan Helen was to forward and we need sit down with you and discuss the areas of concern.

9. The Group are concerned at the white (felling?) markers that have appeared on Cannonball Run and the impact thinning operations will have here. Hopefully you can let us know exactly what's to happen and allay any fears over trail / visual damage.

10. Outstanding Funding and completion of existing permissions for Phase 1. I flagged this up some weeks ago however, you didn't respond specifically on this point. We have funding in place and wish to see this completed asap.

11. Maintenance. This has been flagged by FCS as a major issue. In terms of Carron Valley, we don't see it this way at all. Firstly, due to the ground conditions prevalent at CV these trails were overbuilt and there is no as dug anywhere. Anyone that doubts this need only look at the photographic evidence on the cd in our information pack. Whilst we cannot pretend that there will be zero maintenance, there are a number of ways of achieving this on a cost neutral basis. We don't intend to list these here - it is all about a willingness on the part of FCS to permit development to allow these structures to be put in place.

12. Joint meeting. Yes, as soon as possible please as all of the above issues need to be addressed. In terms of a Facilitator, CVDG have no desire to see another party becoming involved. I don't believe that you or anyone from CVDG or Robert or Mark need this? I obviously cannot speak for either NLC or SC but I'd also be surprised if they considered it necessary to go down this route. CVDG wish to see an end to the continued inertia at Carron Valley and this is within FCS gift. If you are suggesting that the appointment of a Facilitator has become a pre requisite to talks with FCS then you would need to confirm if you are paying for this and to suggest who you have in mind.

Thanks

Niall

Niall Thomson

Chairman

CVDG

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