

Brief for Carron Valley Catering – April 08

Carron Valley Forest is part of the national forest estate, and is managed by Forestry Commission Scotland via Scottish Lowlands Forest District. The forest is roughly equidistant from Stirling, Falkirk, and the northeastern fringes of Glasgow. The main forest carpark is near the east end of the Carron Valley reservoir. It gives access to c. 10.5km waymarked mountainbike trails, and informal access to forest roads with views of surrounding hills and the reservoir. There are picnic tables at the carpark have these been installed recently as we haven't seen any in the area? There is a further large carpark a few yards away, used for events and overflow parking, and which will serve a replica mediaeval fort currently under construction by Clanranald, using mainly volunteer labour over a period of years. At the west end of the reservoir there is a further small carpark, and this serves mainly hillwalkers accessing Meikle Bin and the wider Campsie Hills. A plan for increased public access in the forest is currently being developed, but for the period of this tender, assume only the existing facilities.

It's vital to mention the multi-use trail here as this will be a big pull for families and people seeking general recreation – it will produce a huge increase in numbers. The trail will be completed in 2008 and will definitely be in-scope for the purposes of this exercise.

I don't think it's necessary to condemn the development plan to 2010 and writing it off as out-of-scope. The CVP has every intention of getting this plan moving by Aug 2008 latest, regardless of FCS level of ambition / involvement, so development will happen in 2009. We should be promoting the fact that there will be opportunities for increased business at the venue and I think we should go as far as outlining the proposed developments to allow bidders to begin thinking about potential new business opportunities.

Visitors mostly live within one hour's travel, and are on site for 30mins-3hrs, or more in case of hillwalkers. School parties attend most days during term time to use the mountainbike trails. There is good usage of the forest from March to October, and at weekends throughout the year. Mountainbikers are on site every day. Estimate of annual visitors to Carron Valley is about 20000, derived from the FCS All Forest Survey 2006.

There are 3 main market segments:

- mountainbikers
- casual visitors – families, and groups of 2-3 often older adults. These visitors do not walk far.
- hillwalkers

In addition there are

- about 4 events per year at weekends, involving 100-300 people eg enduro horseriding, cycle events, Clanranald events
- Occasional school visits as part of educational work by Forestry Commission Scotland and Clanranald.

Where did the information regarding market sectors and demographics come from?

With regards to visitor numbers the figure provided gives an outdated picture. The all forest survey was published in 2006, with the sample data being taken at Carron over Q4 2005 and Q1 2006. We know 3 of the surveys were done in 2005 and 1 in 2006. These visits were carried out before any of the MTB trails were officially opened,

meaning that the 20K figure was derived from a sample that missed out a large chunk of visitors who now come to the forest. Irrespective of whether the data captured the bike riders or not its now 2 years old so we feel the using that estimation of visitors paints a misleading picture – in reality the visits must be far higher than 20,000. CVDG Suggest FCS research team revisits this data in conjunction with bike counter data to produce a more realistic figure.

CVDG / CVP will also make the counter data available to bidders as this provides useful information which can help decide peak times and help steer opening days / hours.

The Site

- There are toilets on site, managed by Forestry Commission Scotland.
- There is no permanent structure for catering on site, nor will there be for the period. “However bidders are invited to explore the possibility of providing a temporary structure on site”.
- Drinking water and electricity are not available. *Could this be achieved through a feed from the old office block? We’ve got running water at the toilets now. It is a basic sanitary requirement and would help us get more interest.*
- Mobile phone reception from Carron Valley is unreliable, and you should not assume mobile phones work at the carpark. There is a public phone box within ½ml east of the main forest entrance.
- The carpark is locked overnight each night, but occasionally may be left open.
- Safety and security of any vehicles, temporary structures and equipment left on site is your responsibility.

What We Are Looking For

Forestry Commission Scotland, Scottish Lowlands Forest District requires a catering service, either mobile or off site but nearby, for visitors at Carron Valley Forest main carpark.

There is no need to suggest an “off site” option here. FCS jurisdiction ends at the forest boundary, so anything off site would not be governed by a lease arrangement involving you. In any case, we are talking about on site facilities i.e. in or near the car park

A caterer wishing to tender for this provision of this service should take into consideration the following points, and state their willingness to:

- 1) Provide fresh cooked food.
- 2) Not to provide fried food. *Agree with RH that we remove this until we see what bids are returned. We need to encourage bids and then filter them*
- 3) Keep the carpark and surrounding area clear of any resulting litter
- 4) Report back information relating to the overall management of the forest, and wellbeing of visitors to the local FCS Ranger eg accidents in the forest, antisocial behaviour, informal feedback from visitors.
- 5) Keep regular hours, and advertise them on site. These may vary by day of the week and season/school holidays, and the tenderer will liase with FCS prior to changing opening hours.

Note the sale of tobacco will not be permitted.

The agreement is to run from mid 2008 for one year, and is subject to changes as agreed with FCS / [the CVP](#) to best address the market. Subject to satisfactory performance and outturn in the first year, the contract may be extended for up to two years till January 2011.

You are welcome to visit the site informally during daylight hours, but any accompanied visit can be arranged through Rena Tarwinska 01555 660190.

Please supply the following to reach the address below by 2pm Monday 9 June.

- 1) Business plan, which must include
 - a) weekly routine
 - b) type & description of facility
 - c) goods offered
 - d) staff numbers involved with this service
 - e) clean up procedure
 - f) procedure for interaction with FCS
 - g) projected return

Please expand on the above to demonstrate how the service will address the needs of the visitors.

- 1) Proposed rent paid to FCS
- 2) Copy of current employer's and public liability insurance certificates
- 3) Copy of current Health & Hygiene Certificate (or equivalent)
- 4) Bank reference
- 5) Details of two referees

[Is this too much detail for an EOI? I thought the first thing to do was register the interest based on an outline proposal the gather detailed information through a detailed bid process?](#)

Please note the following:

- The document is without prejudice.
- Important Note: This is not a contract in terms of the Requirements of Writing (Scotland) Act 1995. Any contract would be a self-proving contract to be agreed between Parties.
- Note - FC does not bind itself to accept the highest or any tender submitted as a result of this brief.

End of Brief