



Cormanachan Woodlands Association
Final Quotation Path Construction and Upgrading Cormanachan Woodlands
30th December 2018



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1. Confidentiality

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2. Introduction - Please note section 2.1 to 5.1 has been amended and is on pages 20 to 22.

2.1 The Cormonachan Woodlands are located on the western side of Loch Goil off the minor road between Lochgoilhead and Carrick Castle, within the Argyll Forest Park and Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park. The woodlands extend to approximately 60 hectares and are described as ancient Atlantic semi natural woodland predominantly of oak and hazel species. The Cormonachan Woodlands Association (CWA) is a not-for-profit organisation who manage the woodlands on behalf of the community for conservation, education and recreation by agreement with Forest Enterprise Scotland and education provider Ardroy Outdoor Education Centre (AOEC Trust Ltd).

2.2 The CWA are successfully implementing an ongoing programme of conservation work including the removal of non-native species from within the woodlands and have developed a 2.5km circular route incorporating educational facilities and a carpark in the northern extent of the woodlands.

2.3 The CWA would like to further develop access provision to the southern area of woodlands by constructing a 2km path of width 1.8m, linking the spectacular Cormonachan Burn waterfalls and the ancient settlement / homestead of Upper Cormonachan. The CWA approached McGowan Ltd in August 2018 to carry out a path survey of an indicative route from the Contemplation Shelter on the existing circular route, south to Upper Cormonachan and the waterfalls and beyond to the east to a proposed new car park off the minor road at the Cormonachan Burn road bridge about 2 miles north of Carrick Castle. This report provides a quotation for carrying out the construction of the route.

2.4 Based in the heart of the Cairngorms National Park, McGowan Ltd employs 50 full time staff, with a vast range of experience and expertise in the environmental and civils sectors. With an annual turnover of £4million the company delivers a range of small to large scale specialist environmental and civils projects in sensitive locations throughout Scotland. Through attention to detail in project development, bespoke solutions for project delivery and working to externally audited ISO accreditations 9001, 14001 & 18001, McGowan Ltd give value for money and have been successful in building long-term client relationships. More information on the range of services offered by the Company can be found at www.mcgowanltd.co.uk.

3. Path Route Survey and Sub-Section Summary

3.1 McGowan Ltd carried out a walkover of an indicative route with members of the CWA on 19th September 2018. It was concluded that it would be necessary to vary and microsite the indicative route in some locations to minimise the impact on the semi natural woodland, take account of ground conditions and facilitate better path alignment. In addition, the proposed route should be split into logical sub-sections of work to be constructed in a single sequenced phase. Due to the length of the proposed route and access constraints from the existing car park and circular route to the north and proposed new car park to the south, identification of a more centralised point for access to facilitate the work would be required from the forest road to the west at NS 18970 97032, through discussion and agreement with Forest Enterprise Scotland. A detailed route survey was carried out on 20th September 2018 assisted by a CWA representative. For the purposes of the quotation the route has been broken down into 6 sub-sections, namely A-B, B-C, D-E, E-F, E-G & G-H and

additionally for the construction of the new carpark, as per the site map. A follow up site visit was conducted on 11th December 2018 to ground mark the proposed route with orange marker flags and record a GPS track.

3.2 Section A-B, 676m (Contemplation Shelter to “PAWS”): Section A-B of the proposed route proceeds south on a new alignment from the Contemplation Shelter off the existing circular route through semi natural woodland for approximately 539m, to the edge of a clear fell area. The route then swings slightly southwest avoiding the area of clear fell, along an overgrown quad route formation for a further 137m to an existing gateway to the fenced enclosure of young native planting known as the “Paws” area. The path corridor surveyed favours alignment through open areas and sections of non-native planting/regeneration which would require felling, possibly by CWA members. The route has been micro sited to avoid any oak trees, though some sensitive coppicing of Hazel, Birch and Alder may be required by agreement, to create a clear walking corridor.

3.3 Section B-C, 411m (Existing Quad Route Formation Through “Paws”): Section B-C of the proposed route along an overgrown quad route formation through the “Paws” proceeds northwest for approximately 149m and then southwest for a further 262m to an existing gateway and the junction with an existing overgrown quad route formation from the forest road. The first 149m of the route is relatively steep and aligned on a series of switch backs which could be realigned slightly to reduce gradient.

3.4 Section D-E, 274m (Site Access Route) Section D-E of the proposed route from the forest road proceeds southeast for approximately 274m along an overgrown quad route formation to a proposed spur path to the ancient settlement / homestead of Upper Cormonachan. The route requires to be realigned slightly between 204m – 221m to reduce gradient. Point D of the route is immediately off the forest road at NS 18970 97032 and would form the main access point and laydown area to facilitate the work. The forest road is accessed from the vicinity of Lettermay to the north, off the minor road to Carrick Castle.

3.5 Section E-F, 229m (Spur Path to Upper Cormonachan): Section E-F of the proposed route proceeds southeast for 126m on a new alignment to the ruins of the ancient settlement / homestead of Upper Cormonachan and beyond for a further 103m to the top of the waterfalls on the Cormonachan Burn.

3.6 Section E-G, 209m (Waterfall Link Path): Section E-G of the proposed route continues southeast along an overgrown quad route formation from point E for approximately 66m, the route requires to be realigned slightly between 15m – 39m to reduce gradient. The route continues on a new alignment for a further 73m through an area of clear fell. The route then swings south for a further 70m on a new alignment through more open semi natural woodland to a proposed viewpoint adjacent to the main waterfalls on the Cormonachan Burn.

3.7 Section G-H, 182m (New Carpark Link Path): Section G-H proceeds east for 182m on a new alignment through more open semi natural woodland along the northern side of the waterfalls to the proposed location of the new carpark and junction with the minor road and road bridge over the Cormonachan Burn, south to Carrick Castle. There is a short steep section of the route adjacent to the waterfalls, constrained by rock outcrops, where a technical section of stone pitched path and revetment would be required and materials would have to be imported by helicopter.

3.8 Proposed New Carpark: The location of the new carpark immediately west of the minor road is relatively constrained due to the Cormonachan Burn to the south and an electricity pole to the north, however visibility splays onto the minor road are favourable with planning guidelines. An electricity line also runs overhead in the vicinity of the car park location.

As a consequence, a car park of modest size (20m x 20m) and of similar dimension to the existing car park is proposed. Liaison with the electricity provider will be necessary to ensure that necessary consents and a safe method of work are in place prior to construction. HSE GS6 Guidelines will be followed for the avoidance of danger from overhead power lines. An excavator equipped with a height restriction device may be required. The carpark bell mouth entrance, layout and drainage regime will require prior approval by the planning authority. CWA have engaged the services of an Architect to submit a planning application for the car park.

3.9 Viewpoints/Resting places: Four locations along the route have been identified as viewpoint/resting places. These will be of modest size (4m x 4m) and an allowance has been made to provide natural boulder resting perches won from the vicinity of the site.

4. Access Constraints

4.1 Access for construction of the proposed route from the existing carpark to the north is not desirable due to its relative remoteness from the majority of the route and the scale of work required. The carpark is relatively small and of an insufficient size to accommodate the provision of welfare facilities, equipment storage and a stockpiling area for materials, while also catering for existing recreational uses and activities being carried out by CWA. In addition, access to the start of the proposed route from the Contemplation Shelter would be along a section of the existing circular route from the carpark. This section of path is relatively steep and aligned on a series of switch backs which are unsuitable for importing the material quantities required.

4.2 Utilising the new car park to the south as an access point for construction of the proposed route is only viable for a very limited part of Section G-H immediately west of the carpark. Due to the gradient of part of the route running parallel to the waterfalls, where a stone pitched path is proposed, machinery access for import of materials is not viable.

4.3 Through negotiation with Forest Enterprise Scotland it is therefore proposed that the site access point for the work would be from point D at NS 18970 97032. A laydown area for the provision of welfare facilities, equipment and material delivery and stockpiling could be formed in the vicinity of the turning area just south of the access point off the forest road. The forest road is accessed from the vicinity of Lettermay to the north, off the minor road to Carrick Castle.

4.4 The existing quad route to the southeast of access point D, Section D-E could be upgraded to facilitate access for path construction of Sections E-F, E-G and the western part of Section G-H, with the eastern part of Section G-H being constructed from the new car park at point H.

4.5 The existing quad route to the northeast of access point D, Section B-C could be upgraded to facilitate access for path construction of Section A-B. In addition, by upgrading Section B-C which passes through the "Paws" area of recent native re-planting, access provision for on going management will be enhanced. Additionally, with agreement of Forest Enterprise Scotland, linking the proposed route with the existing forest road provides an opportunity for provision of an alternative circular route north rather than using the minor road and ties in with additional access points to the CWA managed woodlands.

5. Tree Protection Measures

5.1 For Section A-B, part of Section E-G and Section G-H the route passes through semi natural woodland. The path corridor surveyed favours alignment through open areas and sections of non-native planting/regeneration which would