

# AB54 PATH NETWORK - PATH SURVEY RECORD

## **CONFIDENTIAL** *for HDDT internal use only*

Routes surveyed were based on the shortlist of routes and preferred route option(s) agreed with the HDDT AB54 path network steering group, using existing paths and tracks plus new sections of path as required. Alternative options have been identified in the text and on maps where relevant. Recommendations are based on the most viable, sustainable and cost-effective route to achieve the required objectives, recognising that in some cases alternative options might ideally be preferred longer term if and when sufficient funding is available or agreement can be reached with necessary farmers, land owners and managers.

Routes which are currently accessible which HDDT may wish to consider promoting without further capital improvement are noted as such and highlighted in the accompanying path database Excel spreadsheet. All other sections of path or proposed route in the notes which follow require further consideration, consultation and in some cases improvement before promotion.

The information which follows was correct, to the best of our knowledge, at date of research, consultation and survey between September 2019 and July 2020. Structures such as bridges directly relevant to the proposed paths/routes have been included in comments but further professional structural engineering survey would be required to determine their stability, functionality, sustainability and work required to support required use.

Map extracts using the latest available 1:25000 OS maps available at commencement of the contract, supplied by [www.ukmapcentre.com](http://www.ukmapcentre.com), have been reproduced in line with Crown copyright and database rights 2019 under Ordnance Survey Licence Number 100049857. Further reproduction of these maps would require confirmation of licensing permission with Ordnance Survey.

## **Vyv Wood-Gee**

**Countryside Management Consultant**  
Shortrigg, Hoddum, Lockerbie DG11 1AW  
Tel: 01576 300485 Mobile: 0 7711 307980  
E-mail: [vyv@vyvwoodgee.com](mailto:vyv@vyvwoodgee.com)

in association with

## **Chris Wood-Gee**

**Sustainability and access consultant**

## **Alex Bryden**

**GIS mapping specialist**



**Reference numbers below refer to GIS overview map**

## **Strategic routes**

SR1	Huntly to Dufftown
SR2	Huntly to Insch
SR3	Huntly to Keith

## **Community connector routes**

### **North-east of Huntly**

CCNE1	Forgue to Inverkeithny (not surveyed, Aberdeenshire Council dealing with)
CCNE2	Huntly to Fergie
CCNE3	Huntly to Rothiemay
CCNE4	Rothiemay to Fergie
CCNE5	Rothiemay to Tarryblake
CCNE6	Tarryblake to Keith

### **South-east of Huntly**

CCSE1	Gartly to Kennethmont
CCSE2	Kennethmont to Clatt
CCSE3	Kennethmont to Greenmyres
CCSE4	Rhynie to Kennethmont
CCSE5	Rhynie to Clatt

### **South-west of Huntly**

CCSW1	Cabrach to Haugh of Glass
CCSW2	Rhynie to Gartly
CCSW3	Rhynie to Lumsden

### **North-west of Huntly**

CCNW1	Huntly to Cairnie
-------	-------------------

## **Recreational routes**

### **Poem Path**

RRPP1	Clashmach Loop
RRPP2	Clashmach to the Bin
RRPP3	Bin to Battle Hill
RRPP4	Battle Hill loop
RRPP5	Battle to Ba Hill
RRPP6	Ba Hill to Clashmach

### **North-east of Huntly**

RRNE1	Aberchirder to Auchinderran
RRNE2	Auchinderran path network
RRNE3	Colonel Shand's monument
RRNE4	Conniecleugh and Crow Wood loop
RRNE5	Forgue and Bogcoup Loop
RRNE6	Fourman Hill
RRNE7	Queen Mary's Road
RRNE8	Rothiemay and Queen Mary's Bridge
RRNE9	Tarryblake River Isla loop

### **South-east of Huntly**

RRSE1	Ardlair stone circle
RRSE2	Clatt drove road
RRSE3	Clatt, Gordonston and Knockespock
RRSE4	Correen Hills Coffin Road
RRSE5	Hill of Foudland
RRSE6	Hill of Tillymorgan
RRSE7	Mars Road
RRSE8	Red Hill
RRSE9	Strathbogie old roads
RRSE10	Ythanwells and Bogfouton

### **South-west of Huntly**

RRSW1	The Buck circular
RRSW2	Corinacy Loop
RRSW3	Grouse Inn south circular
RRSW4	Dumeath stone circle and Walla Kirk
RRSW5	Edinglassie Loop
RRSW6	Rhynie circular

<b>Name of route</b>	<b>SR1 Huntly to Dufftown strategic link</b>
<b>Start location</b>	Huntly town centre
<b>Finish location</b>	Dufftown town centre
<b>Constituent sections</b>	DU8/HU18 Huntly to Dunbennan (see OAT report spring 2019) Dunbennan to Terryhorn Terryhorn to Glass Glass to Auchindoun Castle Auchindoun Castle to Dufftown
<b>Summary description</b>	
Proposed mid-distance mainly off-road route between Huntly and Dufftown, one of the four strategic links identified in the AB54 path network strategy brief which HDDT were keen to see developed linking Huntly and its neighbouring towns. Proposed route mainly follows existing farm and estate tracks and uses existing bridges for burn and river crossings, with only three short sections with no existing path or track.	
<b>Justification for development/promotion</b>	Proposed link between proposed terminus of the Gordon Way at Huntly Castle and the Speyside Way in Dufftown which would complement and consolidate the overall network of long distance routes in north-east Scotland. Longer term, if the Deveron Way were created, this would also potentially create a circular route with the Moray Coastal Trail as the northern arm. This route also has potential to create or form part of an “outer circular” route around Huntly/AB54 postcode area using the existing Islay Way as the north-west arm from Dufftown to Keith and the proposed Huntly-Keith strategic route to link back to Huntly
<b>Current use</b>	Varies between sections but generally very low. No evidence of anyone currently walking between Huntly and Dufftown as single route.
<b>Potential use</b>	Potentially multi-use (walking, MTB, horse riding)
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Lack of existing functional or promoted off-road route Landowner discouragement of recreational access
<b>Legal status</b>	None but majority of proposed route fully accessible under Land Reform Act
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	Sensitivity re. access development or promotion through or around Aswanley
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Viability depends on negotiating mutually acceptable route with relevant landowners
<b>Survey date</b>	September 2019 - June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	See separate sectional reports which follow
<b>Priority for development / promotion</b>	HDDT will need to decide how much of a priority this route is to the overall network. Proposed that it be medium term priority to allow time to resolve issues relating to landowner resistance to access development and promotion.
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	See separate sectional reports

<b>GIS map ref/ name of route</b>	<b>Dunbennan to Cairnford Bridge</b>
<b>Start location</b>	Dunbennan Wood
<b>Finish location</b>	Cairnford Bridge on A920 west of Huntly
<b>Summary description</b>	No existing off-road route. Various options explored, HDDT will need to decide which to pursue. Preferred option would be development of link path along south-west edge of Dunbennan Wood then development of path through scrub woodland south of A920. Short-term pedestrian only option is to use existing footbridge over River Deveron to access the track which leads from Inschtammack to minor road, following tarmac public road south-west to A920, crossing the river via Cairnford Bridge and then turning off south on the minor road towards Glass
<b>Justification for development/promotion</b>	Part of proposed Huntly to Glass and Dufftown route. Also part of proposed Poem Path (Clashmach to the Bin link). Development of multi-use surface and safe road crossing would help towards developing safe cycling route Glass to Huntly using quiet back-roads remainder of way to Glass
<b>Alternatives considered</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of path parallel to south side A920 through FLS owned scrubby woodland. Main consideration is safe road crossing and drainage/piped culverts required over boggy sections and ditch crossings within scrub area. Development of path west from Dunbennan to east bank of River Deveron then creation of new path south to A920.</li> <li>• Development of path parallel to north side of A920 either on verge (relatively narrow) or fenced path inside field (which would depend on landowner consent to giving up part of field)</li> <li>• Following track through Dowmin and then developing new path along east bank of Deveron to Cairnford Bridge (not considered viable).</li> <li>• Using existing footbridge over Deveron then developing path along west river bank to Cairnford Bridge (no existing path, would ideally involve fencing path to segregate from cattle which would be costly and depend on landowner agreement to giving up strip alongside numerous fields. See RRPP2 Clashmach to the bin for further detailed notes on this option</li> </ul>
<b>Current use</b>	Regular pedestrian use of track past Inschtammack
<b>Potential use</b>	Southern option potentially multi-use. Short-term option over Inschtammack pedestrian only (limited by footbridge).
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	No existing path and blind bends on A920 south of Dunbennan. Northern option limited by condition and stability of footbridge over River Deveron.
<b>Legal status</b>	
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	Track through Dowmin would conflict with curtelage and privacy. Fields west of Dunbennan grazed by horses at livery at Cairnford
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Key issue is safe road crossing. Numerous individuals concerned about long term sustainability of footbridge over Deveron, which should ideally be replaced but costly
<b>Survey date</b>	October 2019
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	6 fruitless attempts to meet with owner of Cairnford, who it is understood is not interested in development of path link from Dunbennan to east bank of River Deveron or parallel to A920

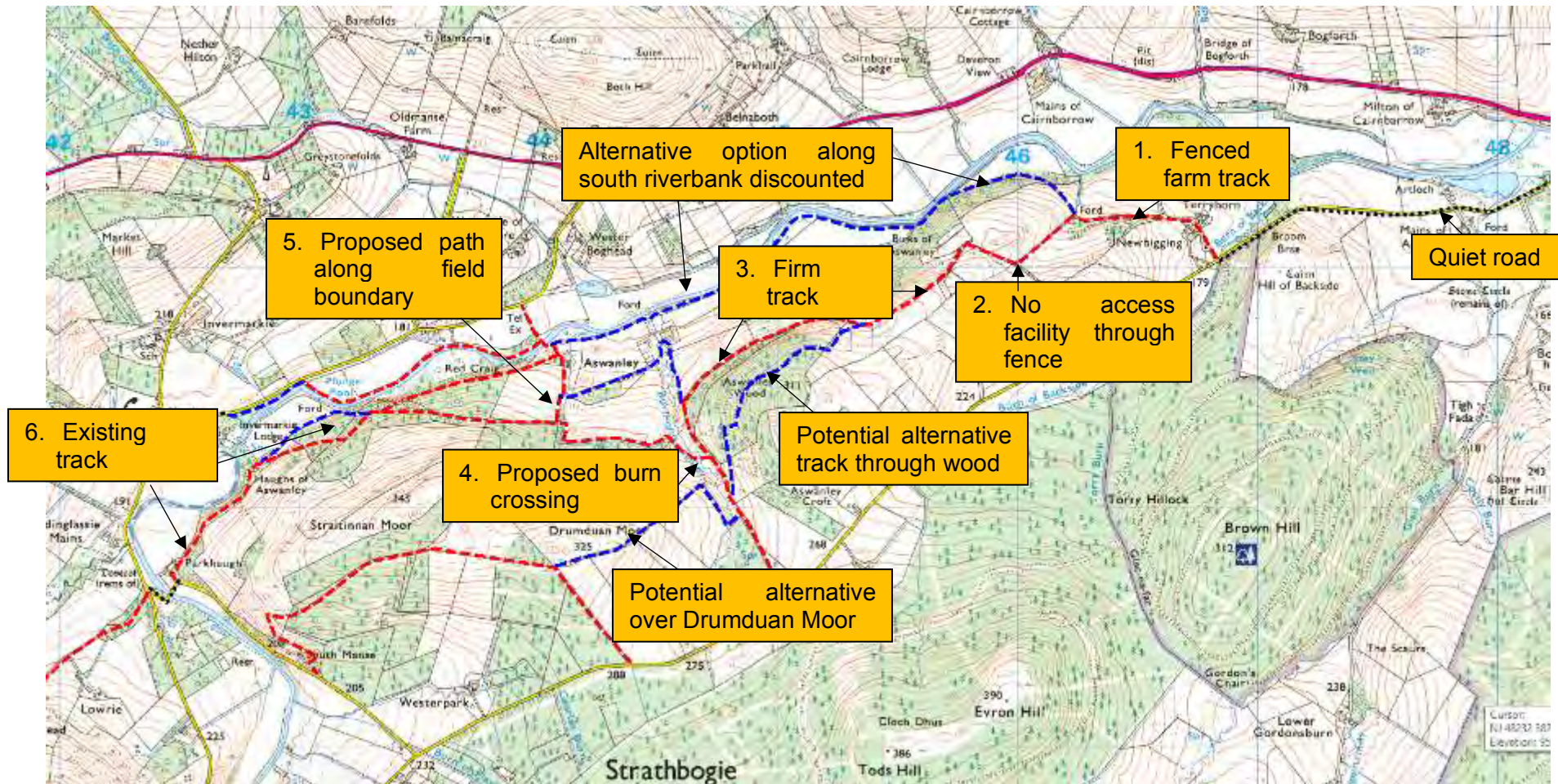
<b>Priority development promotion</b>	<b>for /</b>	Medium to follow on from development of Huntly-Dunbennan route but discussion with council re safe road crossing and with FLS re route development needs pursuing short term
<b>Recommended capital work</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish multi-use path</li> <li>• If following northern option (and/or as part of Clashmach -Bin link) clear overgrown vegetation on DU4</li> <li>• Clear vegetation, level and clearly sign path from north edge of Dunbennan Wood to footbridge</li> <li>• Fence path along edge of field north from footbridge to Inschtammack track</li> <li>• Clearly sign route at road junctions</li> </ul>

<b>GIS map ref/ name of route</b>	<b>Cairnford Bridge to Haugh of Glass</b>
<b>Start location</b> <b>Finish location</b>	Cairnford Bridge on A920 west of Huntly Haugh of Glass
<b>Summary description</b>	Various options explored, HDDT will need to decide which to pursue. Preferred option follows farm track past Terryhorn, new link/gate(s) required through fence to link onto existing track around northern edge of Aswanley Wood, branching south along existing vehicle track south of Aswanley to keep well clear of house and holiday lets/function venue, then developing new crossing over Aswanley Burn and new path along north side of woodland east of Daugh of Aswanley to link onto existing forest and farm tracks through Haugh of Aswanley to Parkhaugh. Alternative to link north from Daugh of Aswanley over existing bridge over River Deveron to minor road into Haugh of Glass or path along north river bank.
<b>Justification for development / promotion</b>	Part of proposed Huntly to Glass and Dufftown route. Development of western end would also create circular route around Haugh of Glass for which demand identified during community consultations
<b>Alternatives considered</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreed with HDDT autumn 2019 prior to survey that preferred route is as outlined above north of Aswanley Wood and Daugh of Aswanley .</li> <li>• There may be potential to continue along the minor road south-west from Terryhorn and then link along the fenceline/through newly planted areas to join HG22 south of Birks of Aswanley.</li> <li>• Option considered following track north from Aswanley Wood towards house/steading, crossing burn then following existing fenced track south-west to link to HG36 but discounted as being too near property and risking incursion on privacy.</li> <li>• Other options explored included following field edge north from Daugh of Aswanley to cross over Deveron over Aswanley Bridge, or branching west immediately south of bridge via Red Craig which creates attractive circular from Glass in conjunction with HG16</li> <li>• Road south of Terryhorn through to Haugh of Glass, potentially cutting off corner north of Westerpark via HG20 (potential for cyclists to use but too far on tarmac for walkers)</li> <li>• Developing/improving path along south bank of River Deveron east from Aswanley Bridge to Birks of Aswanley linking onto farm track (HG23) through to Terryhorn. Aswanley vetoed on grounds of privacy and conflict with wedding photos, river too tight to wood and steep bank around Birks of Aswanley.</li> <li>• Developing new path over Drumduan Moor (HG34) linking to HG20 to keep further away from Aswanley (less direct, more exposed, rough moorland and less suitable as circular from Glass)</li> <li>• Following survey landowner suggested entirely different route north of A920 to avoid Aswanley altogether using combination of windfarm, farm and estate tracks plus new paths which would need to be created. Roughly Huntly-Dunbennan-Drumdelgie-Black Hill – Brown Hill – Norryhill –</li> </ul>

	Daugh of Invermarkie – Aulnapaddock – Corsemaul – Raehutcheon – Hill of Mackalea – The Scalp. Much more remote than preferred route which may afford good views but more challenging, appeals to different type of user and prompts questions about whether route still links to Glass or how it continues west to Dufftown. Not surveyed.
<b>Current use</b>	Occasional pedestrian use of majority of preferred route, some sections used more regularly by local walkers
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use (but MTB rather than road bikes)
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Fences with no access facility west of Terryhorn. Lack of readily identifiable functional path avoiding Aswanley house and holiday lets Forest operations and fallen trees across track
<b>Legal status</b>	Access rights under LRA apply to all of the proposed route
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	Under LRA rights of access do not apply within immediate curtelage of Aswanley house, steading or holiday lets (other than people with landowners' permission) irrespective of use as wedding venue. However, SNH have confirmed at national level that this does not restrict or limit access more widely on the estate, including along the riverbank or on tracks along Aswanley Wood which might be remotely visible from the house or steading. SNH have also confirmed that landowners' view that people paying to hire the house and gardens expect complete privacy and exclusivity does not negate access rights under LRA or justify restriction of responsible recreational access on foot, cycle or horseback, other than in immediate curtelage of the house and holiday accommodation. Previous case law has already established what is reasonable to maintain privacy, which would not extend to include the track around Aswanley wood or around Daughs of Aswanley.
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Viability depends on negotiating landowner agreement and HDDT's views on promoting access if opposition to access maintained
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	Aswanley own most of the farmland, forestry, woodland and other ground south of River Deveron including Daugh of Aswanley, Haughs of Aswanley, Straitinnan Moor, Drumduan Moor and Aswanley Wood. Pam Ingleby (owner of Aswanley, tel. 01466 700262) telephoned after Glass consultation to say they are happy with local people from Glass walking through the estate with permission but were against visitors taking access anywhere on the estate "there of plenty of other places they can go, we want to preserve our privacy". House and steading used as wedding venue, and for corporate events for Land Rover and Mistsibishu including clay pigeon shooting. Lengthy conversations June 2020 with son Jack (tel. 07801 384572) (now managing the estate, lives in England, returns home intermittently and plans to return permanently within next few years) who questions demand or need for route from Huntly to Dufftown and reinforced that while they have no issue with local people from Glass walking on parts of the estate provided they have permission and they know who they are, they are very resistant to development, mapping or promotion of any route south of the Deveron, no matter how informal. Talked through



	<p>their issues and concerns and potential to address these but he maintains access rights do not apply to most of the estate (see comments above which confirm otherwise) and they will resist access development. They have various plans for further commercial development hence he suggests if a route is to be developed it should stay north of A920 using windfarm tracks and developing new links over Norry Hill, Daugh of Invermarkie and potentially Tips of Corsemaul. Aswanley own some land north of the road but identification and development of a viable route north of the road would require further investigation, survey and negotiation. Agreed with HDDT June 2020 that this was beyond the scope of the path strategy and would be explored, if considered relevant, by HDDT, potentially with volunteer input, at a later stage.</p> <p>Discussion with Amy Simpson at Terryhorn confirmed that she understands and respects rights of access under LRA, in principle no issue with people exercising their legal rights provided they do so responsibly, including along the track past the farm, but given a choice would prefer not to have a route developed and promoted through the farm, suggests people “would be better just sticking to the road”. Questions why if they did this for slow marathon they cannot do so at other times.</p>
<p><b>Priority development promotion</b></p>	<p><b>for /</b></p> <p>Medium on the basis that it may take some time to identify and agree mutually acceptable route but would also potentially create shorter circular routes from Glass for locals and visitors.</p>
<p><b>Recommended capital work</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly sign and waymark route throughout to encourage people to stick to agreed route</li> <li>• Replace existing gates in line of route with 2-in-1 gates or install 1.5m self-closing gates adjacent to avoid any concerns about gates being left open</li> <li>• Install new double gates and culverted burn crossing in march fence west of Terryhorn</li> <li>• Install bridge/burn crossing south of Aswanley</li> <li>• Create new fenced path along field boundary north of eastern block of Daugh of Aswanley wood</li> <li>• Install gates to facilitate access on HG35</li> </ul>



1. Stoned farm track branches off minor road, skirting around steading.



Firm unsurfaced track continues west, field gate across track would benefit from replacement with 2-in-1 gate or 1.5m self-closing gate installing adjacent.



Proposed route branches off before ford/second gate across track, following tractor track then climbs gently south-west up field headland parallel to open ditch



2. Double fence currently without any access facility, requires installation of 2 x 1.5m self-closing gates and culverted burn crossing.



Proposed route follows fenceline north-west to existing field gate in fence



Proposed route turns left immediately through gate following clearly defined firm, grass tractor track running south-west uphill parallel to fence and then remains of old dyke



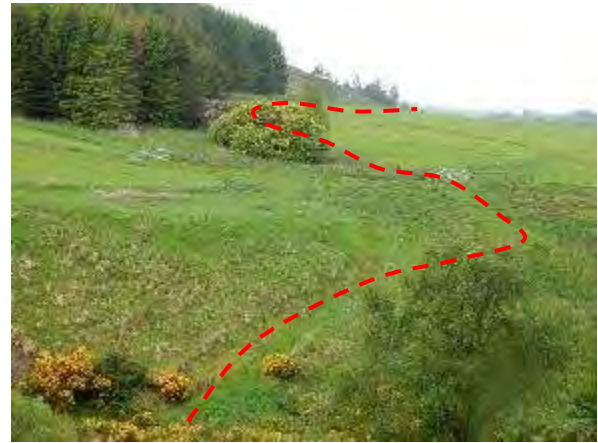
Wooden field gate leads onto firm unsurfaced grass track which follows the contour around northern edge of Aswanley Wood, already used by MTB and walkers, great views across River Deveron and to north. Several further gates across track in line of old fences, open at time of survey and no sign of being locked. Fields to north fenced so no interaction with livestock and contour means track is barely visible (if at all) from steading or house which are several fields below and screened by trees much of the way.



At track junction south of Aswanley, proposed route turns south on well drained stoned track



- Proposed route would cross Aswanley Burn in line of former ford (requires culvert or bridge) as indicated by red dashed line on picture below left, then following firm benched track up to gate in fence/dyke (as indicated on picture below right). Existing well defined grass tractor track follows fence on top of bank above burn north towards Aswanley but to avoid any risk of incursion on privacy, proposed route would run along headland of well drained grass field along north side of Daugh of Aswanley (as indicated by red line below right).



5. From OSGR NJ440 393 an existing clearly defined unsurfaced track runs along the orthern edge of Daugh of Aswanley (pictured below left). Woodland to south has been recently felled. This track is already passable on foot and could be followed west to Haughs of Aswanley. The proposed route turns north from this point, through an existing field gate, to run along the top of the bank west of the burn, which is fenced from field (pictured below right).



The proposed route continues north running parallel to the field headland through a broad fenced grass strip (pictured below left, clearly used by walkers) to join the stoned track through a gate (pictured below right, open at time of survey and no sign of it ever being locked)



The track passes through a further gate (open and no sign of ever being locked), with option either to continue north to join the tarmac lane over Aswanley bridge which joins the minor road at the telephone exchange, or turn left (west) on the grass forest track through Red Craig (pictured below right). Both show evidence of regular use by walkers and were identified during community consultations as in regular use.



6. A clearly defined, firm, well drained grass woodland track roughly follows contour. Clear footprints confirm recent use by walkers but at time of survey the track was blocked in places after recent felling of woodland to the south which had left some trees and brash across the track (pictured below right).



The track which continues down towards the river runs out at the entrance to an arable field, with no path or evidence of recent access along the field headland or through the edge of the wood to the south, although there may be scope to create an informal path if required.

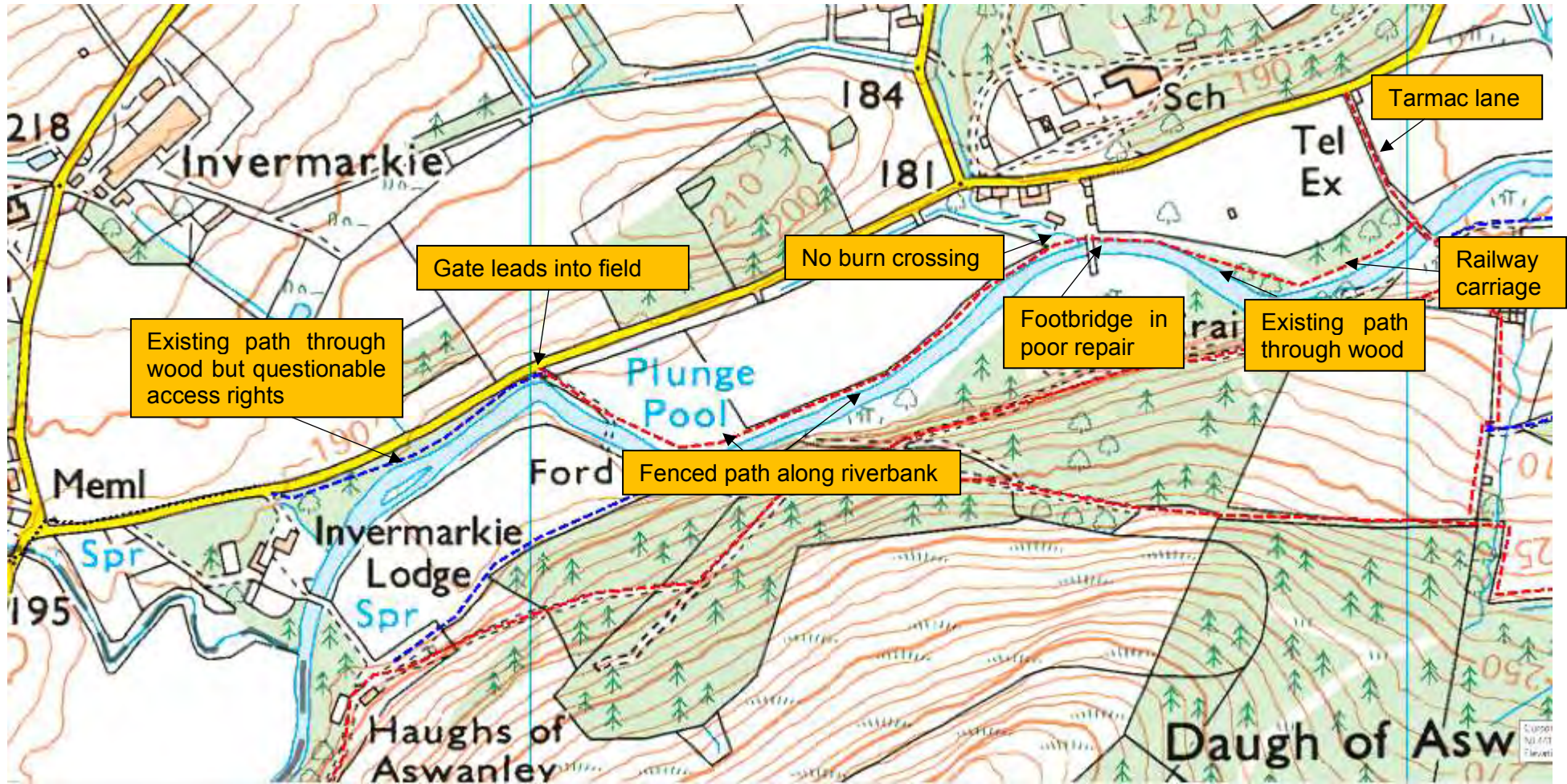


A gate leads onto a clearly defined firm grass tractor track up to Haughs of Aswanley, where it joins with the main forest track (not surveyed due to felling) which would usually present an easier alternative to the lower track. A firm stoned track continues, joining the minor road on the east side of the River Deveron at Parkhaugh.





<b>GIS map ref/ name of route</b>	<b>H16 Haugh of Glass to Aswanley Bridge</b>
<b>Start location</b>	Invermarkie, Haugh of Glass
<b>Finish location</b>	Telephone exchange on minor road north of Aswanley Bridge
<b>Other relevant routes</b>	HG18 HG33 (continuation of this path east along Deveron) Huntly to Dufftown route
<b>Summary description</b>	Informal grass path along north bank of River Deveron, fenced in part
<b>Justification for development / promotion</b>	Potentially attractive circular walk from Haugh of Glass which would help satisfy demand for local circular routes for locals and visitors. Potentially part of Huntly to Dufftown strategic link
<b>Current use</b>	Consultations suggested regular (daily) use by local walkers
<b>Potential use</b>	Pedestrian
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Lack of bridge over burn west of Aswanley Bridge Footbridge over River Deveron south of coach house in very poor repair
<b>Legal status</b>	Use of informal path through woodland east of Invermarkie Lodge (marked in blue on following map) questionable under LRA as could be construed as garden or curtelage but access rights apply under LRA to remainder of proposed route (shown in red dash) so long as exercised responsibly
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	Landowner resistance to use of riverside path past railway carriage west of Aswanley Bridge, and to pedestrian or any other use of their tarmac track without permission on the grounds that they maintain this is private. Consultation with SNH at national level confirms non-vehicular access rights apply under LRA along the Aswanley access lane and along the riverbank so long as exercised responsibly. Aswanley have plans to develop former coach house which will restrict adjacent parking at eastern end of route
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Depends on establishing burn crossing and securing landowner agreement
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	See above
<b>Priority for development / promotion</b>	Medium
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	Installation of bridge below coach house



Wooden step stile over fence links narrow beaten earth path through riverside woodland from Invermarkie Lodge (pictured below left). Metal field gate (unlocked, fastening on string) leads off road into field (pictured below right) from where clearly defined well drained firm, beaten earth tractor track runs parallel to river.



Further field gate across line of track (open at time of survey) beyond which track swings down to ford river. No fence to north of river for several hundred metres beyond gate so at time of survey gate served no function and cattle grazing in field have access onto riverbank. Fence comprising barbed top strand with two plain lower wires then resumes parallel to river with relict fence coiled around end strainer at time of survey (pictured below right).



Cattle currently have free access onto informal beaten earth path along riverbank but no means of getting back into the field which means that anyone walking along the path can inadvertently find themselves confronted by cattle, potentially dangerous (particularly with dog) with no easy escape. Solution would be to extend fence down to river and install 1.5m self-closing gate to segregate cattle along this section, but vegetation would need control. Path/river bank becomes increasingly overgrown and uneven (pictured below right).



Path/riverbank becomes narrower to the east, with fence across line of path which people are clearly climbing across. If fence remains necessary to restrict cattle, install 1.5m self-closing gate.



Narrow grass path leads between shrubs to tributary burn below coach house. No bridge so currently involves fording over stones then scrabbling up far bank. Requires bridge or large bore culvert pipe.



Footbridge over River Deveron still in occasional use by local dog walkers but in very poor repair, potential liability. Offers scope for circular walk around Glass linking with HG18.



Mown grass path continues along north bank of river, fenced from field to north, past former railway carriage gifted to owner of Invermarkie Lodge by his relatives as a birthday present, which is apparently used occasionally for family picnics. SNH confirm access rights still apply

along the riverbank, but it might be worth exploring development of an alternative path behind the railway carriage.



Mown path continues along riverbank then swings round through trees to join Aswanley access road between telephone exchange and Aswanley Bridge. Alternative path continues along riverbank to steps leading onto road at north end of bridge (pictured below right).



Circular route back to Glass would either cross bridge over River Deveron (pictured below left) then follow HG18. Sign on bridge says viewing by appointment only and no vehicular right of access over this bridge without permission but non-vehicular rights apply under LRA. The alternative is to turn north from the bridge along the tarmac lane to telephone exchange (pictured below right) and return along the road to Glass.

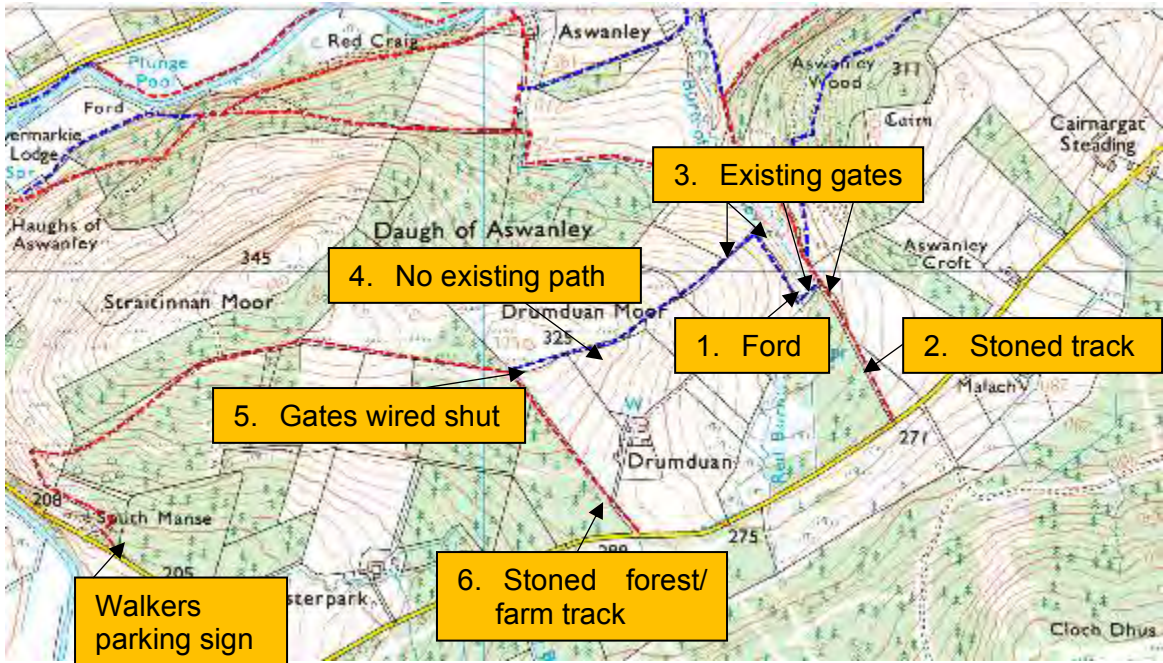


It is possible to walk under the bridge when the river is not in spate, although no evidence of anyone doing so at time of survey (see picture below left). Very short section of riverbank east of bridge mown by Aswanley but no evidence of path continuing east beyond this. Some local people mapped walking along north river bank along to St. Ann's Well at consultations but landowner maintains no-one has ever walked east of the bridge.



There is at present no other bridge across the River Deveron between Aswanley and Cairnford Bridge, and the only section of path identified along the river bank is that used by fishermen along the northern river bank immediately south of Cairnford Bridge.

<b>GIS map ref/ name of route</b>	<b>HG34 Drumduan Moor</b>
<b>Start location</b>	Minor road south of Drumduan (south east of Haugh of Glass) OSGR NJ444 383
<b>Finish location</b>	Junction of southern end of track to Aswanley (HG22) with minor road east of Drumduan
<b>Other relevant routes</b>	HG19, HG22, HG20
<b>Summary description</b> Potential alternative route through Aswanley following field boundary but no existing path or access facilities	
<b>Justification for development / promotion</b>	Suggested by landowner as potential alternative to avoid Aswanley as part of Huntly to Glass/Dufftown route but less direct and rougher walking than preferred route. Could also potentially be promoted as a circular route around Glass in conjunction with HG20 (and/or with HG19 and HG18)
<b>Current use</b>	No evidence of current recreational use
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Gates onto Drumduan Moor wired shut. Lack of any path or access facilities between forest road and Aswanley Burn. No dry alternative to ford over Aswanley Burn east of Drumduan Moor
<b>Legal status</b>	Fully accessible in principle under LRA
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	None
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Depends on improvement of gates and other infrastructure
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	Prefer not to have any route through Aswanley south of A920 but if there had to be one then this would keep as far distant from house as possible.
<b>Priority for development / promotion</b>	Low
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	Replace existing gates with 2-in-1 gates or install 1.5m self-closing gates adjacent.



1. Farm/forest road turns off minor road signed to Drumduan, recently improved through SRDP funding. New timber extraction route branches off to west (not shown on map).



2. Access onto Drumduan Moor is currently through gate into field off track (wired shut and with wire over top) and another gate from that onto the moor (again wired shut). Fencelines between the moor and Drumduan with no access facility, assumed any route would need to run over the moor to minimise conflict with livestock and cropping in inbye.





3. No existing path, presumed route would run parallel to north side of fence over rough tussocky grass and heather. No gates in fence between moor and Drumduan. Parallel fence lines/track no longer exists, incorporated into fields to south of fence.



Further gate in line of route marked on map down the face of Drumduan Moor, then route would turn south-east, through another gate, to follow the field headland (pictured below right) parallel to the fence.



Gap in fence at south-east corner of field leads through to muddy tractor track and ford over Aswanley Burn



Track continues east of ford, through gate (tied shut), beyond which firm but in places poorly drained track continues parallel to north edge of forest.

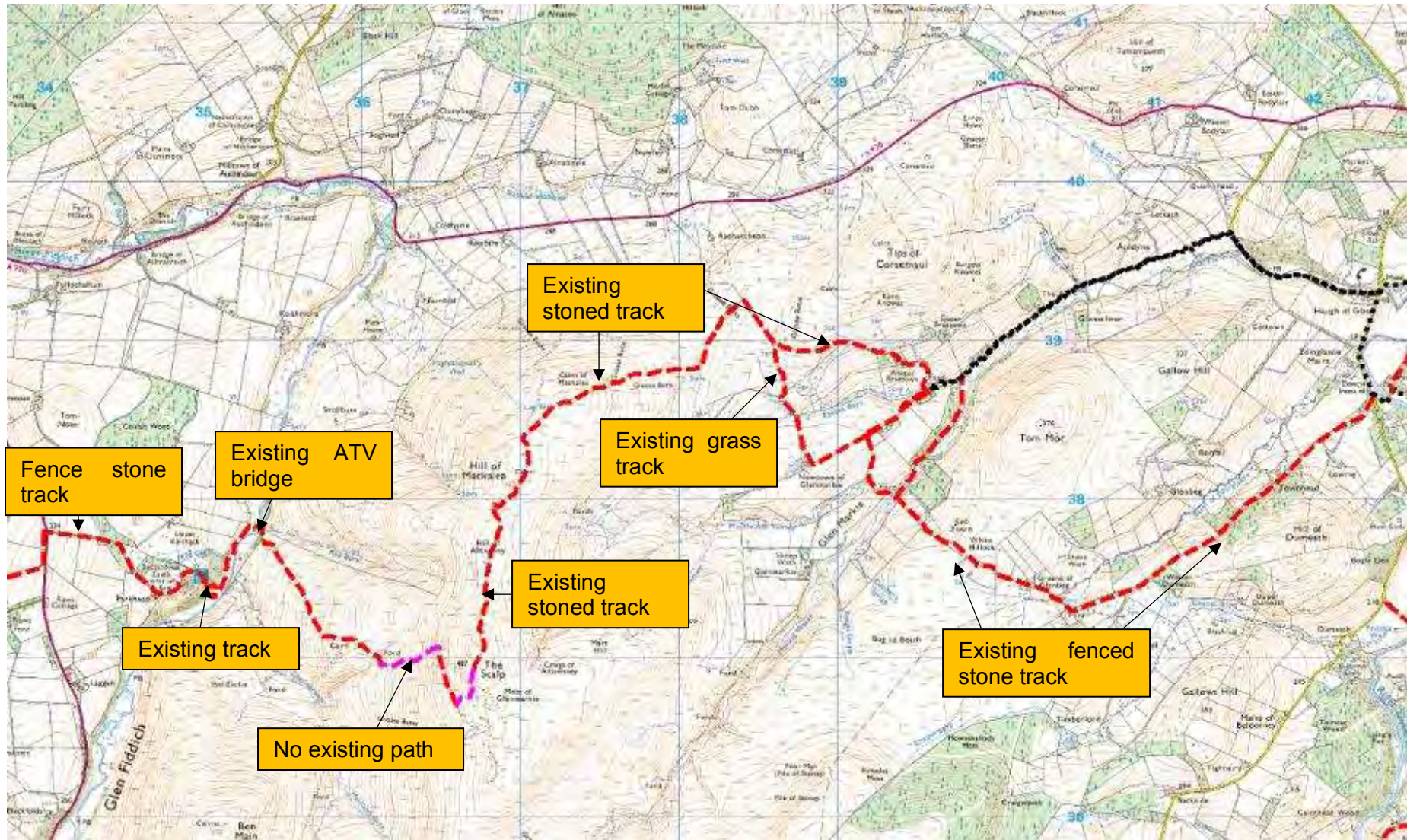


Tracks joins main southern approach stoned track to Aswanley, then passes through gate across track (open at time of survey, no sign of ever being locked). Track continues south without any further gates to join minor road between Drumduan and Malach.



<b>Name of route/ GIS map ref</b>	<b>Haugh of Glass to Auchindoun Castle</b>
<b>Start location</b> <b>Finish location</b>	Haugh of Glass Auchindoun Castle
<b>Summary description</b>	Proposed linear route nearly all of which follows well maintained existing farm and estate tracks, climbing up to the ridge of hills between Glen Markie and Glen Fiddich, from which there are spectacular 360 degree views before dropping down to Glen Fiddich, again mainly on existing tracks, crossing the river by an existing bridge and then following a relatively new track which winds up through the wood to Auchindoun Castle.
<b>Justification for development/promotion</b>	HDDT's enthusiasm to identify and promote a route between Glass and Dufftown was reflected independently by demand expressed at community consultations. Key part of potential link between Gordon Way and Speyside Way
<b>Current use</b>	Walked fairly regularly year-round by locals and some visitors
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Lack of awareness of potential to link existing tracks Lack of readily identifiable link between the Scalp and Auchindoun Castle Some people are frustrated by landowner's resistance to informal recreational access, even on foot
<b>Legal status</b>	Access rights apply under Land Reform Act. Identified as existing paths in Moray core path plan
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	Landowner resistance to any development or promotion of anyone other than local people he already knows using paths or tracks on the estate
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Majority of route exists already using stoned farm/estate tracks and is entirely sustainable for recreational access. Short missing link section west of the Scalp which requires path creation is entirely feasible but requires sensitive development to ensure sustainability without conflicting with conservation interest.
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner consultation response</b>	Malcolm Hay of Edinglassie (tel. 01466 700274) owns the land east of the watershed from the Scalp who has no problem with casual walkers or local people using the route but does not believe promotion of paths is compatible with a livestock farm or wildlife estate and does not wish to invite new people and more problems onto the estate by marketing a route which he is convinced will increase his liability (despite reference to national research which confirms this is not the case). Understandably, given past problems with sheep worrying, he is concerned about access with dogs and objects to the law not allowing landowners to suspend access during shooting or at sensitive times. The fact that walkers with dogs are not allowed in fields during lambing or calving failed to reassure him as he feels even on fenced tracks livestock still react to dogs. Lack of mobile signal, which he feels is a safety risk, were amongst many other reasons cited for resistance to any path promotion.

	<p>The estate gamekeeper lives at Wester Braetown. He accepts that there is a right of access up the track past his house and has no issue with this or access along other tracks provided people keep dogs on leads and behave responsibly to minimise risk of disturbing nesting birds or game.</p> <p>The ground west of the watershed from the Scalp is part of Glenlivet Estate, owned by Crown Estate. Their Tomintoul office has been shut throughout lockdown. No response to message left on ansaphone (01479 870070), emails to address on their website bounce back immediately.</p>
<b>Alternative options</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternative route avoiding gamekeeper's house at Wester Braetown discussed with landowner e.g. following the existing track via the empty steading at Newtown of Glenmarkie but all suggestions vetoed.</li> <li>• A much less direct alternative would be to follow the Deveron upstream to Cabrach and link from there to Dufftown</li> </ul>
<b>Priority for development</b>	<p>Medium: HDDT identified as high priority but will need to decide how to proceed where landowners are resistant to any suggestion of path signage or promotion.</p>
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop new path link between tracks west of The Scalp</li> </ul>



Proposed route follows minor road west from Glass and then up Glen Markie. Tarmac road comes to an end south-east of Wester Braetown, from where a stoned track crosses the burn over a new bridge and leads up between the house and the steading at Wester Braetown (where the estate gamekeeper lives). This is accepted as a ROW and no issue with people using this track so long as they do so responsibly.



The track climbs west up the hill, through an unlocked gate, around the western slopes of Tips of Corsemaul. The alternative route via the less well-used grass track from Newtown of Glenmarkie joins from the left.



The main stoned track continues north-west, the proposed route branching off to the west on a clearly defined, firm, stone based track which passes various grouse butts, climbing gradually up to Cairn of Mackalea. Apart from occasional short stretches with water sitting in wheel ruts, the majority of the track is well drained.



From the trig point on top of the Scalp, the main track continues south. The proposed route follows a less well defined quad track down through the heather (pictured below left) to a little used heathery track (pictured below right) which runs roughly north-south along the western slopes of the Scalp which is in places waterlogged where water cannot shed off the track from old wheel ruts.



The original line of the track can be picked out roughly following the contour but becomes less well defined with a faint sheep track through the heather. Another track can be seen running roughly parallel further down the hill to the west, with patches of muirburn and deeper heather between the two.



At present there is no path between the tracks but it is possible to follow the mown strips around the patches of muirburn to drop down onto the clearly defined lower stoned track which leads north-west down to an ATV bridge over the River Fiddich, with adjacent ford.



A relatively level, firm, clearly defined grass tractor track runs south along the bottom of the bank on the west bank of the River Fiddich which links onto a relatively recently created grass tractor track (not shown on OS maps) which winds up the hill through the wood east of the castle.



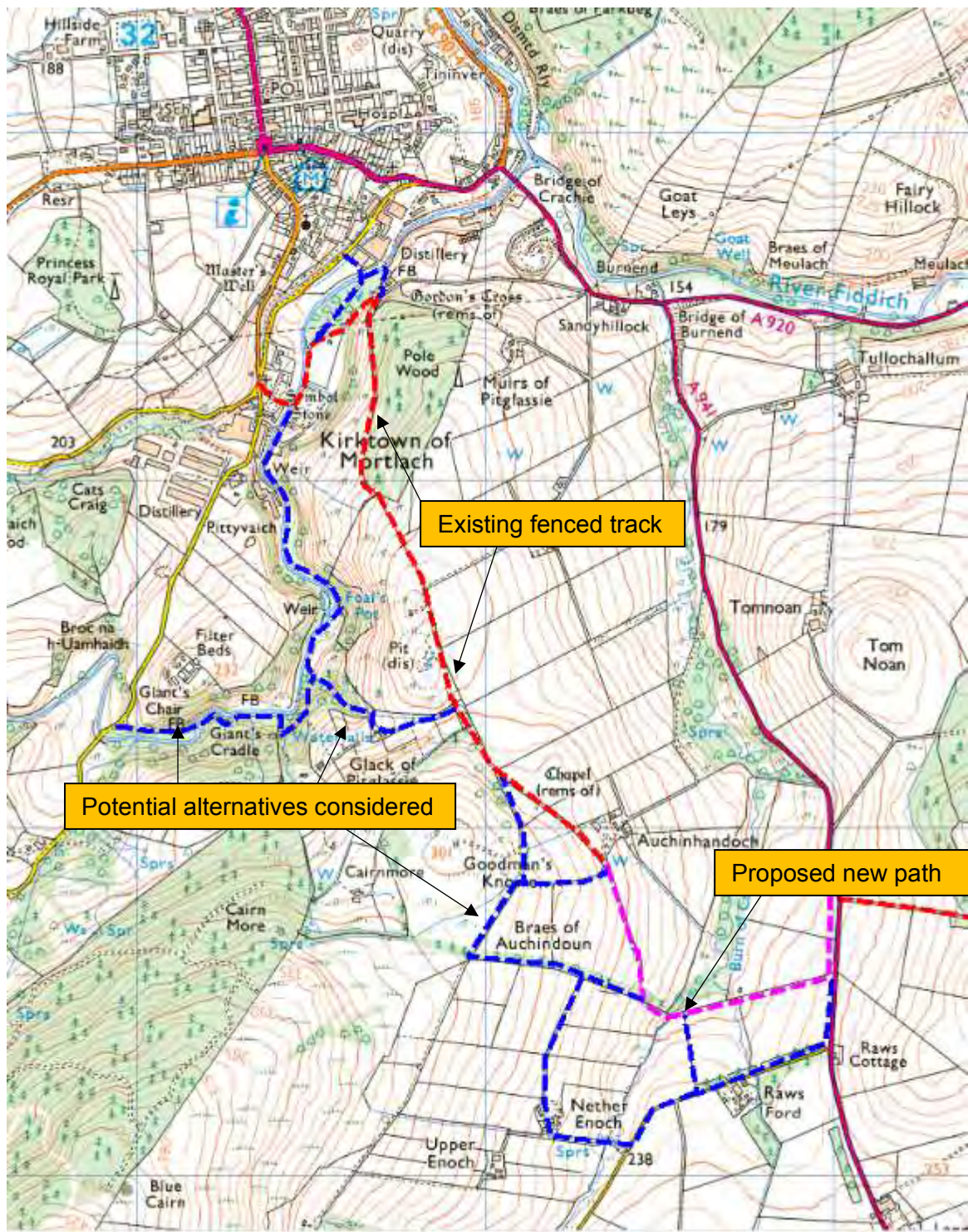
There is no direct access through to the castle off the track, although this could easily be created by installing a kissing gate or self-closing gate in the fence below the castle. Alternatively, access at present is through a field gate in the fence north-east of the castle which leads into a field, and through another gate up to the castle. From the castle, a kissing gate leads south onto a fenced path which runs along the treeline at the edge of the field, through further gates where a track crosses the path, passing the steading at Parkhead, to the fenced stoned track which leads down to the parking area and below that to the A941.





<b>Name of route/ GIS map ref</b>	<b>Auchindoun Castle to Dufftown</b>
<b>Start location</b> <b>Finish location</b>	Auchindoun Castle Dufftown town centre
<b>Summary description</b>	Proposed linear route, wherever possible following existing paths and tracks, but requiring creation of a new path link between Auchindoun Castle and Auchinhandoch.
<b>Justification for development/promotion</b>	A key part of the strategic route which HDDT is keen to develop and promote between Huntly and Dufftown, linking the Gordon Way to the Speyside Way. This section would also create a valuable off-road link between Dufftown and Auchindoun Castle, which is currently accessible only by car or walking up the main A941.
<b>Current use</b>	Existing paths around Kirktown of Mortlach already well used by local walkers.
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Lack of any path between Auchindoun Castle/A941 and Auchinhandoch or Goodman's Knowe, lack of access facility through fences
<b>Legal status</b>	Northernmost section of route is designated core path and path/track south from Mortlach Distillery to Auchinhandoch identified in core path plan as existing path
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	Access rights apply under LRA along headlands of cultivated fields even where there is no path
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	75% of this route exists already using existing paths and tracks but functionality depends on negotiating a new path south from Auchinhandoch to A941.
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner consultation response</b>	See comments below re. priority.
<b>Alternative options</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Track north from Goodman's Knowe recommended as preferred route as it follows existing paths/tracks along the ridge, offering great views</li> <li>Alternative option at northern end surveyed and explored via distillery but rejected as less attractive path, more urban experience. Path shown along north bank of Dullan Water south of the distillery is virtually impassable, squeezed tight between chainlink fence and eroding bank through waist-high vegetation, hence eastern metal footbridge near the distillery is in poor repair and no longer used. There is a vehicle bridge 100m upstream to the west of this footbridge, and link path along the southern side of the river, but overall conclusion is that the recommended route is preferable, taking in the old churchyard with Pictish carved stones and various other historic interest.</li> <li>Route explored down Caochan Dubh past Glack of Pitglassie which is shown on core path plan as existing path and included within Paths around Dufftown as part of Walk 9. Survey confirmed that this section of path is no longer accessible due to property development, realignment of</li> </ul>

	<p>fences and overgrown vegetation. The former path through the field to the north of the burn and track to Glack of Pitglassie, for which an old sign is still in place at the eastern end, is no longer accessible. Local people have confirmed they are no longer able to use this path. If this were re-opened, the core path along the east bank of the Dullan Water past Foal's Pot is a good path and a viable alternative to continuing north along the ridge from Goodman's Knowe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible routing west on core path via Giant's Cradle and Chair considered but rejected as less direct and then involves long stretch on tarmac road north to Dufftown instead of off-road paths by preferred route</li> <li>• At southern end of this section, scope considered to develop new path using existing track via Nether Enoch but this would conflict with privacy and curtelage past house and through steading and track shown on map to Braes of Auchindoun no longer exists.</li> <li>• Alternative options considered include following road to Raws Ford then field boundary north to woodland to minimise length of new path to be created but will depend on what can be negotiated with farmer/landowner</li> </ul>
<b>Priority for development</b>	Medium: Dufftown Paths Group or Moray Outdoor Access might take this forward independently of AB54 strategy
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop new path between A941 and Auchinhandoch which is likely to involve crossing Burn of Corrie and potentially fenced path along field margins plus new gates in field boundary fences</li> </ul>



There is at present no existing path link between the western end of the track to Auchindoun Castle off the A941 and Auchinhandoch (or Dufftown). The A941 is quieter than most A roads but is nonetheless less than ideal as part of a promoted walking route. Fields to the west of A941 are mainly ploughed and cropped. It is therefore proposed that a new path be developed along the field headland, fenced if necessary, south along the A941 and then west, crossing the Burn of Corrie (bridge or large bore culvert would be required) to link up to the former track which leads north to Auchinhandoch. The field through which this track runs is grazed by lively cattle so it may be necessary to consider fencing the track (subject to landowner agreement).

The proposed route continues north-west of Auchinhandoch, joining the main track on the ridge at the remains of the old chapel. The core path plan shows an existing path branching off west up to Goodman's Knowe along the field boundary west of Auchinhandoch, but there is no evidence of any path on the ground.



The proposed route then follows the fenced track roughly north along the ridge. Various gates need replacing but otherwise the track is firm and mostly well drained. This track is already promoted and signs for viewpoints etc. suggest that it was claimed in the past under Land Management Contract .





The path shown on the core path plan continues along the same line through the south-west part of Pole Wood on a grass track/ride which is now overgrown (pictured below left) and wet in places. There is no longer any access facility in the fence at the southern end of this former path. Instead people are now following the western boundary of the wood north, down the hill (pictured below right), which it is recommended be developed as the preferred route, replacing hurdles across the track with 2-in-1 gates.



A stoned level track then a well used, clearly defined signed beaten earth path links from the north-west corner of Pole Wood down to the well signed and well used track along the east bank of the Dulland Water.



The recommended route crosses the river by the northern vehicular bridge, opposite the cemetery, which leads direct to/past the church, from where there is a pavement into the town centre.



<b>Name of route</b>	<b>SR2 Huntly to Insch strategic link</b>
<b>Start location</b>	Huntly town centre
<b>Finish location</b>	Insch town centre
<b>Constituent sections</b>	SB11, SB15, SB13, GM1, GM7, HF8, HF7, HF8, I8, I9, I2
<b>Summary description</b>	Linear route from Huntly to Insch using existing path link (some of which has recently been created by HDDT) from Huntly to Greenmyres which links to the forest road network on Gartly Moor. Proposed new path/track development from Gartly Moor car park east to Red Hill, linking to existing track onto public road east of Lenchie, short section of quiet road then existing track past Craigieford to Cunrie Craig. Scope for development of new path through forthcoming woodland creation around Candle hill, and then potentially new path along field boundary west of Myreton with new bridge over burn to link onto existing promoted path north of Dunnydeer which leads into Insch.
<b>Justification for development/promotion</b>	One of the key strategic routes which HDDT were keen to see developed. Railway stations at Huntly and Insch with regular service between offers scope for people to walk or cycle this route and use the train for the return leg. Development of the proposed route would also create a variety of circular off-road walks from Insch which informal consultations with individuals confirm would be very welcome
<b>Current use</b>	Huntly to Gartly Moor already well used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders. Very limited use of paths and tracks over Red Hill, Hill of Foudland and other off-road sections of the proposed route
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use (walking, MTB, horse riding)
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Lack of any functional off-road link between Insch and Gartly Moor, field boundaries and burns without access facility
<b>Legal status</b>	Access rights apply to most of the existing tracks and much of the ground under Land Reform Act but not through cropped fields (other than around the edge or on specific paths or tracks) or with dogs through fields with livestock during lambing and calving
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	One local resident mentioned past resistance from Craigieford to people using the track past the farm/house but property is sufficiently off the track that access rights should apply under LRA
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Willingness of new owner of Foudland Hill to develop path network, potentially including link to Gartly Moor car park, and of forthcoming woodland planting around Candle Hill significantly influences the viability of developing this route. Some sections yet to be negotiated and may require involvement of Aberdeenshire Council access officer to resolve issues re. track past Craigieford but once established the route should be sustainable
<b>Survey date</b>	September 2019 – June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	<u>Red Hill, Stony Hill, Hill of Foudland</u> - Bryan Harper, owner/director of Puffin Pellets and Harper Forest Products (tel. 01464 820011) bought Hill of Foudland in early 2020. He respects access rights, has no issue with people using paths and tracks provided they do so responsibly, and longer term was already thinking of “doing something” to develop and promote some of the track network he is currently developing over Hill of

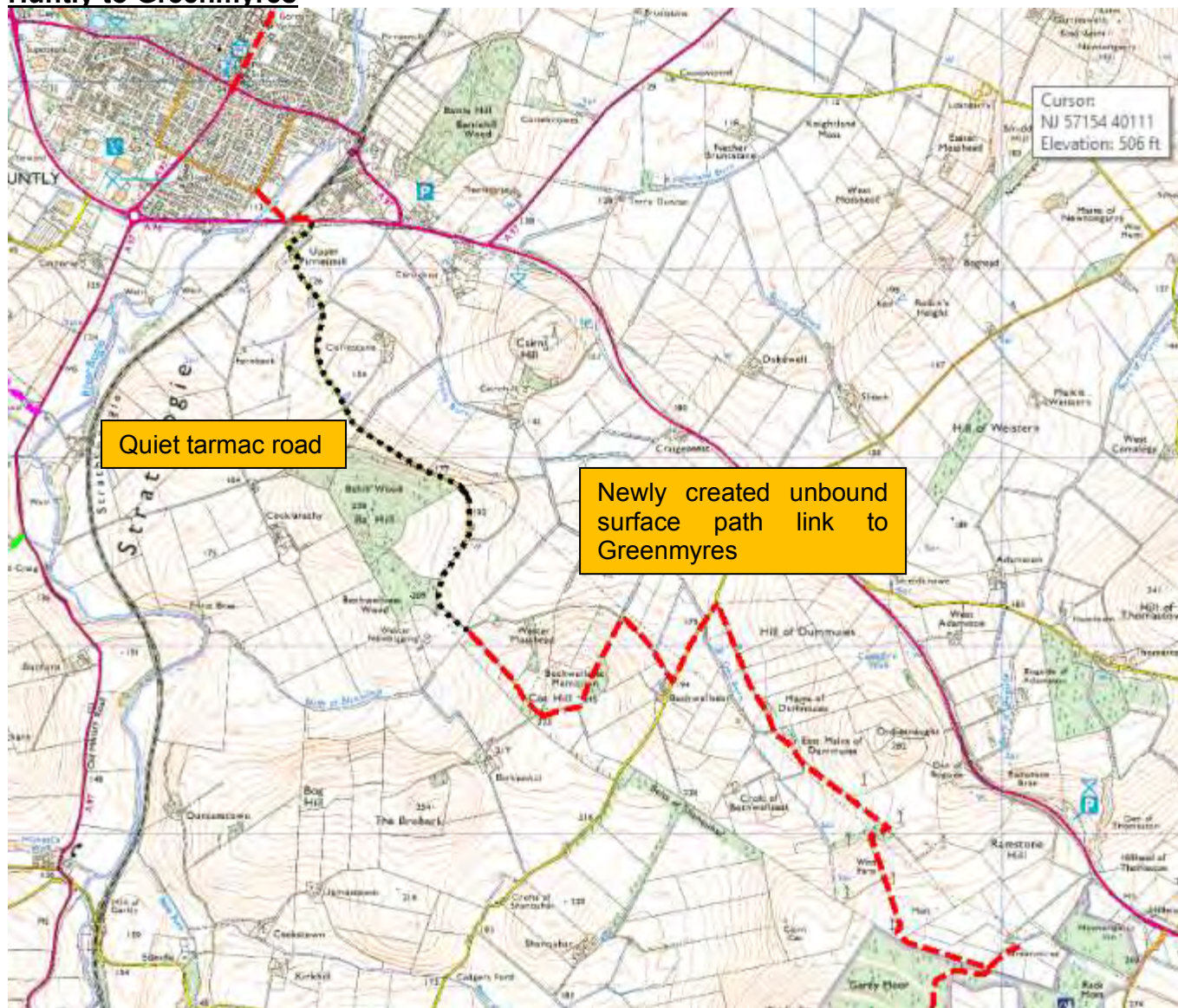
	<p>Foudland, potentially including on-site interpretation of historic features such as site of old plane crash and the history of past slate workings on the hill. He is therefore supportive in principle of path development and promotion both as part of the proposed strategic link and more widely. Inspired by another path recently developed at Insch, he approached the funders of that project but was rebuffed on the grounds of Hill of Foudland being too far from the community. He is in the process of having a woodland planting scheme application drawn up which it is hoped to submit late 2020 with a view to planting in spring 2022. He also intends approaching FLE shortly to try and negotiate creation of a new track to provide access onto Red Hill through the trees from opposite Gartly Moor car park, which could also double up as part of the proposed Huntly to Insch path. Although he has no intention of stopping people walking on the hill at any time, he would rather not promote paths over the next two years while planting and groundworks are underway to avoid unnecessary risk of people and machinery interacting but is happy to talk further about scope for path development and how this fits in with woodland planting and other plans.</p> <p><u>Cunrie, Candle Hill and existing Dunnydeer path</u> – Brian Mackie, Mains of Dunnydeer, Insch AB54 6LN (tel. 01464 820159). Fully conversant with LRA and very sympathetic to both conservation and access rights, already created and actively manages loop path from Aulton, north of Dunnydeer through to Insch. Woodland planting scheme approved 2020 for fields east of Cunrie Crag and south of the road which runs from Hediton to Nethererton. Fencing being installed autumn 2020 ready for planting over winter. No paths included as such but area under existing beech avenue south from West Hediton not being planted and not averse to the idea of a path through the woodland as part of Huntly-Insch route, but would then need to include gates within fences shortly to be installed. No problem with linking onto and promoting existing path between Aulton and Insch as part of this route.</p> <p><u>Myreton</u> – Fiona Menzies tel. 07774 225652. Owns three fields west of Myreton, most of the fields north from Myreton to Largie and east to the shelterbelt which runs south opposite road end south from Leys of Largie. In principle in favour of both conservation and paths but (not unreasonably) questions why some farmers get away with denying legitimate access which then forces people onto other farmers' land. Existing linear shelterbelts not ideal for path creation, very limited space and any felling would result in windblow of remaining trees. Might consider path development along field headland depending on remainder of route being created, feels that other farmers should be asked first and have legitimate justification for not agreeing to it on their land.</p>
<p><b>Priority development promotion</b></p>	<p><b>for /</b> High. Woodland planting over the next couple of years offers opportunity for development of paths. It may take a few years to negotiate and implement the whole route but further discussion is required with landowners sooner rather than later</p>



	to ensure paths are included in designs and factored into fencing, groundworks etc.
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	<p>Minimal work required Huntly-Greenymyres – Gartly Moor, other than replacing two gates on path between Ba Hill and Cot Hill East from Gartly Moor, required work and cost depends on precise route and extent to which existing and proposed tracks linking from Gartly Moor to Red Hill and through to Lenchie can be used as part of the route to be reviewed with landowner). . If landowner manages to reach agreement with FLE re. building new track through forest east of Gartly Moor car park, no work should be required other than possibly installation of side gates, signage and waymarking between Gartly Moor and Lenchie.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Track past Craigieford would require cutting back gorse and replacement gates.</li> <li>• Kissing gates or self-closing 1.5m gates would need to be installed in fence lines around Candle Hill, otherwise assumed this would be a beaten earth/grass path.</li> <li>• 2 or 3 bridges or very large bore culvert pipes would be required at burn crossings</li> <li>• Path between Candle Hill and Aulton Burn likely to require fencing to segregate from livestock, stockproof gates in field boundaries and potentially drainage surfacing</li> </ul>
<b>Alternative options considered</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of path along north side of forest east of Gartly Moor car park entrance. Field understood to be owned by John Crew of Clinkstone. No approach made on the basis that preferred option would be using new track which Brian Harper hopes to create through the forest direct to Red Hill.</li> <li>• Development of new path link south from Gartly Moor via Moss of Wardhouse and Den of Wraes (suggested by Inch runners) – agreed with HDDT to reject as option because of subsequent disproportionate length on tarmac road</li> <li>• Existing forest road from Gartly Moor to Malsach Burn then development of new path link south to Wardhouse Hill linking to existing track which leads down to public road east of Weets (north of Barr Hill). Agreed with HDDT to reject because of subsequent disproportionate length on tarmac road.</li> <li>• Development of path along forest ride from Gartly Moor to Denhead, then south-east along (former) forest ride to forest boundary then south to minor road east of Wraes. Agreed that proposed route is more direct, makes better use of existing tracks and more interesting and enjoyable route for walkers.</li> <li>• Existing track north-east from Stony Hill (or mown paths through heather) to corner of fence on south-west side of Hill of Foudland, then creation of new path to link with existing track via Hillside of Foudland to Largie. Rejected as less direct and more costly than proposed route and greater risk of conflict with livestock where path/track runs through grazed fields. Creation of new path south of Burn of Largie would be very costly and physically challenging in places due to boggy ground and dense scrub in places</li> <li>• Track via Branskston discounted as it runs right through the steading (therefore excluded from access rights under LRA)</li> </ul>

	<p>and is very busy with farm traffic, especially during silaging and harvest.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Shelterbelt east of Myreton (due south from Largie road) would potentially offer scope to create a valuable north-south path link if linked to the existing path south of Aulton Burn via a bridge which would then provide off-road access from Insch to the Picardy Stone – and if the proposed route via Candle Hill were developed, this would also create an attractive circular route north from Insch. However, this is outwith AB54 postcode are so technically beyond the scope of the strategy (unless developed as alternative as part of Huntly to Insch route) and in practical terms, there is little space for a path between the mature trees in the shelterbelt. Any felling would risk windthrow in the remaining trees. Ideally any new path would be developed along the field boundary parallel to the shelterbelt, fenced from the adjacent grazed and cropped fields.</li></ul>
--	---

## Huntly to Greenmyres



The proposed route from Huntly to Insch follows the dead end road south east, over the River Bogie, to the A96, where a narrow path runs along the north side of the road, under the railway bridge, to a crossing point with safety barriers which leads across to the minor dead-end road which climbs up from Upper Pirriesmill around the northern side of Ba Hill.



The tarmac road continues to the turning off to Cairnhill, from where a stoned well drained track continues to the turning east off to Wester Mosshead. The proposed route continues south-east, through the somewhat makeshift wooden wicket/pallet gate (which would benefit from removal if it no longer serves any function, or if not replacement), onto a firm, fenced mown grass path which climbs gently up the hill. As of June 2020, a series of small slates had been discretely placed at the base of several trees and amongst the vegetation offering details of plants growing there (but not necessarily alongside the plants pictured).



Where the main track forks south-west, the proposed route turns east, through a wooden gate (or over the adjacent wooden stile), onto a fenced mown firm grass path which continues to climb gently up the hill. Again the gate would benefit from replacement to bring it up to the standard of the rest of the path.



Just below the summit of Cot Hill, a new self-closing gate leads onto the newly created path which leads down around the west side of Bothwellseat Plantation to Bothwellseat.



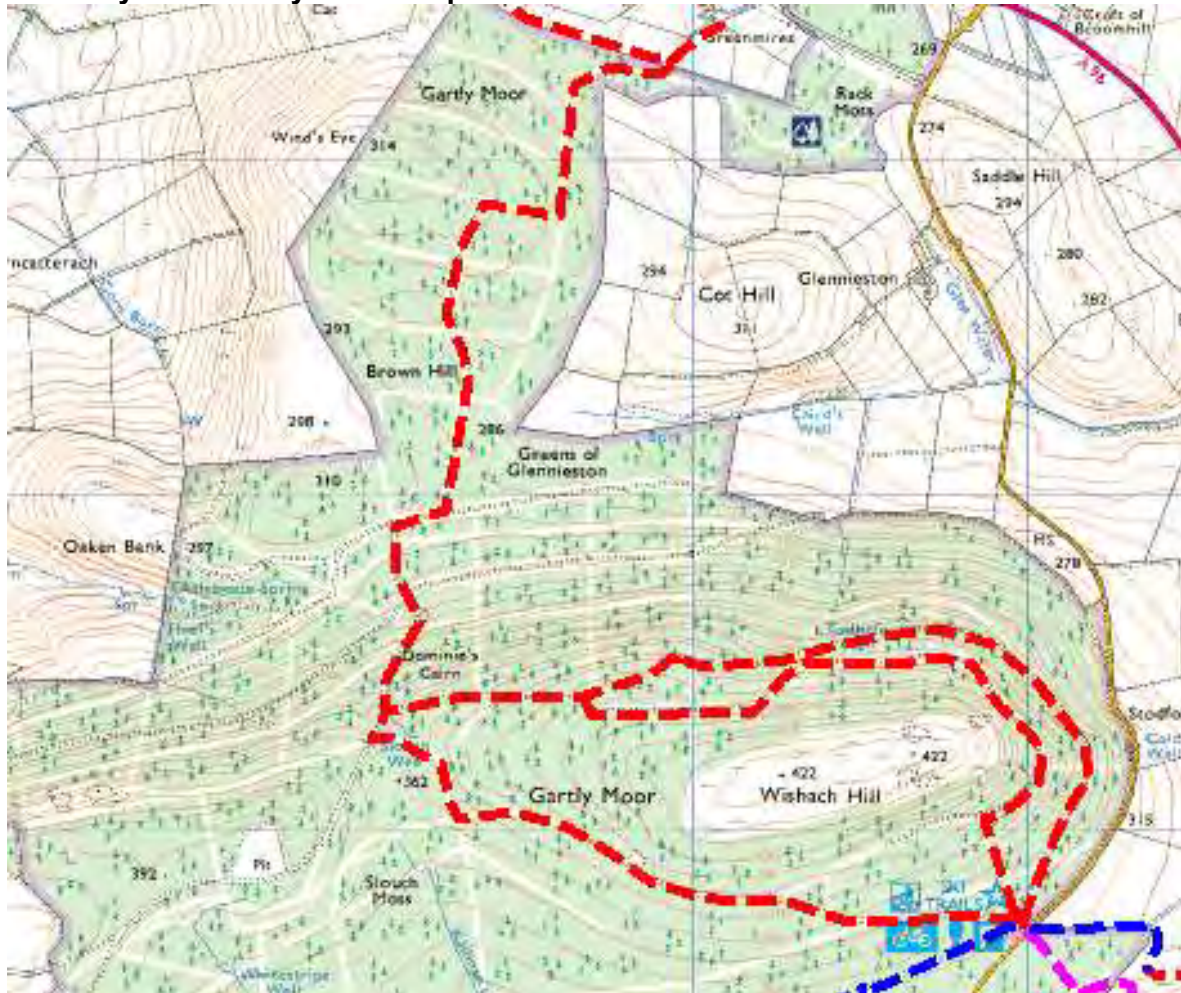
From the road junction at Bothwellseat, the new path continues parallel to the north side of the road as far as the Den Burn. There is a short section on tarmac road before the route turns off along the farm track to Mains of Drummies.



The proposed route follows the stoned farm track past the steadings up to the wind farm, continuing past the turbines on existing stoned track, to join the unbound surfaced path created by HDDT in 2019 which links through to Greenmyres.



## Greenmyres to Gartly Moor car park

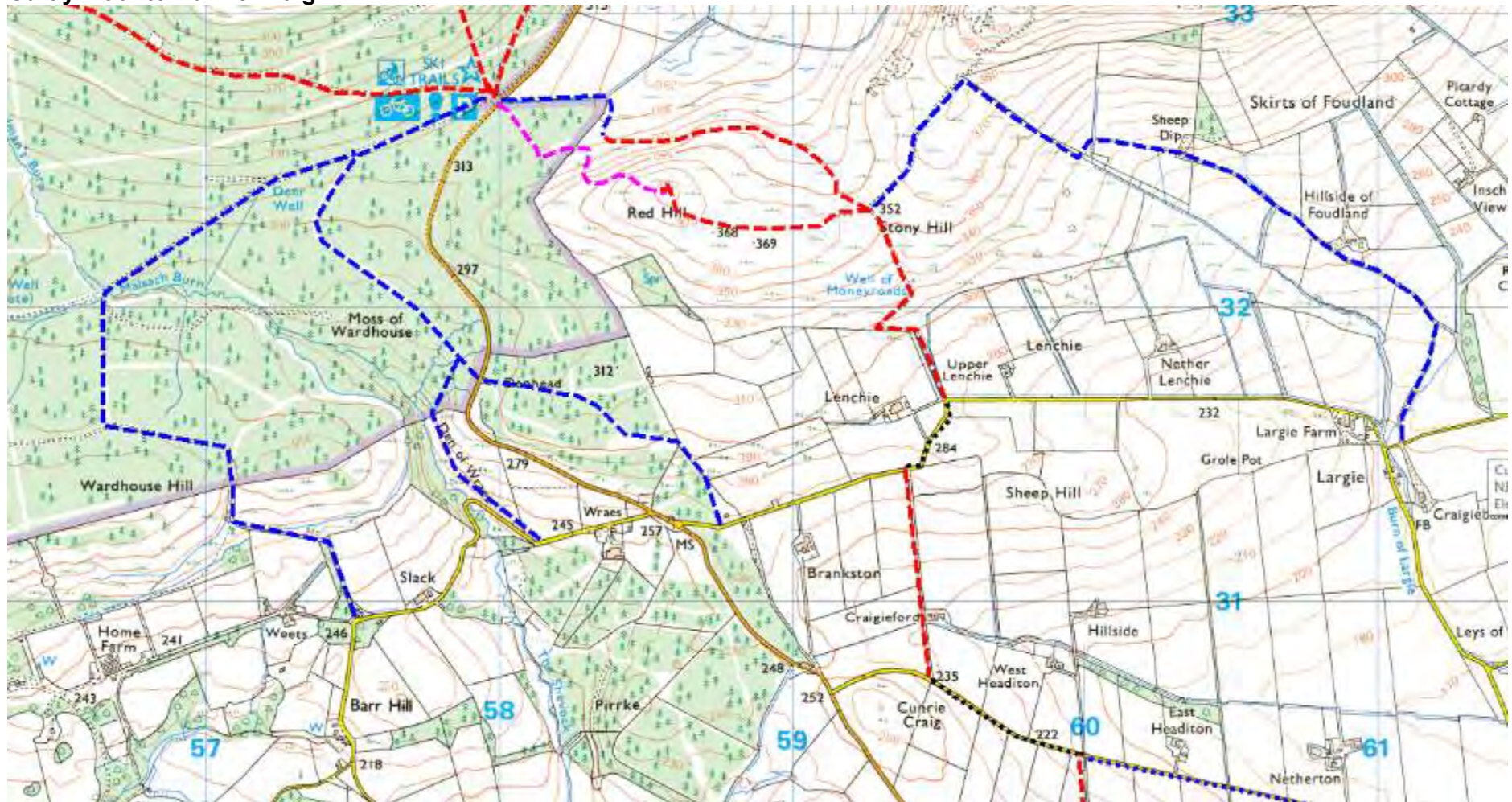


The proposed route would follow the path recently made by HDDT from Greenmyres linking south through the forest up onto the Gartly Moor forest road network.



The most direct route would be to continue south via Dominie's Cairn, around the south side of Wishach Hill. Community consultations suggest that there are two other options: the main forest road north of Wishach Hill, and another track running parallel, slightly higher up the hill. All coincide at Gartly Moor car park.

## Gartly Moor to Cunrie Craig



----- Alternative options considered

----- Proposed route

From Gartly Moor Car Park, there is no existing path or track east, and the forest rides shown on the map are impassable. The simplest route – assuming the landowner manages to agree to development of a new access track through to Red Hill – would be to follow this new track (shown in pink on the map above, precise line yet to be discussed) through to Red Hill.

The most obvious alternative would be to develop a new path along the field boundary along the northern edge of the forest east of the road. There is no existing track or path but a wide headland is left because this part of the field is fairly wet. On the corner of the forest is an open ditch which survey suggests one or two people jump across but there is no other access facility so this would require a large bore culvert pipe (less liability or maintenance than a bridge).



South of the burn, a rough mown path/track runs through the trees, linking onto a new stoned access track which roughly follows the contour around the north side of Red Hill to Stony Hill, where it joins the track coming over Hill of Foudland. The landowner is open to further discussion as to whether the proposed route follows this track or goes over Red Hill, which may be more attractive but involves more gradient.



The proposed route continues roughly south on the main stoned track, which zig-zags down past the quarry, which is currently in regular use with quite a bit of machinery movement but which there would not be an issue promoting once woodland planting is complete. public road just east of Lenchie.





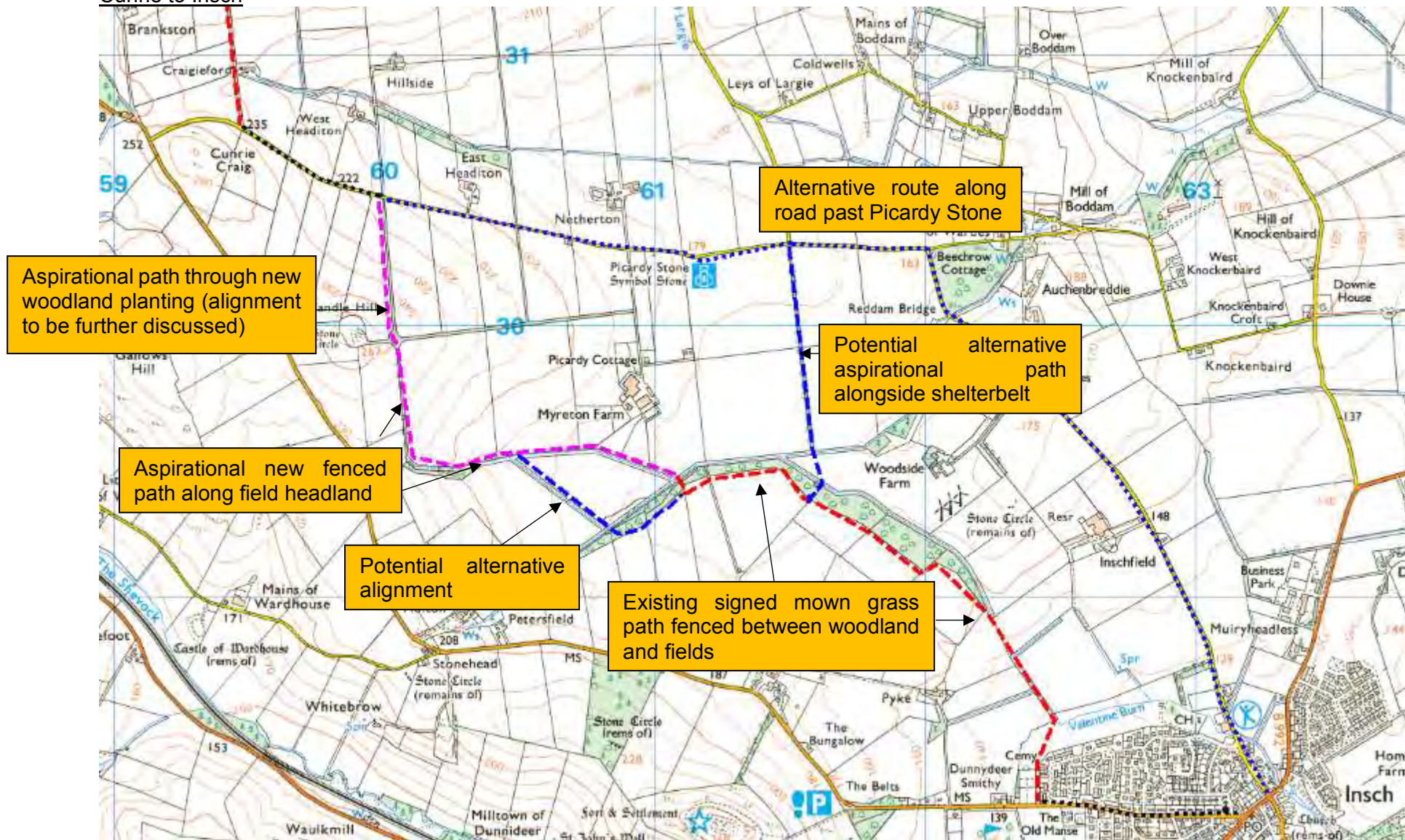
The stoned track (significantly upgraded during winter 2019/20) joins the public road just east of Lenchie (pictured below left). The gate is currently locked without side access with signs to discourage any access but the owner accepts that people have a right of non-vehicular access up this track and replacement with a more suitable 2-in-1 gate or installation of appropriate facility (ideally a minimum 1.5m gap) alongside would resolve the issue.



The proposed route turns west along the public road for a short way before branching off through a gate down the grass track to Craigieford (pictured above right and below left). Gorse is encroaching in parts but the track is otherwise accessible, with double gates across just north of the steading. The steading is set back from the track so although the owner is not keen on people using the track, access rights apply under LRA. The track joins the public road (pictured below right) opposite Cunrie Craig.



Cunrie to Insch



Quite a few people from Insch currently “walk the circuit” along the road north from Insch past Inschfield and North Boddam, turn left at the cross roads past the Picardy Stone, East and West Headiton, and then follow the road south past Coldhome to Aulton from where they follow the path south of the burn back to Insch.

The cheapest and simplest option, which would also take in the Picardy Stone, would be to follow the north and eastern legs of this circuit in reverse from the southern end of the Craigieford track, along the attractive beech-tree lined road to Insch, but this involves a long distance on tarmac. A good compromise would be to develop a new path through (probably impractical) or alongside the shelterbelt east of the Picardy Stone, which would significantly reduce the length on tarmac.

During consultations it emerged that numerous of the fields east of Cunrie Craig and over Candle Hill are going into a woodland planting scheme, which potentially offers scope for development of a new path around the edge of the field shelterbelt east of Candle Hill – including opportunity for people to visit the stone circle (which is not being planted).

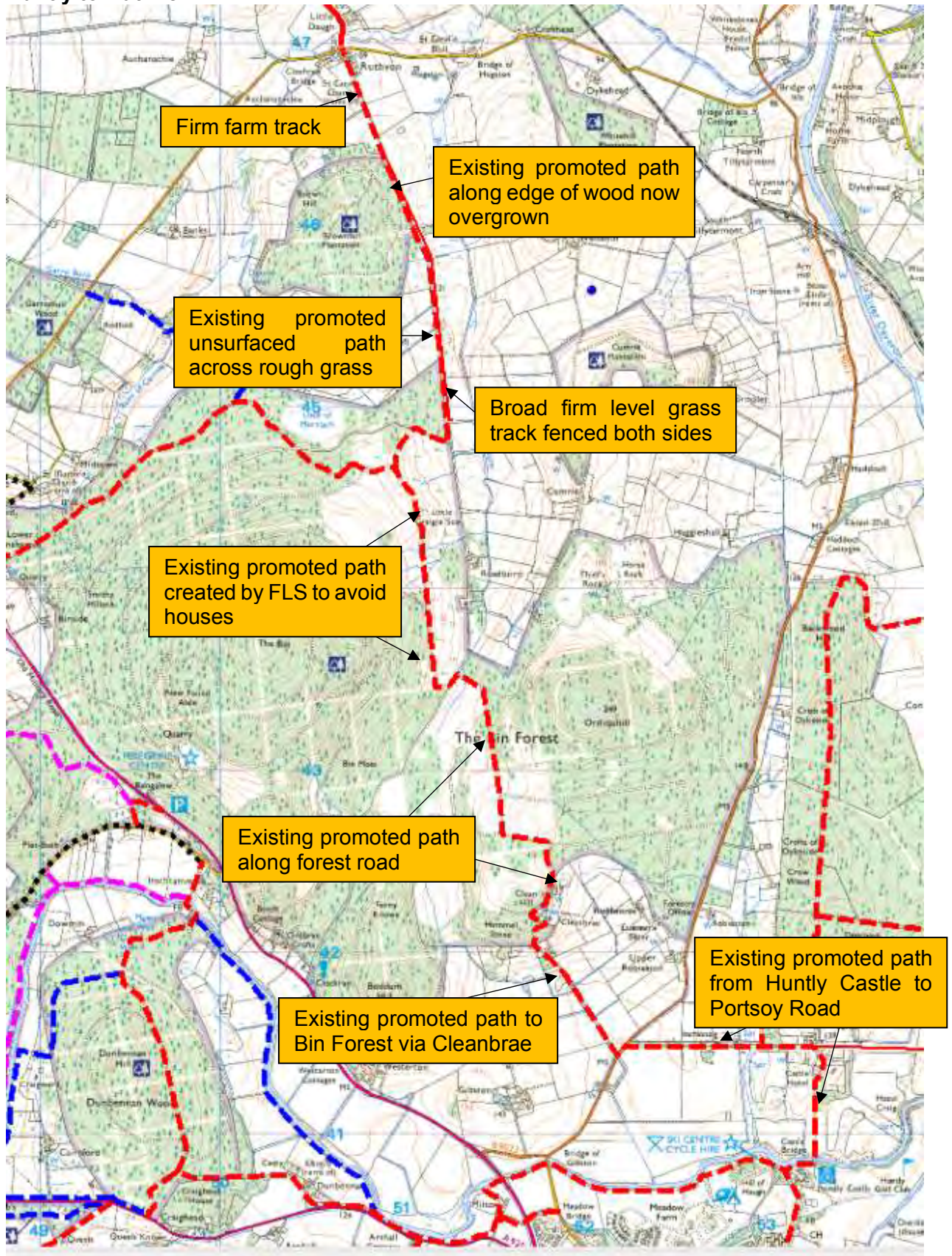
the new path would then need to be continued south along either the field boundary either east or west of the burn which runs through the shelterbelt, which would likely need to be fenced to separate the path from livestock or arable cropping. Depending on the line of the path, at least two and possibly three burn crossings would be involved in linking through to the existing fenced grass path which runs south of Aulton Burn, north of Mains of Dunnydeer, east to Insch (pictured below).



<b>Name of route</b>	<b>SR3 Huntly to Keith strategic link</b>
<b>Start location</b>	Huntly town centre
<b>Finish location</b>	Keith town centre
<b>Constituent sections</b>	HU2, BI11, BI12, BI18, BI4, BI5, BI1. BA1, KE4
<b>Summary description</b>	Proposed mainly off-road multi-use strategic link between Huntly and Keith following the Herricks Route previously developed by Balloch Riders in partnership with Forestry Commission Scotland (as was) with EU funding. The majority of the route follows existing paths and forest roads from Huntly and through Bin Forest, a short section of route over rough grazing which it is proposed be improved through to Brownhill Plantation, track to Ruthven, short section of public road to Cuttlehill then existing tracks and paths through Balloch Wood. Route preferred by HDDT follows public road most of the way from Mains of Auchoynergie into Keith, options to use other paths to reduce length on tarmac, and for those who want to climb up Meikle Balloch Hill.
<b>Justification for development/promotion</b>	One of the key strategic routes which HDDT were keen to see developed. Consultations as part of the AB54 path network strategy development identified unanimous and strong support for improvement and promotion of the route to create a multi-use accessible fit for purpose route, with option for use as a linear route returning by train, or as a circular using various other paths. Parts of the route are already used by walkers, cyclists, runners and horse riders for training, all agreed minor improvements would increase value of route as achievable goal to encourage people of all ages and abilities to be more physically active.
<b>Current use</b>	Southern section through to northern boundary of Bin Forest heavily used on daily basis, as are most of the tracks and paths through Balloch Wood. Link section between the two woods attracts relatively low use at present from walkers, cyclists, runners and horse-riders
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use (walking, MTB, horse riding)
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Lack of awareness of route Lack of surfaced path over rough grassland between Bin Forest and Brownhill Plantation Drainage issues west of Sittinghillock As part of the original grant conditions, Forestry Commission committed to maintain the route but due to financial cutbacks, no longer have resources to do so.
<b>Legal status</b>	Fully accessible under Land Reform Act. Track between Bin Forest and Ruthven clearly shown on historic maps and some suggest is (was) a ROW although not recorded as such on CROW maps.
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	None. HDDT confirmed November 2019 that route should be accessible on foot, MTB or horse but recognised that although many people would wish to follow the whole route, the number of people likely to walk or cycle between Keith and Huntly for work, school or shopping was limited and there was no expectation or requirement for the route to be a bound surface path, which would in many ways detract from the informal character of the route.
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Route already established in principle. Sustainability depends on future maintenance including scrub clearance
<b>Survey date</b>	September - November 2019

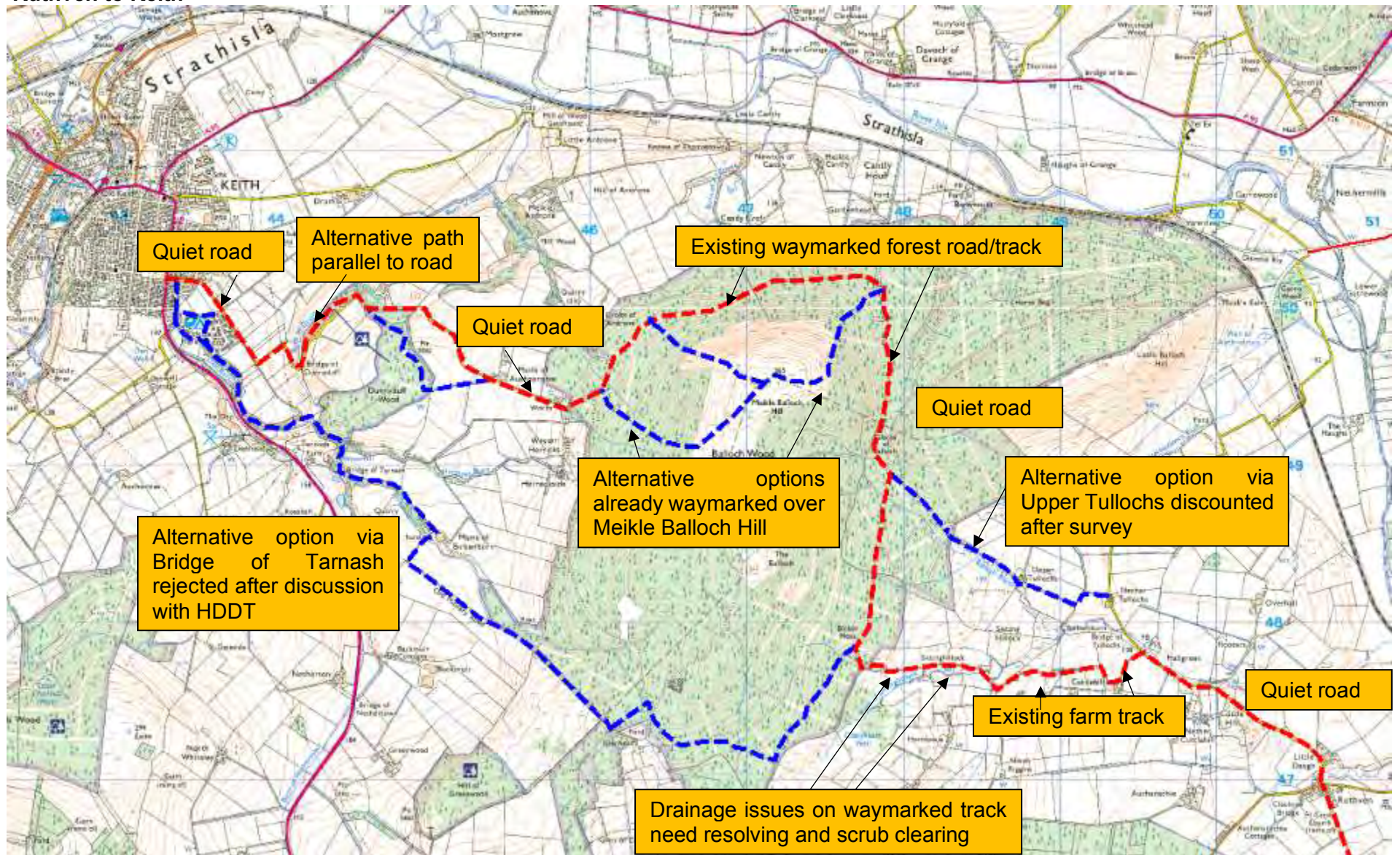
	<p>FLS were one of the key partners in establishing the Herricks Route and it is already promoted on map boards in Bin and Balloch Forests.</p> <p>Ann Gardiner from Whitehill (tel. 07803 041101, <a href="mailto:maywater@btinternet.com">maywater@btinternet.com</a>) owns the ground between Bin Forest and Brownhill Plantation (to the purple line shown on OS). She has confirmed that she is very much in support of development and promotion of this route, which avoids people trying to take access through her steading. Happy to agree to drainage, unbound stone surfacing plus gate replacement as required (needs to be reliably stockproof) but prefer unfenced.</p>
<b>Priority for development / promotion</b>	High on basis of high demand, most of route already exists, landowner agreement to path improvement confirmed, and relatively easy to establish and promote.
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	Creation of unbound unsurfaced path between Bin Forest and Brownhill Plantation. Scrub clearance and resolution of drainage issues between Balloch Wood and Sittinghillock
<b>Alternative options</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternative link between Ruthven and Balloch Wood explored via Nether and Upper Tullochs. Rejected due to track passing through steading at Upper Tullochs and seriously overgrown and drainage problems beyond this.</li> <li>• Alternative link north from Ruthven to Balloch Wood explored following minor road to Netherton then track up to Monk's Cairn from where forest roads link to Herricks route. Discounted as too indirect.</li> <li>• Existing waymarked paths in Balloch Wood over Meikle Balloch Hill for those who want a more challenging walk.</li> <li>• Option to reduce length on road by following existing core path through Dunnyduff Wood surveyed. Already accessible and promoted. Improvement of link to Mains of Auchonanyie being considered by Keith Paths Group.</li> <li>• Alternative option surveyed from Keith to Sittinghillock using existing paths via Den Burn, Bridge of Tarnash, Mains of Birkenburn and Glenhead. Attractive path in places with some historic interest but also some sections (outwith AB54 postcode area) with drainage issues and this option would only ever be pedestrian due to narrow footbridge and steps near Bridge of Tarnash. Following discussion with HDDT agreed that people could choose to follow this option if they so choose, and to use it as a return loop, but preferred route should follow original Herricks Path through Balloch Wood which is 100% multi-use. It was hoped that development and promotion of the agreed route as part of the AB54 path network might encourage Keith Path Group to improve and promote the alternative route via Tarnash.</li> <li>• Discussion during consultations about potential scope for alternative return loop from Balloch Wood via Foggy Moss, West Riggens and Binhall with potential new link into Bin Forest road network but numerous practical issues with this option at present hence agreed with HDDT that focus should be on establishing and promoting a single strategic link between Huntly and Keith. Longer term if there is sufficient interest and demand, local people might consider developing and promoting an alternative option via West Riggens.</li> </ul>

## Huntly to Ruthven





## Ruthven to Keith





From Huntly town centre, the proposed route follows the tarmac public road to Huntly Castle and crosses the River Deveron by Castle Brig. The bridge has been closed to vehicles for some time due to concerns about structural stability but there is no restriction on use by walkers, cyclists and horse riders.



The route continues up the avenue to Huntly Castle Hotel, then following the tarmac road west to the B9022. The route follows the Jubilee Path, a tarmac path created by HDDT on the east side of the Portsoy Road, for a short way before crossing west over the road onto the Cleanbrae access track. Signs says private road no cars, which is entirely legitimate, but there are no restrictions on use of the track by walkers, cyclists or horse riders.

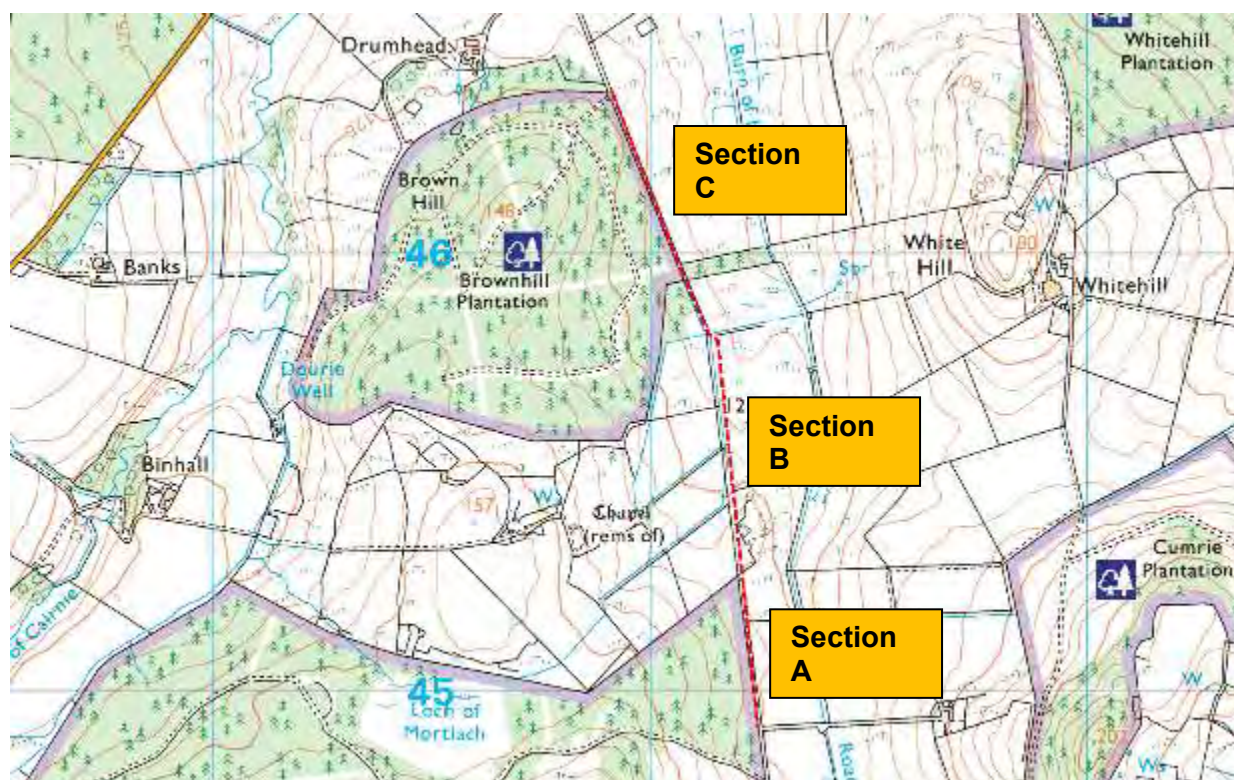


At the top of the track, the route follows the waymarked broad beaten earth track which leads into Bin Forest. A map board identifies the main tracks and forest road network, which present a variety of options. The route could either turn west and follow the track past Hummel Stone to join the main forest road south of Bin Moss, or follow the track east of Clean Hill, turning west at the T-junction around the western side of Ordiquihill through to the main forest road south of Roadhead.



Walkers, cyclists and horse riders all enjoy right of access north along the forest road past Roadhead, which is the most direct route towards Keith. The route currently promoted by FLS follows the forest road which runs parallel to but west of the track past Roadhead, above Craigie Scar. FLS have created and signed a new stoned multi-use path (not shown on OS) which links the two forest roads, rejoining the main track north of Roadhead, thus avoiding the private houses.

The main stoned track branches off to the east to Whitehill, Cumrie and Cormalet. The proposed route continues north towards Ruthven between two straining posts and adjacent sections of post and rail designed to prevent vehicular access without restricting walkers, cyclists and horse riders. Owner of Whitehill would prefer to maintain access with quad bike if required which may require widening the gap. The track beyond this is fenced to the west side along the north-eastern edge of the forest boundary and is also fenced to the east side along a newly planted woodland area (understood to be privately owned). The track is grassed over, prompting complaints from some cyclists, but is firm, level and dry. To increase accessibility by cyclists, it is recommended that this section (approx 350m, marked as section A on map extract below) should be graded and unbound stone surfaced.



Just south of the north-east tip of Bin Forest, the track passes through a metal field gate, replaced as part of the Herricks Path project. The catch is now broken and tricky to negotiate. Proposed replacement with a 2-in-1 gate with 1.5m self-closing section to maintain farm access if required in future. The following relatively short section of track (pictured below right) is a clearly defined, broad, level grass track fenced both sides.



The fence on the east side stops at approximately OSGR NJ512452, north of which (Section B on map section above) the former track is less clearly defined but is periodically waymarked confirming that it runs roughly parallel to the dyke and fence to the west, which is easy to follow even in poor visibility. Nevertheless some people attending the AB54 path network consultations complained that they had difficulty finding their way because of the lack of a defined path. The ground is dry underfoot, even in bad weather, with ditch to west side, but tussocky grass is hard going for cyclists.



It is proposed that the whole of this section is levelled and unbound surfaced with stone parallel to the dyke with piped cross drains and head walls as required under the path to maintain effective drainage (similar spec to that used at Greenmyres) and erect a new fence to the east side (approx.. 575 m). The field is grazed by sheep, but the landowner would prefer not to fence this path.

At the northern end of this section, east of Brownhill Plantation, the route passes through a 10' metal field gate (pictured above right) which needs to be reliably stockproof to prevent sheep straying into the forest, hence proposed replacing with 1.5m self-closing gate (or 2 in 1 gate with 1.5m self-closing section but no farm vehicle access required along this stretch). This gate leads onto a rough, rushy section which follows the line of the original track, with an open ditch to the west and dyke/fence to the east. This whole section is rough underfoot and would benefit from levelling, excavation of cross drains and installation of piped culverts as required and unbound stone surfacing.



At the land ownership boundary on the eastern side of Brownhill Plantation, the track passes through another 10' metal gate (pictured above right) onto a rougher, much more overgrown track (pictured below left) enclosed by dyke/fence to the east and open ditch/forest to the west side, flowing north, with collapsed cross drains in places. 50m north of the woodland boundary water is discharging from free flowing forestry drainage pipes from the western side failing to connect into drains to the east. The whole of this section needs draining, levelling and surfacing



The track continues along the east side of Brownhill Plantation, becoming drier as it rises gently, to become a clearly defined, well drained informal beaten earth path, albeit with gorse and scrub invading across the track – still easily passable on foot or on a horse but less than ideal on a bike. Volunteers (led by Robbie Gordon) have done some work to try and cut back vegetation but there is no formal management or maintenance regime. Scrub and trees in the line of the path need clearing and requirement for surfacing needs to be reviewed, taking account of tree roots etc.

At the north-east corner of Brownhill Plantation, the route joins a firm, level mown grass track enclosed by fences both sides until the junction with the track to Drumhead, from where a hard unbound stone surfaced track continues north to Ruthven.



From Ruthven, the proposed route (already signed and promoted as the Herricks route) follows the quiet minor road north to Hallgreen, then branches off west on the tarmac lane to Cuttlehill, clearly waymarked off the road.



The waymarked stoned track continues west, past Sittinghillock, from where it becomes grassy and wetter (pictured (below left) with water running down the track). Side drains and cross drains need re-excavating to shed water off the track and prevent erosion.



At its western end, beyond the point where it provides access to farm buildings or fields, the track becomes more overgrown (pictured below left), with further similar drainage issues which would be relatively easy to resolve by re-excavating side ditches and installing cross drains feeding into these. The gate at the forest boundary was open at time of survey (pictured below right)



West of the forest boundary, a new stone surfaced link path was created/improved as part of the Herricks Route development. The path remains very sound and dry albeit with some vegetation creeping through.



The link path reaches a T-junction with the forest road at Bicker Moss, where a map panel shows the main route and option over the top of Meikle Balloch Hill. Proposed route follows stoned forest road to Glacks of Balloch then around north side of Meikle Balloch Hill (option to cut off south on path over top, path on left on picture below right). Some of the original waymarks and posts for Herricks Route still in place.



Proposed clearly waymarked route roughly follows contour around north side of Meikle Balloch Hill on firm, well drained stone track. Padlocked gate with gap alongside at end of forest road leads onto car park with map boards.



Tarmac public road leads down past Mains of Auchoynanie (option to reduce road by following signed core path through Dunnyduff Wood). Cyclists would continue on along the road, walkers would branch off on bend on waymarked grass track which runs parallel to and north of the road through to bridge of Dunnyduff.



Majority of track is firm level grass apart from approximately 50 m wet section requiring drainage to pipe water under path shortly before the bridge. Offset wooden barriers at western end of track currently limit access to pedestrian only.



Existing fingerposts at road junctions leading into Keith town centre





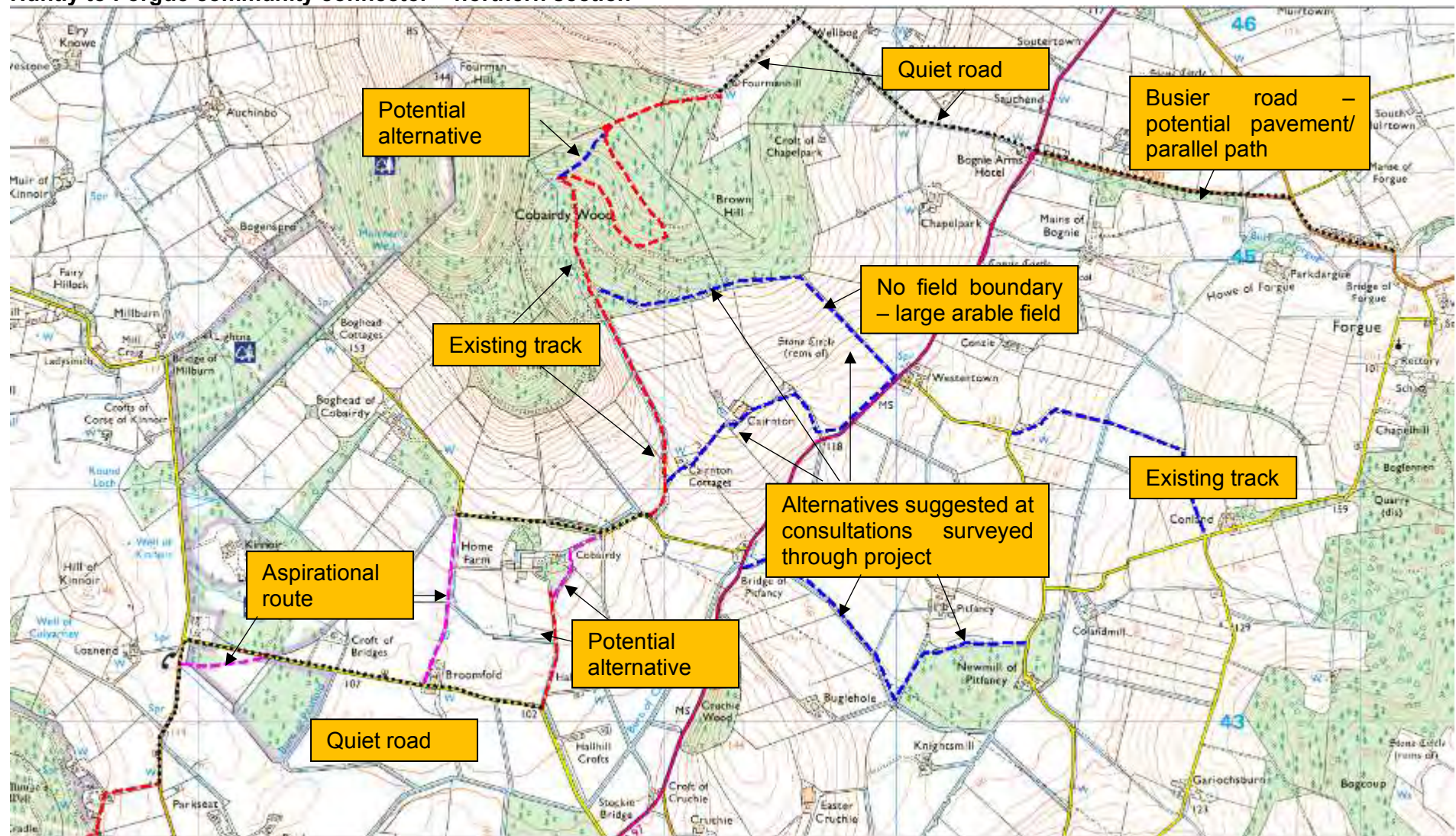
<b>Name of route</b>	<b>CCNE2 Huntly to Forgue community link</b>
<b>Start location</b> <b>Finish location</b>	Huntly town centre Forgue village centre
<b>Summary description</b>	Proposed linear link from Huntly to Forgue using existing promoted paths over Battle Hill linking onto forest tracks through Kinnoir Wood then track from the north-east corner of the wood onto the quiet road west of Parkseat. The proposed route would then follow the road north for a short way, then east past Broomfold, via existing track to Cobairdy, and then the old drove road from Cairnton up to Cobairdy Wood, through which forest tracks lead out to the dead-end road at the north east corner of the wood, which leads down to Bognie Arms and into Forgue (see Rothiemay to Forgue community link).
<b>Justification for development/Promotion</b>	One of the community connectors which HDDT was keen to see developed although no demand or interest expressed in this link at community consultations. Potentially alternative off-road route from Huntly to Rothiemay, or to promote as eastern arm of circular walk from Huntly-Rothiemay with return loop along the Deveron down to Corse of Kinnoir.
<b>Current use</b>	Majority of route already fully accessible other than overgrown section of track/forest road through Cobairdy Wood
<b>Potential use</b>	Pedestrian only over Battle Hill, remainder multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Stile in fence north of Battle Hill. Old drove road/forest road overgrown through Cobairdy Wood.
<b>Legal status</b>	Claimed ROW
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	Potentially issues of privacy/infringement on curtelage past Cobairdy house
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Majority of route already exists and should be sustainable provided forest tracks are kept clear through Cobairdy Wood.
<b>Survey date</b>	September 2019 – June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	Cobairdy is currently up for sale so no approach made to the owners.  Mr. Morison of BMF Group confirmed enthusiasm to develop and promote access on his land
<b>Priority for development / promotion</b>	Low
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	Clear FH7 through Cobairdy Wood  Scope to develop parallel path/pavement alongside the road which would also provide link between Forgue and Bognie Arms (which was due to reopen summer 2020) but further research would be required to establish demand for this path and assess cost/benefits
<b>Alternative options</b>	Numerous options have been considered, but realistically, options are limited by relatively intensive arable farming of most of the ground between Kinnoir Wood and Forgue and the number of burns, ditches and watercourses, most of which are fenced and cropped up to the margin.

	<p>Mr. Morison of BMG Group suggested exploring scope for a link from the south-east corner of Cobairdy Wood down to Westertown, and then using the old track FG5 to Conland. In principle this seemed a sound idea to make use of an existing signed (albeit currently overgrown) track which Scottish government has previously paid the landowner to promote as an LMC. Mr. Morison suggested that part of the appeal of this route was the historic bridge over Burn of Drumblade, although there is little remaining evidence of the original bridge following “upgrading” to support farm traffic. This option would also involve a long stretch on tarmac road through from Conland to Forgue, and there are issues with developing a viable, sustainable link between Cobairdy and the western end of this track north of Brackenbraes.</p> <p>Although it is possible to follow existing forest tracks down to the corner of the wood north of Cairnton, there is currently no access through the wood beyond this, and the field boundary shown on the OS map west of the A97 north-west of Westertown no longer exists, the fields either side having been amalgamated. Development of a new path through the arable field would not be popular or sustainable, and any section along the A97 would require establishment of a new off-road path along field boundaries which farmers are not in favour of because of loss of productive land.</p> <p>Several other routes/links suggested during consultations were explored including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DB3 east of Bridge of Pitfancy which at least one consultee suggested they had walked in the past but there is no evidence of any path or access nor easily identifiable scope to create a path for which demand would appear to be relatively low. Track shown on OS map along north side of wood south of Pitfancy surveyed but only part of track actually exists, remainder very wet and overgrown, and then involves long stretch on public road east from Colandmill to Forgue.</li> <li>• DB2 along Burn of Drumblade also suggested at consultations as a potential link but there is no evidence of any access or path along the burn, limited scope to create such a path, and no rational link between Huntly and Rookford Bridge. Conclusion was that it made far more sense to use existing paths and tracks through Battle Hill and Kinnoir Wood than to try and establish an entirely new path south of A97.</li> </ul>
--	---

Huntly to Forgue – southern section  
See notes and pictures under Huntly to Rothiemay route



## Huntly to Forgue community connector – northern section



At present the most readily accessible link between Kinnoir and Cobairdy is along the tarmac road and then farm track, but it may be possible to create a new path cutting through the southern block of Longmoor Wood to cut the corner off the road.

Three options were explored linking from the road east of Longmoor Wood to Cobairdy. The first (preferred option) is to follow the old track which runs north from Bloomfold. The southern end starts as a stone track (pictured below left) arguably sufficiently far from the house to avoid intrusion on privacy. It is currently overgrown beyond the barn but still firm underfoot.



The middle section (pictured below left) is overgrown but still firm and well defined, and the northern end (pictured below left) is a good firm grass track enclosed by dykes both sides.



The second option considered was to follow the track which branches off on the corner of the road east of Broomfold past Halhill, which stays east of Cobairdy house. Although the OS map suggests that a fenced track runs all the way, only the northern section is now accessible as a good fenced track between an avenue of trees.



At its southern end, the track now stops at what is shown on the map as Hallhill. Access rights would not apply past the house and development of an alternative which did not intrude on privacy or curtelage would be difficult.



The third alternative explored was the track which runs due north, west of Hallhill, which starts off as a stone track (pictured below left) then becomes overgrown with grass, fenced both sides and still firm underfoot. The challenge would be negotiating an acceptable route past Cobairdy House, or past Home Farm.



Various options were explored north from Cobairdy to link via existing tracks or linear shelterbelts direct up to the now overgrown forest road around the base of White Hill before establishing that the more logical route follows the road north-east from Cobairdy and then along the stoned track to Cairnton Cottages, forking north immediately before the cottages on the old drove road which climbs up to Cobairdy Wood. This is a good stoned track, fenced both sides, recently cleared to provide access for woodland management. At the forest boundary there is a metal gate across the track, chained but unlocked, with gap alongside.



Beyond the gate, the main forest road climbs up the glen, with various tracks/forest roads branching off along the contour to the east. Those which have recently been used for extracting timber are accessible, others not. All come to an end at the former fence west of Brown Hill, beyond which there is no readily identifiable way through the wood. The field boundary shown on the OS map north-west from Westertown no longer exists.



The most viable alternative making use of existing paths is to follow the forest road up the glen, looping around to the east on the grass ride (pictured above right) which winds its way uphill to link with the main track down to the north-east corner of the wood at Fourmanhill. This track is deeply rutted in places (pictured below left). The alternative is to follow the new more direct but steeper forest track which cuts off the loop (pictured below right).



A firm, regularly used well managed grass track leads down to the corner of the wood, from where tarmac road leads down to the Bognie Arms. There is no existing path through to Forgue but there may be scope to develop a path or pavement alongside the road.



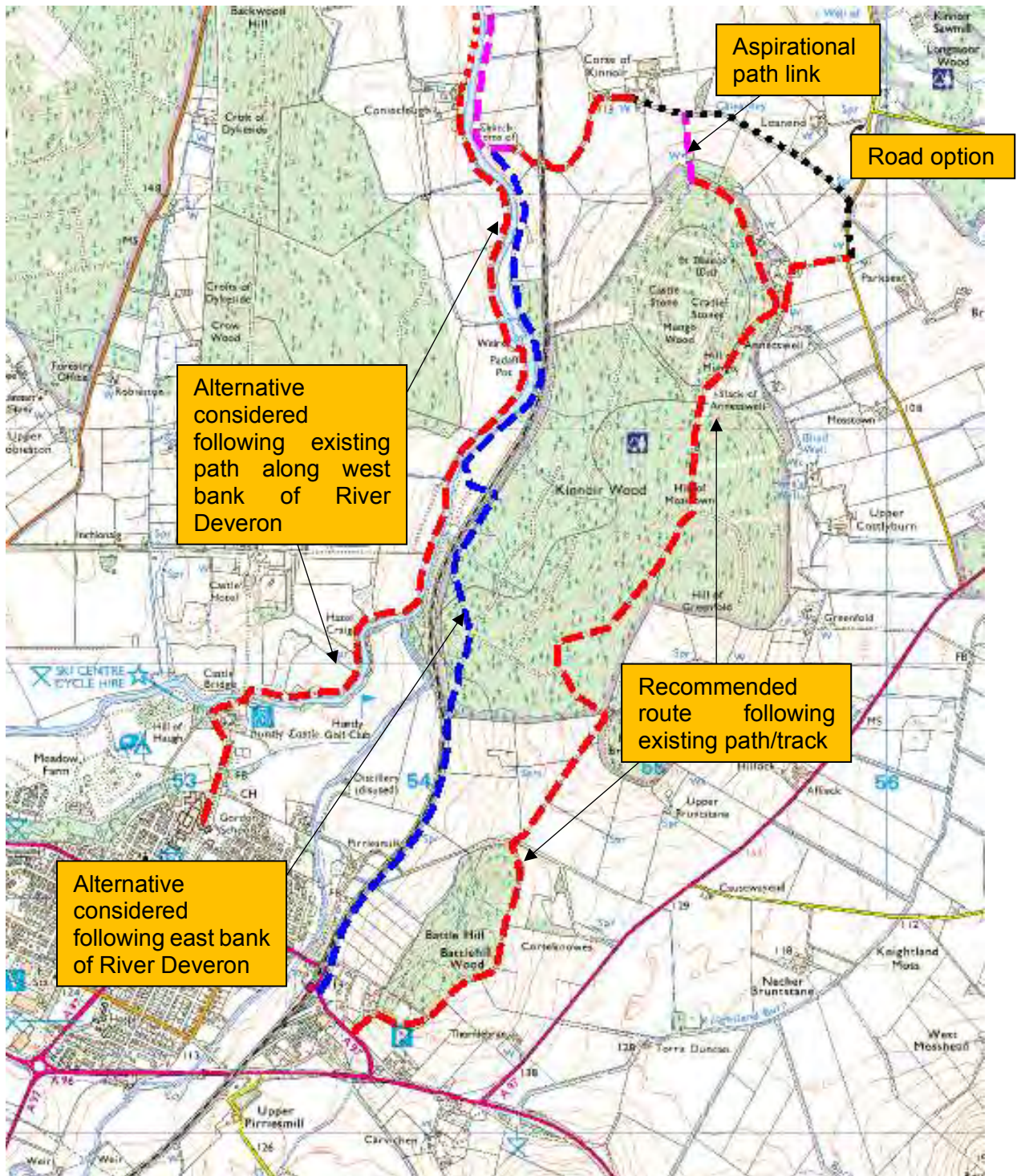
<b>Name of route</b>	<b>CCNE3 Huntly to Rothiemay community link</b>
<b>Start location</b> <b>Finish location</b>	Huntly town centre Rothiemay
<b>Summary description</b>	Proposed linear route following existing paths around Battle Hill, north to Hill of Brunstane, existing forest tracks through Kinnoir wood, and then either following the road north to Auchmull wood or potentially creating a new link to Corse of Kinnoir and then developing a new path along the east bank of the River Deveron to Boghead, from where an existing well defined path/track runs along the river bank through Avochie Estate o Rothiemay.
<b>Justification for development/Promotion</b>	Identified by HDDT as an aspirational community connector, demand confirmed by community consultations. This route would also be a key section of the proposed Deveron Way.
<b>Current use</b>	Paths and tracks around Battle Hill and Kinnoir Wood already well used by walkers. No existing path either north or south of cemetery west of Corse of Kinnoir. Path and track along east bank of Deveron well used by walkers and some cyclists north of Boghead.
<b>Potential use</b>	Potentially multi-use but some sections particularly along river bank likely to be pedestrian only to be sustainable
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Lack of path between Kinnoir and Boghead and physical difficulty getting through this section along the edge of ploughed fields or on steeply sloping riverbank, in some places eroded and overgrown. No bridges or other facility to cross burns between Corse of Kinnoir and Boghead.
<b>Legal status</b>	Paths/tracks between Battle Hill and Kinnoir Wood fully accessible under Land Reform Act, as is the track north of Boghead. Access rights apply along the margin of fields between Corse of Kinnoir and Boghead but not through the fields
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	Avochie estate mentioned that historically there was an old road/ROW from smithy cottage across to the road junction immediately south of the Bridge of Isla. The western end of this is still shown on OS maps. The river crossing was an old plank and rope bridge which the estate pulled down some 10 years ago because it was beyond repair.
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Establishment of a sustainable, functional path between Corse of Kinnoir and Boghead would be expensive and dependent on landowner agreement. Depending on height to which river floods, potentially sustainability issues in fencing path along riverbank
<b>Survey date</b>	September 2019 – February 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	<u>Corse of Kinnoir</u> - farmer Cameron ?? tel. 01466 794070. Friendly and approachable. Farm all the ground east of River Deveron north of Kinnoir Wood to Burn of Auchmull and tenant fields on west side of river north and south of Connicleugh. Respect access rights under LRA provided people act responsibly. In principle not averse to the idea of a path link being developed between the northern tip of Kinnoir Wood and the lane leading up to the farm, provided it was fenced to minimise risk of interaction between people (particularly their dogs) and livestock. Unenthusiastic about suggestion of path development along the riverbank or field margin but would not



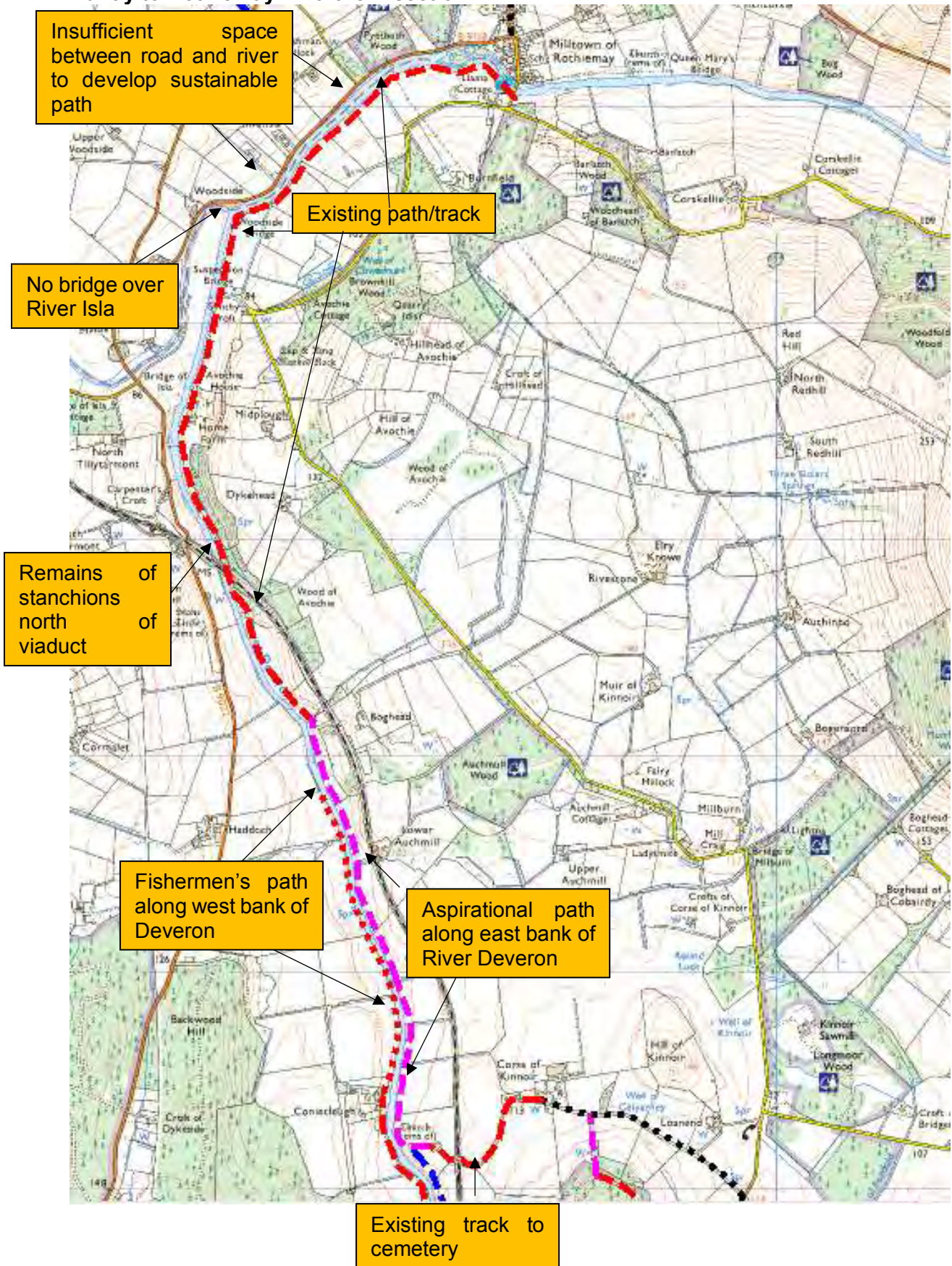
	<p>necessarily rule it out provided it did not interfere with farming and they did not suffer financially as a result.</p> <p><u>Lower Auchmill</u> – J. M. Allan (Jim and son Ian). Tel. 01466 711285)</p> <p><u>Avochie Estate</u> John Shields, owner (tel. 01466 711211 <a href="mailto:johnshields@me.com">johnshields@me.com</a>) is fully up to speed with LRA and respects access rights. The estate runs from Table Mound, the large stone in the River Deveron south of Boghead, downstream to Rothiemay. On the west bank the estate mainly owns just the riverbank, and is currently planting this with trees and woodland for conservation improvement. On the east bank the estate owns the farmland as well. Accepts that many people already enjoy using the existing path or tracks along the riverbank and is happy for them to do so provided they do not get in the way of fishermen. “It is their legal right, who am I to stop them?” He has no problem with promotion of access along the east riverbank, provided people behave responsibly, respect land management and are aware that bulls may be grazing in the fields around Boghead which the track runs through.</p>
<p><b>Priority for development / promotion</b></p>	<p>High</p>
<p><b>Recommended capital work</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish new fenced path link north of Kinnoir Wood to Corse of Kinnoir</li> <li>• Establish new path along east bank of Deveron (potentially fenced) Corse of Kinnoir to Boghead including culverted burn crossings or bridges, self-closing gates in all field boundaries</li> </ul>
<p><b>Alternatives considered</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential development/promotion of route along east bank of River Deveron considered, either north from the former Pirriesmill Bridge, or following the track which runs parallel to the railway north from Huntly Station to Kinnoir wood, then using the existing underpass to get under the railway and down onto the path marked on the OS map along the east bank of the Deveron up to the cemetery west of Corse of Kinnoir. There is no evidence of any path along this stretch of the Deveron, and landowners suggest it has long since disappeared, so concluded it was more pragmatic to use existing tracks through Kinnoir Wood.</li> <li>• Scope to develop a path along the west bank of the River Deveron was explored during community consultations, in discussion with landowners and during route survey. There is an existing informal path to Conniecleugh, north of which a fishermen’s path continues alongside the west riverbank, including planked crossings of burns and ditches. Many of the old stiles over fences and gates which previously provided access through dykes are now impassable, which could relatively easily be replaced but the sustainability of a path along the west bank is questionable due to intermittent flooding. The main limitation on a path up the west bank of the Deveron is the lack of any bridge (other than the main road bridge) over the River Isla and the proximity of the river to the B9118 between the junction of the Isla and the Deveron</li> </ul>

and Rothiemay which does not allow space for a path. The road itself is too busy and with too many blind spots to promote as part of a recommended route. If it were possible to re-establish a bridge across the Deveron north of the railway bridge, then a west bank route might be feasible – and could potentially provide a circular loop, but the costs are likely to be high.

### Huntly to Rothiemay – southern section



## Huntly to Rothiemay – northern section



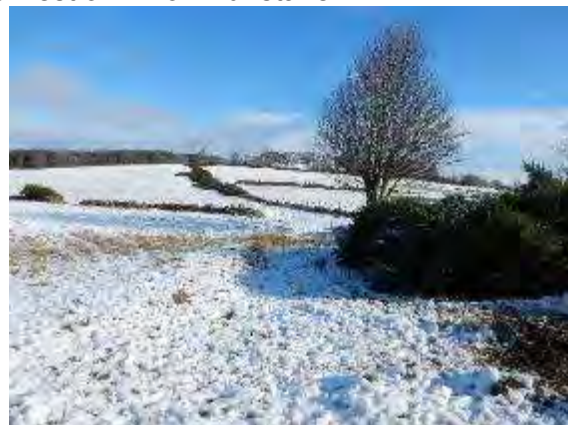
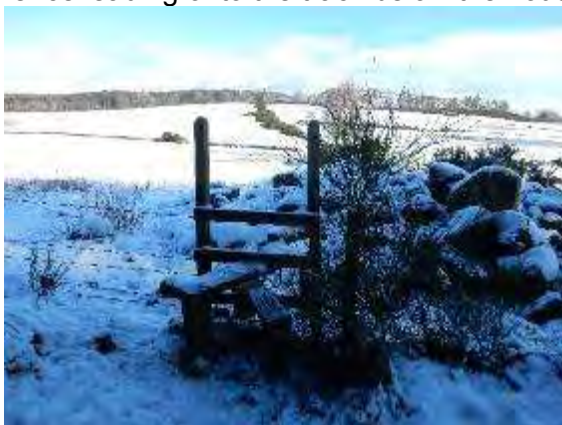
A broad stoned track leads from the parking area below Battle hill up into the wood, branching into two main paths, one up the west side of the wood, and one up the east side. Although uneven underfoot in places, the informal beaten earth path up the east side is well drained and an enjoyable walk.



The waymarked path runs alongside a fenced regeneration area (pictured below left) and then through mature woodland, meeting up with the west side path at the northern end of Battle Hill.



A wobbly but well used wooden stile provides access over the fence into the grazing field beyond, from where a track leads east down to Corseknowes, but there is no longer any evidence of the track shown on the OS map to the west. The proposed route continues north from the stile, parallel to the west side of the dyke, to an old metal gate in the corner of the fence leading onto the track below the house west of Hill of Brunstane.



At the time of survey, the gate was unhung and wired shut. A clearly defined stoned track leads west into Kinnoir Wood. The proposed route forks north at the first junction, following

the forest road north. There is a padlocked gate across the lower end of this road with gap alongside.



Parts of the forest road had recently been resurfaced and ditches dug either side to improve drainage. At present the only access out of the north end of the forest is to follow the forest road north of Annetswell out onto the public road opposite Parkseat. The gate across the lower end of the forest road (pictured below right) appears to be locked at times, but there is a gap alongside.



Current access follows the quiet dead-end tarmac public road to Corse of Kinnoir. Ideally a new link path would be created from the northernmost point of Mungo Wood, following the field boundary alongside the shelterbelt to the north to join this road just east of Corse of Kinnoir. The farmer has confirmed that this might be a possibility provided it was fenced to separate walkers and dogs from sheep, either on the line shown on the map (pictured below left) or just to the west of there (pictured below right).



The tarmac road stops at Corse of Kinnoir, west of which a stoned lane leads down, over a bridge over the railway, to an open gateway from which a broad unfenced mown grass track leads across the field to the cemetery (pictured below right).



There is no existing path between the cemetery, or along the eastern river bank north or south from here (although people did walk along the edge of the field as part of one of the slow marathons). The adjacent field is cultivated to the edge of the level ground: tough walking along the ploughline, or on the steeply sloping and in some parts wooded grass bank between cropped land and river. In some places there is a wider, flatter grass margin alongside the river where it would be relatively easy to cut a path.



Continuing north alongside the river, there are three burns to be crossed, none of which currently have any access facility. Care would need to be taken to ensure any bridge or culvert pipe is designed to cope with the river in spate without holding back water in the dtiches which provide essential drainage to the surrounding fields.



The wide grass riverbank is less steep but still sloping up to march boundary between Corse of Kinnoir and Lower Auchmill at the Burn of Auchmill. It may be possible to get over the burn nearer the railway line but there is no path along the field headlands and the ground is arable cropped.



North of Burn of Auchmill, the fields are permanent grass, with a clear beaten earth (sheep) path running roughly parallel to the river.



West of Lower Auchmill the grass becomes waterlogged, with a wired shut gate in the line of the path and collapsed culvert.



A double fence without any access facility either side of the remains of a dyke east of Haddoch marks the march boundary between Lower Auchmill and Avochie Estate. North of this march fence, it may be possible to develop a path in the grass strip between the river and the fenced field but the existing trees and shrubs provide valuable wildlife habitat and the invertebrates they support provide food for fish so clearance should be avoided.



The alternative is to continue east of the fence along the river, through the permanent grass field, which is level and mainly dry apart from the far northern end.



North-west of Boghead, a track leads down under the railway to join the proposed riverside path, continuing north through double metal field gates with a cattle grid between which lead onto a firm grass track parallel to the east side of the River Deveron which provides farm access and access to fishing huts along the river.



The grass track continues over a gated cattle grid (with adjacent side gate for livestock access) under the railway viaduct





The stanchions for an old bridge across the river immediately north of the river might potentially be used to create a bridge across the Deveron if it were possible to develop a path along the west bank between Huntly and the viaduct. Professional advice from a structural engineer would be required to comment on the condition of the remaining structures and costs of a new bridge. Whichever bank the route was developed south of the viaduct, the proposed route follows the existing broad stoned track which continues north to Rothiemay along the east bank of the Deveron.



There is a newly installed cattle grid with adjacent gate just south of Home Farm, beyond which the stoned track runs between the house and the river. The landowner has confirmed that this track is well used by the estate and by walkers, cyclists and fishermen and he has no issues with public access provided people behave responsibly and respect others.



The main drive forks east on a tarmac lane to the public road west of Smithy Croft. The proposed route continues north on a broad grass path along the riverbank, which narrows and becomes wet in places where culverts are blocked.



The path is particularly waterlogged either side of a 1.5m gate across the track, beyond which the path is unfenced from the adjacent sheep-grazed field.



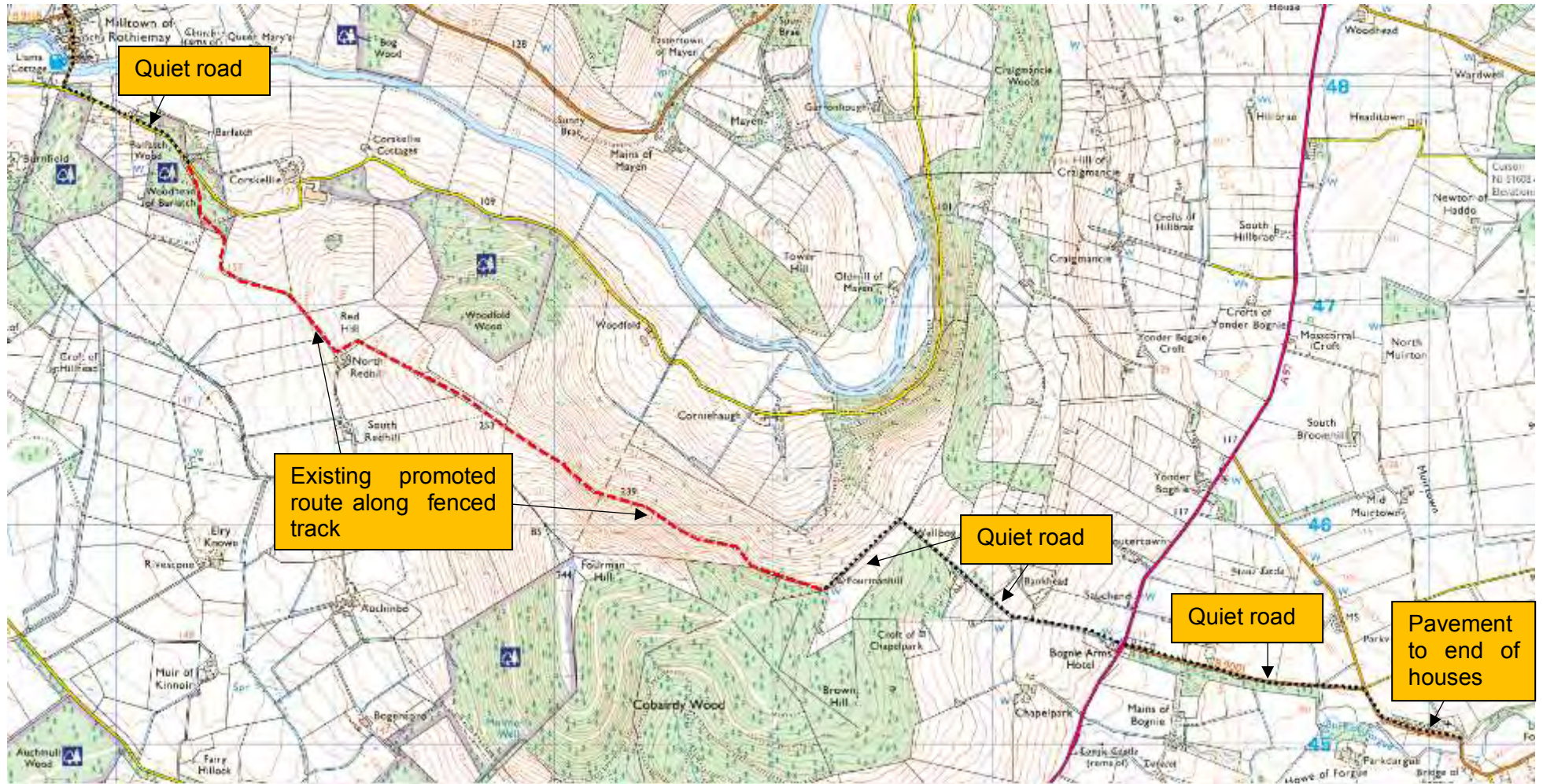
West of the road bridge over the Deveron, there is another waterlogged/muddy stretch which would benefit from a large bore culvert pipe, a further 1.5m gate across the path and then an open ford across the burn just before the bridge which currently limits use of the riverbank path. The landowner's main concern is that any bridge or culvert across this burn should not affect drainage further upstream.



The steps at the southern end of the road bridge are in a very poor state of repair and now fenced off from the road. Alternative access, currently used by local walkers and fishermen, is through a gate onto the fishermen's car park which leads onto the road by Llama Cottage.



<b>Name of route</b>	<b>CCNE4 Rothiemay to Forgue community link (FH1)</b>
<b>Start location</b>	Rothiemay village centre
<b>Finish location</b>	Forgue village centre
<b>Summary description</b>	Existing linear link, western end along quiet lane leading south from Rothiemay to a fenced farm track which runs along the north side of Fourman Hill following the route taken by Mary Queen of Scots, already promoted in Walks around Huntly. Quiet dead end lane leads down to the Bognie Arms, from where the B9001 links into Forgue.
<b>Justification for development/ Promotion</b>	One of the community connectors which HDDT was keen to see developed or to promote. Scope for use as circular route (as already promoted in Walks around Huntly). Popular as recreational route but little local demand identified in community consultations for a more functional link between the two communities.
<b>Current use</b>	Walkers, MTBs and horse-riders already regularly use this route
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	None. The gate across the track at the eastern end of Fourman Hill is locked to prevent illegal vehicular access but a new side gate has been installed to allow legitimate recreational access
<b>Legal status</b>	Claimed ROW
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	None
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Existing sustainable route. Eastern section along B9001 is on busier road. Discussion would be required with Aberdeenshire Roads Department to discuss safety issues of promoting route along this stretch of road and any implications for specifications
<b>Survey date</b>	September 2019 – June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	Track already promoted in Walks around Huntly so no issue promoting. Mr. Morison of BMF Group who own the majority of the track north of Fourman Hill has confirmed his enthusiasm to see the route more widely promoted.
<b>Priority for development / promotion</b>	High
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	Clear gorse encroaching on track (ideal volunteer task).  Scope to develop parallel path/pavement alongside the road which would also provide link between Forgue and Bognie Arms (which was due to reopen summer 2020) but further research would be required to establish demand for this path and assess cost/benefits



Stoned track up to North Redhill, which skirts clear of the steading, east up the hill as a well drained, firm, stoned farm track, fenced both sides (pictured below left looking west) providing farm access to fields either side. South-east of Woodfold Wood the track becomes grassy, with an unlocked field gate across the track (pictured below right) at the march boundary with Bognie and Forgue estates, marked by a carved boundary stone.



East of the gate, the track is relatively level, benched into the hillside and is unfenced, open grazed by cattle together with the ground north and south. Gorse is encroaching in places (pictured below right) for approximately 100-200m, beyond which the track opens out as a firm, dry, relatively level grass track.



The track is fenced again along the south side around a new section of woodland planting (not shown on latest OS map, pictured below right).



The views to the north are spectacular, north-west to Knock Hill (pictured below left) and across the Deveron Valley towards Marnoch (pictured below right).



A padlocked gate has recently been installed towards the eastern end of the track with an independent 1.5m self-closing bridle gate adjacent to maintain legitimate recreational access. Alongside the gate is another carved boundary stone.



A firm grass track continues to the corner of the wood, where it joins the tarmac public road. A former stile in the fence along the north side of the road was previously promoted as the return loop on the Bogniebrae walk but shows little evidence of recent use. The proposed community link continues down the road to the Bognie Arms.



<b>Name of route/ GIS map ref</b>	<b>CCNE5 Rothiemay to Tarryblake link RO10 and RO16</b>
<b>Start location</b>	Rothiemay village centre
<b>Finish location</b>	Tarryblake woods
<b>Summary description</b>	Aspirational link following former drove road. Eastern end between B9022 and B9117 north of Auchinlech is accessible grass farm track. Fenced former track west of B9022 through to Tarryblake is now impassable due to waterlogging, fencing and other rubbish, and overgrown in places
<b>Justification for development/promotion</b>	Strong demand expressed at community consultations for development of an off-road link to enable people to be able to use and enjoy the heavily used path network in Tarryblake Woods without being dependent on a vehicle to get there. Potentially also part of longer distance link between Rothiemay and Keith via Balloch Wood (see separate report)
<b>Current use</b>	None on blocked section, low use of eastern section
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use if route could be redeveloped
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Section west of B9022 impassable due to fences without access facility, waterlogging/running as open ditch/burn, huge boulders cleared off fields and dumped fencing etc.
<b>Legal status</b>	Access rights along old drove road would apply under LRA. Clearly shown on all old OS maps (see below) and local people insist this is a ROW although does not appear on CROW maps
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	No legal restrictions identified, although physically impassable and difficult trying to identify who owns the track itself.
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Depends on cost and securing landowner agreement. If drainage could be sorted and route cleared, longer term should not be any issues
<b>Survey date</b>	February 2020
<b>Landowner consultation response</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Neil Smith, Claymires Farm (tel. 01466 711240 m 07879 676005) claims to “have managed” parts of old drove road in past but ambiguous as to who owns it. Recognises old drove road as such, and that it may be a ROW, but opposed to any suggestion of reopening it as a path for public use on the grounds that “it will only end in trouble”. Non-specific about justification for this, resistant to any practical suggestions to address potential concerns which might include, for example, installation of self-closing gates at tractor crossing north of Cairnhill or refencing both sides to minimise risk of dogs straying into adjacent fields.</li> <li>- Mr. McCombie, Auchincrieve farms fields to south of old drove road west of Cairnhill. Understood to be similarly opposed to any suggestion of recreational access development along old drove road.</li> <li>- Tarryblake Woods managed by Landsown Allen Management Ltd. (Neil Dyson tel. 077037 55665) – left numerous messages, no response</li> <li>- Elizabeth McCombe (tel. 01466 711346) owns Cairnhill and fields between the farm steading and former drove road but none of the track itself.</li> <li>- At time of survey property west of Cairnhill (Boulder House) was up for sale by owners Hans and Monique Bouman</li> </ul>



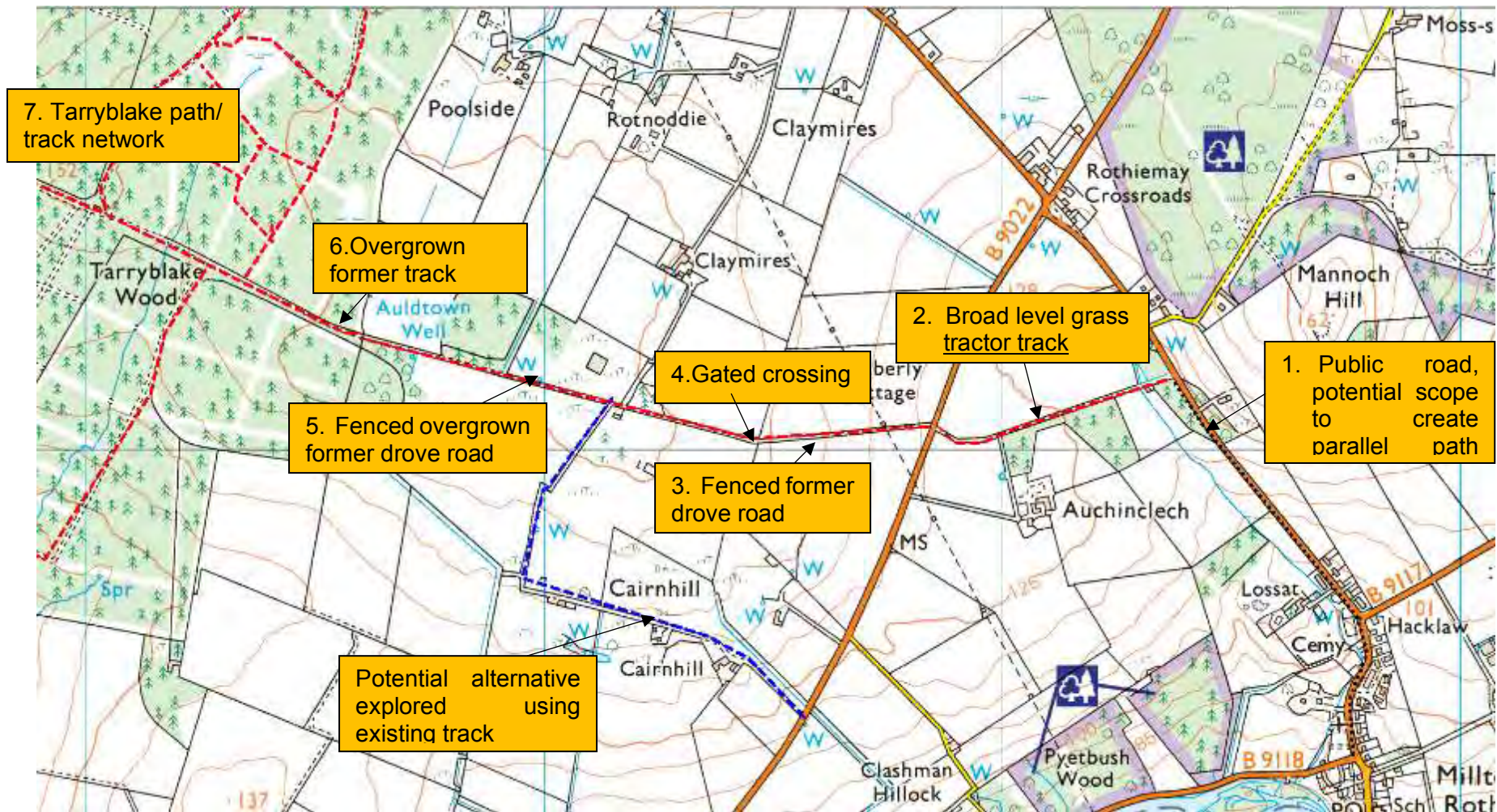
	<a href="https://assets.savills.com/properties/GBABRSEDS100058/EDS100058_ABS19002053.PDF">https://assets.savills.com/properties/GBABRSEDS100058/EDS100058_ABS19002053.PDF</a>
<b>Alternative options</b>	Scope to use the track past Cairnhill, south of the old drove road, explored during survey. Owner of Cairnhill suggests that track between Cairnhill linking through to Claymires could (should) have been claimed as ROW and was for many years used by walkers and horse riders and driven by the postman until Boulder House built in 2006 across the track and new owner denied any public access
<b>Priority for development</b>	Medium on the basis that there is high demand for this route and physically it is not particularly difficult but it would be relatively expensive to re-establish sustainable access along the western section
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drain, level and stone surface drove road between B9022 and B9117</li> <li>• Clear scrub, brash, trees in direct line of track, overhanging branches, relict fence and other dumped material from track. Clear boulders from line of path. Re-excavate and if necessary culvert ditch/drain full length of old drove road, feeding in side drains as required. Level and surface track with unbound stone to create min. 2m wide multi-use path</li> <li>• Install 1.5m self-closing gates in existing fences across track to ensure stockproof while allowing recreational access</li> </ul>

OS One inch 1945-48



OS One inch 1885-1900





1. Proposed route follows B9117 north from Rothiemay, pavement along first stretch to end of houses. Depending on level of demand and available funding, there may potentially be scope to reduce the length on tarmac and create a safer off-road path parallel to the road, along field edges and/or through the woodland east or west of the road, which is relatively open and dry.
2. A broad, firm tractor track branches west off B9117, passing house on left set back in trees (no intrusion on privacy or curtelage), beyond which the track becomes grassy, fenced both sides. Regularly used by tractors accessing fields either side.



From the north-east corner of the wood north of Auchincleach, the track is enclosed by a dyke and fence to the north and is less well used with water standing on the track in tractor wheel ruts in places due to blocked drain/ditch parallel to south of track. Western end of track is drier but thick grass.



3. Track continues west of B9022, fenced both sides, with row of conifers along southern side. No gate across end of track but culvert eroded on northern side (pictured below left). Track overgrown, difficult to negotiate due to brash, large stones cleared from fields, overgrown vegetation, dumped fencing and water running down, initially in open ditch parallel to fence.



Track becomes wetter and more overgrown as it heads west with water running down most of width in places.



4. Fence across track with no access facility in line of old drove road east and west of muddy tractor/farm crossing between fields.



Access along track further constrained by heaps of large boulders which would require clearing (ideal for a sculpture/art project!).



5. Former drive road continues west between parallel fences. Very difficult to walk due to waterlogging, scrub, tussocky vegetation and boulders. Also obstructed in places by dumped fencing and farm rubbish. Track shown on OS map north to Claymires no longer exists as such, amalgamated into fields/grassed over.



6. West of Auldtown Well, former drive road becomes increasingly overgrown and in places waterlogged, with barbed wire fence across boundary with Tarryblake woodland (pictured below left), beyond which original line of drive road visible parallel to fence to south still visible but very overgrown and waterlogged (pictured below right).



Track opens out and is firmer underfoot as it continues west. Wooden railed barrier with gap around end across end of track where it meets the Tarryblake forest road network.



7. A network of firm, level, unsurfaced and stoned forest tracks, some of which are waymarked, lead through Tarrylake Wood, offering scope for wide variety of woodland walks or linking back to car park at Woodlands Croft on B9117. Chainsaw sculptures, picnic site and various other points of interest within the woods and map board at car park.



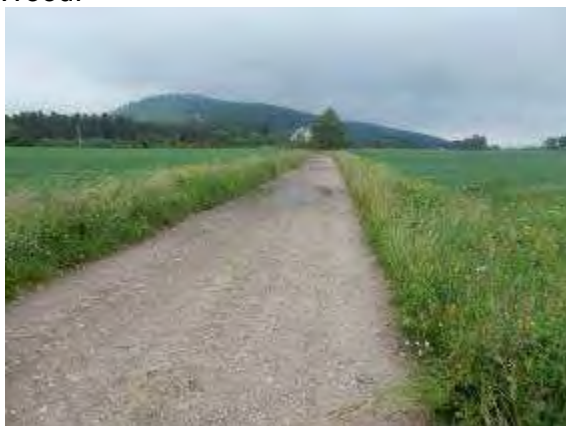
<b>Name of route/ GIS map ref</b>	<b>CCNE6 Rothiemay/Tarryblake to Keith link</b>
<b>Start location</b>	Rothiemay village centre
<b>Finish location</b>	Keith town centre
<b>Constituent sections</b>	RO10, RO16, TA4, BA8, BA1, KE6, KE5, KE4, BA14
<b>Summary description</b>	Proposed link between Rothiemay and Keith following old drove road from Rothiemay to Tarryblake (see RO10 separate survey record), existing forest tracks through Tarryblake wood to disused railway north of Bridge of Nethermills, then disused railway west to Varennes, from where the minor road west to Burnmouth links onto the Balloch Wood forest road network via Toman Leach, along the northern edge of Balloch Wood to join BA1 Herricks long distance route (see separate survey record on Huntly to Keith link) which links into Keith.
	Aspirational route demand for which was identified during AB54 path network strategy community consultations and by Moray Council. Largely exists already, high demand for development of section from Rothiemay to Tarryblake independently of longer distance link to Keith. Relatively low cost to establish.
<b>Current use</b>	High use by walkers, cyclists and horse riders of existing tracks through Tarryblake and Balloch Woods and of section of disused railway west from Nethermills to road.
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Obstructions on old drove road from Rothiemay to Tarryblake. Lack of identified link between Tarryblake and Balloch Wood
<b>Legal status</b>	Access rights apply throughout on off-road sections under LRA.
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	None
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Assuming old drove road can be reopened and improved between Rothiemay and Tarryblake, this would be an easy route to establish, even if it meant using the road east of Varennes
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	See Rothiemay to Tarryblake survey report No consultation with landowners re. BA14
<b>Alternative options</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although it involves a mile or more on tarmac, the cheapest, simplest link from Tarryblake to Balloch Wood would be to follow the quiet lane from the disused railway south of Nethermills through to Varennes, which could be signed and promoted immediately.</li> <li>• Other off-road alternatives include linking through Garro Wood onto the track alongside the Keith-Huntly railway line, a short section on quiet public road then following the existing track north from Netherton and Monks Cairn, from where forest roads link through to Keith either west via Glacks of Balloch to the Herricks Long Distance Route (see Huntly to Keith report) or north via Toman Leach through to Keith.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The alternative to the potential Garro Wood section is to follow the minor road south from the disused railway south of Nethermills, around the eastern edge of Garrow Wood, over the railway bridge and then picking up the track to Monks Cairn immediately north of Nethererton.</li> </ul>
<b>Priority for development</b>	Medium
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create fenced, unbound stone surfaced path along disused railway west from River Isla to Varennes</li> </ul>

Proposed route follows Rothiemay to Tarryblake link (see separate route report), continuing north-west along Red Brae forest track, crossing straight over Estate Road, past Tarryblake House on stoned track, over Bridge of Nethermills to disused railway.



South of Nethermills, proposed route turns west on stoned disused railway, already used by farm traffic, walkers, cyclists and horse riders, to join public road immediately north of Garro Wood.



Ideally route would continue west on disused railway, which runs along northern boundary of new house (not shown on latest OS map) as fenced, grassed over farm track on stone base, to a gate into a field, beyond which the disused railway has been amalgamated into the field. Access currently obstructed by two padlocked field gates across the line of the old railway. The field is full of very lively, inquisitive cattle. Establishment of a surfaced path along the disused railway would involve negotiating fencing off the bed of the railway.





The railway line appears firm and well drained, running above the level of the surrounding fields. At approximate OSGR NJ500 504 there is a gap where the raised railway has been eroded or removed to allow direct access between fields to the north and south. Immediately west of this, a barbed line wire fence runs across the disused railway marking the march boundary (pictured below left). West of the fence, the bed of the railway is overgrown, with a caravan on the railway line. The easiest way round at present is via the telephone mast, from where a mown grass track leads back onto the disused railway (pictured below right). The main bed of the disused railway is still firm underneath and could relatively easily be cleared.



From the cottage at Varennes, the disused railway continues west as a firm, broad, well drained grass track (pictured below right)

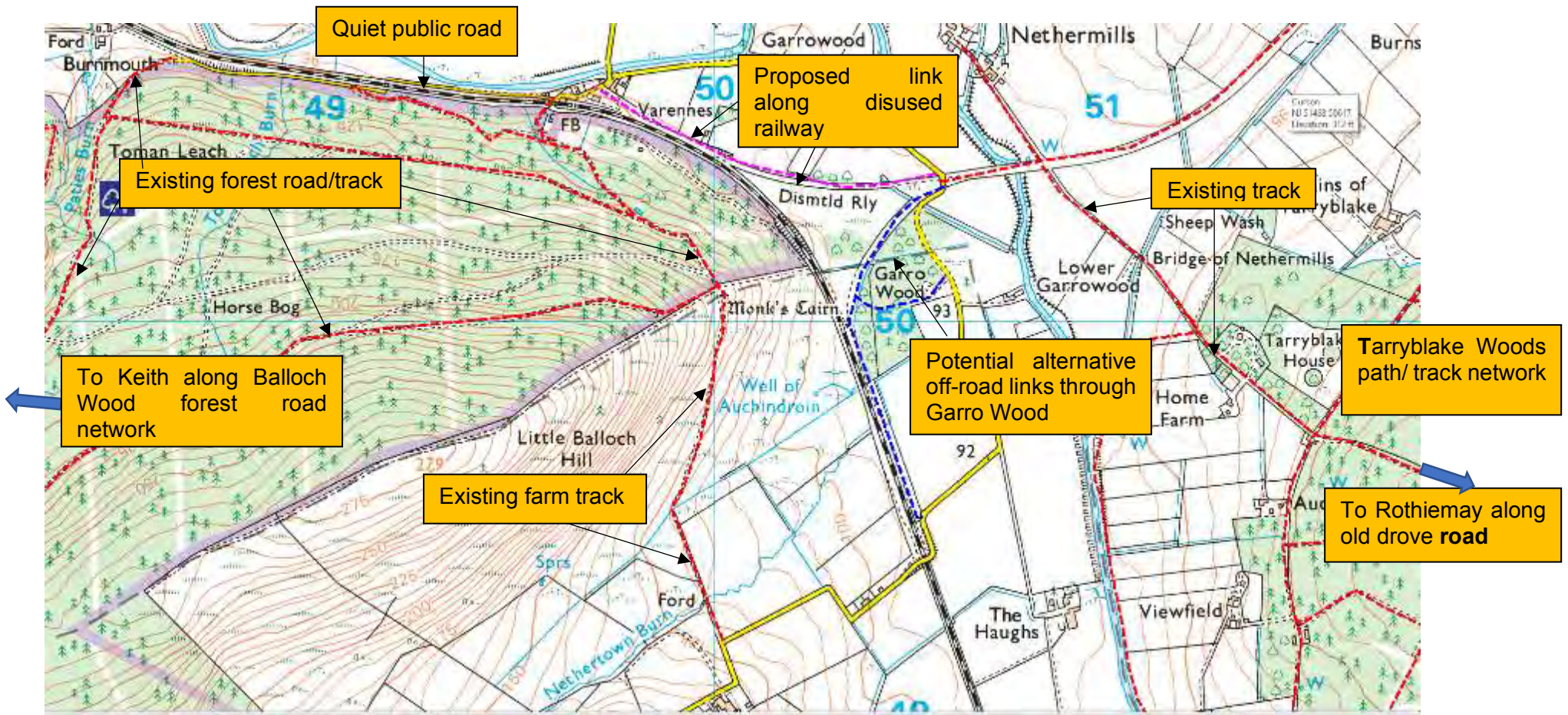


Just before the houses, the track splits. Parallel to the current railway is a firm, mown grass track (left of picture below left) but this runs directly past private houses. The proposed route follows the stoned track which curves to right (north) away from the railway, to join the public road.

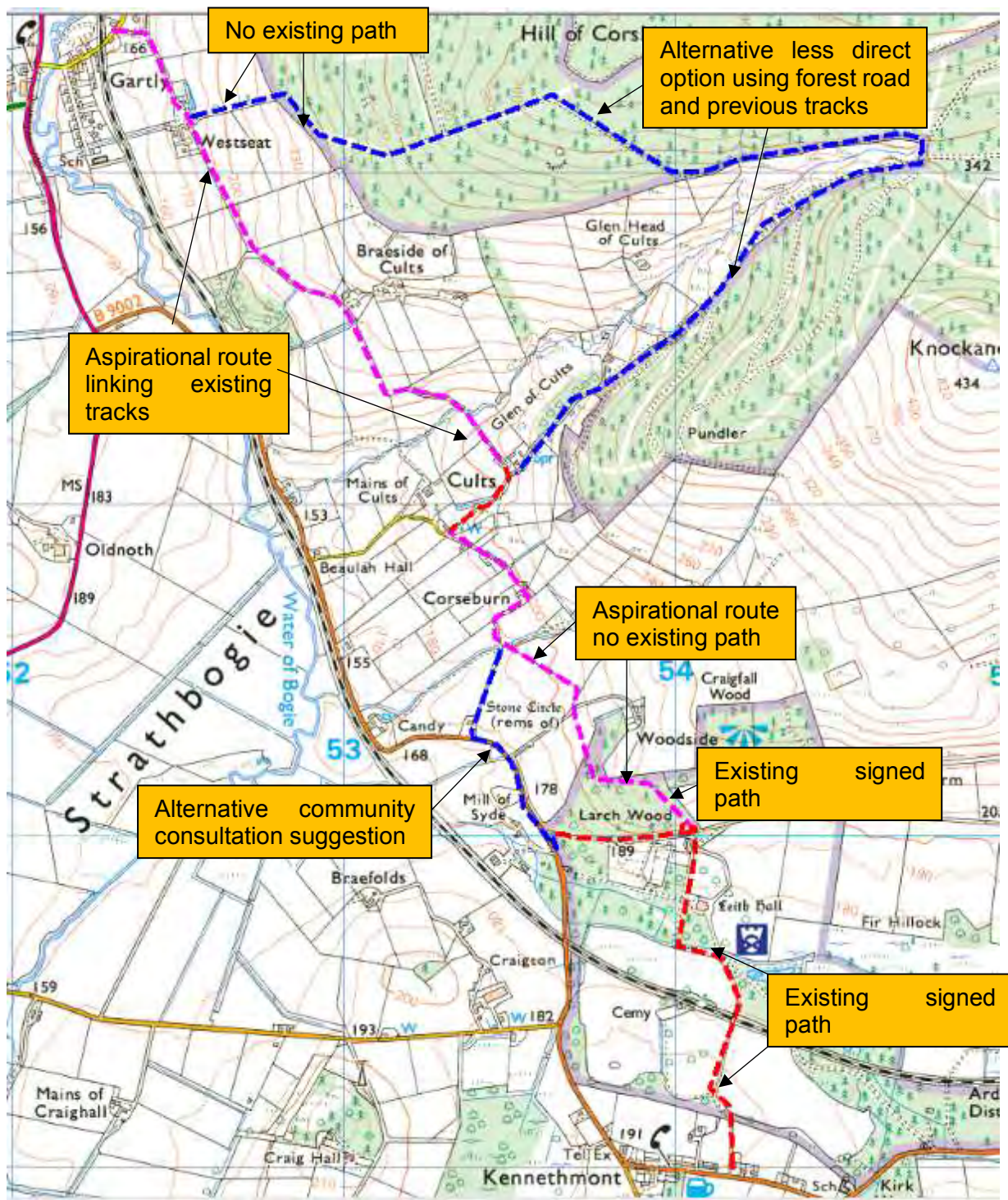


Proposed route then follows the public road west towards Burnmouth, parallel to the north side of the railway, crossing under the railway line via a bridge. Where the farm track branches off west, the proposed route to Keith links onto the Balloch Wood forest road network with a gap alongside the locked gate to allow recreational access.

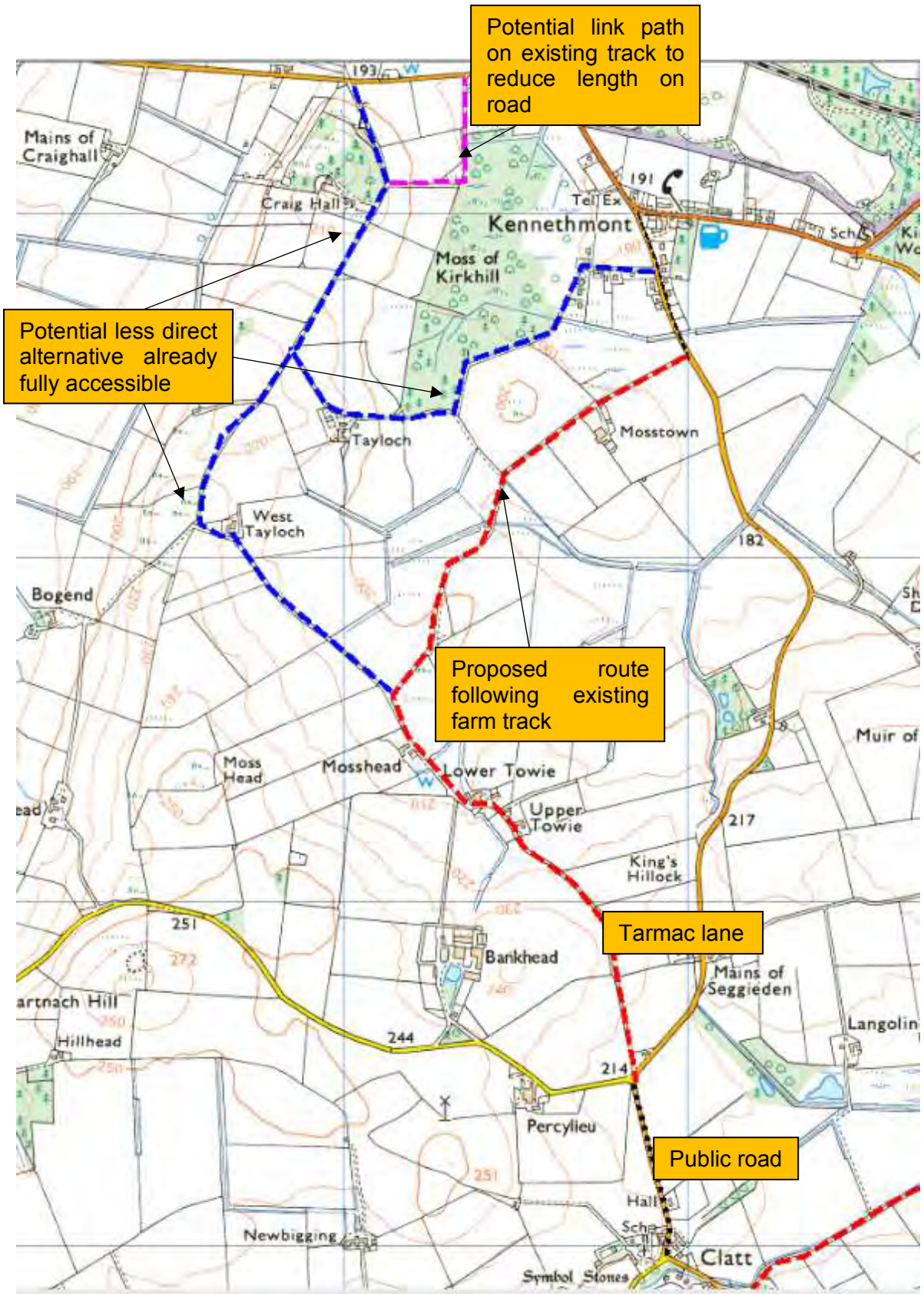




<b>GIS map ref / name of route</b>	<b>CCSE1 Gartly to Kennethmont</b>
<b>Start and finish location</b>	Gartly Kennethmont village centre
<b>Summary description</b>	Aspirational linear link between the two communities of Gartly and Kennethmont. A signed promoted off-road path already exists between Kennethmont, Leith Hall and the B9002 west of Larch Wood and it is hoped it may be possible to create new sections of path to link this with other sections of existing or historic track.
<b>Justification for development / promotion</b>	Identified by HDDT as one of the community links they are keen to develop, endorsed by a couple of people at community consultations, although without specific objective.
<b>Current use</b>	None
<b>Potential use</b>	Depends on route taken. Potentially multi-use but mainly pedestrian.
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	No existing off-road route and no link between sections of remaining track. The only link between the two communities at present is the B9002 and A97, both of which are fairly busy, bending and dangerous.
<b>Legal status</b>	None
<b>Access issues relevant to the route</b>	Some of the existing sections of track go through or very close by houses and farm steadings, where access rights would not necessarily apply under LRA.
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Options are severely constrained by busy public roads, the railway line and Water of Bogie which runs parallel and by intensive agricultural management of farmland west of the river, all of which suggest the only viable option is to try and develop a route east of the railway. As this is more hilly, it is less likely to be suitable as an active travel link for cycling to work, school or to shop.
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	
<b>Priority for development</b>	Low on basis of potential resources required to establish the route compared with anticipated use.
<b>Recommended capital improvements work</b>	Depends on route which can be negotiated
<b>Alternative options considered</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community consultations suggested the route might run between the parallel fences south from Corseburn to the house on the old military road (B9002) east of Candy. The track shown on the OS map between Coresburn and the B9002, and along the east side of the B9002 south from the Woodside track to larch Wood, no longer exists. This would therefore involve 0.25 miles along the B9002 which is not considered safe unless a parallel path could be developed east of the road. off-road.</li> <li>• Hill of Corskie – alternative less direct option requiring establishment of new path along field boundary east from Westseat to the forest boundary connecting through to existing forest roads (although some of these are now overgrown – see Kennethmont to Gartly Moor notes). Option explored to establish path along the western forest edge but currently impenetrable gorse, control of which would be an ongoing maintenance issue</li> </ul>



<b>GIS map ref / name of route</b>	<b>CCSE2 Kennethmont to Clatt</b>
<b>Start and finish location</b>	Kennethmont Clatt village centre/hall
<b>Summary description</b>	Linear link between two local communities following the old military road Tarmac south of Mosshead and east of Mosstown, grass track inbetween with some ruts and potholes but all of which is already accessible on foot, cycle or horseback (also used by farm vehicles).
<b>Justification for development / promotion</b>	One of numerous community links which HDDT identified in the AB54 path network brief that they were keen to develop, endorsed by several people at community consultations for recreational use, and to ensure the historic military road is not lost from public use. Also potentially part of circular routes around Kennethmont and Clatt based on Strathbogies old roads.
<b>Current use</b>	Walking, cycling and horse riding
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	None. Surface is not suited to road bikes but cyclists happy to use quiet roads
<b>Legal status</b>	Claimed ROW
<b>Access issues relevant to the route</b>	None. Track between Mosstown and Mosshead was previously signed and claimed as LMC.
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Existing track, viable to promote, at worst may require minor drainage in future.
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	None as already promoted
<b>Priority for development</b>	Medium
<b>Recommended capital improvements work</b>	Replace gates with self-closing gates where required



South of Kennethmont, the track to Mosstown is signed “footpath to Clatt”, which suggests it was previously claimed under Land Management Contract as a path, and that the farmer has no issue with people using it.



The stoned track continues to the farm, beyond which the track is less well used but still firm and fully accessible.



The OS map shows a path linking north from the corner of the track west of Mosstown to the track between Kennethmont and Tayloch (KT3). There is no longer any path along this field headland (pictured below left looking north) but it might be possible to create a link which would reduce the length on road south from Kennethmont. The main track continues south-west (pictured below right), linking with the old military road north of Mosshead..



The steading at Mosshead is set back off the track (pictured below left). From Lower Towie, the route follows the tarmac public road south to Clatt.

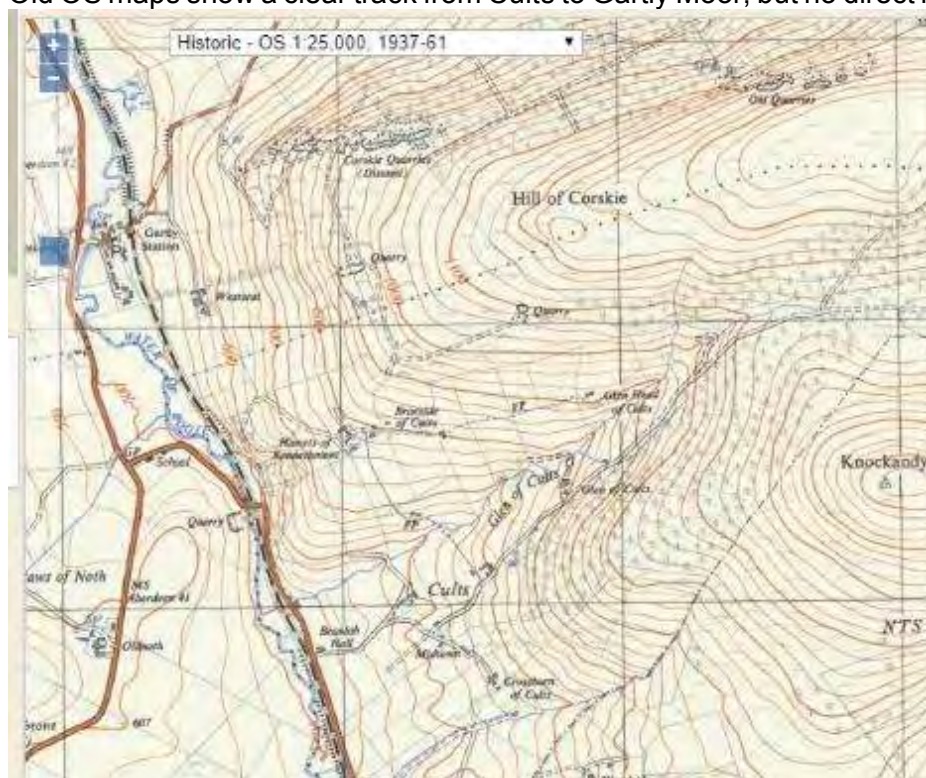


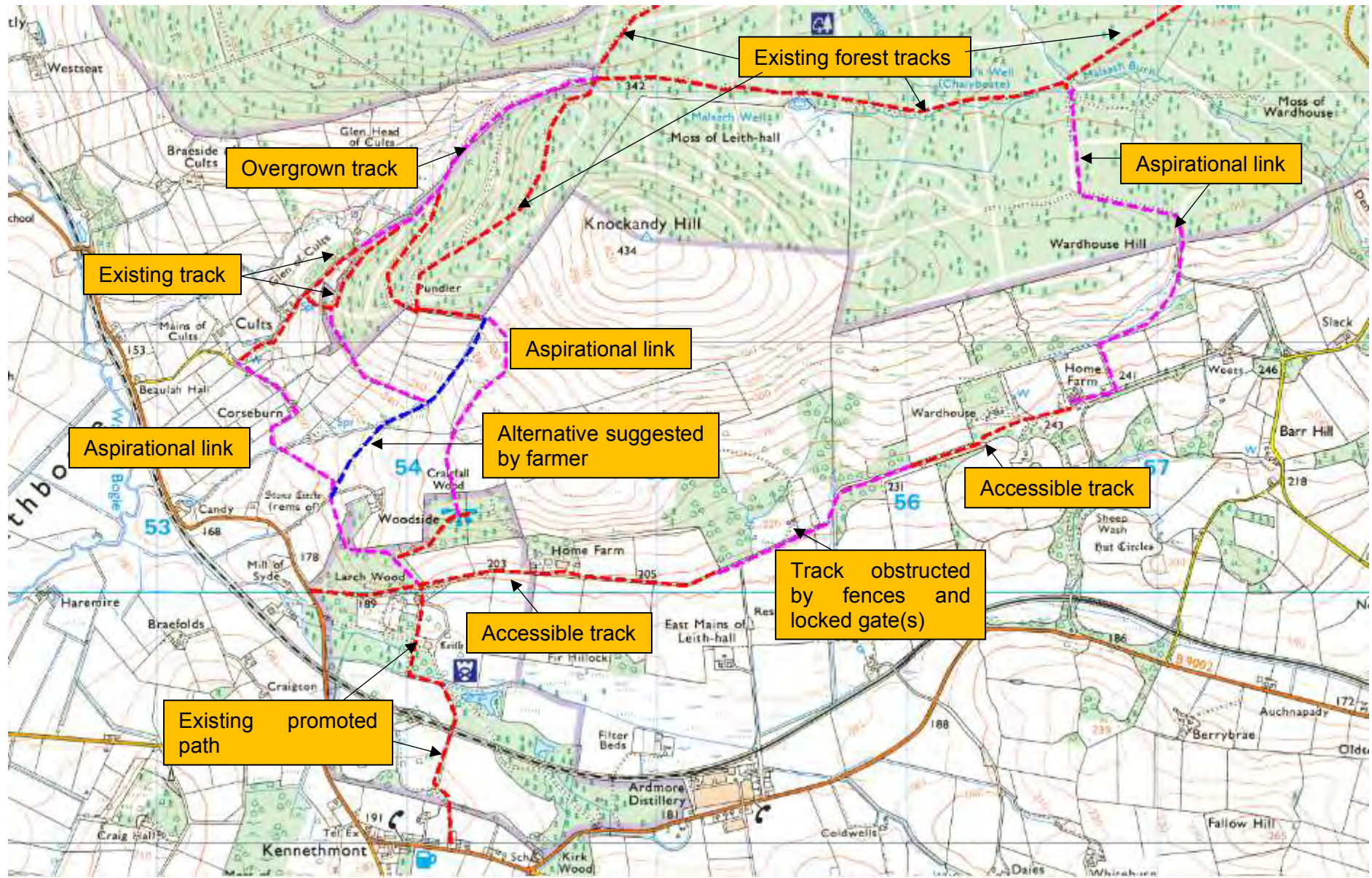


<b>GIS map ref / name of route</b>	<b>CCSE3 Kennethmont to Greenmyres link</b>
<b>Start and finish location</b>	Kennethmont village centre Greenmyres
<b>Summary description</b>	Aspirational linear (ideally circular) route linking Kennethmont with Gartly Moor and via the existing forest road network to Greenmyres and on to Huntly.
<b>Justification for development / promotion</b>	Development of functional multi-use link between Kennethmont and Gartly Moor was identified as local priority during community consultations. There is much local frustration at paths and tracks which people used to use now being obstructed and farmer resistance to people exercising their legal rights of access. Development and promotion of this link would help redress this, and open up a lot more access from Kennethmont.
<b>Current use</b>	Uncertain – a couple of local people said they walked various routes to get up onto Gartly Moor but little evidence of use on ground
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Lack of any functional through route. Fences without access facility. Dense gorse, overgrown tracks on Gartly Moor. Safety issues walking along B9002
<b>Legal status</b>	Local people insist the track east from Home Farm to Warehouse is a right of way although not shown on CROW maps. Access rights apply along this track under LRA, on other paths and tracks and through fields, provided exercised responsibly.
<b>Access issues relevant to the route</b>	Long history of Home Farm denying people access rights even along fenced tracks, Aberdeenshire Council have had past involvement to get signs saying private no access taken down and trying to get obstructions removed but understood the situation remains unresolved. Needs to be pursued further through Aberdeenshire Council.
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Depends on developing a safe off-road link from Leith Hall to Cults and reopening the track north-east to Gartly Moor, and/or resolving issues along the track east from Home Farm and developing a link up Warehouse Hill to the forest road network
<b>Survey date</b>	October 2019 - June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	<u>Home Farm</u> – David Cowie (tel. 07827 744270), wife tel 07748 382084 owns/farms all the ground north of Ardmore Distillery/the railway to Gartly Moor, west to Woodside and east to laighmuir, other than the fields south of Craigfall Wood and immediately east of Leith Hall which are owned by NTS. Mr. Cowie is very anti public access of any kind anywhere on his land. There is a long history of him discouraging and obstructing access along the track east to Warehouse. Private signs at western end of track, locked gates and fences further east along track. His justification is concern about dogs, sheep worrying and liability (regardless of reassurances that this has not changed post LRA and practical suggestions to mitigate). He will not consider path development or promotion unless paid to do so or possibly selling a strip of land along the burn up his western boundary.

	Nature Scotland Wildcat Policy Lead – Roo Campbell (07880 751488)
	We knocked on a lot of doors around Cults (including Glen of Cults) at different times, both midweek and weekend, without response
<b>Priority for development</b>	Medium
<b>Recommended capital improvements work</b>	Depends on route
<b>Alternatives considered</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aspirational route identified during community consultations (as used by slow marathon, or permutation on it) from Craigfall Wood, up existing grass track on south-west flank of Knockandy Hill to link with end of forest road east of Pundler. Farmer/landowner refuses to agree to this.</li> <li>• Potential path development up the western boundary of Home Farm along burn between Woodside track and Pundler. Consultations with SNH confirmed that this has already been identified as a key wildcat corridor/link between Clashindarroch and Gartly Moor which would likely not fit well with access development, and the landowner would only agree if he sold the land. There are also physical challenges with trying to establish and maintain a path up the burn.</li> </ul>

Old OS maps show a clear track from Cults to Gartly Moor, but no direct link from Kennethmont





The proposed route would follow the existing signed path off the B9002 in Kennethmont village centre up to Leith Hall. Unless a route can be negotiated north from Craigfall Wood, which currently seems unlikely due to landowner resistance, the options are

- (i) to try and develop a link via Corseburn through to Cults, and then re-establish the old track north-east up the south side of Glen of Cults to link with the forest road network
- (ii) to develop a link from Corseburn to the track which runs to the southern tip of the forest, south-west of Pundler
- (iii) to follow the fenced track east from Leith Hall, past Home Farm to Wardhouse, and then link up either via Wardhouse Home Farm or Weets to Wardhouse Hill and from there to the forest road network.

From Cults, a stoned track climbs north-east, becoming less well used and more grassy after passing various houses to the north of the track, but clearly well used by walkers.



The track becomes impassable at Glen of Cults due to overhanging branches, rhododendron and other brash (some cleared from the adjacent garden).



The OS map shows the original track/path continuing north-east of Glen of Cults on the field (north) side of the forest boundary. Sheets of corrugated iron laid on the ground suggest that there has previously been access continuing along the line of the track, and the line of the former track is still apparent but impassable due to dense gorse. At time of survey there was no evidence of recent access.



It is possible to find a way through a clearing in the trees, around the edge of a small fenced area (not shown on the OS map – pictured below left) and link up to the forest road which runs parallel slightly higher up the hill which is now overgrown with self-seeded trees (pictured below right). There is a clear “path” along the old track but it is not clear whether this is from people walking (and if so where from) or as a result of deer and other animals. Shortly to the north, the former forest track switches back round towards Pundler,



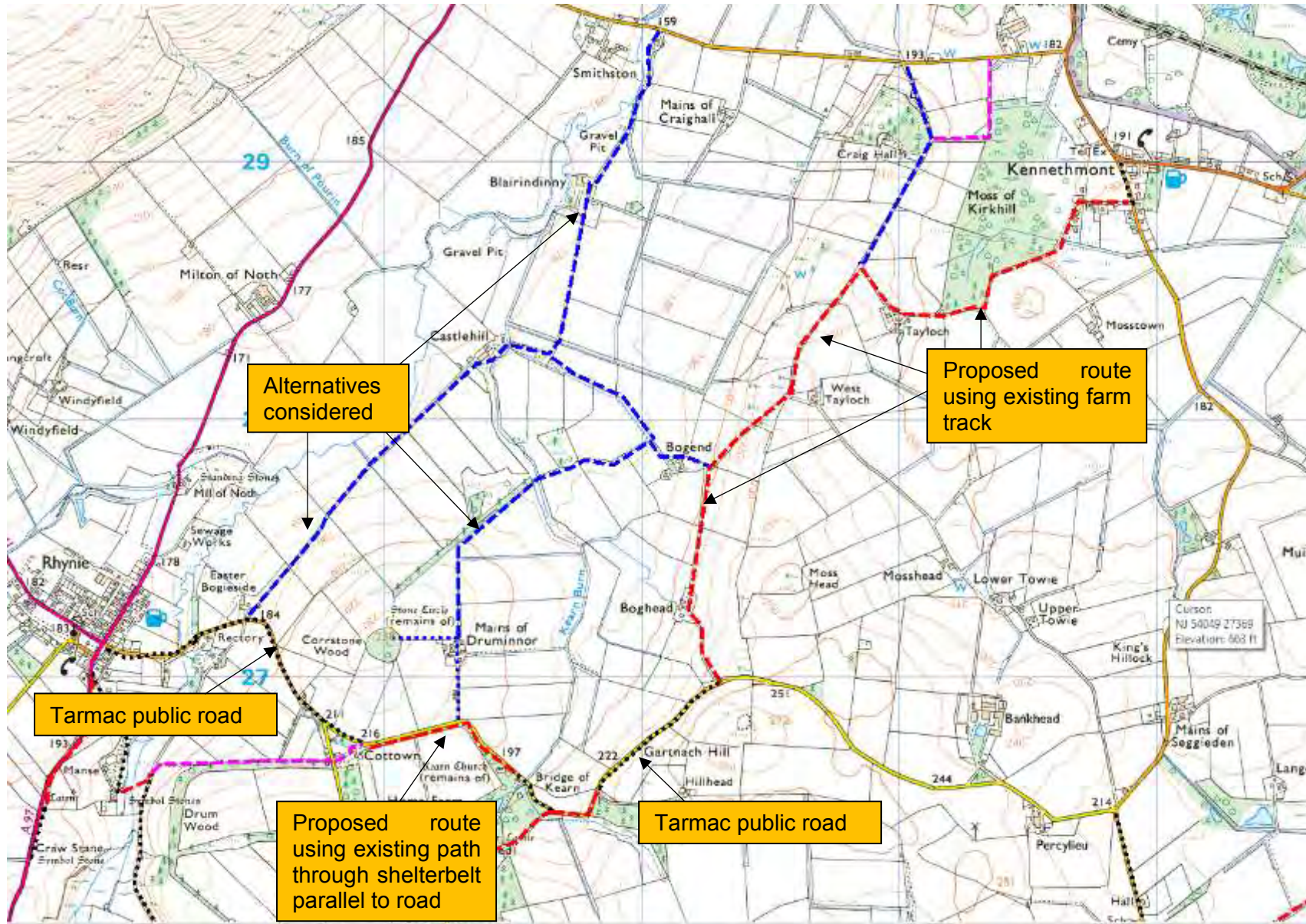
Between the bend in the track and the line of the former path shown on the OS map north of the forest boundary is impassable due to dense gorse and trees with no evidence of any recent access (pictured below left). Uphill from the bend, the forest road becomes much less vegetated as it climbs south towards Pundler, from where it is possible to follow the forest road north over Gartly Moor.



Name of route	CCSE4 Rhynie to Kennethmont
<b>Start location</b> <b>Finish location</b>	Rhynie village centre Kennethmont village centre
<b>Constituent sections</b> (see more detailed reports under Rhynie circular route)	RH13 Bridge of Kearn woodland path KT5 Boghead path KT2 Old military road KT3 Moss of Kirkhill
<b>Summary description</b> Linear route following existing paths and farm tracks to link Rhynie and Kennethmont, with a short section on public road.	
<b>Justification for development/promotion</b>	One of the community links suggested in the AB54 path network brief. No specific demand identified at community consultations – cyclists from Kennethmont already use the road to get to the shop at Rhynie and are likely to continue to do so, but this route and its constituent sections are important parts of the overall path network, and provide valuable off-road access opportunities around the two villages as well as potential for development and promotion of longer circular routes in future.
<b>Current use</b>	Daily use of RH13, unknown level of use of KT5
<b>Potential use</b>	RH13 pedestrian only, other sections multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	
<b>Legal status</b>	Access rights apply under LRA
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	Potential issues with privacy and curtelage using the track past Boghead
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Capable of sustainably supporting low level use but RH13 would not support high level of use
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	Mains of Druminnor are happy for people to go past/through the steading to access the remains of the stone circle in Corrstone Wood but development/promotion of a community link, potentially to be used by cyclists, would create more issues for the farm, who are understandably concerned about safety and potential conflict between farm traffic and cyclists
<b>Conclusion / priority for development</b>	Low-medium priority for development as community link but worth pursuing as part of wider network
<b>Alternatives considered</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A less direct option to following the road east from Rhynie would be to follow the same route as suggested for the Rhynie to Clatt link (see CCSE5) to the road east of Druminnor and then link onto KT5 Boghead path.</li> <li>• Some years ago Rhynie Community Council suggested development of a path along the former field edge track north of Mains of Druminnor to Bogend, linking along existing farm track through to the old military road. This is still mapped as an aspirational route but is questionable in terms of promotion as a community link because of issues around the steading at Mains of Druminnor.</li> <li>• Colin Millar's report suggested development and promotion of a route following the existing farm track north-east from Rhynie to Castlehill and then either branching south east to</li> </ul>

	<p>Bogend to link up with the military road, or continuing via Blairindinny to the minor road north of Smithston which can be followed to Kennethmont. Either option involves passing through Castlehill Farm steading, and the latter option also goes through or very close by the steading at Blairindinny, which is less than ideal from all perspectives. The road east from Smithston is also relatively busy so this option was disregarded.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Community consultations suggested development of a new path from Easter Bogieside to Corrstone wood and then north-east along the field boundary to Bogend, which was discounted following survey in favour of the preferred route because of the difficulties trying to negotiate a new path through or around intensively managed agricultural fields.</li></ul>
--	--





The road east of Rhynie is well-used already by local walkers, cyclists and horse riders. East of Cottown a path has been developed through the trees parallel to the south side of the road.

The path comes to an end at the cemetery west of Bridge of Kearn, beyond which the proposed route would need to follow the road to the track up to Boghead.

North from Boghead is a fenced, firm farm track (pictured below left), which continues to Bogend. The proposed route forks north-east just before Bogend through several gates (pictured below right, picture taken looking south).



North of Bogend, a firm grass track on the west side of the fence (open on the other side to permanent grass field) climbs gradually up the hill (pictured below left looking south). Mid-way to West Tayloch the track switches to the east side of the fence through an open gateway, with hurdles across it at times to control sheep movement (pictured below right).



Shortly beyond the open gateway is a field gate across the end of the track, beyond which the track is more clearly defined, initially grass and then stony.



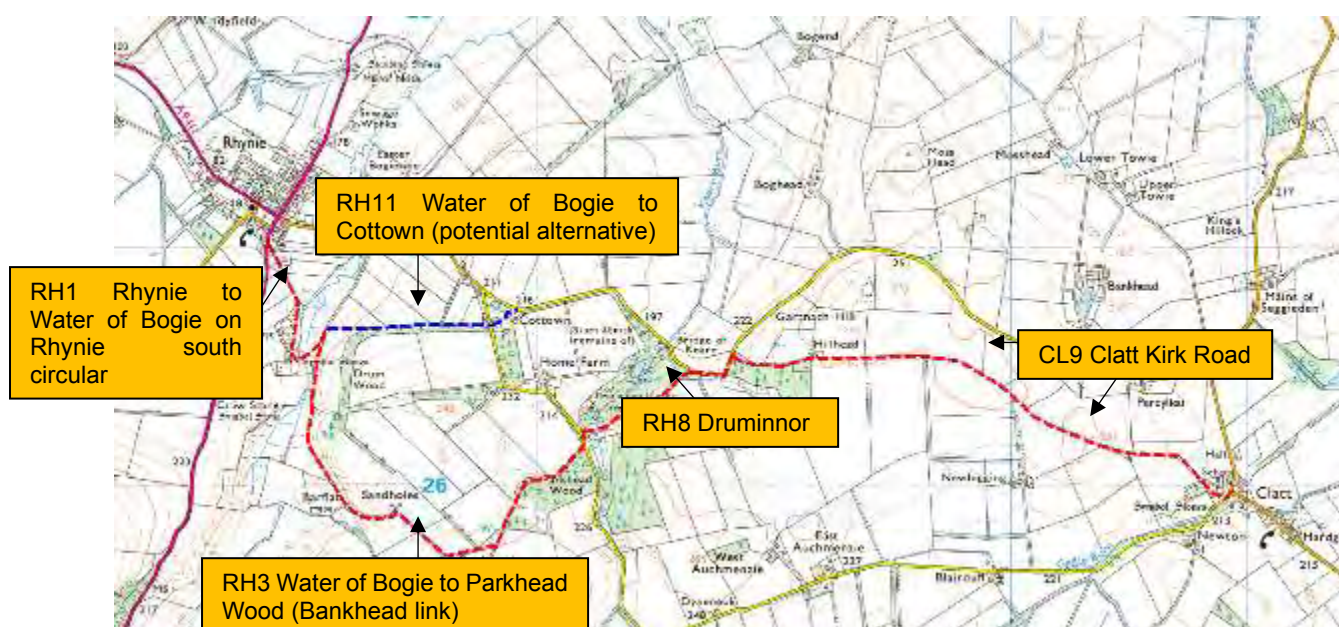
At the brow of the hill, just west of West Tayloch, the track splits (pictured below right). The proposed route takes the left fork, heading north on a well-used farm track.



Half-way to Craig Hall, the track forks again, the proposed route taking the right fork, heading south-east to Tayloch, from where a tarmac lane leads into Kennethmont which is used only by farm traffic.



Name of route	CCSE5 Rhynie to Clatt community link
Start location	Rhynie village centre
Finish location	Clatt village centre
Constituent sections (see more detailed reports under Rhynie circular route)	RH1 Rhynie south circular (as far as Water of Bogie) RH3 Water of Bogie to Parkhead Wood (Cottown alternative) RH8 Druminnor CL9 Clatt Kirk Road
Summary description	Proposed mainly off-road link between Rhynie and Clatt using a combination of existing informal paths and short sections on quiet single track roads, other than the eastern half, which follows the line of the old Kirk Road which has not been accessible for some years.
Justification for development/promotion	One of the community links suggested in the AB54 path network brief, endorsed by community consultations. The route currently promoted in the Walks around Huntly booklet is entirely on-road along narrow, winding lanes with blind corners which puts many young and old off walking or cycling. Consultations identified local demand to reopen the Kirk Road
Current use	Low
Potential use	Multi-use if route could be redeveloped
Restrictions/limitations on current use	See sectional reports
Legal status	See sectional reports
Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route	See sectional reports
Practicality of route, viability, sustainability	Promotion of the western half of the route, which is already fully accessible, would cut the length on road but without the Kirk road there is still a substantial length on road which is likely to deter some potential route users.
Survey date	June 2020
Landowner / consultation response	See sectional reports
Conclusion / priority for development	Promote the western half of the route as part of routes around Rhynie, highlighting scope to use these paths as part of link between Rhynie and Clatt



AB54 path network strategy – path survey record October

<b>GIS map ref / name of route</b>	<b>CL9 Clatt Kirk Road</b>
<b>Start location</b>	Hillhead, east of Rhynie (OSGR NJ 518 265)
<b>Finish location</b>	Clatt Old Kirk (OSGR NJ 538 259)
<b>Other relevant routes</b>	Part of potential off-road Rhynie to Clatt link Rhynie to Water of Bogie. Water of Bogie to Parkhead wood. Druminnor
<b>Summary description</b>	
The old kirk road between Rhynie and Clatt features on Scotways Heritage Paths website <a href="http://www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=411">http://www.heritagepaths.co.uk/pathdetails.php?path=411</a> and was identified during community consultations as an aspirational route for redevelopment but very little of the route still exists on the ground. There is a stoned track leading to properties either end but most of the former route runs along headlands of arable and grass fields with relict gates in field boundaries and property developed over the eastern end of the track.	
<b>Justification for development / promotion</b>	Clatt Kirk Road is a key part of any off-road path between Rhynie to Clatt, which was proposed as one of numerous community links suggested in the AB54 path strategy brief, and endorsed by community consultations.. Scope for potential promotion as part of circular route Rhynie-Clatt-Kennethmont
<b>Current use</b>	Several people at community consultations claimed they occasionally walk this route but no evidence of current use and others question whether it has been walked in the past 20 years
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use if route was redeveloped but seems unlikely to be sufficient justification for a surfaced path
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Line of historic track runs close between renovated farmhouse and newly built garage for which Aberdeenshire Council apparently granted planning permission without taking account of the historic route. Storage sheds built on track behind house, tight squeeze past, no alternative way around without climbing fences
<b>Legal status</b>	None (not recorded on CROW maps). Property owner at eastern end of track claims to have checked with Scotways who apparently said it ceased to be ROW 83 years ago and that if it still had been, Aberdeenshire Council would not have granted planning permission
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	Access rights under LRA include field headlands, provided rights exercised responsibly, but exclude gardens, curtelage of buildings and sufficient to afford privacy to houses. This therefore precludes any right of access past the house at the eastern end of the historic track and may also restrict access past Hillhead.
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Would depend on negotiating an alternative route to bypass the house at the eastern end
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	Resident owner of house across track at eastern end (runs wood burning stove shop in Alford) friendly and helpful but averse to access directly past their house which would intrude on their privacy. Track goes directly between his house and garage, with storage container on the track limiting access to very narrow around side. Fields to north usually ploughed or grazed by cattle. Local residents suggest that regardless of rights under LRA, relevant farmers are resistant to people walking along

		even the edge of their fields so no further approach made to other landowners due to other priorities and questionable viability.
<b>Priority development promotion</b>	<b>for /</b>	Low on the basis that track no longer exists. Claiming as a right of way would be a lengthy process and would not compel farmers to agree to a fenced or promoted path along field headlands.

### Kirk Road, Clatt

Start location: roadend, Hillhead (NJ 518 265)  
 End location: Clatt Auld Kirk (NJ 538 259)  
 Geographical area: Grampian  
 Path Type: Rural Path  
 Path distance: 2.2km  
 Accessibility info:



[Back to Search](#)

### Route Description

A sign at the roadend states Hillhead of Clatt and the track leads up to the farm. Past the farm, the Kirk Road appears to largely follow field boundaries east and southeast until c.NJ530263 where its line has been ploughed out for about 100m. Beyond this field, the old route continues generally southeast past Roadside cottages to reach Clatt Auld Kirk.

This old road now crosses an arable field, so it will not always be accessible. It's also likely that the environs of Hillhead of Clatt and Roadside cottages will need to be avoided in order not to impinge on the occupants' privacy. The Heritage Paths project would welcome more information about the accessibility of this route.

### Heritage Information

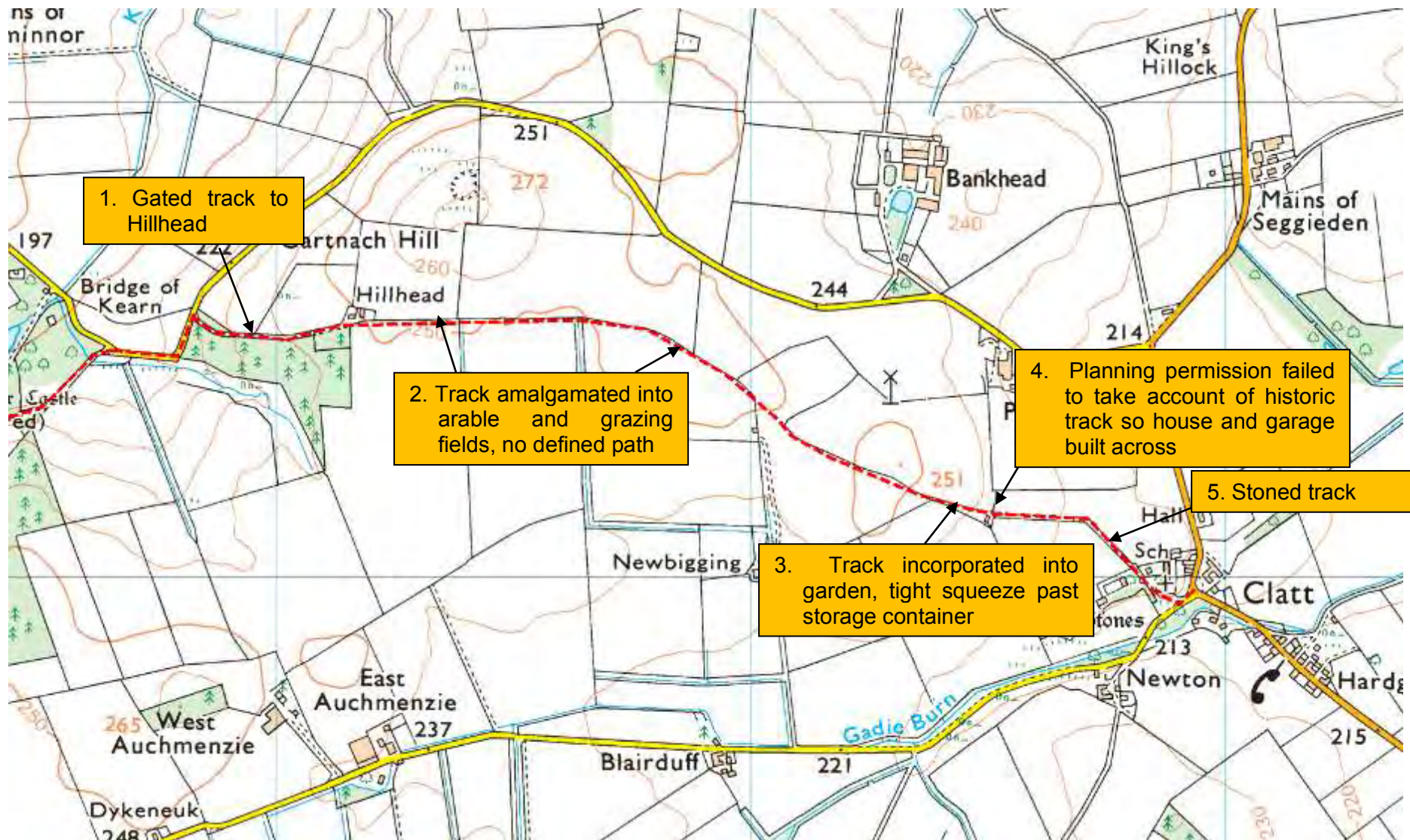
This route is reportedly labelled *Kirk Road* on an 1797 estate plan of Leith Hall. On the first edition OS 1" map (1874) it is just as clearly marked as the present day road past Persylieu to the north, but on later maps it appears relatively less significant. Present day OS 1:50,000 maps only show the route in part.

The Auld Kirk in Kirktown of Clatt was reportedly rebuilt in 1799, although sharp eyes may spot a lintel dated 1778 and the belfry dates from 1640. It was repaired in 1886 and refurbished for community use in 2004. However, the site itself is likely to be far older, probably medieval.

Old maps show various interesting features along the Kirk Road - the sites of a causeway and tumuli - which may point to this being a very old route indeed. Placename evidence may come from the cottages at Roadside (NJ535261), which lie well away from the road network currently in use. Indeed Newbigging's farmbuildings were originally sited slightly further east and these were instead accessed from the old road just west of Roadside.

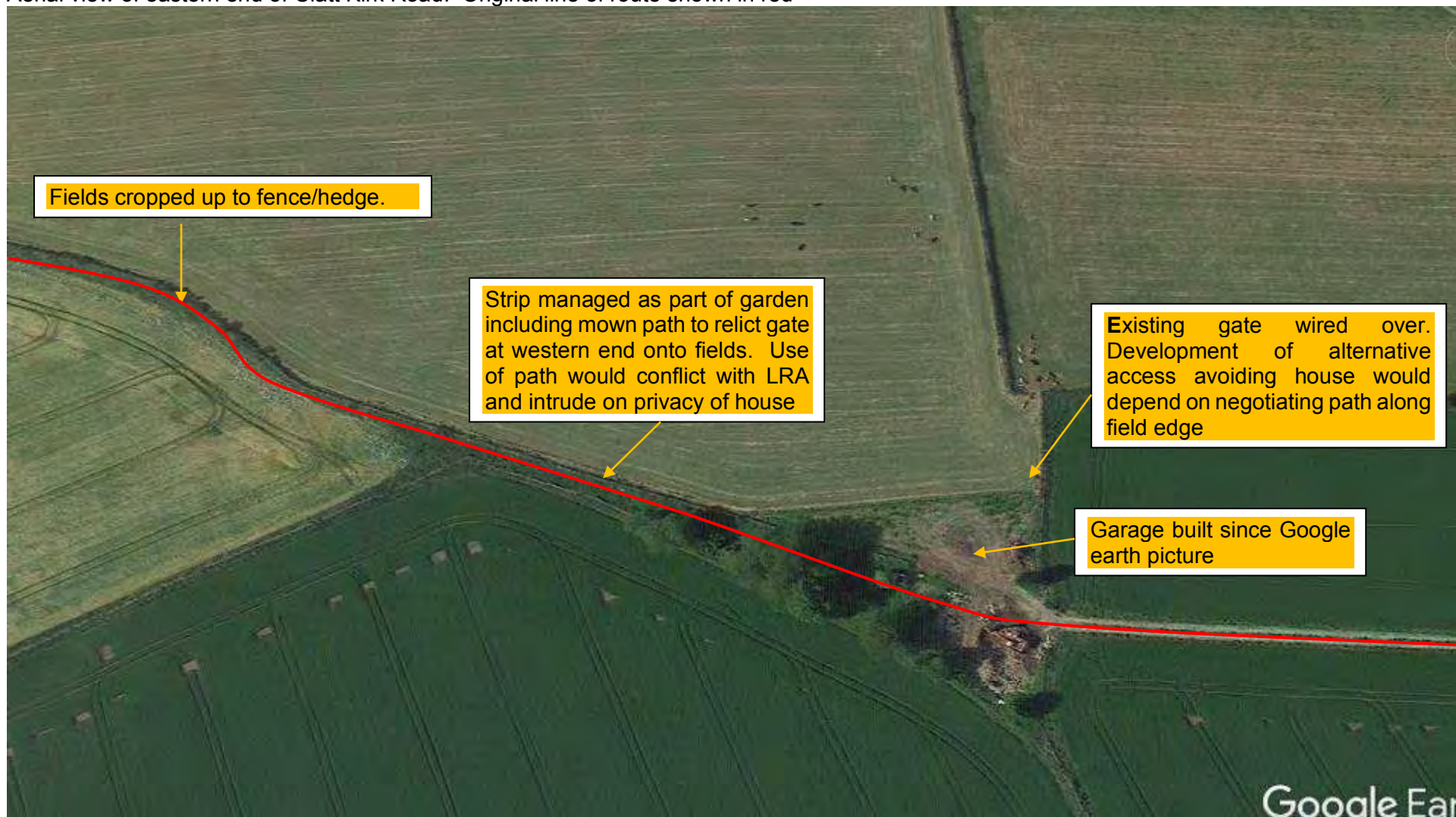


## CL9 Clatt Kirk Road





*Note: Map above is latest version of OS1:25,000. Googleearth images suggest field boundaries have since changed*  
Aerial view of eastern end of Clatt Kirk Road. Original line of route shown in red



1. Track/drive to Hillhead branches off public road over cattle grid



Hillhead is off the line of the old track (see picture above right)

2. Former kirk road amalgamated into fields now cropped tight to fence/dyke



Line of former kirk road shown in red. Amalgamation of fields shows no sign of original route, and no access rights across growing crops so development or promotion of path would require negotiation with farmer



Looking west through relict gate at western end of strip now managed as part of garden

3. Former line of kirk road between parallel dykes now managed as part of garden



Looking east down the old Kirk Road from gate pictured above

4. Former kirk road now runs tight between rebuilt house and garage. Unfenced stoned track leads east to Clatt



Looking west up track to house



Looking east towards Clatt from house

5. Unsigned stoned track continues down to Clatt church and old manse (central track in picture below). Tarmacked from manse to public road junction in Clatt (right side of picture below right)



<b>Name of route/ GIS map ref</b>	<b>CCSW1 Grouse Inn to Haugh of Glass CB15, HG1, HG2, HG6</b>
<b>Start location</b>	Grouse Inn, Cabrach
<b>Finish location</b>	Haugh of Glass
<b>Summary description</b>	
<p>Linear route following the River Deveron between Cabrach and Glass using a combination of existing tracks and very quiet dead-end roads. The southern section follows an existing track through attractive woodland (see Corinacy loop route notes), beyond which the route continues north on a quiet dead-end tarmac road to Tomnaven. The best option through to Raigie Burn to minimise conflict with livestock or farm management will need to be agreed with the landowner. North of Raigie Burn, the route will either follow the grass track along the river to Waterside, or the parallel track around the contour higher up the hill. From Waterside a fenced stone track continues past Little Gouls to Burn of Succouth, from where quiet tarmac road leads to Glass.</p>	
<b>Justification for development/promotion</b>	<p>A long-established but relatively little used route which offers potential for development and promotion both as a recreational route in its own right and key section of the Deveron Way. Community consultations confirmed high levels of interest in promoting this route, which allows appreciation of this very attractive western part of Aberdeenshire. Dorenell rangers and Cabrach Trust keen to see this route developed and promoted but unlikely to take forward themselves. Requires relatively little work to establish or maintain the route. Longer term, HDDT suggested there may be potential to use the community minibus to provide transport between Cabrach and Glass for people wishing to walk the route one-way.</p>
<b>Current use</b>	Low level use by local walkers and occasional MTBs.
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Access through/around Tomnaven and no clearly identifiable route between Tomnaven and Raigie Burn. Lack of awareness of scope and accessibility
<b>Legal status</b>	Access rights apply under LRA full length of route other than through Tomnaven steading
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	Original track used to go between the buildings at Tomnaven, which are gated as part of winter cattle housing and handling. Under LRA no right of access through steadings other than on a ROW and so alternative route avoiding steading needs to be negotiated.
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Minimal work required to establish the route, most of which uses existing tracks. Viability depends on negotiating alternative access through Tomnaven.
<b>Survey date</b>	October 2019, February 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	<p>Southern section farmed by Callum McBain at Newton Farm (01466 702229) who previously claimed and waymarked as LMC and confirmed September 2019 he had no issue with public use or promotion.</p> <p>Tomnaven is owned by Mr. Moran of Cabrach. As one of the planning conditions of Dorenell wind farm development, the house at Tomnaven (together with others on the estate) has been rebuilt for long term let, but has since stood empty. The steading and fields are farmed by another (undisclosed) tenant on the estate, but apparently it is Mr. Moran who would need</p>

	<p>to be negotiated with regarding development and promotion of access through Tomnaven. In view of wider problems with access on Cabrach estate, negotiation re. this and other paths to be pursued in conjunction with feasibility study being commissioned by Dorenell rangers.</p> <p>Mr. and Mrs. Paul Smith who own Blackbog (tel. 01466 700307) consulted re. potential development of off-road path along the river north of Walla Kirk bridge. Whilst very amenable and approachable, and understanding and respecting access rights under LRA, having invested significant time, money and effort encouraging and supporting a wide range of wildlife on their property, they are not in support of path development on any route through their land.</p> <p>Mr. MacPherson (01466 700246) owns Netherton and the fields which surround it. Again while very friendly and respectful of legalities re. access rights and responsibilities, he is not prepared to consider development of any path across his ground.</p> <p>The fields between the river and Playlands are owned by Aswanley, who are similarly resistant to any suggestion of path development along the river, field headlands or along existing tracks.</p>
<b>Alternative options</b>	<p>Route surveyed as discussed and agreed with HDDT.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential alternative from Tomnaven to follow the existing track up the hill to the east to link onto the track which roughly follows the contour north around the hill. Not surveyed so unclear how far the track goes if a ford still exists or whether there is alternative crossing over Raigie Burn. Field boundaries have changed since latest OS map and since aerial photos on Google earth.</li> <li>• Alternative from Back hill Gouls to follow the grass track along the river (HG2), rejoining the main track south of Waterside.</li> <li>• Landowners consulted to explore scope to develop a new path along the river north from Auchinhandoch (HG6) as alternative to the tarmac road but none supportive.</li> </ul>
<b>Priority for development</b>	High
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	<p>See first section of Corinacy Loop for notes re. southern section.</p> <p>Install self-closing or 2-in-1 gates along route between Tomnaven and Waterside and if necessary create new fenced path to avoid stading at Tomnaven and link through to existing track.</p> <p>Install large bore culvert to create crossing over Raigie Burn.</p> <p>Create dry crossing parallel to ford on Thompson Burn crossing west of Meikle Gouls</p>

For route from the Grouse to Newtown of Corinacy see Corinacy Loop notes. A quiet single track tarmac public road leads north from Newtown to Tomnaven, where the road ends. Old maps suggest that historically a track continued on the same line as the road between the buildings. In winter the area between the buildings is now used for moving/feeding cattle.



It is possible to avoid going through the steading by following the tractor track which swings off to the east immediately before the steading, and following this around the back of the buildings., which is temporarily “fenced” by a series of field gates. At time of survey all of the gates were open but there was clear evidence of heavy tractor movement.



Alternatively, a clear track continues east up the hill (pictured above right) which may link up to the track which follows the contour around the hill fence.

The area north of the steading is clearly heavily used by tractors, is very muddy and “fenced” by more temporary gates and hurdles, less than ideal for walkers, cyclists or from a farm perspective so a mutually acceptable way around the steading would need to be negotiated, including fencing and self-closing gates.



The burn is culverted north of the steading (pictured below left) but in winter is deep mud. The clearly defined grass tractor track which continues north-east from the culvert (indicated by the red arrow in picture below left and shown as northern blue dash on map above) peters out, without any means of crossing the Raigie Burn or dropping back down the bank.



The preferred route follows another tractor track, initially running north, which descends gradually to the haugh alongside the river, from where the firm, clearly defined benched track continues along the foot of the bank to a field gate in the fence south of Raigie Burn.



The original bridge over the burn has long since collapsed, and been replaced by two sleepers. Some form of bridge of large bore culvert pipe would be required to provide a sustainable burn crossing.

The track immediately above the burn is rough, overgrown and badly waterlogged and requires drainage, leading up to and through a rusty field gate across the track, and then to another newer gate.



Beyond this second gate, the firm grass track (pictured below left) is clearly well used by farm traffic



At Backhill Ghouls, the track splits one arm continuing north through a gate, down to the river, the other going up the hill, alongside the steading, to join with the grass track which comes along the contour of the hill from the south (pictured above right) which may potentially be a viable alternative from Tomnaven. This track then passes through a gate and runs around the contour of the hill, through a further gate into a woodland plantation, and then re-joins the riverside track south of Waterside.







From the junction of the two tracks (pictured above left) a single stoned well-used farm track continues through several gates (unlocked) to Meikle Gouls, below which there is a ford over Burn of Gouls.



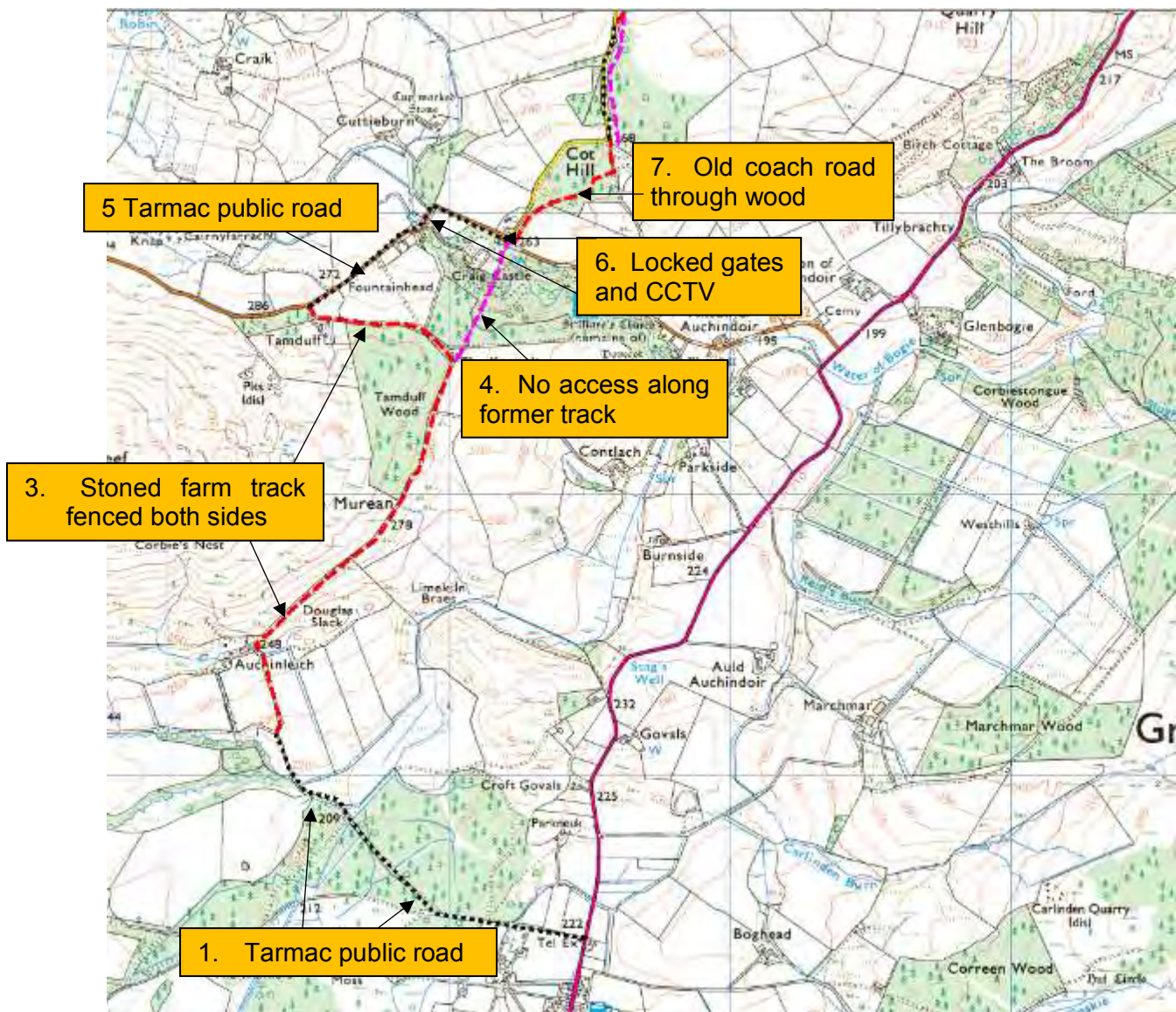
Other than the ford, the track is well dained, climbing through several further unlocked gates past Little Gouls, with field gates alongside the track adjacent to cattle grids, to join the tarmac public road at Burn of Succouth.



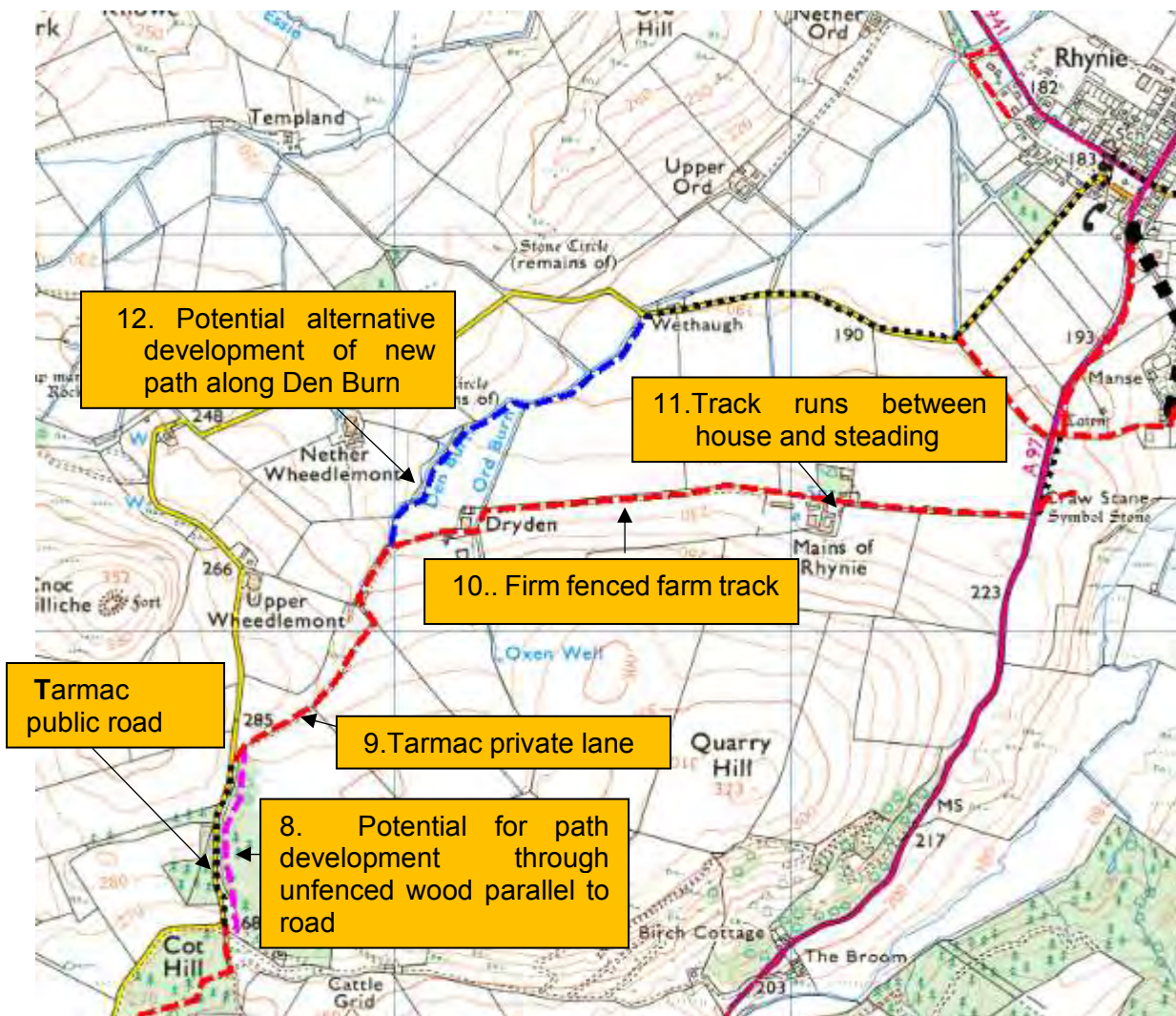
<b>Name of route</b>	<b>CCSW3 Lumsden to Rhynie community link</b>
<b>Start location</b>	Lumsden village centre (telephone exchange on A97)
<b>Finish location</b>	Rhynie village centre
<b>Constituent sections</b>	LU14 Auchinleith to Tamduff RH5 Craig Castle to Cot Hill RH17 Dryden RH18 Den Burn
<b>Summary description</b>	Tarmac road west from A97 north of Lumsden turns into well drained stoned track south of Auchinleith, keeping well clear of the farmhouse as it follows the contour north-east below Coire Mureann and Tamduff Wood, past the Kennels to join the B9002 just north of Tamduff. Short section on quiet road then level track (former coach road) around Cot Hill, from where there is scope to develop a new path through the wood east of the road linking to the track to Dryden. Proposed new path to be developed following Den Burn to re-join the minor road at Wethaugh which leads to Rhynie.
<b>Justification for development/promotion</b>	One of the community links suggested in the AB54 path network brief, endorsed by a couple of people at community consultations. Northern section could potentially form new circular route from Rhynie
<b>Current use</b>	Very low
<b>Potential use</b>	Potentially multi-use throughout
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Lack of demand and lack of identified off-road route
<b>Legal status</b>	None but majority of proposed route fully accessible under Land Reform Act
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	Access between steading and farmhouse at Mains of Rhynie
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Southern section is all on stoned farm track so no issues re. viability or sustainability. Potential to reduce length on road and even those sections which are on road are on quiet lanes.
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Auchinleith has recently been sold to new owner (retired Huntly bank manager). No further details available but as proposed route does not go through his land or close to the house, nor conflict with access rights, no consultation required.</li> <li>• Track between Auchinleith and Tamduff together with land to west has recently been sold by Clova Estate to Mr. Moran, owner of Cabrach. Rights of recreational access apply full length of this track and no obstructions so not consulted.</li> <li>• Castle Craig currently up for sale with ongoing family dispute about ownership following death of previous owner so they are not prepared to discuss path development at present. Alistair Barliss apparently owns the farm and the wood over Cot Hill. He currently lives in a caravan west of the castle but was not available at time of survey.</li> <li>• Owner of Dryden (Brian Fitzpatrick tel. 07841 382913) respects LRA and has no issue with people using the track past his house in either direction, which currently attracts</li> </ul>

	<p>surprisingly little use. He has right of use of tarmac road west through to Upper Wheedlemont public road and contributed to cost of upgrading but is understood not to own the lane.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Owner of Mains of Rhynie (Ian Duxbury tel. 07432 458519) owns land west to Den Burn, east to A97, fields east of A97 (including the field containing the Craw Stane) and north to the boundary with the field west of A97 through which existing promoted path runs. Also claims to own the tarmac lane west of Dryden. Runs farm building construction firm from farm plus some contracting so quite high levels of machinery movement through the farm steading, particularly during harvest. No issue with public access in principle, or people using the track between the farm and Dryden, but questions how many people are actually going to use a link between Lumsden and Rhynie (as well as how and why) and has reservations about public access between the steading and farmhouse at the farm because it adds extra pressure on machine operators. No readily identifiable alternative to avoiding steading at Mains of Rhynie, other than cutting north along one of the field boundaries west of the steading, although not keen to lose productive ground. Instead he suggested developing a new fenced path along Den Burn, which is his western march boundary (may potentially have been previously claimed as LMC but Aberdeenshire Council have no records of any SRDP paths). HDDT would need to 100% fund costs of fencing, any necessary drainage and surfacing. Wildcat project (led by Roo Campbell at SNH tel. 01463 725130 <a href="mailto:roo.campbell@nature.scot">roo.campbell@nature.scot</a>) are also currently considering developing a wildcat corridor along the same burn to link Clashindarroch with Gartly Moor, which would conflict with development of recreational access along the burn</li> </ul>
<p><b>Priority development promotion</b></p>	<p><b>for /</b> Although it should be relatively easy to establish a sustainable off-road multi-use route, local people feel that the key question for this route is how many people are likely to use it, particularly given lack of services in Lumsden and lack of bus service between the two communities to provide option to walk one way.</p>
<p><b>Recommended capital work</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sign and waymark route from Auchinelith to Tamduff and add to Lumsden map board.</li> <li>• Re-open old coach road south of Cot Hill – requires vegetation clearance and signage</li> <li>• Pursue development of new path along Den Burn</li> <li>• Consider developing new path parallel to east side of minor road north of Cot Hill linking to Dryden track</li> </ul>

## Lumsden to Rhynie community connector route – southern section



Lumsden to Rhynie community connector route – northern section



1. Tarmac public road west from telephone exchange, forks north at entrance to Clova House drive, continuing over bridge over Burn of Corchinnan
2. At western end of tarmac road, ungated firm, stoned fenced farm track branches off north towards Auchinleith (below left), skirting east of farmhouse which is set well back from the track through a gate (below right) so avoiding any issues with curtelage or privacy.



3. Recently upgraded stoned track continues north-east through an unlocked gate with gap to side (below left), following contour north-east around Hill of Towanreef (below right), past Tamduff Wood on left.



Kennels set back to right of track (below left), beyond which track bends west, past Tamduff (set back from track so again no curtelage or privacy issues).



4. Community consultations suggested that historically there used to be a track/path between the Kennels and B9002 east of Craig Castle. There is no longer any evidence of any path or track through the wood north from the kennels (below left)



Survey found no evidence of former path shown on OS map along west side of woods south of Craig Castle and track marked running diagonally across field to Fountainhead (below left) is usually grazed by cattle hence discounted in favour of continuing along track past Tamduff to B9002.



5. Junction with road unsigned. Double metal gates but no evidence of these ever being locked. The proposed route follows the B9002, which is a quiet minor road, north-east from Tamduff, south of Cuttieburn, to the road junction north of the castle.



6. The gates across the drive to Craig Castle are padlocked both ends with private signs and CCTV.



Alternative options were surveyed to explore scope for linking east through Craig Castle woods to St. Mary's Church, but the original bridge is understood to be in disrepair and due to ownership disputes over Craig Castle and the property being up for sale, this option was also discounted.

7. The farm steading is on the north-east corner with tractors and machinery turning and moving across the road on a blind bend, with consequent safety issues. It is therefore

recommended that the proposed route follows the old coach road which runs parallel to the road, through the stone pillars east of the road junction (pictured below left and right)



The trees and hedge alongside the former track are overgrown at the southern end but the track underneath still appears firm and would be relatively easy to clear.



On the east side of Cothill, the main track continues east over a stone and wood bridge now in a poor state of repair. The proposed route would turn off before the bridge to drop down to the track which runs north-south





The track crosses over the stoned track which heads east to Tillybrachty to rejoin the minor road between Cot Hill and Wheelemont on the bend.



8. Quiet road continues north to Wheelemont. Length on tarmac could be reduced by developing a path through the wood east of the road along line of former track which appears to have been levelled/benched out roughly parallel to the fence, joining Dryden track through padlocked gate.



9. Unsigned well drained tarmac private lane leads down to Dryden.



10. From Dryden, firm well drained firm, level farm track leads east to Mains of Rhyndie, stoned approx.. 50% of distance.



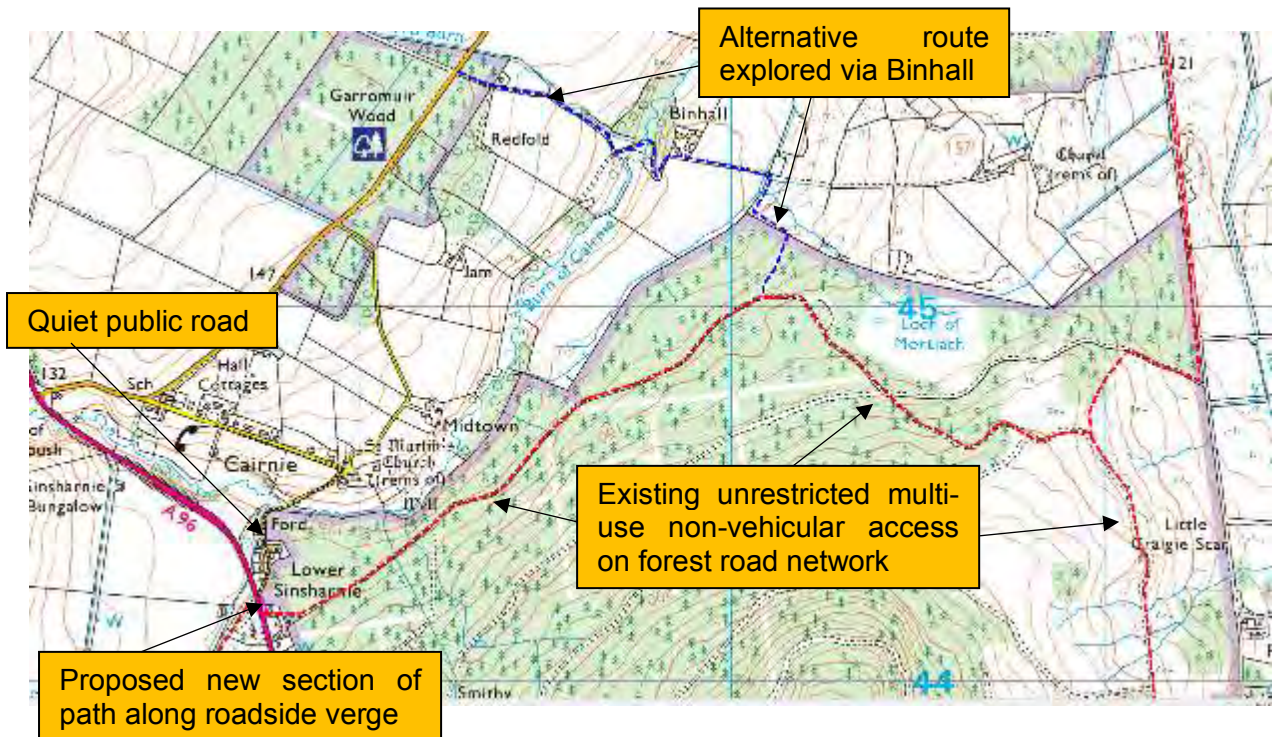
At Mains of Rhyndie, track continues between farmhouse and steading – many other paths/tracks in similar situations promoted for public use, including on some SGTs such as Annandale Way, and could potentially be claimed as ROW but ideally would be preferable to identify an alternative avoiding the steading. Tarmac/concrete drive enclosed by hedges both sides leads from steading east to A97



12. Alternative suggested by farmer/owner of Mains of Rhyndie would be to develop new path along east side of Den Burn. Wide fenced strip parallel to hedge, may have been claimed as LMC/LMO in past. Path would need to be fenced from field and potentially surfaced.



<b>Name of route</b>	<b>CCNW1 Cairnie to Huntly community link</b>
<b>Start location</b> <b>Finish location</b>	Cairnie village centre Huntly town centre
<b>Constituent sections</b>	BI21 Cairnie link BI4, BI4, BI12, BI10, BI11, HU2
<b>Summary description</b>	Tarmac public road (relatively quiet) through Cairnie village south to A96. Proposed development of short section of new surfaced multi-use path along verge along A96 to link safely into forest road network through The Bin and from there to/from Huntly
<b>Justification for development/promotion</b>	Consultations suggest that a single short section of missing path alongside the A96 currently deters people from cycling and walking between Cairnie and Huntly. Potentially also part of proposed Poem Path link from the Clashmach to the Bin.
<b>Current use</b>	Regular but low level use by cyclists, walkers and horse riders
<b>Potential use</b>	Potentially multi-use throughout
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Safety concerns about walking/cycling/riding immediately alongside A96 without proper path, particularly parents with young children concerned re. volume and speed of traffic
<b>Legal status</b>	Accessible under Land Reform Act
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Short section of path. Viability depends on imminent dualling of A96 and how this might affect this particular section. As of spring 2020, proposals for this section of dualling had yet to be developed. There might be potential to get this section of path developed as part of the dualling programme (or associated mitigation works).
<b>Survey date</b>	October 2019
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	Development of path alongside A96 would require confirmation of land ownership boundary and responsibility for verge which would require further consultation with Aberdeenshire Council and Roads Scotland
<b>Priority development for promotion</b>	Priority and alignment will depend very much on A96 dualling proposals. HDDT suggest high priority by virtue of relatively short section of path which could create important link and should potentially be easy to secure active travel funding but some consultees question how many children are realistically going to cycle to school through The Bin (or how many parents would let them) particularly in dark/winter. Quantification of existing and potential latent demand would help clarify.
<b>Alternative options</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope explored to follow minor road north from St. Mungo's Church at Cairnie, past Garromuir Wood and then follow track past Binhall to link into north-west corner of The Bin. Rejected as too indirect and no existing path/link between Binhall and forest road network, less suitable as active travel link</li> </ul>
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of bound surface multi-use path along verge on north side of A96 between Cairnie and south west entrance to The Bin</li> </ul>



Access along northern end of verge along A96 constrained by services box. Width of remainder of verge constrained by overgrown vegetation other than mown strip immediately adjacent to road.



Level stoned access track branches off A96 opposite garage, leading to gate into Bin Forest. Main gate locked to prevent illegal vehicular access, gap alongside allows access on foot, cycle or horseback. Western end of this track/forest road is firm, well drained grass on stone base. Other sections of forest road in more regular use are stone surfaced.



Alternative option explored from Cairnie to Bin Forest via Binhall

Stoned track leads from public road to Binhall, keeping south of the house and continuing east to gate and handling pens.

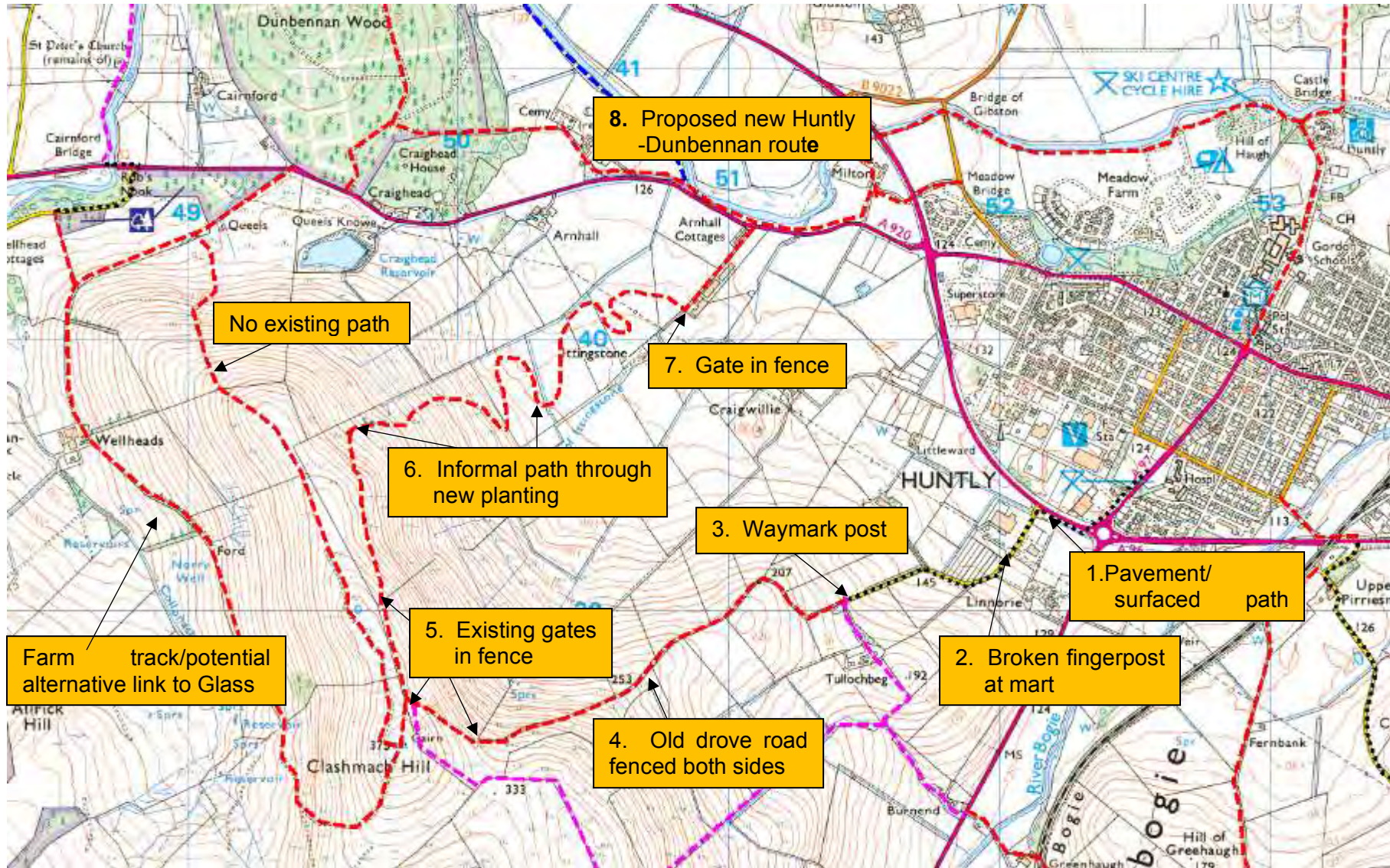


Field between end of track and The Bin is rough wet grassland, grazed by cattle. No path or track linking to Bin Forest, or evidence of forest ride shown on latest version OS map. Open ditch on east side of fence with remains of stone dyke and further parallel fence on east side of ditch.





<b>Name of route/GIS map ref</b>	<b>RRPP1 Clashmach Loop CM1 and CM7</b>
<b>Start location</b>	Huntly town centre/main car park
<b>Finish location</b>	
<b>Other relevant routes</b>	DU18 Huntly to Dunbennan CM2 CM3
<b>Summary description</b>	
Proposed new circular path following the existing path up the old drove road (Hielan' Road) from the cattle mart to the top of the Clashmach, descending via the informal track created as part of new woodland planting on the eastern slope of the Clashmarch to Ittingstone. Will eventually link back to Huntly via the proposed new Huntly to Dunbennan path DU18	
<b>Justification for development / promotion</b>	The Clashmach is one of the key Huntly landmarks and the historic drove road up it is one of the most popular walks, parts of which currently look neglected which does not reflect well on the AB54 path network. Although a few people pick their way down the northern slopes, for most the current path is a linear 'there and back'. An informal grass track has been created winding its way back down from the ridge to Ittingstone, north of the old drove road, which creates an attractive circular.
<b>Current use</b>	Daily mainly pedestrian use. Many local people aim to walk up the Clashmach at least once a year. Horse riders and some walkers also use the new northern track
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Lack of awareness of the grass track from Ittingstone up the Clashmach or scope for a circular route. Poor signage and limited promotion of the main route up old drove road for visitors
<b>Legal status</b>	Fully accessible under LRA
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	None
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	No issues with viability. Northern loop path is unsurfaced but would withstand moderate level of use and higher use in dry weather. FLS have apparently commissioned mowing and maintenance of the northern path through the new planting for the next 10 years.
<b>Survey date</b>	November 2019
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	FLS confirm that they respect rights of access under LRA but have no plans to waymark or promote this route. Also consulted with owners of Ittingstone, confirmed no path/ access onto Clashmach through the farm steading
<b>Priority for development / promotion</b>	High
<b>Recommended capital improvements work</b>	Signage and waymaking





1. Path link from Huntly town centre developed and promoted as part of Walks around Huntly booklet. Safety island in middle of carriageway on A96 to facilitate safe crossing then pavement/tarmac path on south side of A96, continues up road to mart, Requires fingerpost at road end



2. Broken leaning sign at mart signs path up hill and says dogs must be kept on lead but no longer easily visible. Requires replacement fingerpost. Route continues up single track quiet tarmac lane



3. Waymark post at end of Tullochbeg track signs path straight up Clashmach but not very obvious for those unfamiliar with the route, some apparently stray down to Tullochbeg. Recommend replacement with fingerpost



4. Old drove road/Hielan' road climbs up between fences/dykes, occasional seats at viewpoints. Path/track fully accessible, but seats and remains of old stiles currently add to overall impression of neglect when this could/arguably should be one of the flagship routes in the AB54 path network. Scope for volunteer clearance of gorse and other vegetation and replacement of broken seats with something more creative, potentially inspired by, based on and/or including poetry (as part of proposed poem path) developed in conjunction with local people/schools and artist(s)



5. New self-closing gate in deer fence across track (pictured below left), path continues straight on through gate to second gate in fence immediately below summit of Clashmach Hill (pictured below right).



Proposed route continues north, without passing through gate onto the summit, on clearly defined path/track parallel to and east of deer fence, recommend mowing/flailing to control gorse. to further gate in fence at edge of new planting



6. Path/track forks right, away from fence, down to 15' metal gate (unlocked) with stile several metres further along fence (pictured below left). Informal broad firm grassy track winds down through newly planted area. Beyond gate informal beaten earth track marked by bamboo canes follows vehicle tracks winding down hill through newly planted area, sprayed out in places. Local residents suggest that FLS has commissioned ongoing mowing/maintenance of this track as part of woodland establish for at least the next 10 years, which coupled with ongoing use will help define and consolidate path.



Track passes through further 15' metal gate (unlocked) with stile over fence adjacent (pictured below right), beyond which track becomes much more clearly defined





7. Self-closing gate in deer fence adjacent to main gate (unlocked) leads back onto tarmac road south of Strathbogie Garden Centre at Ittingstone.



8. Route links north, directly across A920 onto proposed new Huntly-Dunbennan route (survey commissioned by HDDT spring 2019, see report by OAT)

<b>Name of route/GIS map ref</b>	<b>RRPP2 Proposed poem path – Clashmach to the Bin</b>
<b>Start location</b> <b>Finish location</b>	Huntly town centre/main car park (if being walked as a loop) or the Clashmach/Bin
<b>Constituent GIS map ref sections</b>	DU1, DU8, DU4, DU6, DR1, DR3, DR4 BI14, BI16, BI13
<b>Summary description</b>	Proposed new linear link between Clashmach and the Bin as part of the proposed Poem Path following proposed new Huntly-Dunbennan path through to Dunbennan Wood then existing paths and tracks, crossing north over A96 to link into Bin Forest path network
<b>Justification for development / promotion</b>	This route combines existing and aspirational paths. As well as forming a key part of the proposed circular poem path around Huntly, it would also create a new circular path in its own right from Huntly to Dunbennan Wood, linking through to the Bin and back to Huntly, for which there is considerable demand from local people. Various sections of this also coincide with other proposed or aspirational routes, including part of the proposed Huntly to Dufftown strategic link and possibly (if Option 5 is pursued) the Cairnie community link through to the Bin.
<b>Current use</b>	Tracks through Dunbennan wood and forest roads in the Bin walked daily
<b>Potential use</b>	Pedestrian only (limited by footbridge over river Deveron)
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Overgrown path link between north end of Dunbennan Wood and footbridge No existing path along River Deveron west of footbridge No functional link between Inschtammack and the Bin Irrespective of which option is chosen, it is impossible to get between the Clashmach and the bin without crossing the busy A96
<b>Legal status</b>	Access rights apply under Land Reform Act
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	<p>The viability of this route depends on creating a safe, sustainable link between the Clashmach and Dunbennan, and between Dunbennan and the Bin.</p> <p>Numerous people raised concerns at community consultations about the condition and sustainability of the existing footbridge over the Deveron north of Dunbennan Wood. The bridge is currently functional and accessible but professional engineering survey would be required to confirm its structural stability and long term sustainability. Replacement with a new bridge would not be cheap but many argue is critical to the AB54 path network.</p> <p>Future dualling of A96 may have significant impact on this route – HDDT and local people need to be mindful of need to feed into consultations to ensure suitable crossing is maintained whichever option is adopted</p>

<b>Landowner consultation response /</b>	
<b>Priority for development / promotion</b>	Medium – Huntly to Dunbennan path takes priority, from which this route should follow on.
<b>Recommended capital improvements work</b>	Tbc depending on which option is preferred

There are numerous options for development of a functional path link between the Clashmach and the Bin, and many different factors to take into consideration to identify a preferred option, as summarised below and summarised on the map which follows.

#### Option 1

The simplest/low level option, which effectively creates another “petal” or loop path around Huntly, would be to follow the Clashmach Loop (CM7), down to Arnhall Cottages, cross directly over the A920 and then follow the proposed new Huntly to Dunbennan pathDU8 (full feasibility study previously commissioned by HDDT) west to link with the main north-south forest road through Dunbennan. If, for whatever reason, the Dunbennan link is not taken forward, then the much less direct alternative would be to turn east from Arnhall Cottages and follow the existing path along the River Deveron to Gibston Bridge, then take the Jubilee path alongside Portsoy Road to link onto the track up via Cleanhill to the bin.

#### Option 2

Another option would be to link directly from the summit of the Clashmach to Dunbennan wood on path reference CM2. Several people at community consultations suggested that they currently walk or run north along the ridge. Survey confirmed that there is an informal beaten earth path (or farm track) part-way along the ridge of the Clashmach, with an unlocked field gate in the fence in the line of the track.



The track is clearly defined as far as the pond, but then (as the OS map suggests) peters out where tractors appear to turn off west down the hill, beyond which there is no evident path (or evidence of people walking this way) although there is an old metal gate in the next fence (fastened on string, and tied with wire rather than being hung at the opposite end) where cattle clearly congregate. Shortly after this, there is a new gate through the corner of the new deer fence to the north.



The individuals who marked this “path” on the map at community consultations said that they continue north in line with the ridge, straight down the north face of the Clashmach, and then come down via the electricity sub-station. There is no access facility in the fence north of the ridge, and it is a steep drop down the bank along the line marked on the map at consultations, with no evidence of any access, several further fences to negotiate and a lot of marshy ground if you continue due north towards Dunbennan. Although there is no path, dropping down the fence line to the west there is another field gate (pictured below right). Which accesses onto the field north of the Clashmach.



There is no path or evidence of public access down this field, but no restriction on access dropping down to a gate onto the wind farm track. At time of survey the gate onto the track was blocked by a ring-feeder.



The stoned Clashindarroch wind farm track crosses a cattle grid, with adjacent field gate, passing the securely fenced sub-station, and then joins the A920 through double gates (pictured below right), which most of the time are double padlocked with no alternative access. Signs further up the track highlight safety considerations in using the track, particularly during icy weather, which directly contradict notices on the gates which say strictly no unauthorised access. Access rights apply along this track under Land Reform Act and whilst it is entirely acceptable to lock gates to prevent illegal vehicular access, provision for legitimate recreational access should be provided alongside in the form of a separate gate 1.5 m minimum width.



Access to Dunbennan wood involves crossing the A920, which is not particularly safe at this point because of the blind bend in the road and lack of any pavement or roadside path.

The alternative to following the Clashmach Ridge is to follow the broad, firm, dry grass track (CM3) south from the summit cairn which leads down to the main windfarm access track.



The wide, stoned windfarm road heads roughly north, around the western flanks of the Clashmach, with a cattle grid with adjacent bypass gate part-way along





South of Wellheads, a metal gate in the fence to the east of the track links onto an earth tractor track which it is thought links up with the tractor track along the summit just north of the pond, which could potentially offer an alternative option instead of going down the north face of the hill. The main windfarm road continues north, through numerous double gated crossings at Wellheads to facilitate cattle handling/movement, although the gates are usually open.



This lower option joins the option from the north face of the hill south of the electricity sub-station. Alternatively, a firm grass track branches off the windfarm road south-east of Wellhead Cottages, dropping down to the minor road to Glass along the eastern edge of a field.



The minor road leads east to the A920. The safest option from this point would be to turn west, over Cairnford Bridge, crossing the A920 where there is relatively good visibility, and then turning north on the quiet minor road up past Broadland.

Community consultations suggested that there is a path along the west bank of the River Deveron but survey suggests this only extends a short way, mainly used for fishing, beyond which the riverbank became impassable and there was no evidence of any access facility through or over fences and field boundaries. Aspirations for development of a path along the west river bank have been identified as part of the development of the proposed Huntly to Dufftown route.

### Dunbennan Wood

Following either option 1 or 2, the most direct route is through Dunbennan wood following either the main forest road around the east of the wood (DU1), or the quieter track over the hill through the middle of the wood (DU2, as shown on the map below). The two tracks join on the north side of Dunbennan Hill where the Dowmin access track heads north. Although there are locked gates at the entrance to Dunbennan Wood, and where the tracks split south of the hill, there are wide gaps alongside to allow recreational access. A forest ride (pictured below right, DU4) branches east off the track south of the Dowmin gate in the northern forest boundary.



Community consultations identified this as having previously been fully accessible on foot and horseback, but survey confirmed that it is now overgrown and in places boggy, although it would not take a lot to clear the scrub.



There is no fence across the northern end of the wood, and only a faint path to the footbridge (pictured below right), with large boulders in the way in places.





A wooden wicket gate leads onto the somewhat wobby footbridge over the Deveron which has signs saying maximum 3 people at a time. At the northern end of the bridge is a stile in a barbed wire fence to cattle sheep getting onto the bridge.



Option 3 follows the field boundary north from the footbridge (DU10), through a field gate to the tarmac drive which leads onto the Inschtammack access track.



The track leads north to a minor road, where the proposed route turns left (west) along the road and then branches off north on the old road to the north. The double gates across the track are padlocked, with a narrow squeeze around the end. Ideally the gates would be replaced with a more suitable barrier to allow legitimate recreational access, or a wider gap create at the end.



Option 4 - The most direct route to the Bin, as recommended by several people at community consultations, is to follow the tarmac old road north and then cut off to the right (east) through to the A96 on DR4. In the past volunteers have cleared a “path” through the scrub but at time of survey in October 2019 it was hard to pick out the route, which has quickly overgrown. Taking the shortest route possible through the scrub then involves a stretch along the verge of the A96, which is not to be recommended. The speed of traffic along this section of the A96 makes crossing the main road very dangerous, although this may change depending on dualling proposals. Consultations during the study confirmed that the section west of Huntly is lagging behind other sections of the A96 dualling and is some way off the design stage, in advance of which it is impossible to pre-judge the implications for path development. Assuming a safe crossing can be developed, a more sustainable link would require a more concerted effort to clear back the vegetation and, ideally, to lay a short section of unbound surface path, clearly waymarked off the old road, coming out directly opposite the entrance to the old peregrine centre.

On the north side of the road a padlocked barrier restricts access with a narrow wooden squeeze alongside which leads onto a stoned forest track. It is understood that a link would need to be created between the old quarry and the end of the forest road to the north-west which links up to the summit of The Bin.



#### Option 5

Rather than crossing the A96 at this point, another option would be to continue west along the old road (DR3), following the stoned forest track north from the T-junction, (pictured below left) which turns into a stoned forest track (pictured below right) as it swings west.



Beyond the end of the forest road (DR5), the old road becomes increasingly overgrown, although the remains of the old road are still evident (pictured below left). The remains of a former dyke mark the march boundary at the western edge of the forest, with a gap in the fence in the line of the former path, and a broad grass strip running down the northern edge of the wood (pictured below right) towards Bogmoor, from where a track leads north to Cairnie (DR1). There was no evidence at time of survey of anyone using this strip for access at present.

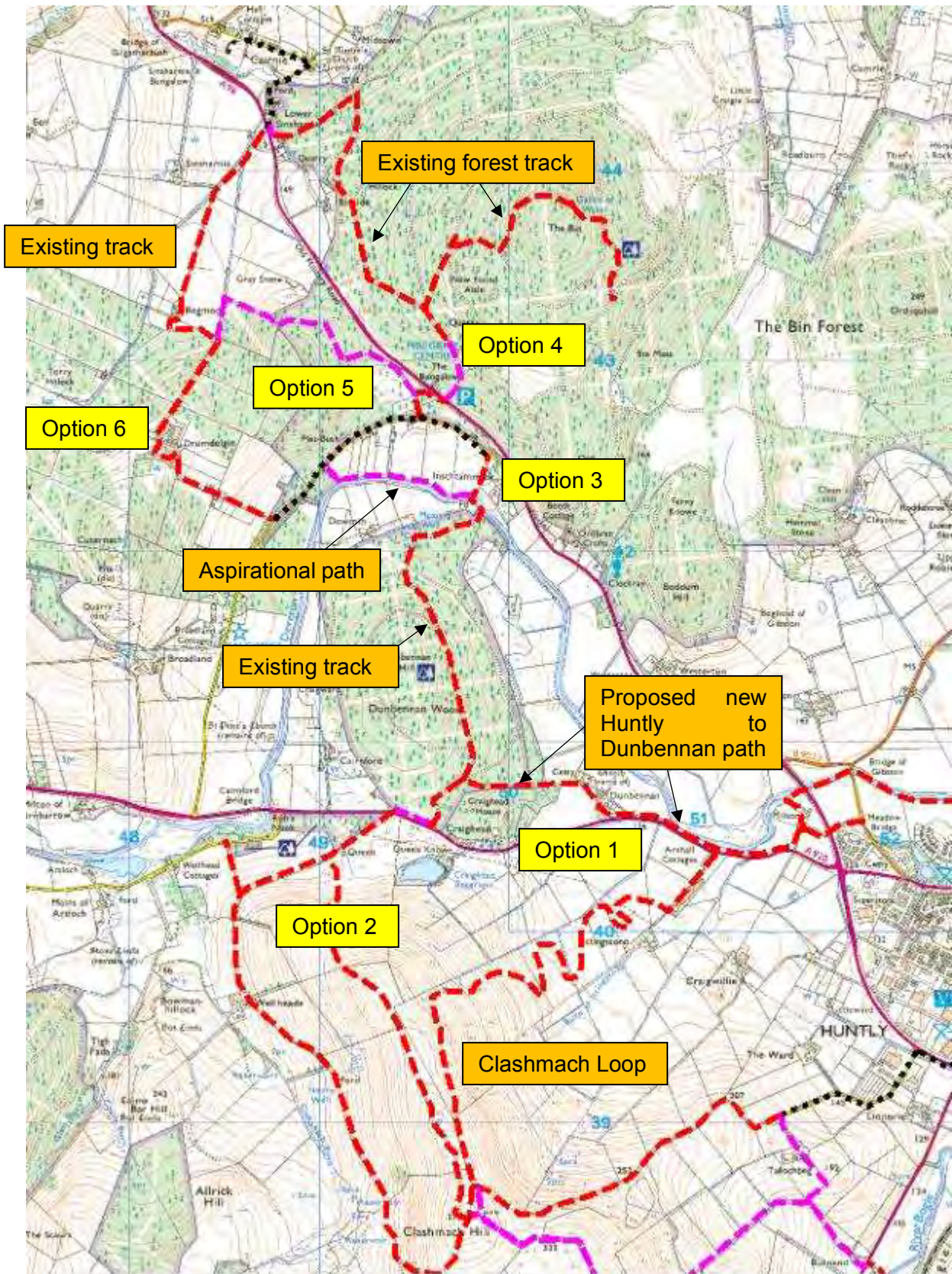


Option 6 is to either follow the minor road west from the junction of the Inschtammack track, or to develop a path along the north bank of the Deveron, west from the footbridge. There

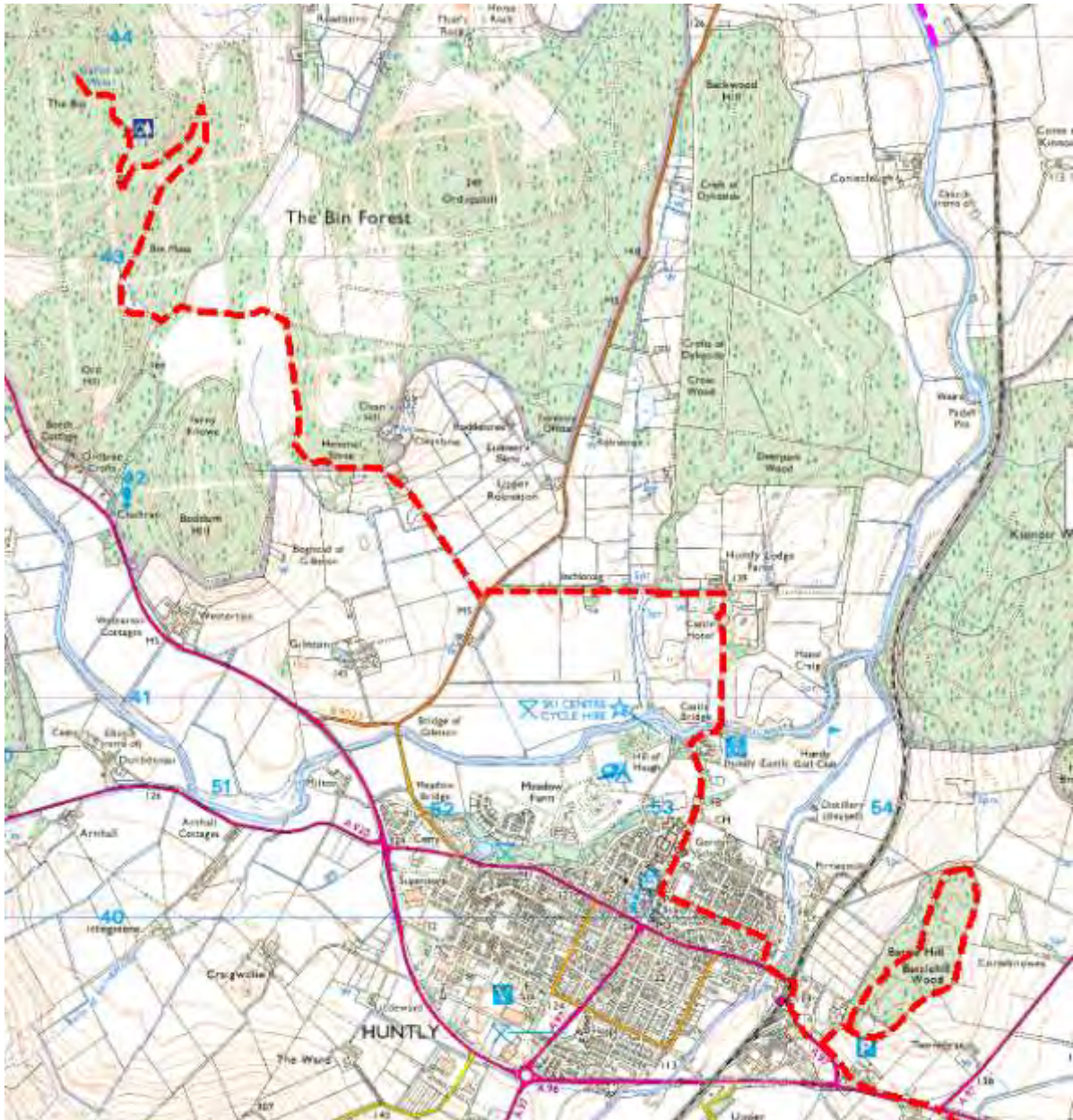
was no evidence of any existing path or access facility through field boundary fences although people said they had walked along the riverbank, possibly as part of a slow marathon.

A new link would then need to be created through to the road south of Plet Bush (DU6), and then following the existing track (DR1) past Drumdelgie and Bogmoor to Cairnie, crossing the A96 at the service station, from where the forest road network leads through the Bin.





<b>Name of route/GIS map ref</b>	<b>RRPP3 Proposed poem path – Bin to Battle Hill</b>
<b>Start location</b>	Bin Forest
<b>Finish location</b>	Battle Hill
<b>Constituent GIS map ref sections</b>	
<b>Summary description</b>	
Linear link between The Bin and Battle Hill following existing waymarked paths, forest roads, the farm track down from Clean Hill to Portsoy Road, the approach road to Huntly Castle Hotel and minor public roads.	
<b>Justification for development / promotion</b>	Existing route requiring no improvement but scope for development and promotion as part of the proposed poem path
<b>Current use</b>	Used daily by walkers, cyclists and sections through the Bin by horse riders
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use other
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	None
<b>Legal status</b>	Clean Brae to Huntly Town Centre via Huntly Castle Hotel is a core path. Access rights apply under LRA on all other paths, tracks, forest roads and rides in Bin Forest and on Battle Hill
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	None
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Pre-existing route, albeit not currently promoted as one single route, fully sustainable
<b>Survey date</b>	September 2019 – June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	Pre-existing promoted route so no consultation
<b>Priority for development / promotion</b>	High
<b>Alternatives considered</b>	Various options through Huntly, including potential to follow the path south along Portsoy Road and then east along the Deveron to the Meadows. Also various options from Huntly Castle/town centre to Battle Hill, scope to promote some of the town's local history along the route

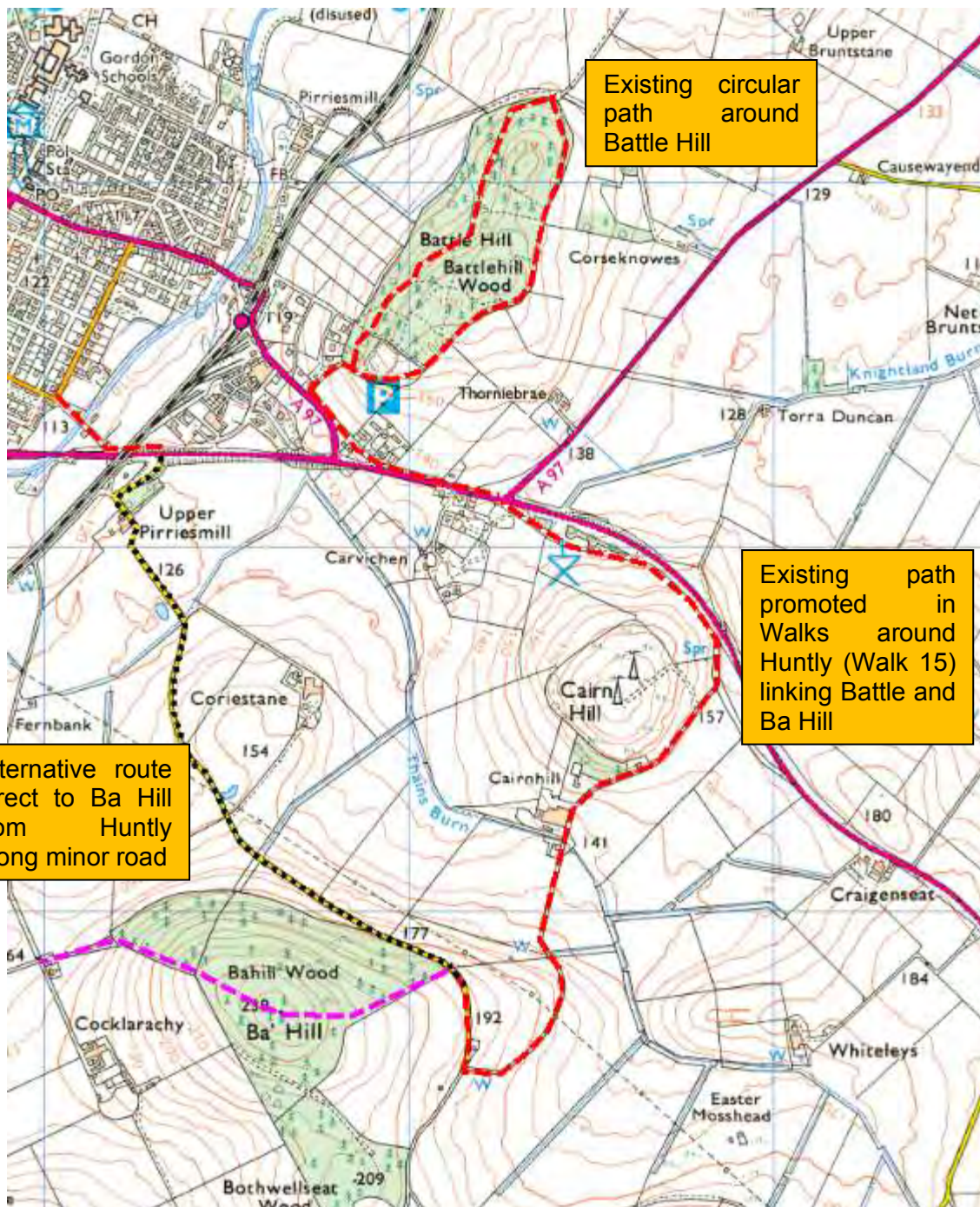




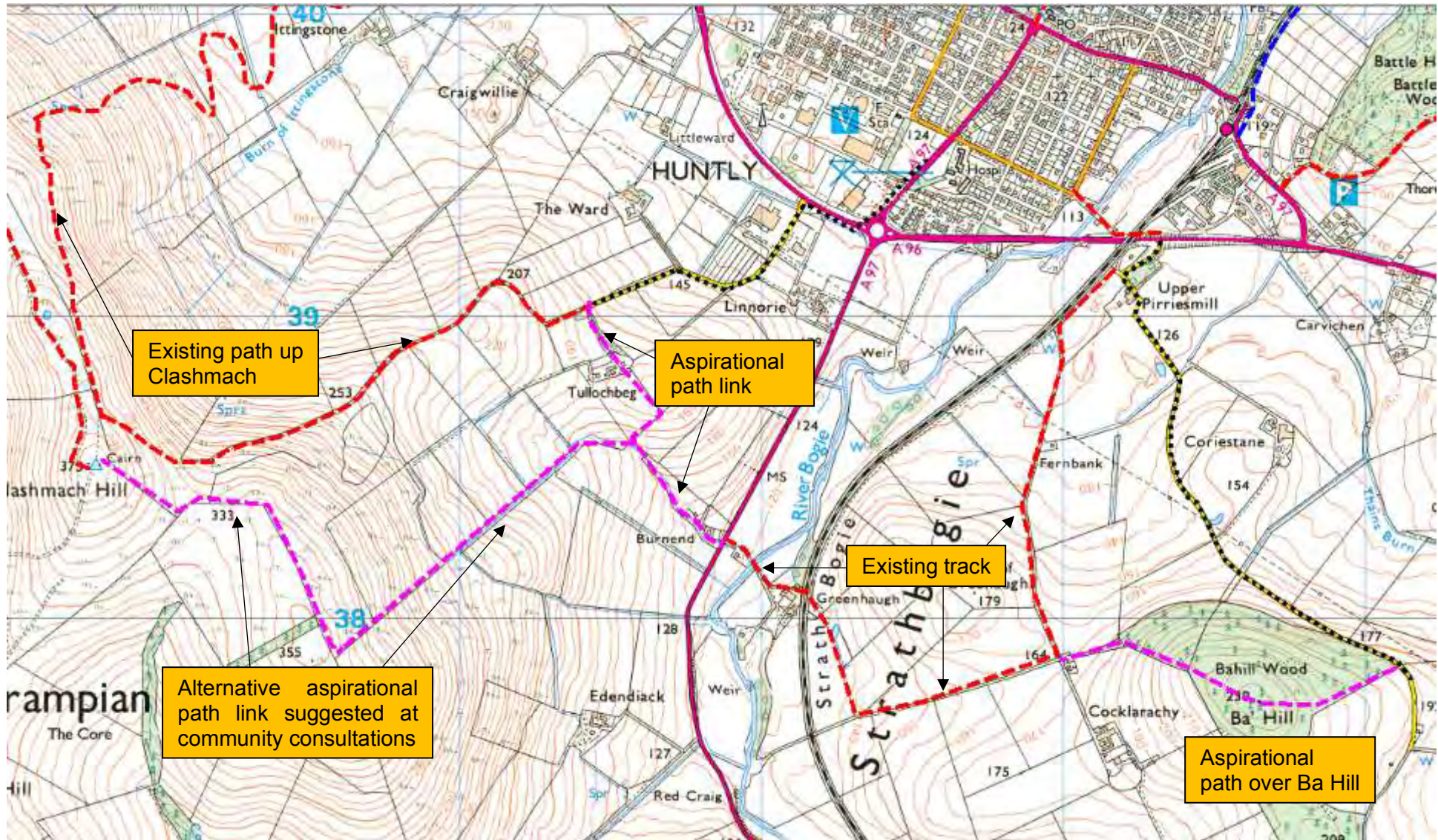
<b>Name of route/GIS map ref</b>	<b>RRPP4 Proposed poem path – Battle Hill loop (HU1)</b>
<b>Start location</b> <b>Finish location</b>	Huntly town centre/main car park
<b>Summary description</b>	Circular waymarked path around Battle Hill signed from the car park at the southern end of the wood. Mainly informal stoned or beaten earth path. Various alternative options including links between the east and western arms of the route.
<b>Justification for development / promotion</b>	Existing route with scope for further development and promotion as part of the proposed circular Poem Path
<b>Current use</b>	Heavily used by walkers, runners and dog walkers on a daily basis
<b>Potential use</b>	Pedestrian
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	
<b>Legal status</b>	Core path
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Future dualling of A96 may have significant impact on this route – HDDT and local people need to be mindful of need to feed into consultations to ensure suitable crossing is maintained whichever option is adopted
<b>Landowner consultation response</b>	Existing promoted route so no consultation
<b>Priority for development / promotion</b>	High



<b>Name of route/GIS map ref</b>	<b>RRPP5 Proposed poem path – Battle Hill to Ba Hill (SB14)</b>
<b>Start location</b> <b>Finish location</b>	Huntly town centre/main car park
<b>Summary description</b>	Linear link between Huntly/Battle Hill and Ba Hill, mainly alongside road or track. Alternative direct route from Huntly along quiet lane south from Upper Pirriesmill. Both of these routes are already promoted in Walks around Huntly as walk 15 Ba Hill.
<b>Justification for development / promotion</b>	Existing route with scope for further development and promotion as part of the proposed circular Poem Path
<b>Current use</b>	Already promoted in Walks around Huntly and currently understood to be regularly walked
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	
<b>Legal status</b>	Access rights apply under LRA, not currently a core path
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Future dualling of A96 may have significant impact on this route – HDDT and local people need to be mindful of need to feed into consultations to ensure suitable crossing is maintained whichever option is adopted
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	Existing promoted route so no consultation
<b>Priority for development / promotion</b>	Medium – route west from Ba Hill needs to be developed
<b>Recommended capital improvements work</b>	



<b>Name of route/GIS map ref</b>	<b>RRPP6 Proposed poem path – Ba Hill to Clashmach link</b>
<b>Start location</b> <b>Finish location</b>	Huntly town centre/main car park
<b>Constituent GIS map ref sections</b>	SB17 CM9, CM10, CM1, CM7
<b>Summary description</b>	
<b>Justification for development / promotion</b>	Several people at community consultations suggested this would be a useful link to provide a circular route south of Huntly.
<b>Current use</b>	Parts of proposed route used as part of slow marathon but with specific permission of relevant farmers. Consultations suggest people occasionally walk along the track from Upper Pirriesmill to Coclarachy, and some continue west then north to Greenhaugh but frequency or level of use unclear.
<b>Potential use</b>	Mainly pedestrian but potentially multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	No existing path over Ba Hill A97 crossing No existing path between A97 and Clashmach
<b>Legal status</b>	None other than usual access rights under LRA
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	Access rights would not apply through steading other than specifically negotiated
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Depends on negotiation with farmers and landowners
<b>Survey date</b>	Ba Hill surveyed November 2019, remainder of route not surveyed – prime volunteer opportunity
<b>Landowner consultation response</b>	
<b>Priority for development / promotion</b>	Medium
<b>Recommended capital improvements work</b>	To be identified during survey

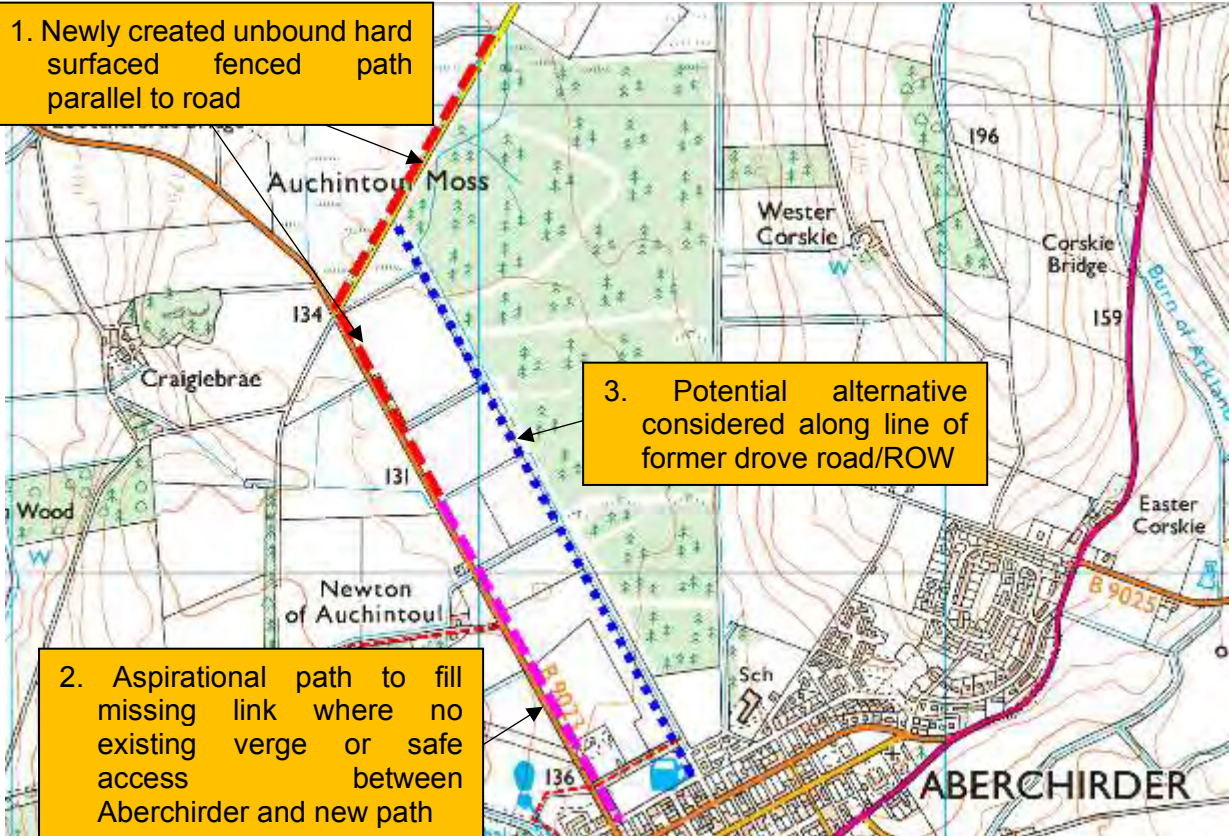


<b>GIS map ref / name of route</b>	<b>RRNE1 Aberchirder to Auchinderran AB10 Auchinderran south link path</b>
<b>Start location</b> <b>Finish location</b>	Junction with minor road east of Cottown (OSGR NJ 513 268) Corrstone Wood (OSGR NJ 510 272)
<b>Other relevant routes</b>	AB8 Cleanhill Wood AB11 Auchinderran link path north AB12 Auchintoul Moss AB14-AB21 Auchinderran paths
<b>Summary description</b>	An unbound surface path has recently been created most of the way between Aberchirder and Auchinderran allowing people to safely access the new network of paths at Auchinderran on foot, bike (or horse). Work was funded through SRDP but there was insufficient funding to complete one key section along the B9023 north of Aberchirder. People therefore either have to use the road, which is surprisingly busy, or drive to Auchinderran.
<b>Justification for development / promotion</b>	Aberchirder has very few off-road paths, particularly accessible from the village. This single section of missing path would enable local people to access the high quality path network at Auchinderran, reduce reliance on cars, encourage and enable more outdoor activity and exercise than currently possible.
<b>Current use</b>	Relevant section of path does not yet exist but Auchinderran paths are very well used on daily basis by wide range of ages and abilities from very young to very old
<b>Potential use</b>	Walking, cycling, horse riding, buggies, runners, wheelchairs
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Lack of any off-road path on the missing section means there is currently no alternative but busy road which most people consider unsafe
<b>Legal status</b>	None
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	No fence along the road for most of the path length, but it is physically challenging to try and walk this stretch because of boggy, uneven ground and overgrown vegetation. Community association considered alternative along old drove parallel to rather than alongside road but landowner would not agree
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Depends entirely on landowner approval and funding.
<b>Survey date</b>	November 2019
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	No direct approach. Brian Gregg of Auchinderran has previously costed out and submitted application for this section of path through SRDP but allegedly it fell one point short in assessment process. Brian had approached the landowner who agreed in principle but the farm is now up for sale. Community council preferred that negotiation continue to be undertaken by Brian Gregg, who already has local contacts. BG is also a fencing contractor and proposes supplying fencing materials at cost to minimise costs.  Contact for Aberchirder and District Community Association: Bob Peden tel. 01466 780277 bobpeden1@sky.com
<b>Priority for development / promotion</b>	High (confirmed by local community council as highest local priority)

**Recommended capital improvements work**

As per AB11 and AB12 – drainage, ground preparation and development of unbound surface path parallel to road, fenced on roadside

1. Newly created unbound hard surfaced fenced path parallel to road

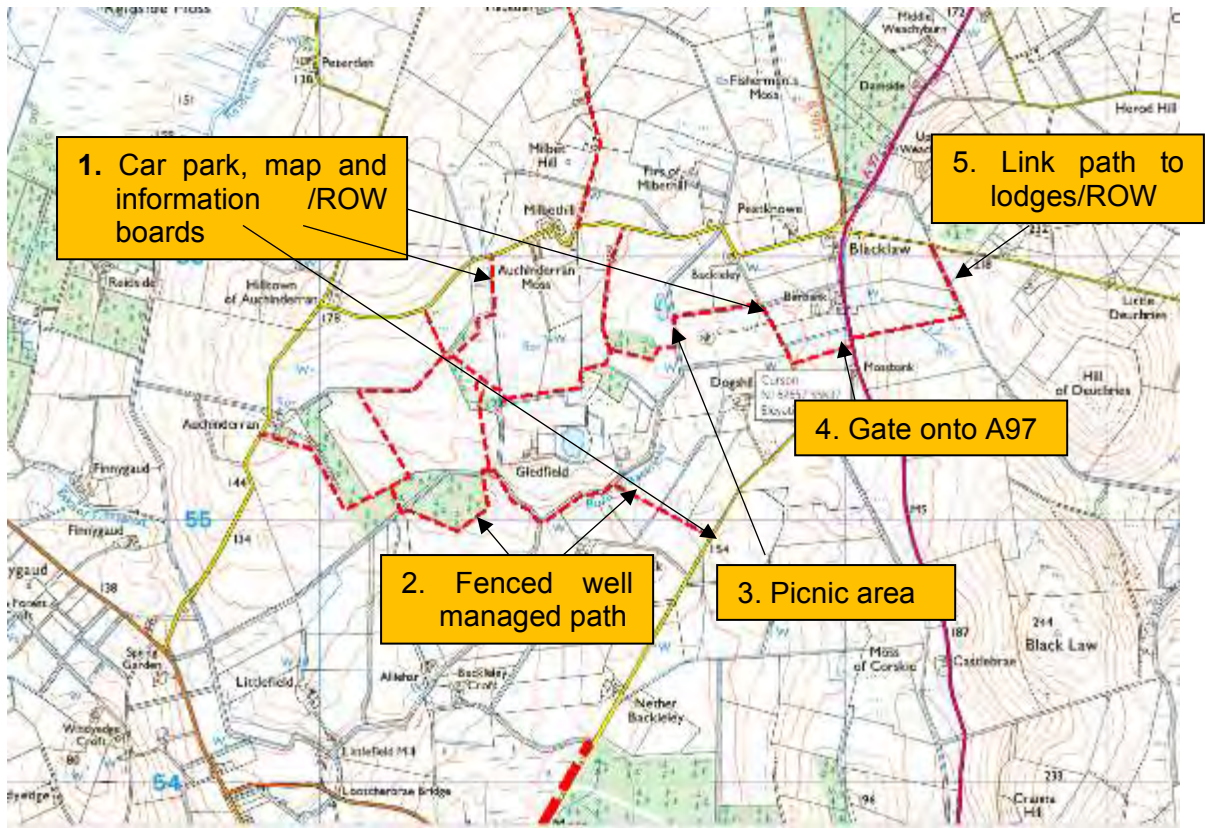


<b>GIS map ref / name of route</b>	<b>AB11 and AB12 Auchinderran link path north and Auchintoul Moss</b>
<b>Start location</b> <b>Finish location</b>	B9023 north of Newton of Auchintoul (OSGR NJ 619531) Bridge on minor road south of Nether Backieley (OSGR NJ 620541)
<b>Other relevant routes</b>	AB10 aspirational Auchinderran link path south AB14-AB21 Auchinderran paths AB9 Auchintoul
<b>Summary description</b> An unbound surfaced path has recently been created, funded through SRDP, most of the way between Aberchirder and Auchinderran allowing people to safely access the new network of paths at Auchinderran on foot, bike (or horse). The path stops part way along the road beyond which it is considered quiet enough to use the road.	
<b>Justification for development / promotion</b>	Important off-road link to enable people to access Auchinderran path network without being dependent on fossil fuelled vehicles
<b>Current use</b>	Walkers, cyclists and horse riders of all ages and abilities.
<b>Potential use</b>	Walking, cycling, horse riding, buggies, runners, wheelchairs
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Wooden posts restrict vehicular access either end of the new sections of path. Missing section south to Aberchirder limits current use
<b>Legal status</b>	Fully accessible under LRA
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	None
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Well built sustainable path
<b>Survey date</b>	November 2019
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	N/A – all negotiated by Brian Gregg of Auchinderran as part of SRDP application
<b>Priority for development / promotion</b>	High as part of promoting Auchinderran path network and endorsing application for funding for AB10
<b>Recommended capital improvements work</b>	None required other than extension south to Aberchirder and possible extension north-east past Dogshillock to entry point to Auchinderran path network





<b>GIS map ref / name of route</b>	<b>RRNE2 Auchinderran path network AB14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21</b>
<b>Start location Finish location</b>	Various, main access points off A97 south of Blacklaw (OSGR NJ630557), west of Auchinderran Moss farm (OSGR NJ616560) and from car park on minor road near Dogshillock (OSGR NJ624549)
<b>Other relevant routes</b>	AB10, AB11 and AB12 Auchinderran link paths
<b>Summary description</b>	Network of clearly signed and waymarked unbound all abilities paths through newly planted woodland and wildlife areas developed as part of new windfarm. Equally good for local and visiting walkers, cyclists and riders as parents wanting somewhere safe to teach kids to cycle or go for a walk with buggy/grandparents/multi-generation. On-site interpretation re. wildlife. Picnic areas, seats along the paths
<b>Justification for development / promotion</b>	One of the best examples of path development linked to a new windfarm providing welcome off-road access for all abilities and types of use near Aberchirder, an area with very few other paths
<b>Current use</b>	Daily mainly pedestrian use, also buggies, cyclists and horse riders
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use, all abilities
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Lack of awareness that the farm is happy for people to walk through the yard
<b>Legal status</b>	Fully accessible under LRA
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	None, specifically developed for access and actively promoted
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Developed to high standard with well drained, surfaced tracks so no issues re viability or sustainability
<b>Survey date</b>	November 2019
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	Landowner initiated path network as part of windfarm development
<b>Priority for development / promotion</b>	High to raise awareness of people not local to the area
<b>Recommended capital improvements work</b>	None (other than development of link path to Aberchirder AB10)



1. Map and information boards at each main entry point and car parking





## 2. Fenced well managed unbound surfaced path/track





3. One of several picnic benches/areas, incorporating wheelchair access



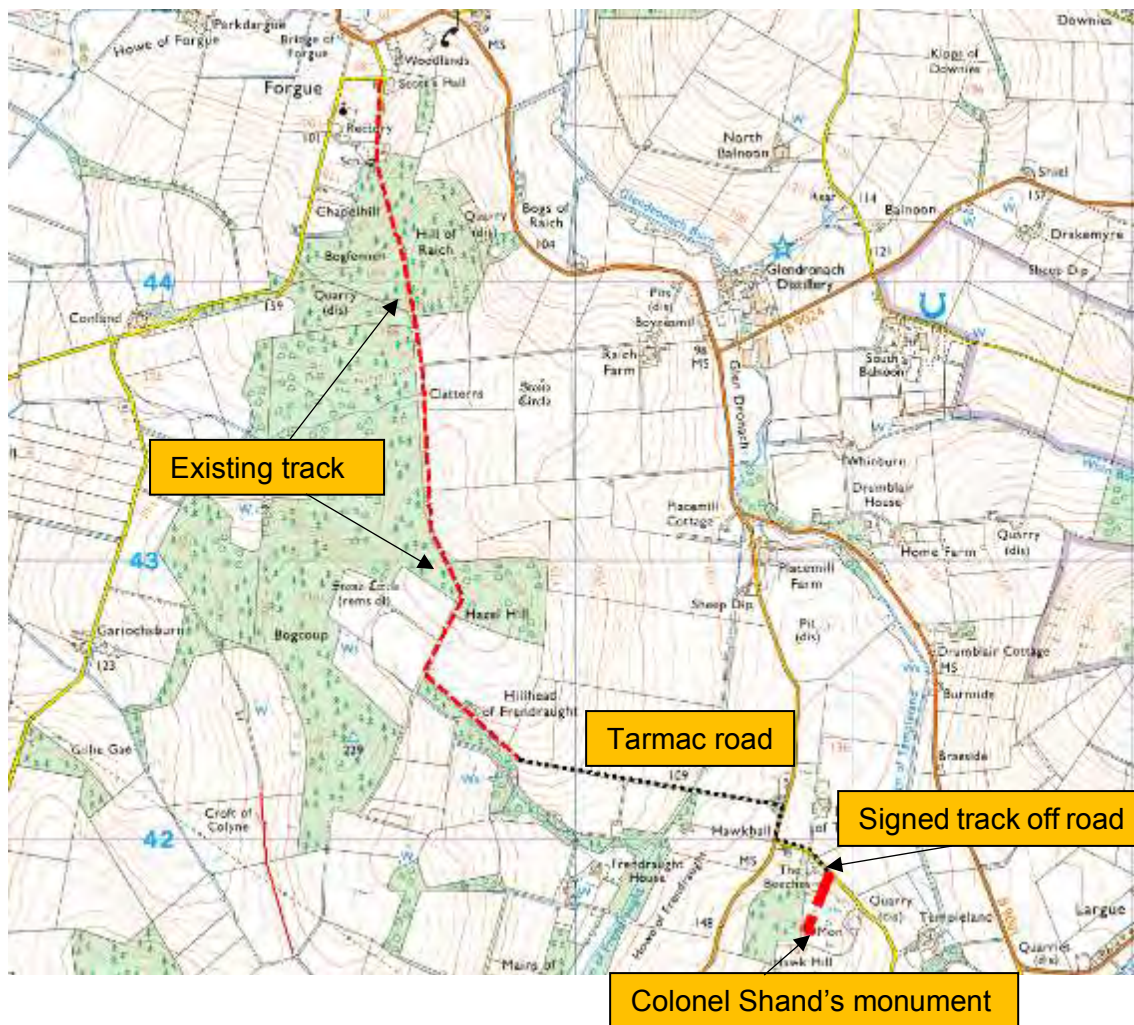
4. Gate onto A97 to create safer road crossing

5. Signed link path to lodges at Hill of Maunderlea



<b>Name of route/ GIS map ref</b>	<b>RRNE3 (LA2) Colonel Shand's Monument</b>
<b>Start location</b>	? Largue as short walk or potentially longer walk from Forgue
<b>Finish location</b>	where there is good parking at the Scott Hall
<b>Summary description</b> Existing signed firm track up to an imposing but little known monument in memory of Colonel Shand	
<b>Justification for development/Promotion</b>	Opportunity to make more of this promoted path. Identified during consultations as a feature of local historic and landscape interest.
<b>Current use</b>	Unknown how many people use this although it does get a mention on the internet
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Lack of awareness and lack of parking – the nearest is roadside parking south of Templeford or towards Largue.
<b>Legal status</b>	Access rights apply under LRA and signed (presumably claimed as LMC or LMO)
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	None provided people do not block the gateway when parking
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Existing route
<b>Survey date</b>	February/June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	Mr. Morison, BMF Estates, keen to further encourage and promote use of existing paths and routes (partly to justify keeping people away from paths/tracks around Frendaught House)
<b>Alternative options</b>	Potential to promote as longer route from Forgue together with Forgue and Bogcoup loop path
<b>Priority for development</b>	High
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	None required



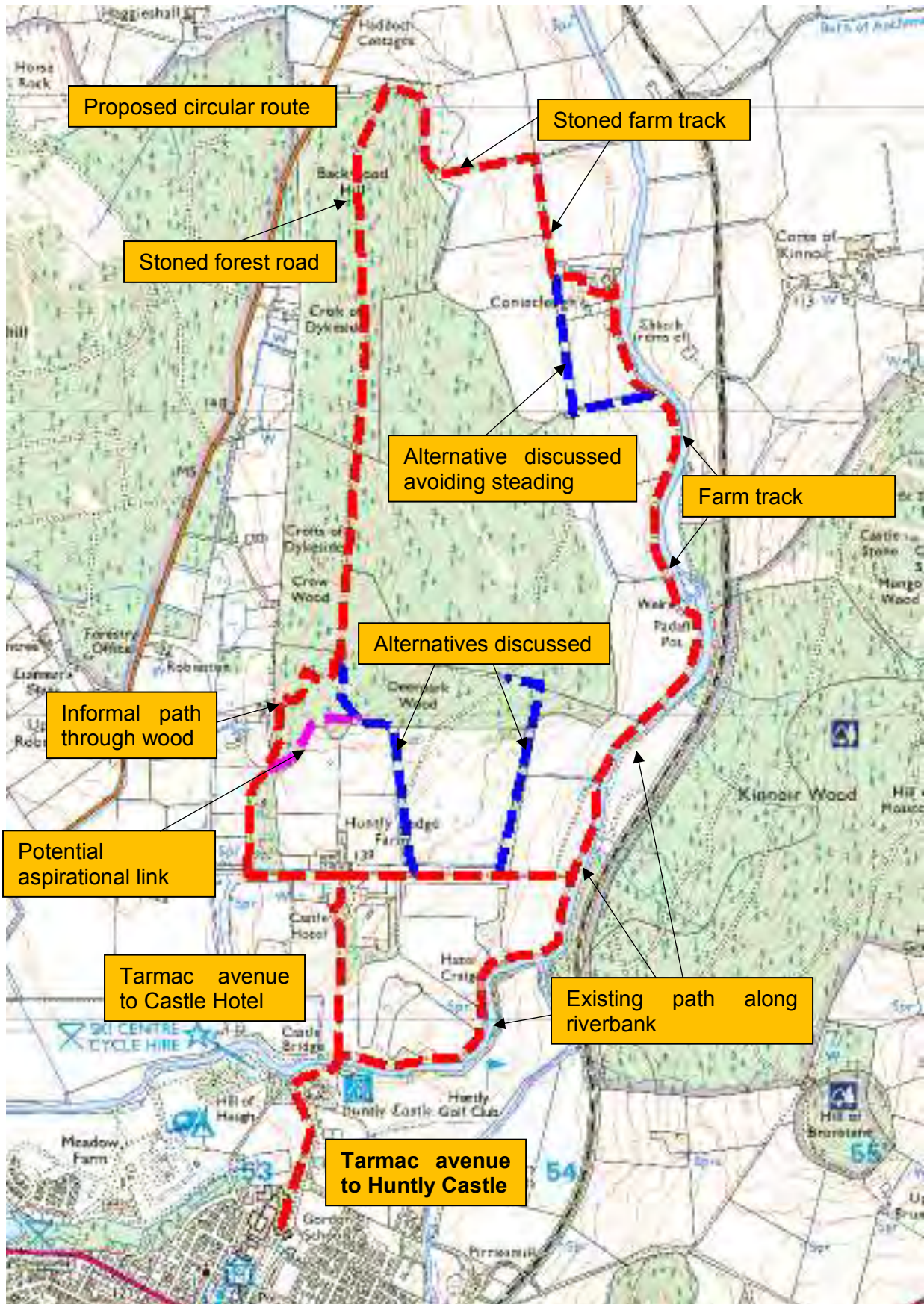


<b>Name of route</b>	<b>RRNE4 CONNIECLEUGH AND CROW WOOD LOOP</b>
<b>Start/finish location</b>	Huntly town centre/ Huntly castle
<b>Summary description</b>	<p>100% off-road circular route from Huntly town centre following an informal narrow path along the west bank of the River Deveron north to Conniecleugh, a stoned farm track west to the northern end of Crow Wood, forest road south through the middle of the wood and then informal narrow beaten earth path winding through the trees to link back to Huntly Castle Hotel.</p> <p>Shorter version follows riverbank north from Castle Bridge, past Hazel Craig, with return loop along farm track west from fishermen's hut</p>
<b>Justification for development/Promotion</b>	Identified by numerous Huntly local residents during community consultations as one of the priorities for development and improvement, particularly given the loss of the path around the golf course and Pirriesmill Bridge. Welcome contrast in character to forest tracks/paths in the Bin, Battle Hill and Kinnoir Wood, and to the Jubilee Path. Local outcry at erection of fencing across the path in June 2020 confirms the importance of this path locally.
<b>Current use</b>	Pedestrian – at time of original survey, and in February 2020, little evidence of use (other than by fishermen) between the eastern end of Huntly Lodge farm track and Conniecleugh but during lockdown it is understood that use of this route increased exponentially.
<b>Potential use</b>	Mainly pedestrian
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Lack of access facility in fences, some boggy sections.
<b>Legal status</b>	Access rights apply under LRA
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	<p>Issues with new fencing erected across the path east of Castle Bridge June 2020, owner of Conniecleugh denying access along his access track, and new fishing hut being built across the riverside path at Conniecleugh which was then being used to justify denial of public access. NatureScot's national access and legal specialist confirmed that access rights apply under LRA along riverbanks, irrespective of whether there is a path managed or mown for fishing, and regardless of whether fishing is commercially let. Riverbanks can only be considered "private" where immediately adjacent to a house or forming part of a garden, but where there is a history of access along the riverbank, development of any garden or woodland planting should take account of and maintain public access.</p> <p>Construction or development of fishing huts or lodges requires planning consent, which should include consideration of access and any necessary mitigation to maintain legitimate public access. The Drumlean case confirmed that future judgements should focus objectively on the impact of the action on access rather than trying to second-guess the motive.</p>
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Legally there is no question that access rights apply and physically this is a relatively easy route to sort out. NatureScot advise that Aberdeenshire Council should help pursue whatever action necessary to assert access rights.

<b>Survey date</b>	Southern section September 2019. Complete route February 2020. Fencing issues east of Castle Bridge revisited June 2020
<b>Landowner consultation response</b> /	<p>Discussion with Gordon Lawson, who farms Huntly Lodge Farm, which is owned in partnership with his family (ongoing discussions re future of farm following death of his father). Tel. 07464 746176. Site visit 27.2.20 at which time the farmer was in the process of reviewing fencing in conjunction with negotiations re. fishing rights. VWG discussed the implications from an access perspective, including access rights and responsibilities under LRA, liability relating to cattle, sheep, interaction with dogs and fishing. VWG explained that the intention would be for HDDT to fund gate installation and fencing immediately associated with the proposals (but not for refencing of the whole field) with details, timing and funding subject to further discussion with HDDT. Flagged up to HDDT scope for early implementation in advance of adoption of the formal AB54 path strategy.</p> <p>After some initial misgivings, the farmer recognised the benefits of positive access management to enable people to walk along the riverbank and be segregated from livestock. We looked at how wide the strip would need to be to avoid fencing being damaged or washed away when the river is in spate, and to provide suitable recreational access – clearly scrabbling up and down the bank is not viable or sustainable, and it would be far better if the fence were erected on level ground on top of the bank leaving a wide enough strip (min 2 m) for people to walk comfortably along avoiding areas currently subject to erosion. The farmer understandably still had some concerns about loss of SFP depending on the area involved, which he wished to discuss further with his agent/adviser, and with fishing interests. Subsequently fencing erected across the path, which HDDT are understood to have resolved in conjunction with Aberdeenshire Council.</p> <p><u>Christopher Lowen, Conniecleugh</u> – tel. 07725 996454, <a href="mailto:conniecleugh@gmail.com">conniecleugh@gmail.com</a>. Comprehensive notes of lengthy discussions 24.6.20 emailed to Stuart 1.7.20. CL disputes rights of legitimate non-vehicular access along riverbank, past steading or up his track and had plans to install locked gates to restrict access. He insists no routes should appear on maps or be promoted in any way without his prior stamp of approval.</p> <p><u>Ian Cameron – tenant farmer</u> who has livestock in the buildings and crops the fields at Conniecleugh. Face to face meeting February 2020. Confirmed he has no issue with people walking up the track alongside the steading, never had problems so far.</p>
<b>Priority for development</b>	High
<b>Recommended capital improvements</b>	Installation of 1.5m self-closing gates in fencelines, or 2- in-1 gates on tracks where there may be need or justification to lock the main gate.



	Detailed annotated maps previously supplied to HDDT June 2020 included below.
<b>Alternatives considered</b>	<p>Alternative discussed with Connicleugh to avoid going near steading, following the field boundary west from the gate across the track approx.. 500 m south of the steading, then linking up to the corner of the track north-west of the house. Connicleugh were not prepared to consider this alternative and the tenant farmer thought it preferable to stick to the existing route</p> <p>Community consultations suggest there was historically a link north from the farm track east of Huntly Lodge Farm to Crow Wood which is now impassable. The farmer denies there has ever been a track or that people have walked along this route. Tracks/linear shelterbelts shown on the OS map have long since disappeared. Various alternative options discussed, none of which the farmer considers viable, confirmed access rights apply along farm track, no issue in principle with people using this, improvements already in hand as part of fishing development, potentially scope to further improve to segregate cattle from people walking along the track.</p>



The proposed route follows the tarmac road down the avenue to Huntly Castle and over Castle Bridge, which is closed to vehicles but which is fully accessible on foot, cycle or horseback. The signs saying private road relate only to restriction on vehicular access and at present there is nothing to suggest that the bridge is unsuitable for recreational access.



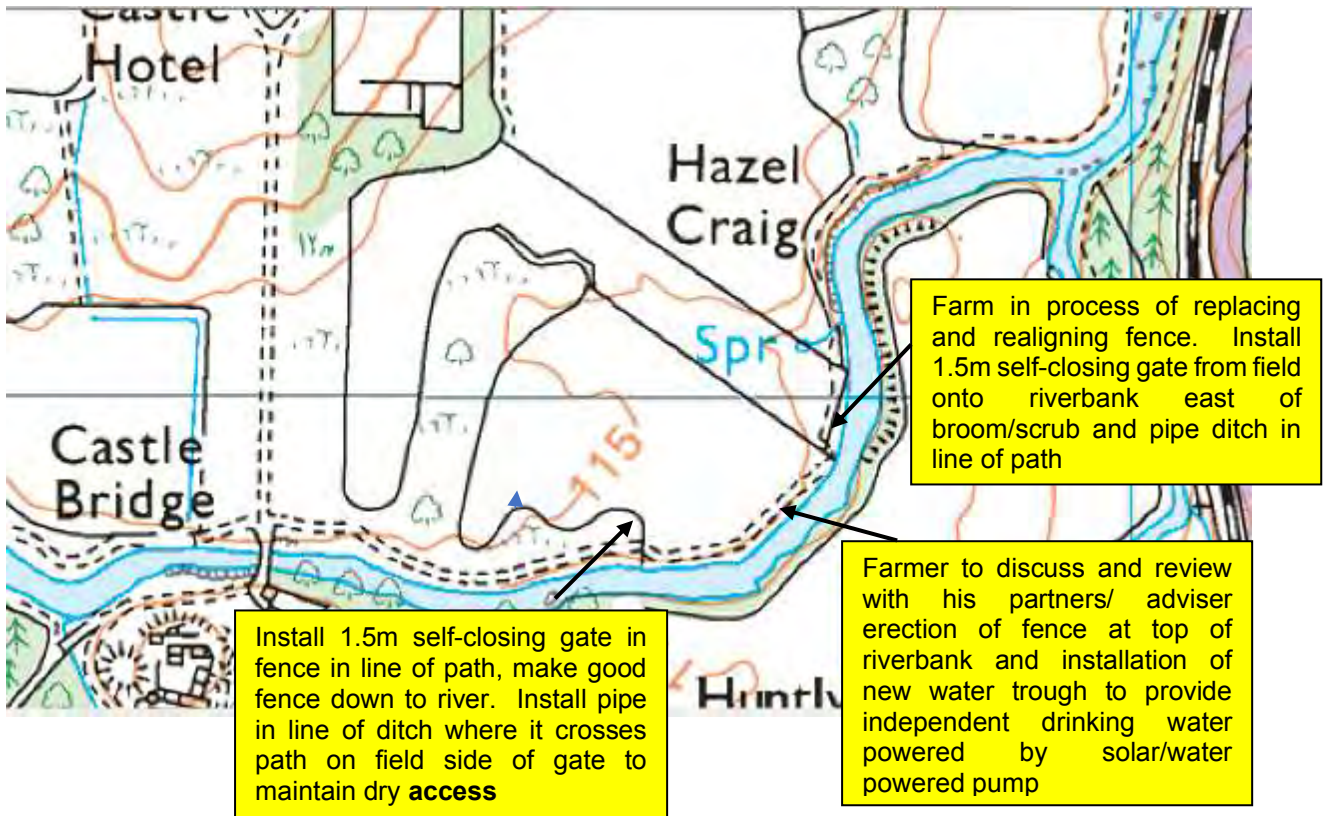
Immediately north of the bridge, an informal beaten earth path turns off through the trees, which is shown on the OS map as a track, but in reality is a well-used but relatively narrow path.



At time of original survey (and until June 2020) there was a relict fence across the path (pictured below left), with a metal hurdle wedged between boulders at the junction of the fence and riverbank to restrict sheep straying, which was difficult for less physically mobile walkers to negotiate.



During site visit with farmer February 2020 VWG discussed options to maintain necessary stockproof boundary while still allowing and providing recreational non-vehicular access. Agreed that fencing or access provision close to riverbank was unsustainable due to fluctuating water levels and risk of flood damage. Action agreed with the farmer on site visit is summarised below.



Agreed that self-closing gate should be installed left of tree to maintain access irrespective of water levels, and that the intention would be for this to be funded by HDDT as part of a package of path improvement work.

Photo taken June 2020 with new fence erected where it had previously been agreed new gate would be installed.

Beyond the fence/hurdle, the field was open to the river. Walkers (particularly those with dogs) had expressed concern about interaction of cattle grazing in this field.



It was agreed with the farmer that the proposed new fence would be erected along the top of the bank, potentially line wire (could be electrified) which would segregate cattle from people but still allow sheep to graze underneath which maintains SFP entitlement (but then does not necessarily provide reassurance that dogs will be segregated from livestock). Farmer originally proposed fencing close to edge of bank but ground is unstable, badly eroded and subject to flooding which would not provide suitable sustainable recreational access.

At time of survey, the fence parallel to the riverbank resumed at the end of the red dashed line on the photo above, creating a narrow strip without access provision from the field and dense scrub along the top of the bank restricting scope for access. A fallen gate (pictured below right) leads from the field into a wet area with dense gorse and snowberry, again without access facility onto the riverbank, so people are presumably climbing over/through fence

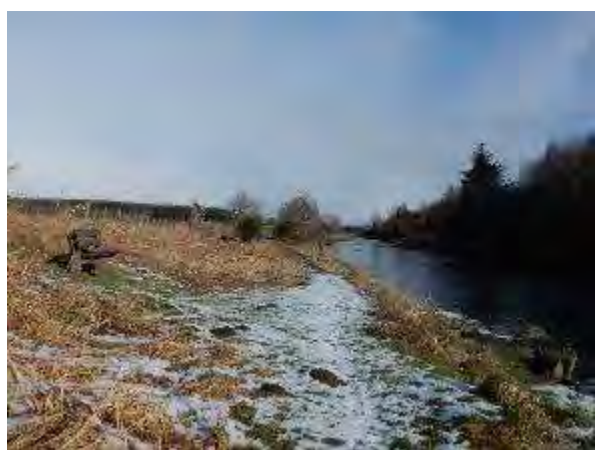


The farmer was in the course of preparing to realign and replace existing fences at time of discussion (27.2.20). Agreed that it would be very easy to incorporate access provision and the easiest solution was to install a 1.5m self-closing gate in the new fence to provide access direct from the proposed fenced strip onto the riverbank while maintaining a reliable stockproof boundary.

A blocked ditch/boggy area on the river side of the fence impedes access (and field drainage). Agreed that proposals should include re-excavating ditch and installing piped crossing in line of path on fenced riverbank section (pipe to be of sufficient diameter to accommodate storm flow), and that it was reasonable for the costs of this work to be funded through the AB54 path network strategy, subject to HDDT being able to secure the necessary funding.



A narrow beaten earth path winds through the trees along the bank around Hazel Craig (pictured below left). Beyond the bend, just before the junction of the Deveron and the Bogie, the path becomes a broader grass path, with several wooden benches alongside.



An unlocked metal field gate in the fence immediately before the fishing lodge, with adjacent wooden wicket gate, leads onto the well-used farm track which runs back to Huntly Lodge Farm. This track also provides access for fishermen, and at time of discussion (February 2020) the farmer was reviewing scope to upgrade the track and to provide a fenced parking area near the fishing hut. There is a further gate across the track at the brow of the hill (pictured below right) with ample space for installation of a self-closing 1.5m gate adjacent which would allow the main gate to be locked if required to control illegal vehicular access..



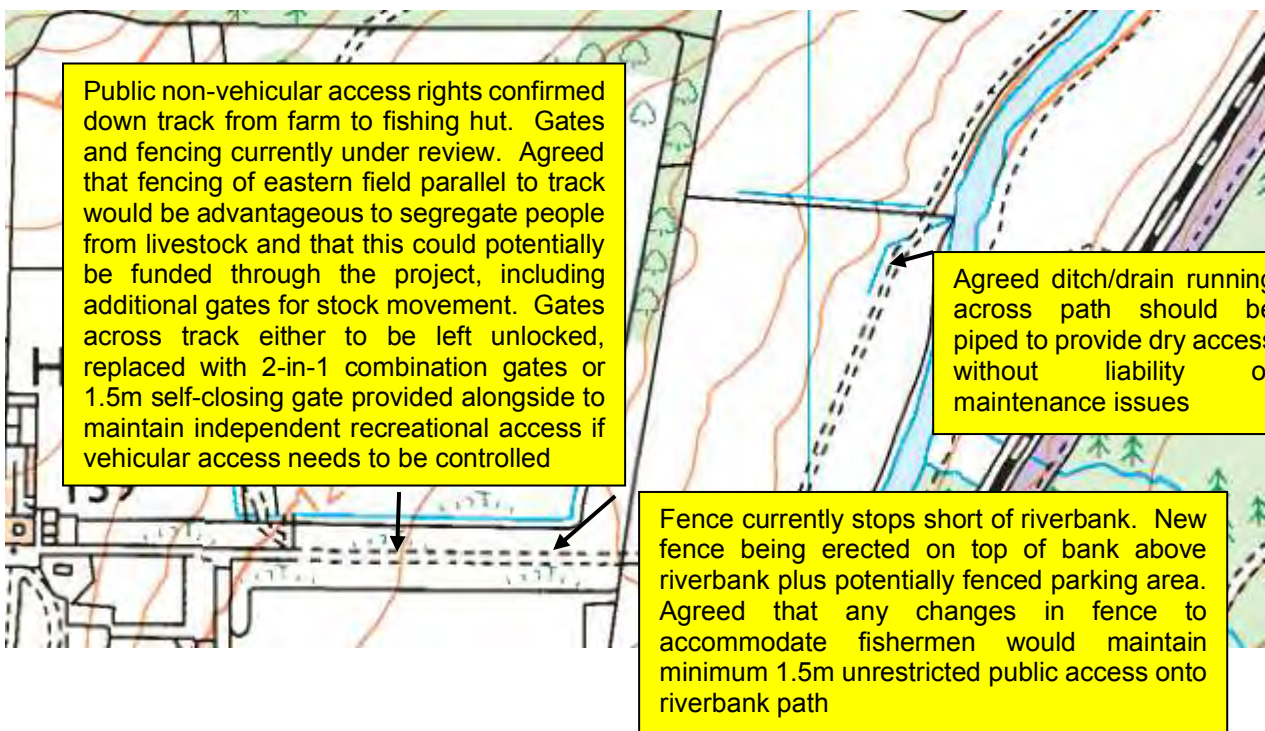
The riverside path splits at the fishing hut, with one spur going up to the fishing hut and the other continuing north along the riverbank which avoids conflict between fishermen and public access. Beyond the hut is another wooden wicket gate in the fence providing access off the river bank. The proposed route (and existing path) continues north along the west bank of the river as a broad, level mown grass path.



Most of this section of path is relatively dry, other than where a ditch feeds under the path. The strips of wood laid in the line of the path are rotten and a potential liability.



Action agreed with the farmer to improve access along the track to Huntly Lodge Farm, and on the riverside path immediately north of the fishing hut, is summarised below (taken from the detailed notes produced for HDDT June 2020 following obstruction of the path by new fencing).





The riverside path comes to an end immediately beyond a bench at an ash tree on the river bank, beyond which a much narrower path scrabbles along the bank below the tree.



There may be scope to create a safer path between the tree and the fence. At community consultations a path was identified linking from the south east corner of Deerpark Wood to the riverbank, which several people said they used to walk but was no longer accessible, others identified as an aspirational path. At time of survey there was no evidence of anyone using this strip (pictured below right) and the owner of Connicleugh (who apparently owns this land) is strongly opposed to access development along this line.



A narrow beaten earth path continues north along the riverbank, the area to the west having been planted with trees. There are occasional damp/wet patches along this stretch of path which would benefit from installation of cross drains.



Just before Padaff Pot and the weirs, the riverbank becomes impassable. The proposed route follows the mown broad, firm. Unfenced grass track which runs parallel to the river.



At time of survey there was one gate along this track at the field boundary south of Conniecleugh with no evidence of it ever having been locked nor having been shut across the track for a long time. The proposed route continues north along the track.



There is a further gate alongside the track just before the steading at Conniecleugh, again with no evidence of it having been shut for a long time, nor ever locked. At time of survey there was a container between the track and the riverbank which is understood to have been used by fishermen. On return visit in June 2020, a new lodge had been built below the container with steps leading down from the track. For those wishing to continue north along the riverbank, there was ample space to follow the beaten earth path below the lodge.



The proposed circular route follows the main track west from the river, with the main steading on the right (to the north) and a few unused semi-derelict buildings to the south. The main sheds are used for winter cattle housing, and the tenant farmer has confirmed he has no issue with people using the track.



The house at Conniecleugh is set well back from the track, down a separate drive (far right on picture below left, looking east back down the track towards the river). The proposed route follows the main well-drained stone track north then west, past several more houses, each set sufficiently back off the track not to create any issue with curtelage or privacy.



The proposed route branches off the Conniecleugh track into the forest at the northern end of Backwood Hill. The gate across the forest road is locked, with single strand wire either side, which people are evidently climbing over. There is ample space for installation of an independent 1.5m gate, but as there is no need for stock control, a gap would be preferable. The stoned forest road climbs up Backwood Hill and through Crow wood. Where the main forest road splits east, the proposed route continues south on a now grassy track (to the right of picture below right).



This track is clearly defined and firm underfoot but is clearly less well used by forest traffic with overhanging branches in places. The track comes to an end at a turning circle at the northern edge of Deerpark Wood, from where a clearly defined path leads west through the trees.



Painted red wooden arrows on wooden posts sign a beaten earth which winds down between the trees which is clearly being brushed and maintained (presumably informally by local people).



At the western edge of the wood, the path follows the dyke south and then links on an easily missed path through the scrub onto the access track south of the adjacent croft west of the wood.



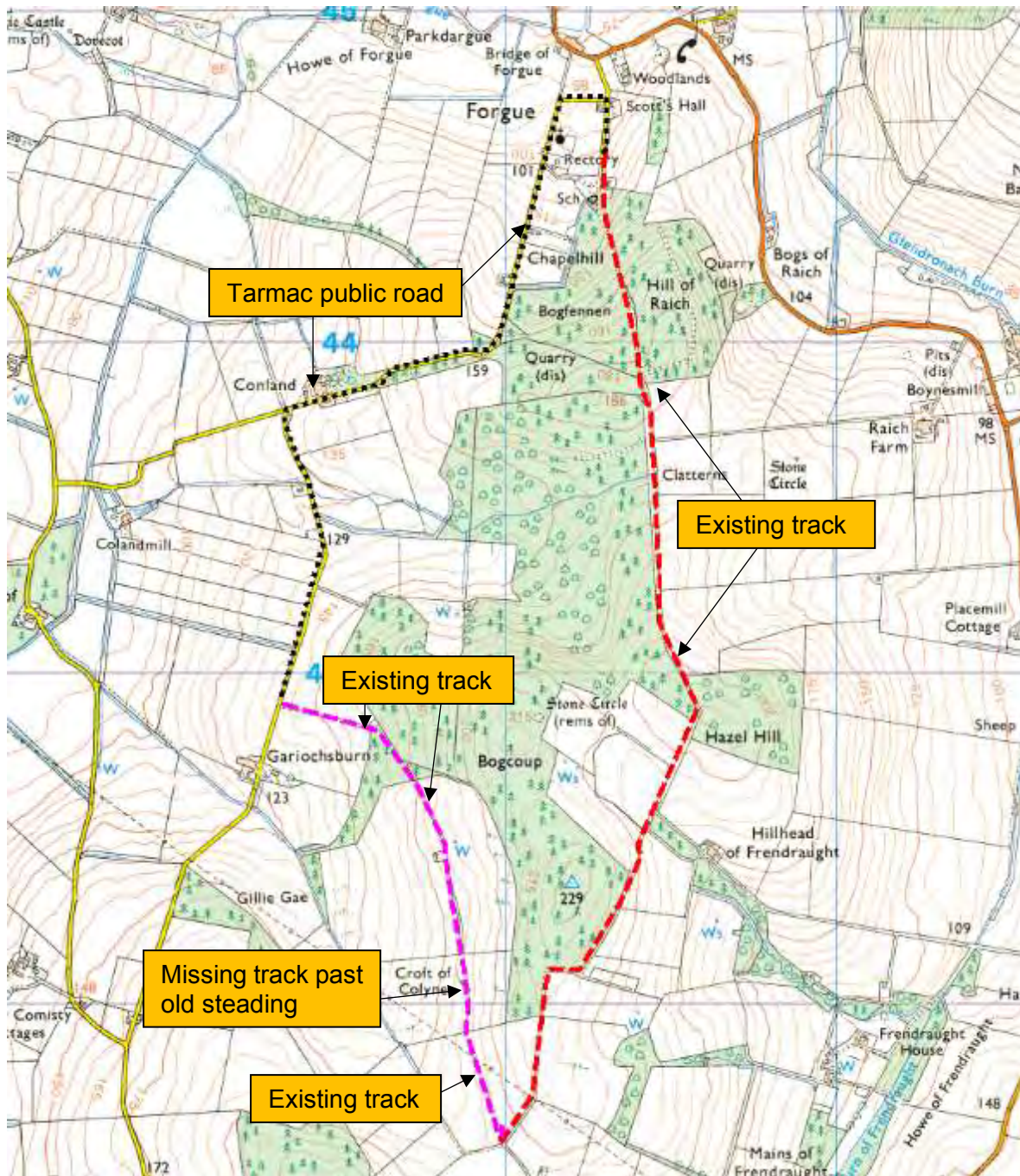
A more easily identified, formalised access/link path needs to be developed which enables people to responsibly exercise their access rights while respecting the privacy of adjacent properties.



At the southern end of the lane, the route turns east along the main approach road to Huntly Castle Hotel, from where it follows the avenue back to Castle Bridge and into the town.



<b>Name of route/ GIS map ref</b>	<b>RRNE5 Forgue and Bogcoup Loop FG3, FG4</b>
<b>Start/finish location</b>	Forgue – Scott's Hall, ample parking
<b>Summary description</b> Proposed new circular route south of Forgue, following the minor road from Forgue to Conland then south to Gariochsburn from where a good stoned track leads up into the forest west of Bogcoup. The proposed route follows the fenced track south between fields to Croft of Colyne, where there is a short missing section of track before the track resumes south towards Colyne. A fenced, firm, well drained track links north back up to Forgue over hazel Hill.	
<b>Justification for development/Promotion</b>	Forgue has very few promoted or usable paths and is in part of the AB54 postcode area where community consultations expressed demand for development of more paths . This route was identified following encouragement from the owner of the estate to explore potential for development of a new route between Fourman Hill and Insch following that taken by Mary Queen of Scots, of which this could be a key part but also an interesting stand-alone circular route exploring some of the wider countryside of the local area, another of the priorities identified during community consultations.
<b>Current use</b>	Track from Forgue south over Hazel Hill used by walkers and horse riders
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Lack of existing through track past Croft of Colyne. Lack of public confidence in access rights along track adjacent to game rearing pens
<b>Legal status</b>	Access rights apply for whole of route under LRA
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	Game rearing/release pens in wood alongside track south-east of Bogcoup but that should not affect access rights provided path users exercise their rights responsibly (mainly keeping dogs on short lead)
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Nearly all on existing track and landowner encouraged development so in principle should be viable but may meet gamekeeper resistance
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	Gordon Morison of BMF Group (Forgue and Bognie Estates tel 01464 871331, Estate Office, Frendaught House, assistant Rosanna Stickels), keen to further encourage and promote use of existing paths and routes as part of active management strategy to keep people away from paths/tracks around Frendaught House
<b>Alternative options</b>	There are numerous tracks and paths through the forestry over Bogcoup which could potentially link east-west over the hill instead of the loop south to Croft of Colyne
<b>Priority for development</b>	Medium
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	Re-establish fenced track past Croft of colyne Replace gates with 2-in-1 gates



An unsigned, unfenced firm stoned track turns east off the minor road north of Garriochburn, climbing gently up to the forest, where it turns south-east.



The main forest track follows the edge of the forest east, with another less well-used track heading north-east. The proposed route heads south, through a gateway (pictured below left, no sign of gates being shut recently) along a stoned track fenced both sides (right hand track in picture below right, left fork goes into a field).



The track passes the remains of an old steading on the right (south), and then comes to an end at a row of four metal field gates strung together leading onto a grass field full of lively cattle. The original track through this field has long since been lost, so it might be necessary to create a fenced path along the field headland to separate cattle and path users. An unhung metal field gate at the opposite corner of the field leads into the field immediately north of Croft of Colyne. The proposed route follows the field headland to a gate in the fence south of the steading, which leads back into the same field full of lively cattle.







The proposed route continues due south across the field to double wooden gates in the next fence, which leads onto a firm, well drained relatively level, unfenced beaten earth/grass track, under the power lines to the ungated track junction north of Colyne.



The proposed route turns sharp left, following the stoned track north-east, with the forest to the west and fenced fields to the east



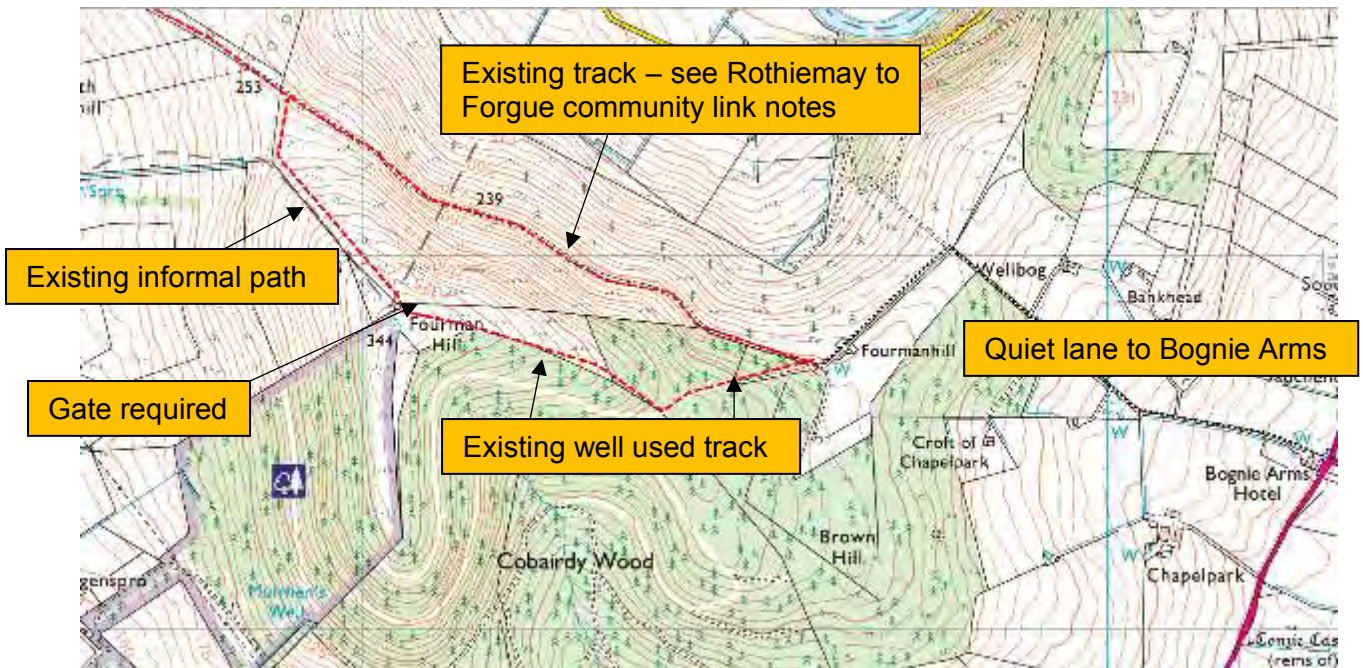
Numerous tracks branch off/join to/from the west through the forest, the proposed route continuing due north, over Hazel Hill.



As it starts to drop down towards Forgue from Hill of Raich through beech woods, the track becomes more open, with a real sense of history. The track joins tarmac road just above the school, with a barrier across to stop illegal vehicular access but no restriction on walkers, cyclists or horse riders.



<b>Name of route/ GIS map ref</b>	<b>RRNE6 Fourman Hill FH1 and FH4</b>
<b>Start location</b> <b>Finish location</b>	Parking area at eastern edge of forest, Fourman Hill Or Bognie Arms (link by quiet lane)
<b>Summary description</b>	Proposed new circular route to the trig point on the top of Fourman Hill, one of the landmarks north-east of Huntly with spectacular views in every direction. Following existing tracks and informal paths.
<b>Justification for development/Promotion</b>	Identified during community consultations as one of the best and most satisfying walks in the AB54 postcode area yet very few people seem aware of it. Landowner wholly in support of promotion. Relatively easy walk with historic interest at the march between four major estates.
<b>Current use</b>	Local walkers
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Fence with no access facility on north side of trig point (people are currently climbing over it, evidence of past gate)
<b>Legal status</b>	Access rights apply for whole of route under LRA
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	None
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Nearly all on existing track and landowner encouraged promotion
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	Gordon Morison of BMF Group (Forgue and Bognie Estates tel 01464 871331, Estate Office, Frendaught House, assistant Rosanna Stickels), keen to further encourage and promote use of existing paths and routes on the estate. This was one of the routes he specifically recommended.
<b>Alternative options</b>	Old signs indicate previously promoted path following the fenceline south from the trig point, now impassable due to new fencing, planting and scrub/tree regeneration. Numerous other options for circular routes south through Cobairdy Wood explored with conclusion that the recommended route is the most enjoyable and most viable recreational route to be promoted.
<b>Priority for development</b>	High
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	Install 1.5m self-closing gate in corner of fenceline north of trig point.



Small parking area for 2-3 cars at end of tarmac road at north-eastern end of Fourman Hill, from where a clearly defined, well-used grass track climbs gently west up through the forest (pictured below left). The proposed route forks right at the unsigned junction, following the broad grass track, with clear vehicle wheelings, initially between trees and then onto open heather roughly following the contour around the north of Fourman Hill.



At the end of the vehicle track, a narrow but clearly defined beaten earth path forks off to the trig point. A stone cairn has been built next to the trig point, with a blue tupperware box tucked between the stones on which there is a label saying “please open me and sign the summit book: name, date, weather and comments”. At time of survey, three couples/small groups or walkers had signed the book within the preceding four days.



Immediately north of the trig point three fences mark the junction of different estates. A historic boundary stone is one of numerous on this route. People are clearly climbing the fence to the right of the strainer post (pictured below left), where it appears there used to be a metal hurdle/gate (pictured below right, looking east from below the fence). Barbed wire has been removed from this section of fence but a self-closing gate is required to facilitate access.

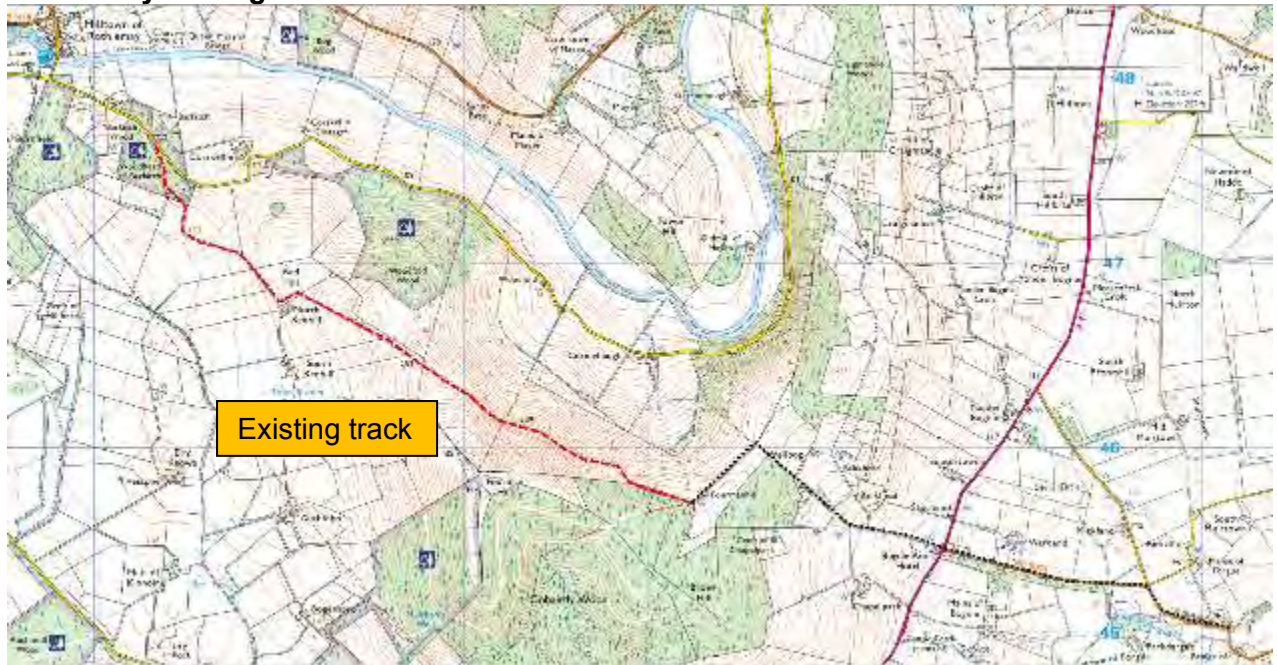


The recommended route follows that currently being used, following the north side of the fenceline north-west down to the “Queens Road” track around the north side of the hill.

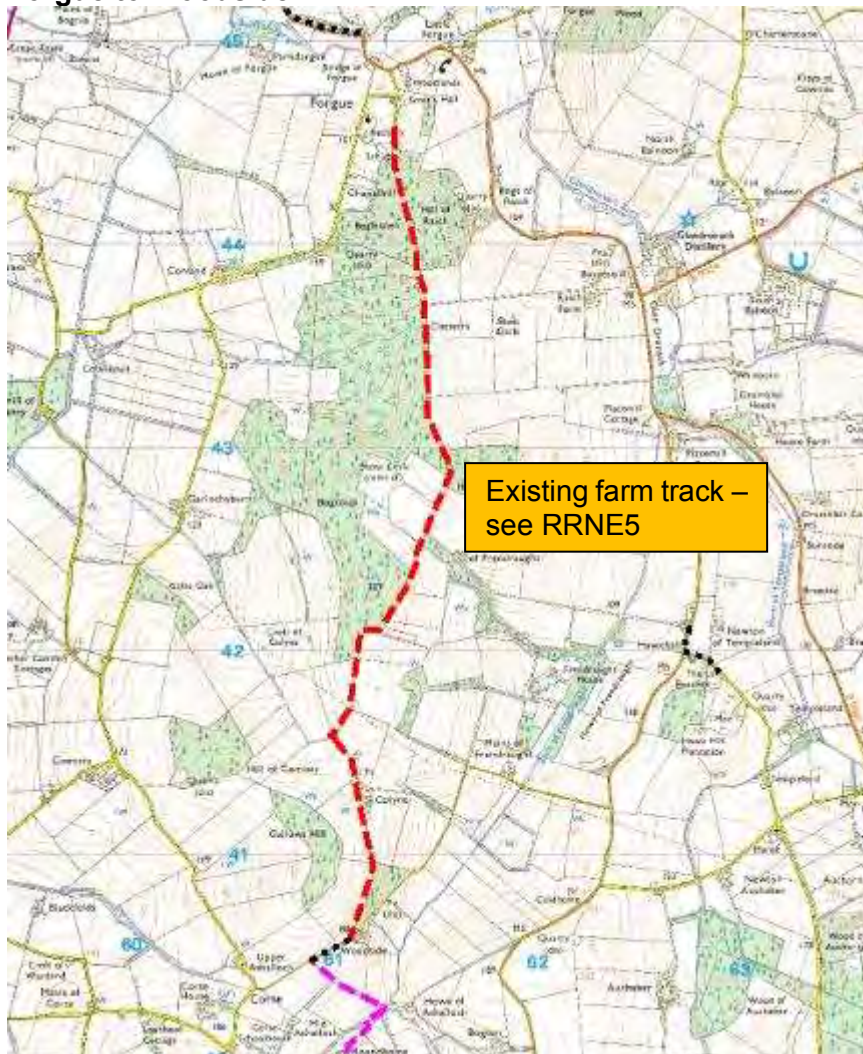


<b>Name of route/ GIS map ref</b>	<b>RRNE7 Queen Mary's Road</b>
<b>Start location</b>	Rothiemay village centre
<b>Finish location</b>	Insch
<b>Summary description</b>	Aspirational linear route suggested by owner of Bognie and Forgue estates using existing tracks and paths with some new sections roughly following the route taken by Mary Queen of Scots south from Rothiemay
<b>Justification for development/promotion</b>	Potential longer distance route north-east of Huntly which is the part of the AB54 postcode area least well provided for by paths. Longer-term scope to develop as part of outer circular path around the area
<b>Current use</b>	Northern section well used, remainder not
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	No existing route
<b>Legal status</b>	Variable
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Northern part of route already exists and fully accessible, similarly tracks through Glens of Foudland wind farm down to A96, old road around Hill of Foudland and link through to Insch either via Colpy or RRSE5/SR2. Middle section would require further work to develop and then negotiate
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	Owner of Bognie and Forgue estates (Gordon Morison) who owns most of the land between Fourman Hill and the A96 suggested the route and is happy to consider new sections of path if required
<b>Alternative options</b>	
<b>Priority for development</b>	Low
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	See CCNE4 Rothiemay to Forgue, RRNE5 Forgue and Bogcoup Loop. Section south of A96 included within RRSE5 Hill of Foudland and SR2 Huntly to Insch

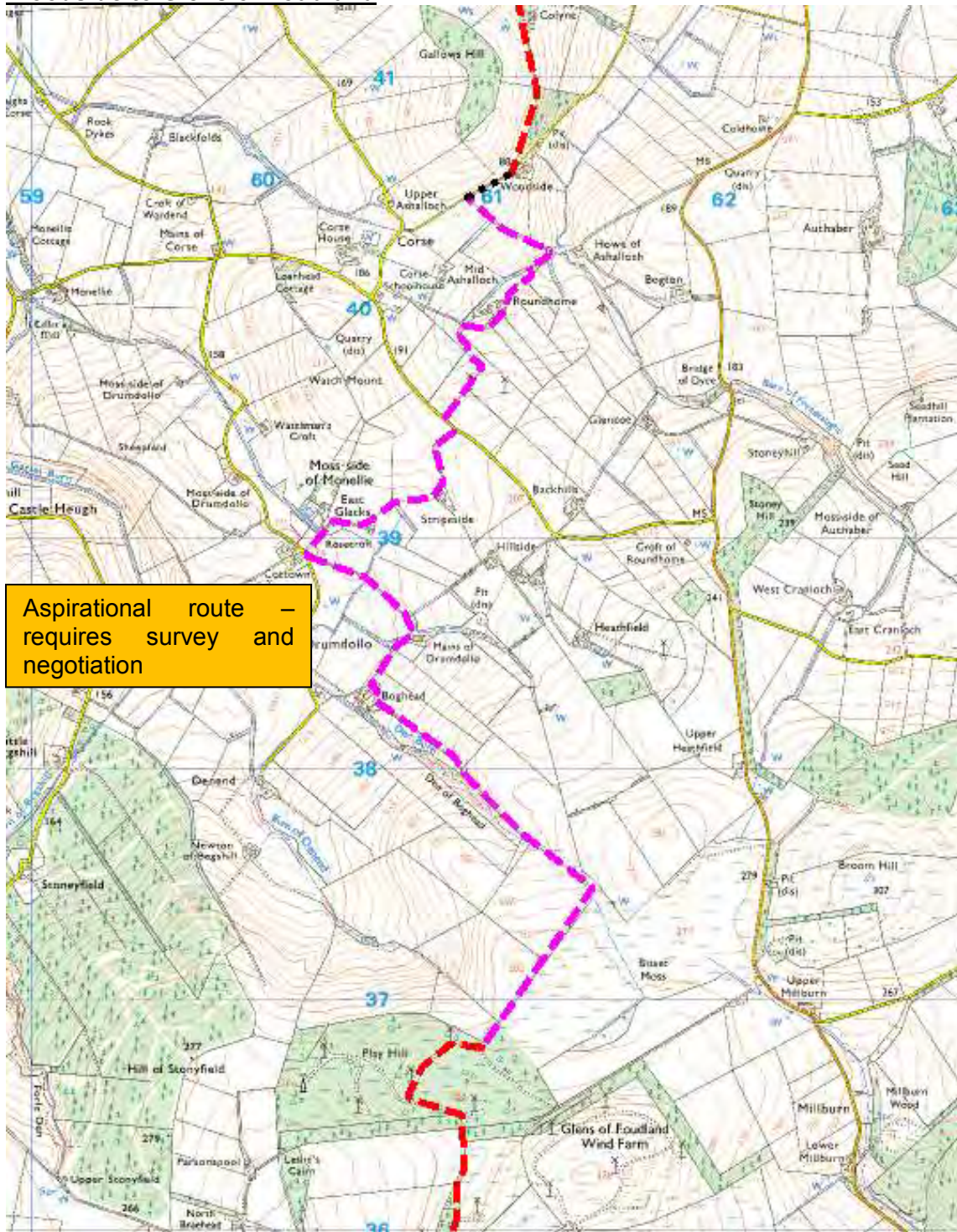
**Rothiemay to Forgue – see CCNE4**



**Forgue to Woodside**

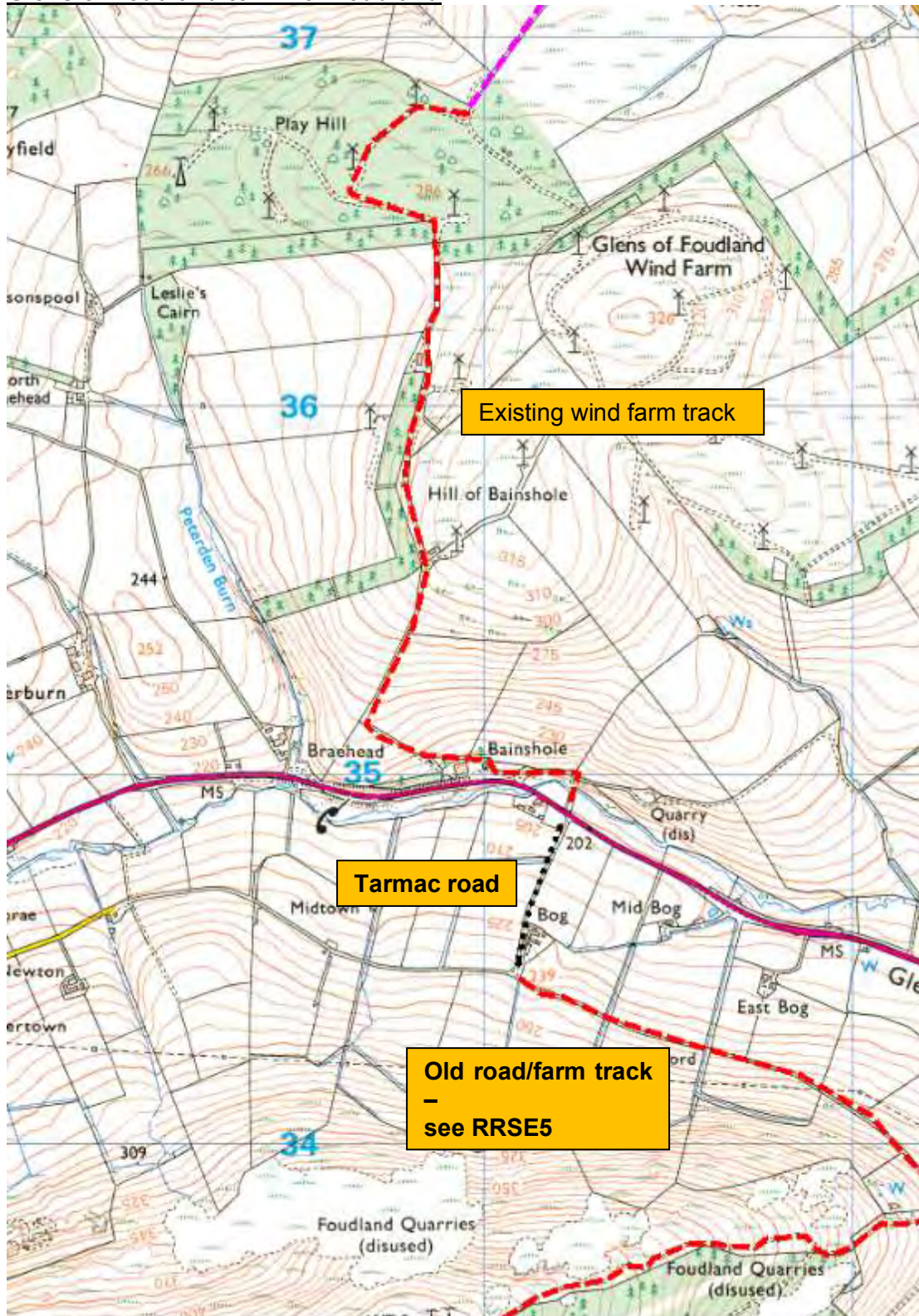


## Woodside to Glens of Foudland





**Glens of Foudland to Hill of Foudland**



<b>Name of route/ GIS map ref</b>	<b>RRNE8 Queen Mary's Bridge</b>
<b>Start location</b>	Rothiemay village centre
<b>Finish location</b>	
<b>Summary description</b>	A short, easy circular walk from Rothiemay following a mown grass path along the north bank of the Deveron to a historic bridge reputedly built for a visit of Mary Queen of Scots to Rothiemay Castle, looping around past the former castle's historic dovecot and returning along a stoned track back to the centre of Rothiemay.
<b>Justification for development/promotion</b>	
<b>Current use</b>	Already used daily by local walkers
<b>Potential use</b>	Pedestrian
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Lack of awareness
<b>Legal status</b>	Variable
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	None identified, existing well used path
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Short loop already exists, fully accessible, sustainable.
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	
<b>Alternative options</b>	
<b>Priority for development</b>	High
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	None



A short lane leads east from the main road in Rothiemay, opposite the shop, down to the riverbank. A wooden door in the high stone dyke leads onto a mown grass path along the riverbank.



The level, well drained grass path continues alongside the river, across a short wooden bridge/board walk, past the remains of an old church (pictured below left) to Queen Mary's Bridge over the Kirktown Burn.



Retracing the path back to the old church, a mown path leads up the east side of the field to the 18<sup>th</sup> century dovecot which belonged to the former Rothiemay Castle. The well-trodden path continues up to the corner of the field.



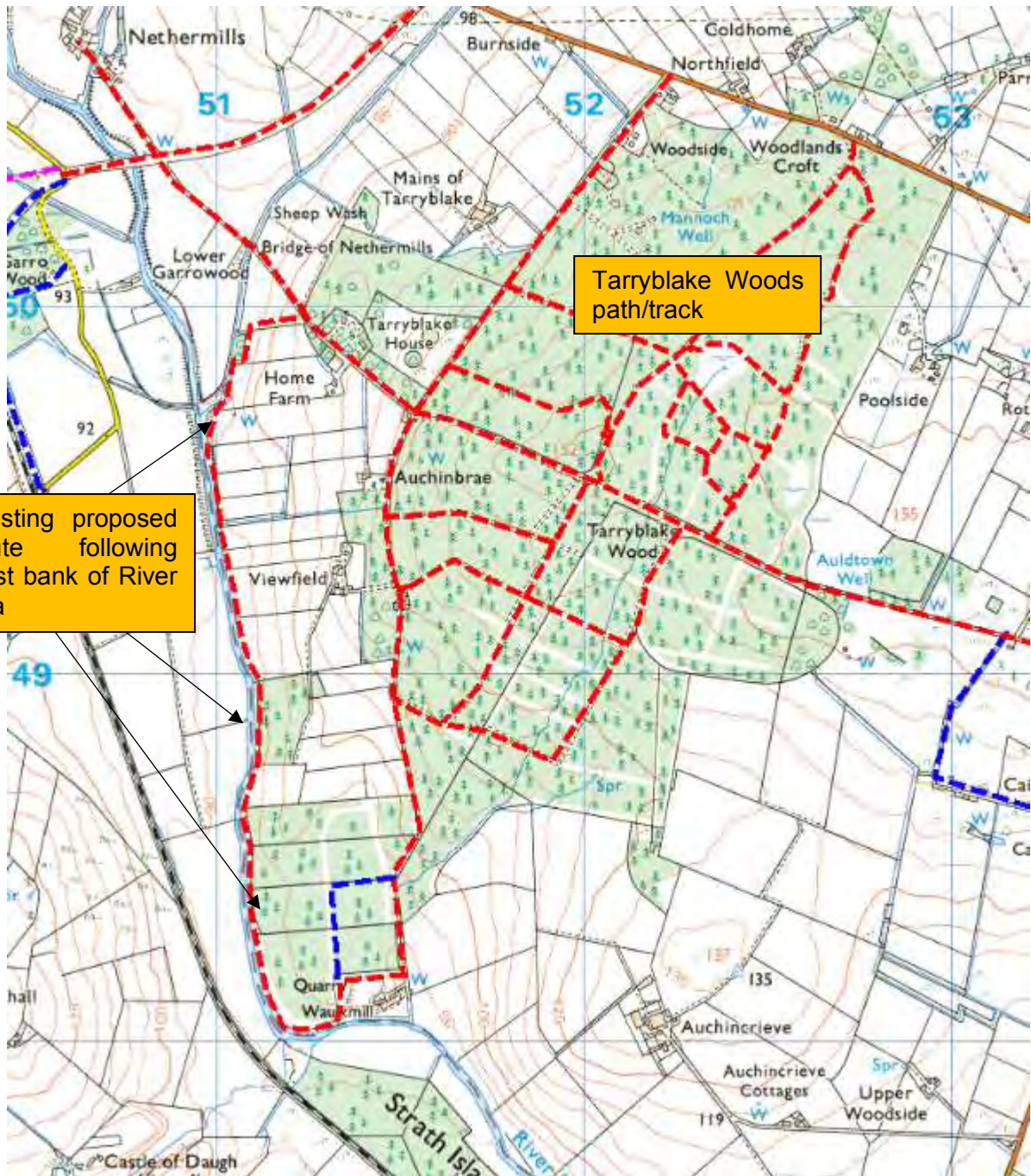
An unlocked field gate leads onto a stoned track which leads west from Mains of Rothiemay to the village centre.



Maps suggest that there was a track which ran up the west side of the dyke, east of Kirktown Burn, linking onto the stoned track past Mains of Rothiemay. At time of survey this was very overgrown but it may be possible to create a link along here to extend the proposed route.



<b>Name of route/ GIS map ref</b>	<b>RRNE9 Tarryblake River Isla Loop</b>
<b>Start/finish location</b>	Tarryblake woods
<b>Summary description</b>	Existing promoted route following forest rides and broad tracks through Tarryblake Woods, south to Waulkmill and then a very attractive mown grass path/track which follows the east bank of the River Isla north to the junction with Shiel Burn, continuing through the wood to link back onto the Tarryblake Wood forest road network just north of Tarryblake House.
<b>Justification for development/promotion</b>	Many local people already enjoy using paths around Tarryblake but visitors and those from other parts of the AB54 path network are unaware of the scope and/or are looking for a specific route recommendation. This is a really enjoyable, safe and interesting entirely off-road walk, cycle or ride for people of all ages, with scope to lengthen it by adding in other bits of the forest road network.
<b>Current use</b>	Well used on virtually daily basis by walkers, MTBs and horse riders
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	None other than lack of awareness
<b>Legal status</b>	Access rights apply under LRA so long as exercised responsibly.
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	None
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Existing route, sustainably managed
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	Tarryblake Woods managed by Lansdown Allen Management Ltd. (Neil Dyson tel. 077037 55665) – left numerous messages, no response
<b>Alternative options</b>	Lots of alternative permutations using existing promoted routes through Tarryblake Woods, including loops off the riverside paths through open grass areas managed for wildlife and newly planted areas of woodland Longer term there is local demand for creation of a path south along the north bank of the River Isla to Bridge of Isla and on through to Rothiemay
<b>Priority for development</b>	High
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signage and waymarking</li> </ul>



Tarryblake Woods path/track

Existing proposed route following east bank of River Isla





<b>GIS map ref / name of route</b>	<b>RRSE1 Ardlair Stone circle KT13 Potential circular route east of Kennethmont</b>
<b>Start/ finish location</b>	Kennethmont or Ardlair
Other relevant routes	KT14, CL5, CL3
<b>Summary description</b>	Existing track up to stone circle signed off public road. Historically a path linked south from the stone circle to Holywell and the Clatt drove road, potentially creating a circular route from Kennethmont.
<b>Justification for development / promotion</b>	Identified during community consultations as a potential circular recreational route from Kennethmont with varied historical interest
<b>Current use</b>	Track up to stone circle used regularly by local people and visitors, no evidence of any public access beyond
<b>Potential use</b>	Mainly pedestrian
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Lack of access facility in fences/dykes south of south circle, or through to standing stone to east. Cattle in field up to stone circle.
<b>Legal status</b>	Access rights apply under LRA (regardless of whether there are cattle or bulls in field)
<b>Access issues relevant to the route</b>	Claimed as LMC in past
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Viable through to stone circle. Development as part of circular route depends on how important this is to the local community or as part of the overall AB54 path network as it would require re-establishment of the old path past Holywell and either looping around past Seggieden and then along the road back to Kennethmont, or south to link along the old drove road
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	Owner of Ardlair accepts that people enjoy rights of access to the stone circle and is happy for them to use this route provided they do so responsibly
<b>Priority for development</b>	Medium
<b>Recommended capital improvements work</b>	Ideally install independent self-closing gate in the fence north of stone circle and in fencelines to south to facilitate access





Os map shows line of footpath from ARdlair south to old drove road along different line to that identified during community consultations

Double gates lead off public road opposite Ardlair to stoned track which leads south to gateway in next fence onto grass field beyond which there is no track but stone circle on the brow of the hill is easily accessed across the grass.

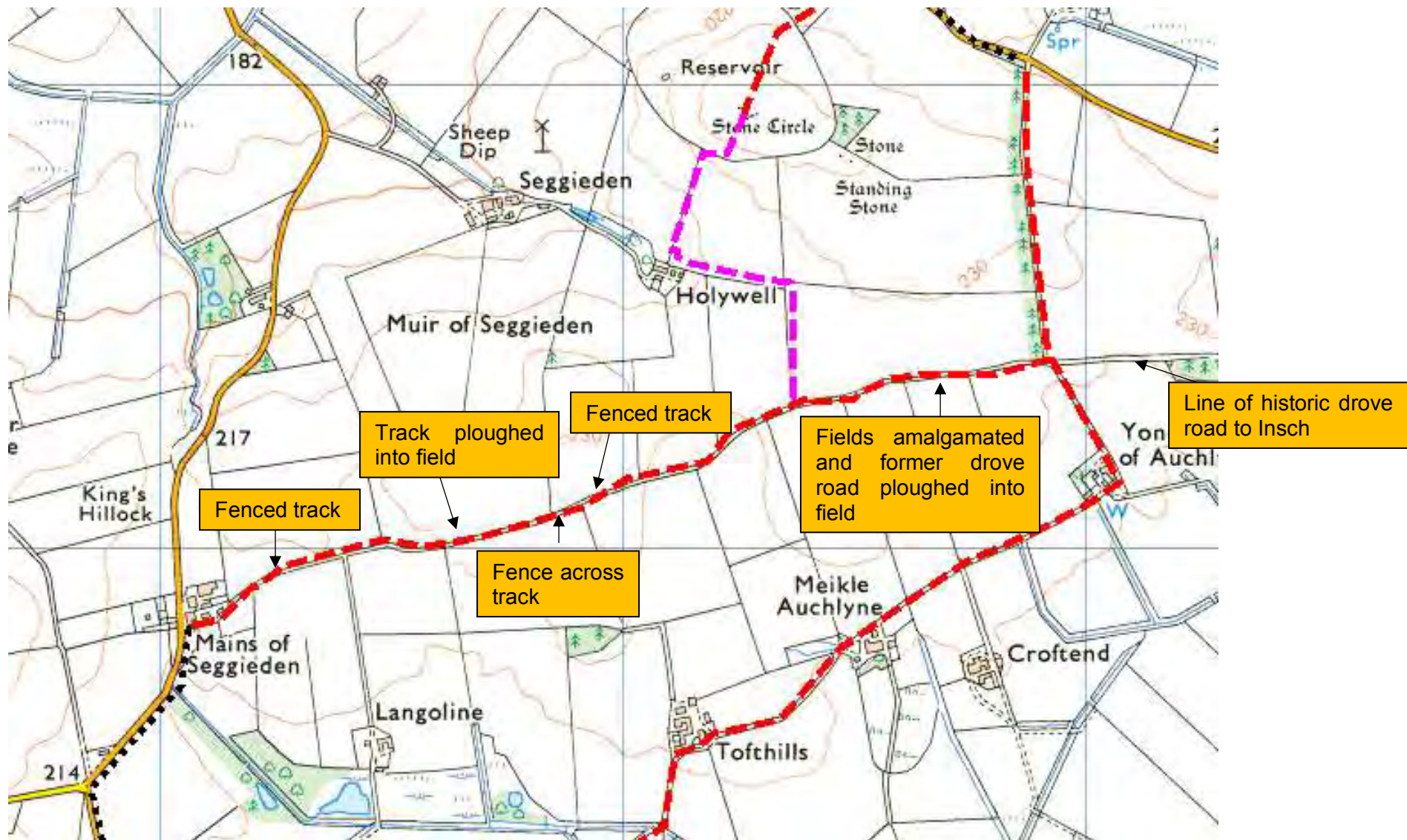


Community consultations suggested people are currently walking south from the stone circle on an existing path towards Holywell but survey failed to identify any access facility in the fence or dyke or any sign of a path or people currently walking along the field boundary south to Holywell.

.



<b>GIS map ref / name of route</b>	<b>RRSE2 Clatt drove road</b>
<b>Start and finish location</b>	Clatt village centre
<b>Other relevant routes</b>	CL3, KT13
<b>Summary description</b>	
Part of the historic drove road which originally went from Rhynie to Inch, which for many years remained a fenced track enjoyed by local people but recently fenced and ploughed over in parts.	
<b>Justification for development / promotion</b>	<p>The old drove road used to be used as part of a circular walk from Clatt returning along the stoned track past Yonderton of Auchlyne and Toffhills. It was also used as part of a circular walk from Kennethmont via Ardlair and the stone circle.</p> <p>Local residents, and some local farmers, feel strongly that reopening of this route is as important as a matter of principle as in creating attractive circular routes from both Clatt and Kennethmont with intrinsic historic interest (which tick all the boxes in terms of what people are looking for in terms of recreational routes). Several local farmers said they thought it was an outrage that someone was allowed to plough up a historic route and not forced to reinstate it, that it makes a mockery of LRA and access rights and raises questions as to why others should then provide or develop access when the minority are denying it.</p>
<b>Current use</b>	During community consultations local walkers identified currently using this path but no evidence of use on the ground and currently impassable
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Multiple fences across line of old track (including live electric). Parts of former drove road ploughed into field now arable cropped.
<b>Legal status</b>	Locals insist it is a historic ROW but not shown as shown on CROW maps. Access rights apply under LRA around field margins even if the track is no longer there
<b>Access issues relevant to the route</b>	Until the farmer amalgamated fields and got rid of the field boundaries and former track, even if this route was not formally recorded as a ROW access rights applied under LRA. Legally, access rights do not apply under LRA across or through arable crops.
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	At present not a practical route. Viability would depend on reinstating rights of access
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	
<b>Priority for development</b>	Medium
<b>Recommended capital improvements work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-establish path along line of former track, fenced if necessary</li> <li>• Install gate(s) in fence(s) across line of track to maintain stockproof boundary while allowing legitimate access</li> <li>• Fence path as required along line of old drove road along field boundary</li> </ul>



Google Earth image. Copyright 2020 but aerial photos 2008. Field boundaries correspond with 2018 edition OS map.



The drove road turns off the public road on the south side of Mains of Seggieden as a tarmac lane between the buildings and fenced field to the south.



From the last cottage, the track becomes grass, enclosed by fences either side, until it is joined by the stoned track which runs through the middle of the steading, east of which the drove road continues as a firm, level stone track, fenced both sides.



On the west side of a small copse of trees along the north of the drove road, the main farm track swings south into a field, the drove road continuing east as a grass track through to the next field at the end of the trees.



The track disappears on entrance to the next field, which is ploughed and cropped right up to the southern fenceline (with no facility to get through the fence). At the eastern end of this field, the line of the old drove road is still clearly visible, continuing east between two parallel fences to a copse of conifers, but is inaccessible due to a fence with live electrified topwire.



North of Meikle Auchlyne, fields have been amalgamated, field boundaries removed and the old drove road has been ploughed and cropped as part of the field with no access through it.

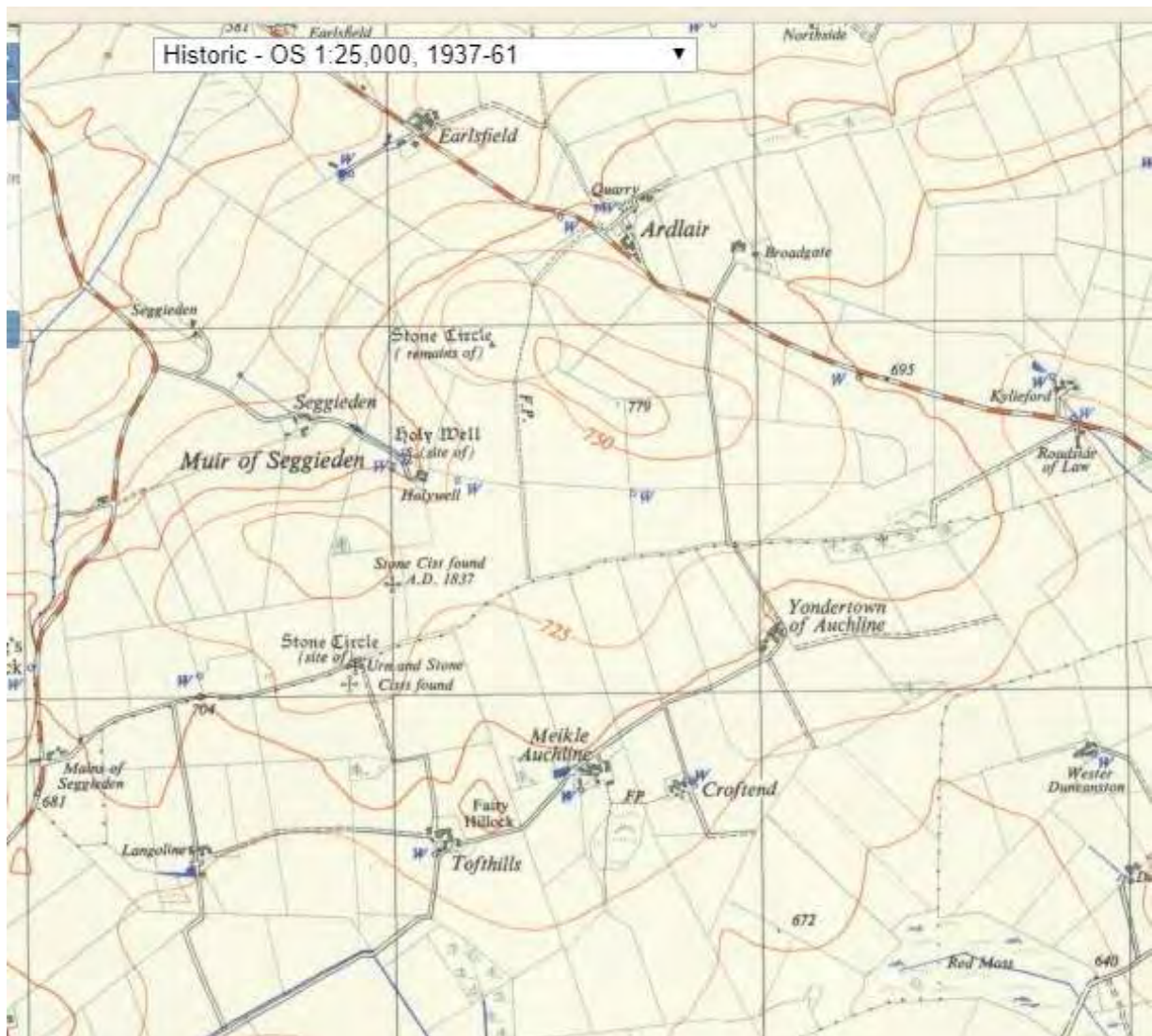


The drove road is clearly visible on the OS 6" 1843-82 map and still clearly shown on the 1945-48 OS 1" but by then the section east of Yondertown of Auchline no longer appears as a fenced track.

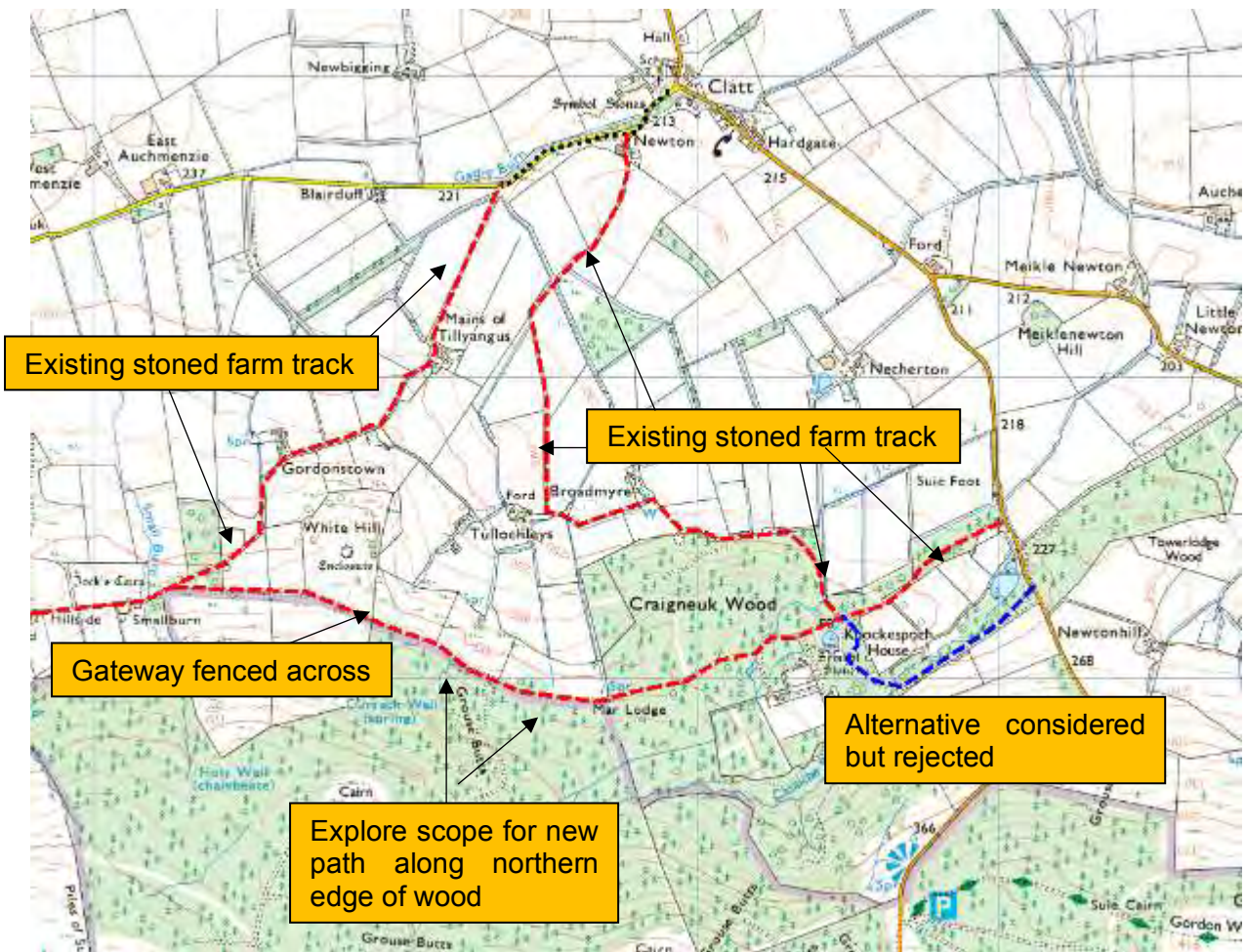




By the 1937-61 OS 1:25,000, the middle section of drove road is no longer a fenced track although the eastern section to Roadside of Law is still shown as a track.



<b>Name of route/</b>	<b>RRSE3 Clatt, Gordonston and Knockespock</b>
<b>Start/finish location</b>	Clatt
<b>Summary description</b>	Circular route using existing fully accessible tracks south from Clatt up to Gordonston, a section of the historic Mars Road (now a grassy track) which runs along the northern edge of the Correen Hills, linking back down to Clatt on farm tracks
<b>Justification for development/Promotion</b>	Good circular route requiring minimal work. Also scope to promote as part of Mars Road, which there is considerable local enthusiasm to maintain as a viable route. Potential link from Gordon Way down to Clatt.
<b>Current use</b>	Mainly walkers but also MTB and occasional horse riders
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Lack of awareness of the path. Blocked access south of White Hill. Very lively cattle in the fields with no alternative way past or through south of Tullochleys.
<b>Legal status</b>	Access rights apply throughout under Land Reform Act
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	<p>Mar Lodge sits right next to the route/former Mar Road, so there may be issues with privacy and curtelage, although it is used as a holiday let. The area in front is mown grass which so care would also need to be taken to avoid users causing any damage.</p> <p>Gate fenced across with barbed wire and electric wire on south side of White Hill between Mar Lodge and Smallburn.</p>
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Majority of the route is viable and sustainable, other than access past Mar Lodge, and the section of track north of the wood west of the lodge where there is no clear path and lively cattle discourage access!
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	
<b>Priority for development / promotion</b>	Medium
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore potential to create new path along north edge of wood west of Mar Lodge instead of along field headland</li> <li>• If not consider fencing path/track parallel to north side of fence to segregate cattle from access takers</li> <li>• Replace gates as required with 2-in-1 gates or boxed 1.5m self-closing gates</li> </ul>
<b>Alternative options</b>	<p>Alternative to extend south-east explored using southern approach drive but discounted as passing too close to Knockespock House and intruding on privacy and curtelage (even when using alternative grass path through trees east of house)</p> <p>Potential to incorporate part of this route into Gordon Way</p>



From Clatt village centre, the route follows the minor road south-west to Newton, forking left (south) up the stoned track signed to Tullochleys. Part-way up the track is signed as a footpath, which suggests that it may previously have been claimed as an LMC (Aberdeenshire Council apparently have no records of LMCs or LMOs). The track is relatively level, firm and well drained throughout.



Just east of Tullochleys, where the main track swings right to the farm, (pictured below left, looking west) the proposed route forks left (east) toward Broadmyre on another firm, well drained track.



The track keeps runs south of the house and steading at Broadmyre, keeping right at the junction, up the hill towards Craigneuk Wood (pictured below right looking north).



The track runs along the northern edge of the wood, passing several cottages, but given the level of existing use of this track by farm and forest traffic, as well as walkers and cyclists, privacy and curtelage are clearly not an issue. Beyond the cottages the track swings right, climbing gradually up the hill to join the Mar Road immediately north of Knockepoch House.



The proposed circular route turns right (west) along the stoned well drained estate track, to Mar Lodge, which it is understood is now a holiday let.



The old Mar Road runs in front of the house across the grass – there is insufficient space around the back of the house to develop a path. West of the lodge, the old road is now a narrow beaten earth path, constrained between a fence to the north and gorse encroaching from the wood to the south.



South of Tullochleys, where the forest road turns up to the south, the original line of the Mar Road track, south of the fence, is entirely blocked by gorse. Access is now through a metal unlocked field gate into a field of lush grass grazed by lively cattle.



There is no evident track in line with the gate, but a rutted farm track swings up the hill to run north of the fence to a gate in the next field boundary, which was wedged open at time of survey, no sign of ever being locked. Beyond the gateway, although there are signs of where the track used to run parallel to the north side of the fence, there is no longer any clear path or track and in places the ground is marshy. Access across this field is also compromised by the cattle crowding people walking through! Ideally a fenced track/path would be created. Alternatively, the forest immediately to the south of the track is dry underfoot and it would be worth exploring scope to create a path through the trees.



Although there is a gate in the fence which runs north from the north-east corner of the forest, it is unhung and wired shut, with electric wire over the top and a post behind to prevent it opening – presumably this is a march boundary. An independent 1.5m self-closing gate, if necessary two gates in series with fenced box between, might be a solution, or a path through the forest would avoid the issue. The initial section of the old track/Mar Road west from the gate is overgrown with gorse (pictured below right).



Beyond this first patch of gorse, the original track, now grassed over, is still clear, roughly following the contour around the hill. At the next field boundary, south of Gordonstown, there are double gates wired shut across the track, beyond which the track runs along the contour through trees.



There is a broken, unhung metal field gate across the end of the old Mar Road where it joins the stony track down to Gordonstown just east of Smallburn (to the right in picture below left). The proposed route follows the track down past Gordonstown, well clear of the farm steading or house.



Beyond Gordonstown the proposed route takes the right fork, following the less well used but still clearly defined, well-drained, firm stoned track (on the right in picture below left) to Mains of Tillyangus.



The track swings left immediately before the steading, avoiding the house and main buildings,

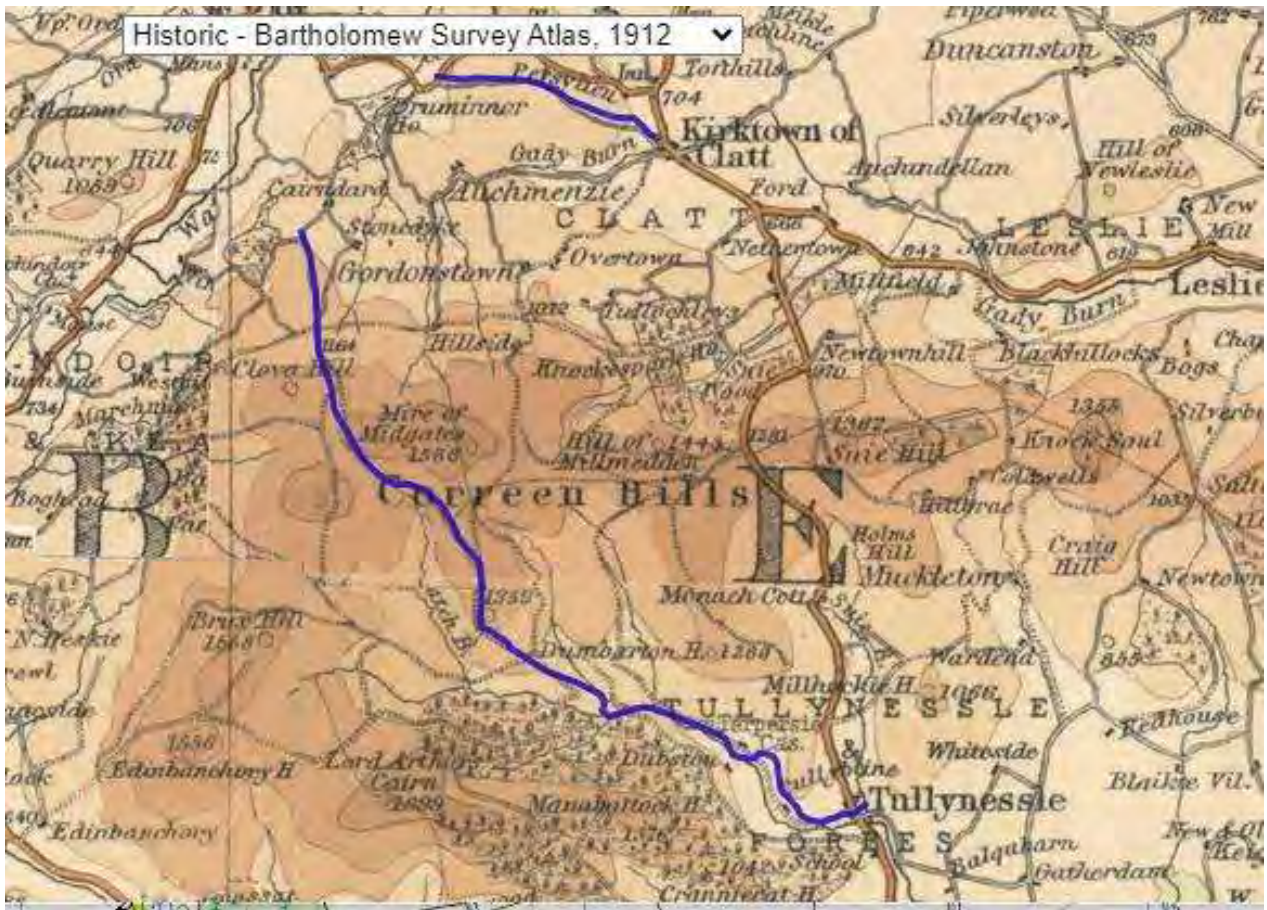


The track continues north-east as a stoned lane for a short way and is then tarmaced until it joins the road between Rhynie and Clatt east of Blairduff, which is followed back to the start point in Clatt.





<b>Name of route/</b>	<b>RRSE4 Correen Hills Coffin Road (CH1)</b>
<b>Start/finish location</b>	Rhynie/Tullynessie
<b>Summary description</b>	Linear route following a historic coffin road between Rhynie and Tullynessie, part of which is proposed be included in the extension of the Gordon Way from Suie to Huntly
<b>Justification for development/Promotion</b>	Existing enjoyable path through spectacular countryside, easy to navigate, ideal for promotion with minimal further work
<b>Current use</b>	Mainly walkers but also horse riders and MTB
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Lack of awareness of the path. Linear route with no public transport options
<b>Legal status</b>	Access rights apply under Land Reform Act
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	Past issues with farmer putting hurdles/fencing across the northern end of the track, reported to Aberdeenshire Council and chased up as part of AB54 path network development, issue appears to have been resolved
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Sustainable route
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020 (northern end)
<b>Landowner consultation response</b>	Aberdeenshire Council have dealt with previous issues on northern part of this route
<b>Priority for development / promotion</b>	High
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replace gate off hill at northern end with 2 in 1 gate</li> </ul>
<b>Alternative options</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope to develop/promote circular route using Gordon Way and/or Mars Road as northern arm, and/or to link through from Terpersie on forest roads to Mars Road</li> <li>• Part of this route is already promoted as a circular route from Lumsden <a href="http://www.garioch.info/walks/Scotland/Aberdeenshire/Terpersie-Manabattock-Lord%20Arthur%27s%20Hill.pdf">http://www.garioch.info/walks/Scotland/Aberdeenshire/Terpersie-Manabattock-Lord%20Arthur%27s%20Hill.pdf</a></li> <li>• Other circular options (albeit beyond AB54 boundary) include <a href="https://www.sobt.co.uk/2013/10/walk-correen-hills.html">https://www.sobt.co.uk/2013/10/walk-correen-hills.html</a></li> </ul>

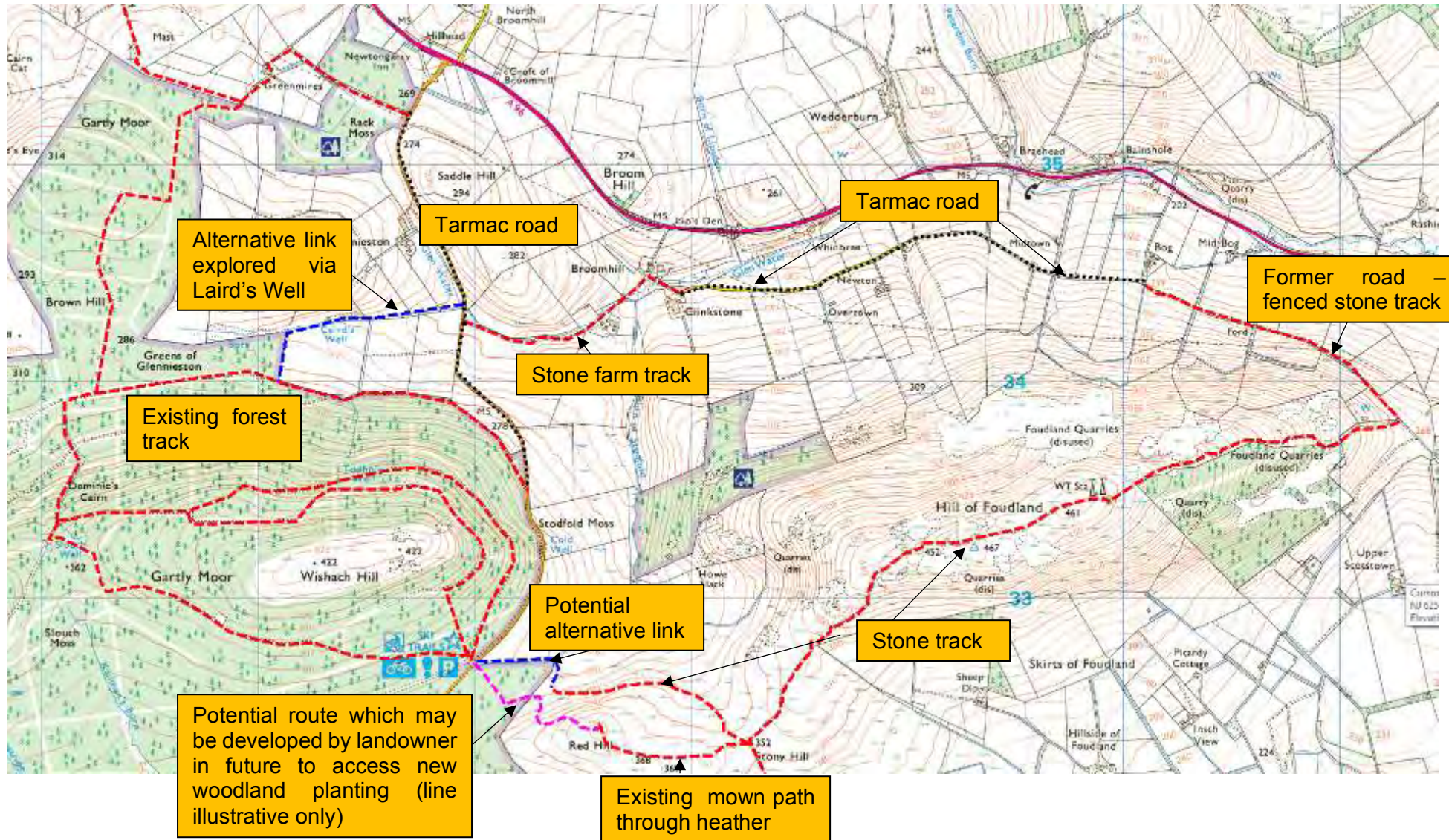


Coffin road on north side of Clova Hill, pictured left looking south, and on the right pictured looking north from intersection with Mars Road



<b>Name of route/</b>	<b>RRSE5 Hill of Foudland</b>
<b>Start/finish location</b>	Greenmyres or Gartly Moor car park
<b>Constituent route sections</b>	GM1, GM2, HF2, HF3, HF1, HF7, HF8, GM6
<b>Summary description</b>	Proposed circular route following the old road south of the A96 through the Glens of Foudland then climbing up an existing steep stone track up the eastern flank of Hill of Foudland to the masts and old quarries on the summit, from where there are spectacular views in every direction. The old quarry track which leads west down from the summit has recently been resurfaced and a new track created north-west from Stony Hill, from where an aspirational link would lead back to Gartly Moor car park and the forest road network back to Greenmyres.
<b>Justification for development/Promotion</b>	During community consultations several people suggested exploring potential for route development and promotion over Hill of Foudland, for which support of the main landowners has since been confirmed. This route would create a great MTB challenge from Greenmyres.
<b>Current use</b>	Some local walkers climb up Foudland Hill (those from Inch mainly from Colpy) but very little existing use of proposed loop
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Lack of awareness of the path or scope to get up Red Hill.
<b>Legal status</b>	Access rights apply under Land Reform Act
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	Parts of the old road go through or close to steadings but given current vehicular use curtelage and privacy should not be a restriction.
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Proposed route makes use of sections of old road and existing tracks, many of which have recently been upgraded, with relatively little work required to establish a viable route and low future maintenance requirements.
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	<p>Gordon Morison of BMF Group (Forgue and Bognie Estates tel 01464 871331, Estate Office, Frendaught House, assistant Rosanna Stickels) owns the eastern end of Hill of Foudland and much of the land north between the A96 and River Deveron north of Forgue. At the time of meeting with him November 2019 he was in the process of trying to buy Hill of Foudland and encouraged route development as outlined, although subsequently the hill was sold to someone else (see below). BMF still own the eastern end of the hill and are supportive of path promotion, subject to responsible use and discussion re. erosion risk and maintenance responsibilities on steep track down the face of the hill.</p> <p>Bryan Harper, owner/director of Puffin Pellets and Harper Forest Products (tel. 01464 820011) bought Hill of Foudland in early 2020. He respects access rights and has no issue with people using any of the paths or tracks over the hill, provided they do so responsibly. He is in the process of having a woodland planting scheme application drawn up which it is hoped to</p>

	submit late 2020 with a view to planting in spring 2022. Longer term he was already thinking of “doing something” to develop and promote some of the track network he is currently developing over Hill of Foudland, potentially including on-site interpretation of historic features such as site of old plane crash and the history of past slate workings on the hill. He is therefore supportive in principle of path development and promotion, and hopes to negotiate with FLE a track between Red Hill and the public road east of Gartly Moor car park which would be ideal as part of this loop and the proposed Huntly-Insch strategic link.
<b>Priority development promotion</b>	<b>for /</b> Medium. Further consultation with landowner required short-term to discuss proposed route over Foudland Hill and north/west of Stony Hill to tie in with woodland planting proposals but he would prefer route not physically developed or promoted until after planting has finished to avoid conflict between machinery and path users
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replace gates along old road north of Hill of Foudland with 2-in-1 gates</li> <li>• Create link from Red Hill through to Gartly Moor car park</li> </ul>
<b>Alternative options</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternative option considered as part or Huntly to Insch strategic route along field boundary north of forest east from Gartly Moor car park to link with newly created track around north side of Red Hill</li> </ul>



There are two options for the start of this route

- (a) following the stoned access track east from Greenymyres then turning south along the tarmac public road to the track to Stodfold
- (b) following the existing path which leads south from Greenymyres up to Gartly Moor, then following the forest road east along the northern edge of the forest to the public road junction then, north along the road to the track to Stodfold.



There is a locked gate across the end of the forest road at the north-east corner of Gartly Moor but gap around the northern end of the gate which allows walkers, cyclists and horse-riders to pass

Community consultations identified an alternative, reputedly existing path via Laird's Well, which would cut the corner and avoid the section on public road on the second option. Survey failed to identify any existing path or evidence of recent use, no access facility through fences (other than a single gate wired shut), gorse in places and a burn to cross. This section is therefore currently aspirational and would depend on landowner negotiation.



Both options coincide at the western end of the hard stoned/tarmac track which runs east from the public road south of Glennieston, skirting west around the north side of the steading of Stodfold (thus avoiding any issue with curtelage). This track is already well used by farm traffic and fully accessible under LRA.



The track continues north-east, past a house on the left, and then swings east, south and well clear of Broomhill and north of Clinkstone which is set well below the track, from where the track becomes tarmac public road at Clinkstone.



The tarmac road swings north to join the A96 south of Bog. The old road continues as a stoned track, fenced both sides, south-east through double unhung metal gates fastened on chain and string.



The stoned track continues south-east, through two further metal gates (neither showing any evidence of being locked). The old road continues in the same direction to Colpy.



The proposed route turns off to the west immediately after the second gate, through another metal unlocked field gate, up a steep, well maintained and well drained stone track, with open ditch along the north side, to another unlocked metal gate onto the hill (thought to be the march boundary). There is a BMF sign below the gate saying “Foudland Hill – private” but walkers, cyclists and horse riders all have legal right of access up this track provided they behave responsibly, and the landowner has confirmed he respects these rights.



The track splits at OSGR NJ619337, the left arm branching south-west on a beaten earth track through the forest (pictured below left). The proposed route follows the northern arm which continues west up the face of the hill on a well-drained newly restoned track which splits again (pictured below right) to form a small loop immediately before the transmitter station with another beaten earth track continuing from the southern arm of the loop running parallel to and south of the main stoned track.





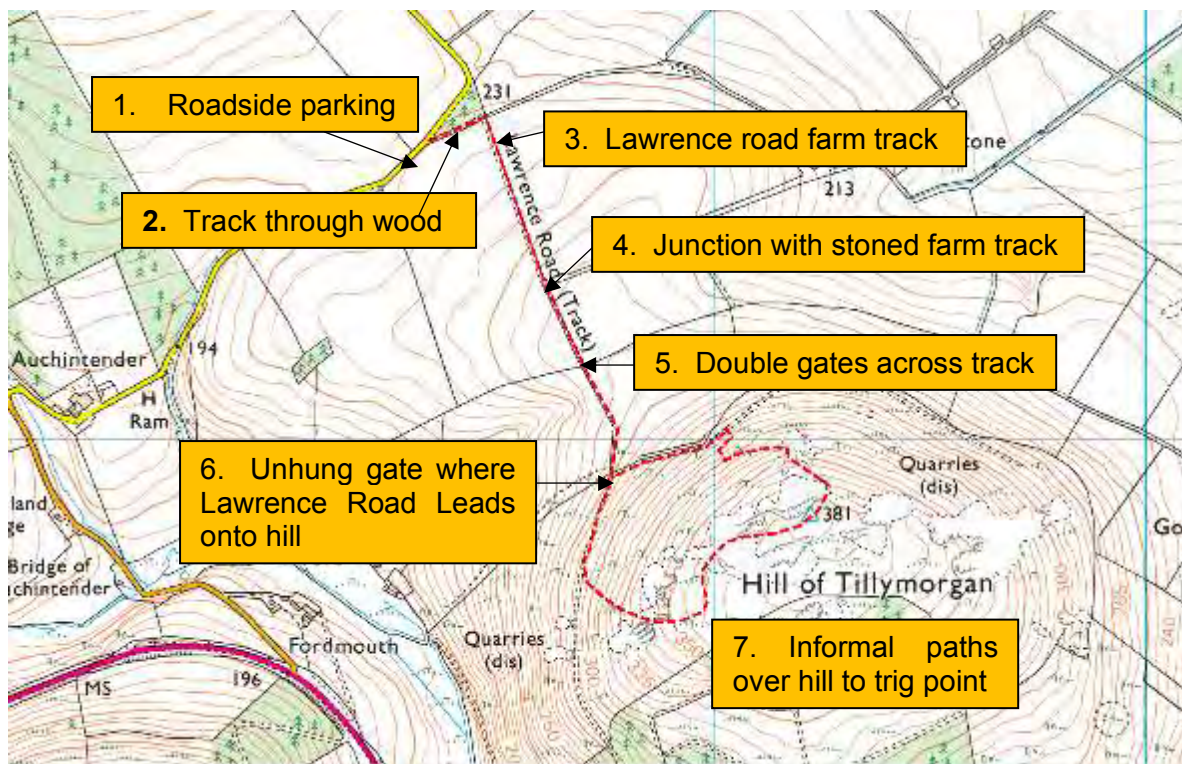
The main track over Hill of Foudland down to Stony Hill has recently been regraded and resurfaced (pictured below left). From Stony Hill, the track splits. A new stoned track has recently been created which roughly follows the contour around the north of Red Hill (shown with red arrow in picture below right) which is fully accessible under LRA on foot, bike or horse, but currently comes to a dead end at the forest boundary.



Alternatively, a mown path through the heather leads west from Stony Hill up to the summit of Red Hill (green arrow above right and pictured below). The most viable line for the proposed route and link back to the forest road network over Gartly Moor will depend on future woodland planting plans, yet to be agreed, which will need to be further discussed with the landowner.



<b>GIS map ref / name of route</b>	<b>RRSE6 (HT1 and HT2) Hill of Tillymorgan</b>
<b>Start/finish location</b>	Minor road north of Hill of Tillymorgan (OSGR NJ 643357)
<b>Other relevant routes</b>	HT3 South Hill of Tillymorgan HT4 Wood Burn HT5 Lawrence Road South
<b>Summary description</b>	<p>Circular walk up the Hill of Tillymorgan, outward and return loops coincide along the old Lawrence Road, now a firm grassy farm track, with a loop over the hill mainly along old quarry track, the remainder “off-piste” following informal sheep tracks up to the trig point on the summit, then dropping back down to the north onto another track.</p> <p>Alternatively Hill of Tillymorgan can be accessed from the south at Kirkton of Crusalmund see <a href="https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/Forum/viewtopic.php?f=9&amp;t=13639">https://www.walkhighlands.co.uk/Forum/viewtopic.php?f=9&amp;t=13639</a></p>
<b>Justification for development/promotion</b>	On the eastern boundary of AB54 postcode area where there are few promoted paths. Popular but little known hill walk with spectacular 360 degree views, opportunity to explore a different aspect of the area's archaeology. Easily accessible off A96. Scope for longer walks and/or link to/from café and parking at Colpy (see GIS map and accompanying spreadsheet).
<b>Current use</b>	Used regularly by walkers
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brash on track at entry to wood (easily bypassed)</li> <li>• Gates across track at each field boundary, some unhung and fastening on wire but all passable.</li> <li>• Limited roadside parking at northern end</li> </ul>
<b>Legal status</b>	Fully accessible under LRA
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	None identified. Access rights apply through livestock other than during lambing or calving when people accompanied by dogs are encouraged to find an alternative route to avoid young animals.
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Good tracks fully able to support unlimited amount of multi-use in any weather.
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	Not consulted, already promoted on various websites
<b>Features of interest</b>	Remains of 19 <sup>th</sup> century slate quarries, quarrymens' shelters <a href="https://canmore.org.uk/site/112592/hill-of-tillymorgan-quarries">https://canmore.org.uk/site/112592/hill-of-tillymorgan-quarries</a> Potentially also much older Pictish remains
<b>Priority for development/Promotion</b>	High
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signage and waymarking.</li> <li>• Replacement of gates with 2-in-1 gates would offer farmer reassurance to avoid any risk of gates being left open and stock straying.</li> </ul>



Extract from OS 6" 1843-1882 (below left) and 1885 OS map (below right) clearly showing Lawrence Road which originally ran north-south from the corner of the road





1. Roadside parking north of hill

1. Unsigned clearly defined firm track branches off through wood. Piles of brash at start of track may be to deter vehicles, does not restrict access on foot, MTB or horse



3. Track turns south at eastern corner of wood, gate across track usually open, beyond which a clearly defined, firm, well drained grass/beaten earth farm track heads south, fenced to the east side, open to arable fields on west side.



4. Junction with stoned farm track from Greystone Farm. Double gates tied against fence immediately beyond, presumably for stock movement, little evidence of regular use



5. Stoned track finishes at new double metal field gates across track, alternative access through field gate to right. Ideally gates would be rehung but accessible at present. Lawrence Road continues through double gates as firm informal track parallel to field boundary



6. Unhung new metal field gate across track at fence where track leads onto the hill. Needs new posts and gate rehanging. Ideally replace with York 2-in-1 gate incorporating 1.5m self-closing section. Lawrence Road continues south as clearly defined firm grass track overlying stone base around western side of Hill of Tillymorgan



7. Firm, clearly defined track forks off uphill between remains of old quarry spoil heaps, continuing around the hill as firm grass track



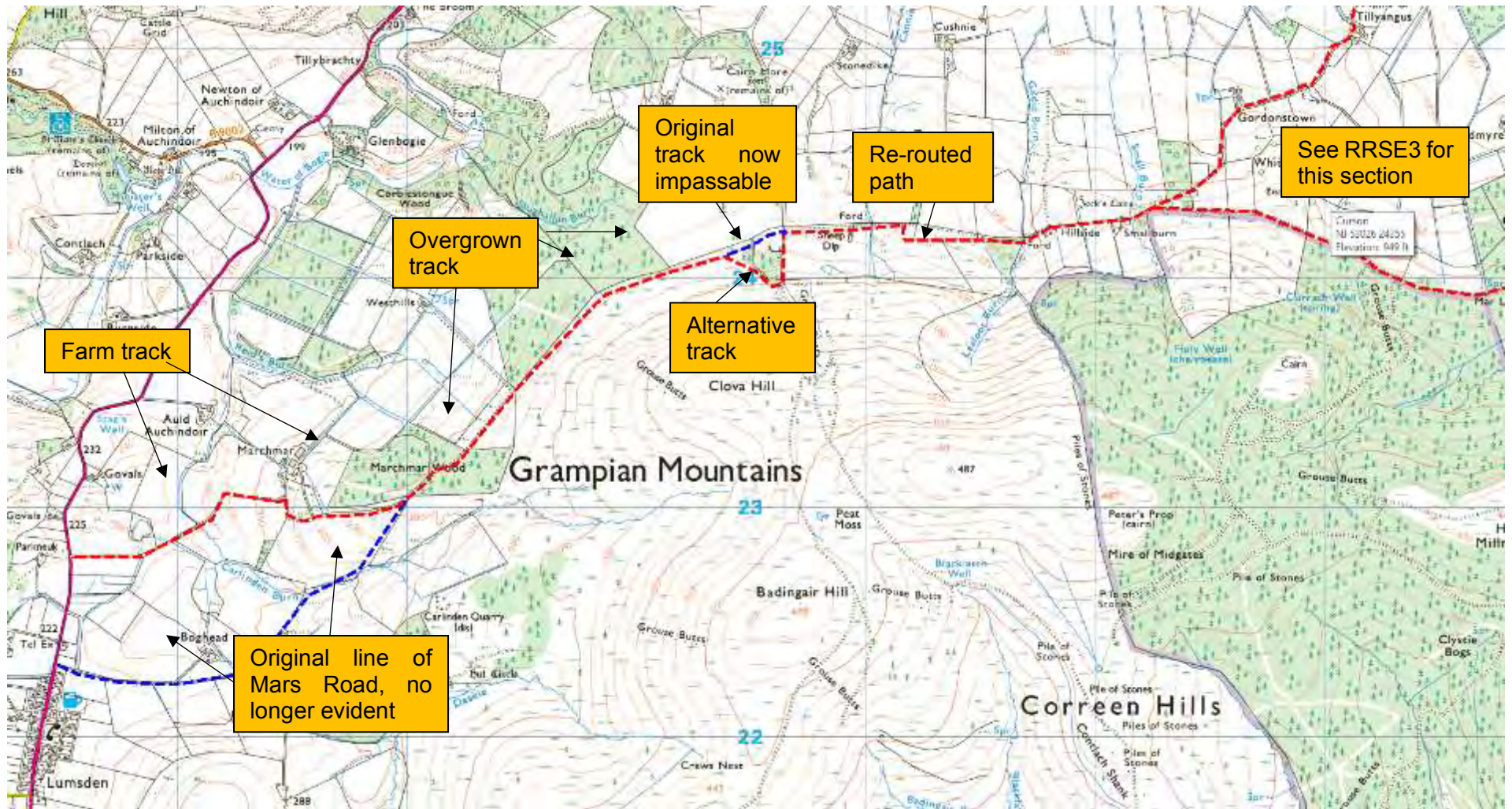
Track eventually peters out near top of hill, beyond which informal sheep tracks/grass paths lead through quarry heaps to trig point



Archaeological remains and remains of old quarrymen's shelters offer plenty of scope for enjoyable exploration and a great picnic spot

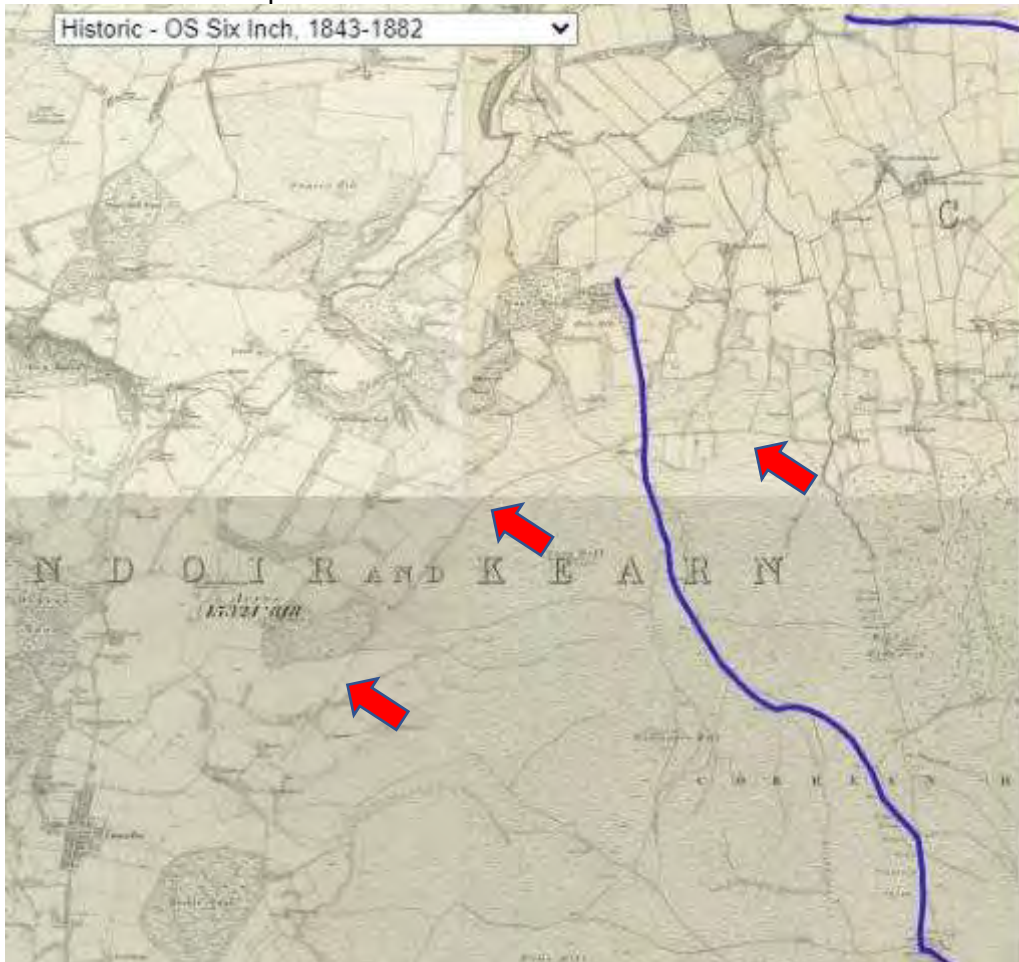


<b>GIS map ref / name of route</b>	<b>RRSE7 Mars Road</b>
<b>Start and finish location</b>	Lumsden Clatt or road east of Knockespock, north of Suie
<b>Other relevant routes</b>	RRSE3 Clatt, Gordonston and Knockespock
<b>Summary description</b>	Historic old road, most of which has survived as a track although increasingly overgrown in places and under threat of being lost altogether without positive intervention. A great walk, either as a linear route or in combination with other paths (e.g. Correen Hills coffin road)
<b>Justification for development / promotion</b>	Numerous people attending community consultations were keen to see the Mars Road included in the AB54 path network strategy to ensure it is not lost without trace. It is potentially a useful link off the proposed Gordon Way extension to accommodation (and longer term perhaps services) in Lumsden. Great potential for further volunteer research into history of the route and for promotion of this, and local history, as part of route promotion.
<b>Current use</b>	Walkers, past history of use by horse riders
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Very overgrown in places. Link to Lumsden currently involves stretch on main road
<b>Legal status</b>	Access rights apply under LRA
<b>Access issues relevant to the route</b>	South of Cushnie one section of the original route has been fenced across and tree planted over but it is relatively easy to follow the fence around the new planting onto a track which links back onto the original Mars Road.  The track runs through the garden of Hillside, but they have confirmed they fully accept it as a ROW and have no problem with people using the route
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Requires some work to make it viable and future maintenance may be required to control gorse but historic interest may well help attract volunteer involvement.
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	See above re. Hillside
<b>Priority for development</b>	Medium
<b>Recommended capital improvements work</b>	Clear scrub from line of track. Replace gates as required. Confirm route south-east of Cairnmore, install new gates if required to provide access through wood





Mars Road is clearly shown on the historic OS 1843-1882 map, running east from Lumsden around the north side of the Correen Hills, past Knockespoock and continuing east of the Clatt to Suie road. It is still clearly shown following the same route on the 1926-35 Bartholomew half into the mile map



By the time of the 1920s-40s OS map, the south west end of the route was shown only as a dashed line rather than a fenced clear track,



Logically the route would still start in Lumsden, but it is no longer possible to get along this southern section between Lumsden and the old Mars Road because of fenced march boundaries, Burn of Deakie and Carlinden Burn. The stoned farm track up to Marchmar is the easy option but there is no existing off-road link between Lumsden and the western end of the track. There may, however, be scope to develop a new path west of the A97, following the minor tarmac road west from the telephone exchange, turning north on the existing forest track and then north-east on the existing path through the wood, through the gate in the forest boundary fence, through to Parkneuk. Access would need to be negotiated around Parkneuk and through to the A97 to provide a straight crossing onto the Marchmar track.



From Marchmar, the track skirts around the south side of the bungalow, following the fenced stony farm track through several gates up the hill alongside Marchmar Wood, which has relatively recently been felled, leaving a row of mature beech alongside the track.



At the top of the former wood, the track joins the original line of Mars Road coming through from Lumsden. The main farm track continues east into fields - it is possible to follow this and get back out onto the hill through a gate in the top northern corner of the field.

However, the proposed route follows the line of the original Mars Road, through the unlocked gate in the deer fence around a replanted area of woodland.



The line of the original track is still evident, with the remains of old parallel dykes either side, but the track itself is badly overgrown with gorse and vegetation, and in places boggy. Although there is a distinct line through the heather, this appears to be from use by rabbits, foxes and other animals rather than regular human use.



On the north side of Marchmar Wood, the track passes through another gate in the deer fence, onto open rough grazing. The line of the original track is still visible in places but rapidly becoming overgrown by gorse in others.



The track passes through an open gateway, immediately adjacent to a gate into a newly planted area to the north. The main track heads east up Clova Hill, but Mars Road followed

the fence around the contour. It is not entirely clear whether the original route was north or south of the existing fenceline, but the only way through now is south of the fence. The first section beyond the gateway is blocked by gorse, further east the original track becomes visible again. There are some boggy patches where drains are blocked or where water is backing up on the top side of the fence.



The track continues parallel to the fence, with sporadic fallen trees and boggy bits, and on one section the remains of a stile in the line of a former fenceline. New fences not shown on the OS have been erected, with a slip hurdle in the line of the track (confirming recognition of access rights along it).



The track gets boggier on the north side of Clova Hill, with a relatively recently excavated drainage ditch at one point. The original track continued parallel to the fence but there is no access facility over or through the fence. Ideally the original line of the Mars Road would be cleared, drained and access facility installed in the fence.



Although there is a trodden path through the wood, it appears to be from sheep. The alternative is to follow the fence south around the edge of the wood and use the gate at the southern tip of the wood on the old coffin road.

A faint trodden path continues east of the wood/coffin road, parallel to the south side of the fence, through double metal gates at the sheep dip to a field gate in the next fence.



The next field is ploughed and cropped right up to the fenceline, erasing all signs of the original track, but access rights apply regardless along the headland. At the conifer shelterbelt, the original track has been fenced across, with live electric and no means over, through or around (the shelterbelt to the north is securely fenced with live electric topwire). The alternative is to follow the fence around the newer shelterbelt to the south, and then the headland of the field to the south, through to the gate in the next fence.



The track continues along the south side of the fence, through a patch of gorse, to a field gate with adjacent kissing gate on the west side of the shallow ford over Leaffoot Burn.



The grass track continues east of the burn, parallel to the fence, to the field gate on the west side of Hillside.



The line of the original track is now mown as part of the garden, but the owners of Hillside recognise this as a right of way and have no problem with people walking, cycling or riding past. Possible alternatives were discussed to develop a path south of their property to respect their privacy but they would prefer the route stay where it is at present.



Mars Road continues along the stoned access road, east from Hillside to Smallburn. Gates either side of the track are designed to swing across to move stock but are usually open.

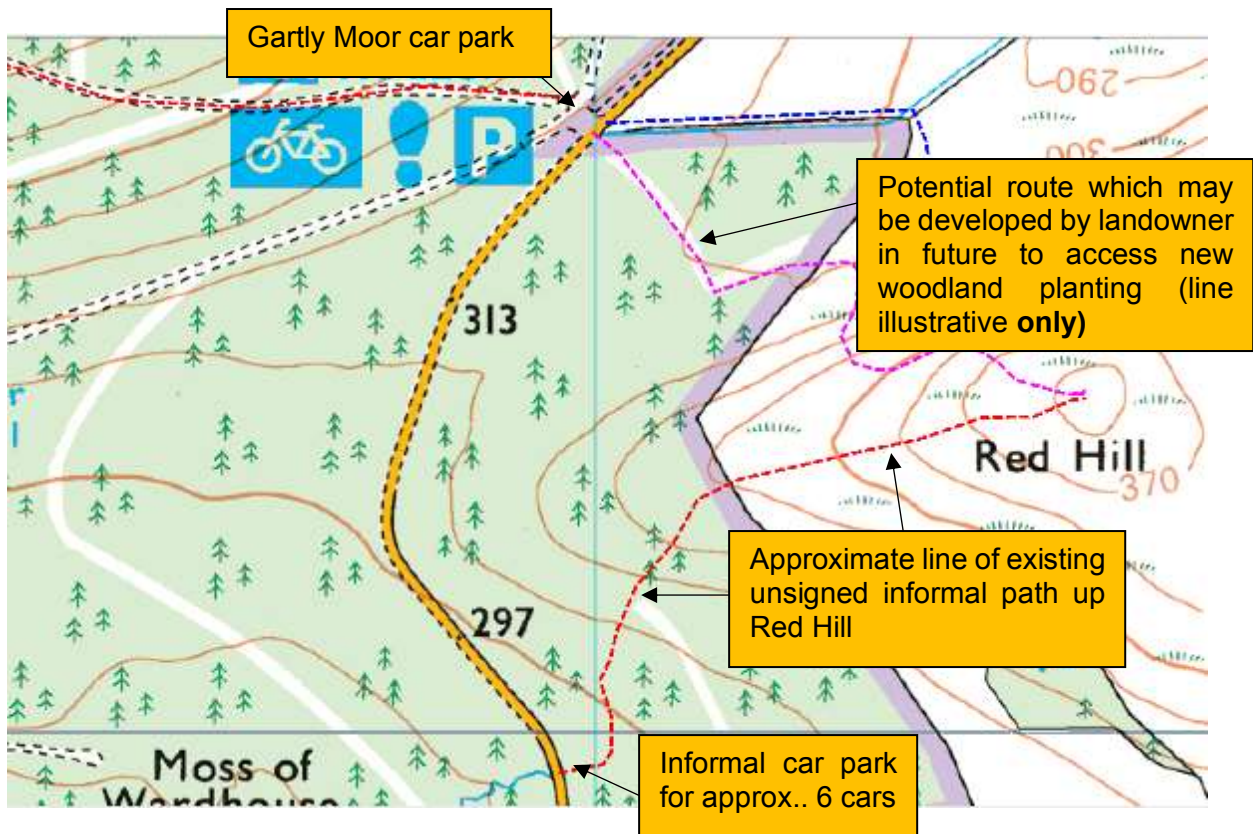


Although the track passes close between the buildings at Smallburn, they are not occupied and as this track is used daily by vehicles and farm traffic, there is no issue with recreational non-vehicular access.

East of Smallburn the historic Mars Road continued east to Mars Lodge (see RRSE3, which also includes option to drop down from Mars Road at Smallburn via Gordonstown to Clatt).

<b>Name of route/ GIS map reference</b>	<b>RRSE8 Red Hill HF6</b>
<b>Start/finish location</b>	Car park on east side of road south from Gartly Moor (or potentially Gartly Moor forestry car park)
<b>Other related routes</b>	Huntly to Insch strategic link, Hill of Foudland circular route
<b>Summary description</b>	Relatively short linear low-key route following informal narrow path through the forestry on the east side of Gartly Moor out onto the open hill, where a beaten earth path winds up through the heather to the cairn on the summit of Red Hill. The views from the top and sense of open wildness are fantastic.
<b>Justification for development/ Promotion</b>	Recommended by several local people at community consultations as one of their favourite walks which very few people seem aware of. Welcome contrast from the more formal forest road network in the main block of forest to the west. Scope to promote as one of the little-known paths in the AB54 postcode area which are already enjoyable with little if any further improvement required.
<b>Current use</b>	Used daily by local walkers and runners
<b>Potential use</b>	Mainly pedestrian
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Lack of awareness of the path or scope to get up Red Hill.
<b>Legal status</b>	Access rights apply under Land Reform Act
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	None although current open access and mown rides through the heather may change as part of woodland planting scheme
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Someone is already unofficially cutting back overhanging branches and brash to keep this route open
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	Bryan Harper, owner/director of Puffin Pellets and Harper Forest Products (tel. 01464 820011) bought Hill of Foudland in early 2020. He respects access rights, has no issue with people using the path up Red Hill, or other paths on his land, provided they do so responsibly. He is in the process of having a woodland planting scheme application drawn up which it is hoped to submit late 2020 with a view to planting in spring 2022.
<b>Priority for development / promotion</b>	High – no work required, existing path
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	Remove the “trip wire” at the forest boundary which presents a potential trip hazard and liability
<b>Alternative options</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Landowner of Foudland Hill plans to approach FLE in conjunction with woodland planting application to try and negotiate creation of a new track to provide access onto Red Hill through the trees from opposite Gartly Moor car park, which could potentially create a circular route.</li> <li>Failing this, alternative option considered as part of Huntly to Insch strategic route along field boundary north of forest east from Gartly Moor car park could create a circular route but path identified on map up Red Hill already in use is enjoyable in its own right, mainly because of its informality</li> </ul>





An informal unsigned stoned car park on east side of road south from Gartly Moor. Picture below left shows one of several bays, to left of picture below right.



Unsigned but clearly defined firm stoned path (pictured below left) leads off parking area onto broad forest track/ride.



Track narrows to clearly defined stone path, overhanging branches in some sections which are being unofficially cut back by local walkers (on ground in line of path below right).



Path broadens again towards forest boundary, at which there are two parallel plain wires across the line of the path which serve no function as there are no livestock on the hill beyond but present a liability and trip hazard which needs to be removed.

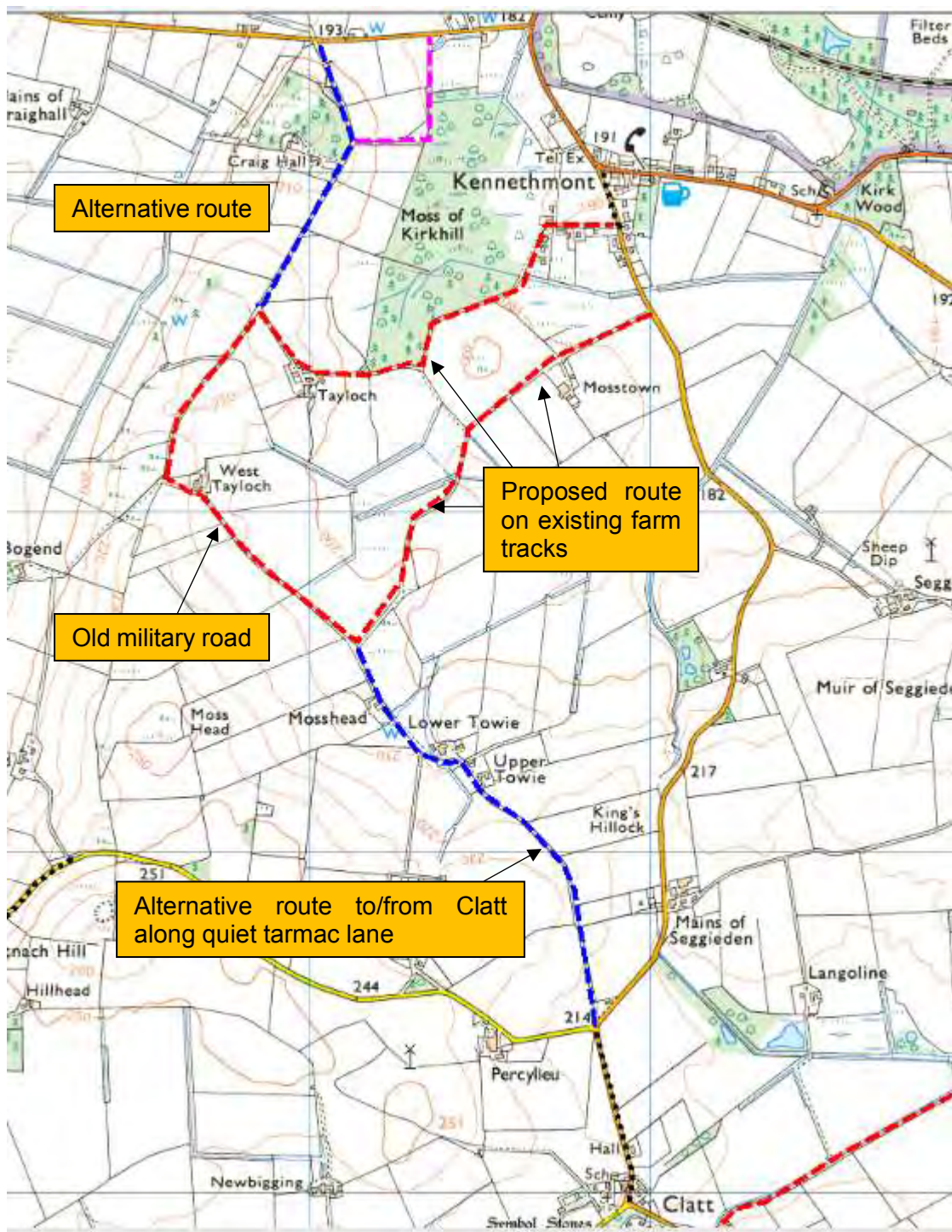


Beyond the forest boundary, a broad beaten earth path leads up through heather onto a mown ride which climbs to stone cairns on the summit





<b>Name of route/ GIS map reference</b>	<b>RRSE9 Strathbogie old roads</b>
<b>Start/finish location</b>	Kennethmont (or Clatt)
<b>Summary description</b>	Circular route from Kennethmont or Clatt following the old military road and farm tracks
<b>Justification for development/ Promotion</b>	Interest expressed at community consultations in exploring historic tracks, particularly the old military road west of Kennethmont. Also keen local enthusiasm for more circular off-road walks around Kennethmont. Scope to explore local history.
<b>Current use</b>	Used regularly by some local walkers and horse riders
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Lack of awareness.
<b>Legal status</b>	Access rights apply under Land Reform Act
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	Some short sections rutted and occasional puddles, otherwise good track
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Sustainable route with very few issues
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	
<b>Priority for development / promotion</b>	High – no work required
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	
<b>Alternative options</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A popular longer walk including more on public road involves following the B9002 north from Kennethmont then taking the road west towards the A97. The main track branches off by Craig Hall, but it may be possible to create an alternative to cut off the corner and reduce the length on road using existing tracks (currently overgrown).</li> </ul>



Track from Tayloch to Kennethmont covered by route from Rhynie to Kennethmont CCSE4, and from Mosstown to Mosshead by notes on Kennethmont to Clatt community link CCSE2

From West Tayloch to Mosshead the proposed route follows a well-used grass track



The track runs alongside the steading at West Tayloch without any issues with curtelage or privacy

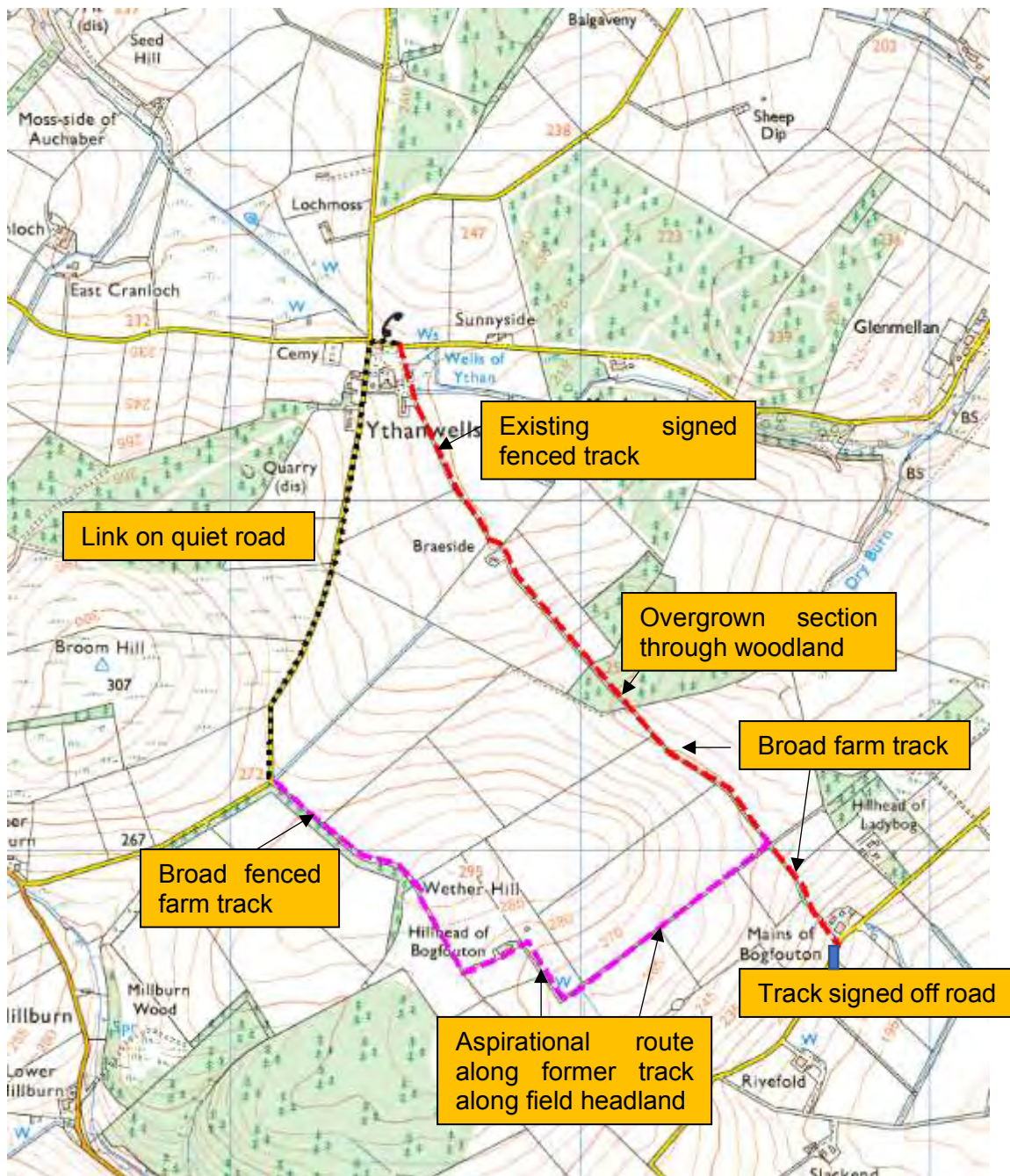


#### Potential link from Craig Hall to Kennethmont

The old track which runs between parallel dykes down a line of trees enclosed from Craig Hall to the edge of the wood is currently obstructed by dumped fencing materials and vegetation (pictured below left) but would potentially create an ideal short-cut reducing the distance on road. The northern end of this track (pictured below right) is now somewhat restricted in width by overhanging tree branches but is still passable.



<b>Name of route/GIS map ref</b>	<b>RRSE10 Ythanwells and Bogfouton YT1 and YT4</b>
<b>Start/finish location</b>	Ythanwells – roadside parking by cemetery
<b>Summary description</b>	Proposed circular route combining a long-established but in part overgrown waymarked track with a long history of past recreational use, an aspirational path along a former track along a field headland, a farm track and the final section on quiet public road.
<b>Justification for development / promotion</b>	Community consultations identified a particular dearth of paths to the east and north-east of Huntly, where local communities expressed demand for circular routes they knew they could confidently use. Several people identified this route as one they had enjoyed in the past but which had now become overgrown in the middle section.
<b>Current use</b>	Long history of past use by local people, northern section still clearly well used by dog walkers and others but little evidence of use of overgrown section
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Overgrown vegetation south of remains at Braeside
<b>Legal status</b>	Formal metal fingerpost at both ends of track suggest this is either a core path (yet known shown in CPP) or ROW. Locals insist this is a ROW and would appear to meet all the criteria. Potentially also claimed in past as LMC but Aberdeenshire council has no records of LMC or LMO paths.
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	Track at northern end passes houses and at southern end runs alongside steading but no issue with privacy or curtelage, long history of use. Steading at Hillhead of Bogfouton uninhabited.
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	This route would require relatively little to establish, work could easily be undertaken by volunteers, as could future maintenance
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	
<b>Priority for development / promotion</b>	Medium
<b>Recommended capital improvements work</b>	Clear overgrown vegetation





Metal fingerpost signs track as public path to Bogouton off public road at Ythanwells. Track is tarmac to gates across stoned yard (open at time of survey, appear to be rarely closed other than when moving livestock) beyond which the track is stoned.



Stoned well-used tractor track finishes at entrance to potato field east of former buildings at Braeside. Promoted route continues south east as fenced grass path, initially with clear tractor wheelings and long grass between.



Track soon becomes very overgrown with grose, nettles, broom and other vegetation due to lack of use. Although there appeared to be a worn line, it is hard to judge if this is from occasional walkers or deer.



Track becomes more open as it runs between woodland either side but then more densely overgrown with scrub, although still dry underfoot and would be relatively easy to clear with volunteers.



Broken metal gates across track at end of wood, presumably to control livestock movement up and down the track. Firm, broad tractor well-used beaten earth tractor track continues south to public road at Mains of Bogouton where track is signed with similar forma metal footpath fingerpost beside steading.



For a circular route, rather than continuing down to the road, the proposed route branches off west two fields north of mains of Bogfouton on a broad, clearly defined tractor track along the field headland north of the fence (pictured below left). The tractor track finishes at the next field boundary with no facility through the fence (?march boundary?).



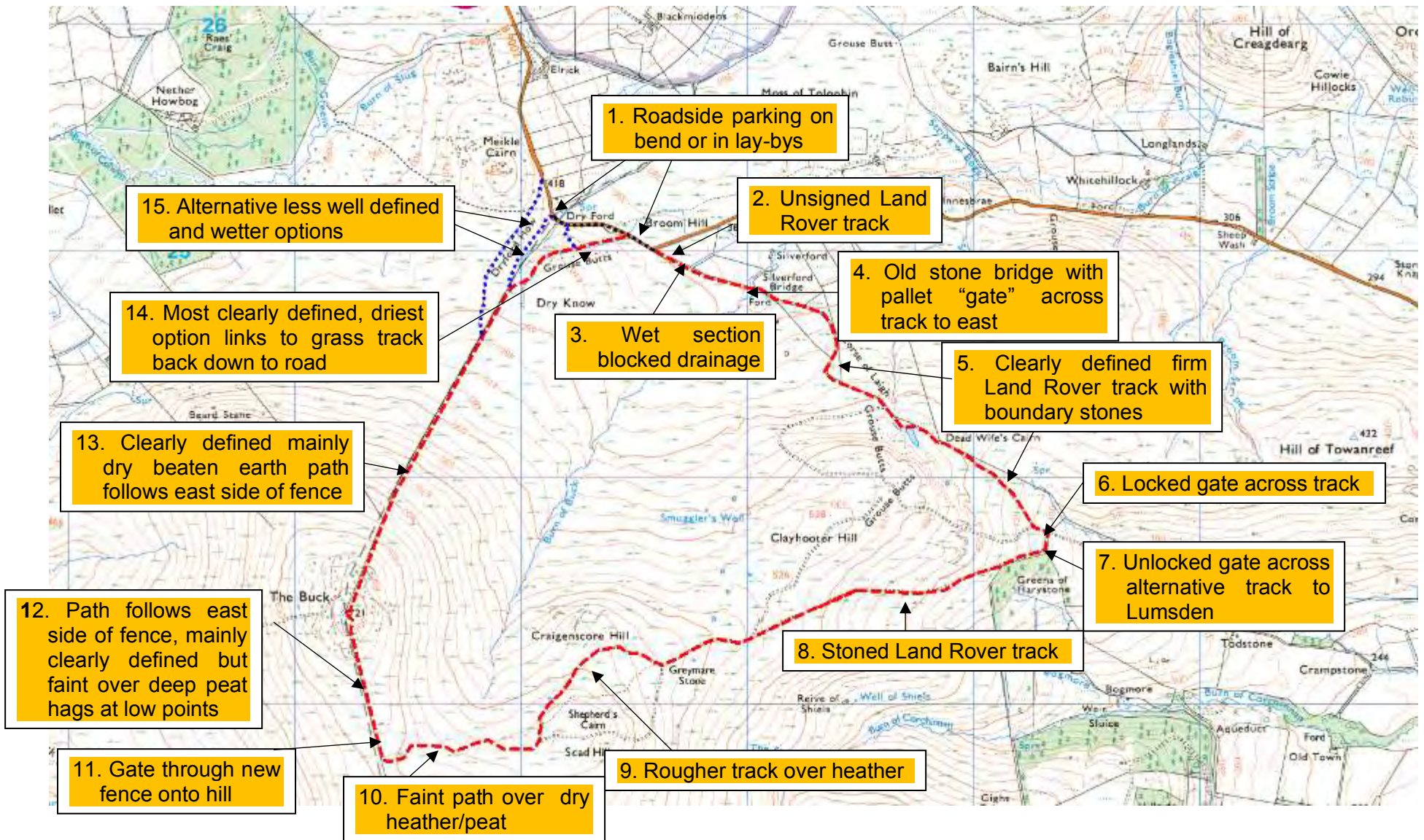
Approaching this from the opposite end there is no evidence of the track marked on the map until a pair of wired together gates (pictured above right) and then overgrown scrub between two fences (pictured below left) which could potentially be cleared to create a fenced path.



There is no fenced track outh of this west or north to Hillhead of Bogfouton but no problem following the fenceline around the field headland to join the track which runs around the south side of the steading, from where a fenced stoned track leads back up to the public road back to Ythanwells..

<b>GIS map ref / name of route</b>	<b>RRSW1 Buck circular walk</b> LU12 Corse of Laigh LU10 Kebbuck Knowe LU11 Craigenscore Hill CB29 Dryford Howe
<b>Start and finish location</b>	B9002 at Dry Ford (OSGR NJ 421 251)
<b>Other relevant routes</b>	CB28 Buck Hill Path CB30 Meikle Cairn LU20 Dancing Green
<b>Summary description</b>	Circular walk following the historic Corse of Laigh south-east to the boundary of Clova Estate, climbing a stony Land Rover track south-west up Craigenscore Hill and then a beaten earth path over peat to the fence in the saddle between Kebbuck Knowe and The Buck, from where a peaty path climbs up to the trig point on the Buck, linking with the already promoted direct route up the north face of the Buck
<b>Justification for development / promotion</b>	Longer, more interesting but little known circular variation on the shorter linear route up the Buck already promoted in some walking guides. Incorporates sections of historic track, carved stones marking the boundary between estates, spectacular views from one of the outstanding hills in the AB54 postcode area, opportunity to visit important Pictish site and carvings. Corse of Laigh noted as being of extreme antiquity, a surviving remnant of the ancient road system of the area and “was probably the road taken by Edward 1 on his march from Invercharach in the Cabrach to Kildrummy Castle on 1 <sup>st</sup> August 1296” (quoted in Colin Miller’s notes November 2019 included in supplementary papers passed to HDDT).
<b>Current use</b>	Corse of Laigh and track up Craigenscore Hill used by estate/shooting vehicles. Well tramped path up the Buck.
<b>Potential use</b>	Walking (multi-use on Land Rover tracks)
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Lack of awareness of alternative options. some people concerned about peaty section between Kebbuck Knowe and the Buck, which is actually relatively easy to navigate in relation to fence. Locked gate at boundary with Clova estate on Corse of Laigh but easily diverted around
<b>Legal status</b>	Fully accessible under Land Reform Act
<b>Access issues relevant to the route</b>	None
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Peaty sections will not support MTBs or multi-use
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	Not consulted as most of route is already promoted, albeit in different sections on Lumsden map board and in walking guides.
<b>Priority for development</b>	High
<b>Recommended capital improvements work</b>	Signage and waymarking recommended but further work depends on quality of path. Suggested that this be promoted as a hill path and potential users alerted to boggy sections. Replacements of pallets with gate and resolving drainage on track near Silverford would be relatively easy to resolve. Attempt to establish a better path over the higher peaty sections would be very expensive and questionable whether landowner would support

**The Buck Circular Walk - Note fencelines around The Buck are not as shown on latest OS map**





2. Corse of Laigh branches off B9002 south of Broom as unsigned stone track (right of picture). Informal roadside parking to west in lay-by / pull-offs.

3. Wet low lying section of standing water on track where drain blocked. Relatively easy to avoid with dry feet via verge and across wooden poles someone has laid across ditch. Ideally excavate ditch both sides to allow free drainage and build up level on this section of track with stone.



Firm, well drained, partially stoned track continues south-east past entrance to Silverford, continuing straight ahead past bush in picture below right



4. Beyond bend, track becomes grassy, crossing Burn of Buck via historic stone bridge (Silverford Bridge). Bridge clearly being used by farm/estate vehicles so assumed sound and no issues for pedestrians, cyclists or horse-riders but not formally assessed for structural stability



Immediately east of bridge double pallets propped across track as gate/stockproof barrier. Ideally these would be replaced with a Centrewire York 2-in-1 gate (or equivalent) incorporating 1.5m self-closing section which would allow the main gate to be locked to restrict illegal vehicular access while still allowing legitimate non-motorised access along the Corse of Laigh. Short low-lying wet section where drains blocked either side of path, ideally would benefit from clearing drains and building up ruts with stone.



5. Clearly defined, firm, well drained track continues, initially fenced/dyked both sides, with regularly spaced engraved stones marking historic boundary between Clova and Craig estates



Unlocked field gate across track, beyond which firm vehicular track continues fenced to north side only



6/7. Track splits north of Greens of Harystone. Corse of Laigh continues south-east as clearly defined stone track towards Todstone and Lumsden through padlocked gate, no alternative access in line of track but relatively easily circum-navigated by following track south along west side of deer fence (pictured below left) to another unlocked gate on the corner of the wood (pictured below right) from where another stoned track (unmarked on OS map) leads down along north east side of wood to Burn of Corchinnan.







8/9. Recommended route branches right (west) from corner of wood, before passing through gate, following clearly defined, firm, dry shooting track west-south-west up to Craighenscore Hill (below left). Track splits at Greymare Stone, main route following still clearly defined but unstoned shooting track up across heather to Scad Hill (below right).



10. Clearly defined track through the peat hags over/around Scad Hill (below left) then becomes faint quad track over relatively dry heather leading to saddle between The Buck and Kebbuck Knowe.



11. 1.5m metal gate in new east-west fence (not shown on OS map) beyond which path climbs north towards The buck parallel to remains of old fence to north.



12. Path mainly clearly defined through heather but disappears in places through lowest lying sections of deep peat hags where it is difficult to distinguish between sheep/hare tracks and path, although relatively easy to pick your way through and keep feet dry in clear conditions. Beyond peat hags, clearly defined beaten earth path continues to summit of The Buck.



Fantastic 360 degree views from trig point on the summit of the Buck, Tap O'North clearly visible on horizon. Remains of old Pictish hill fort plus Pictish fish carvings on stone below trig point.



13. Clearly defined, firm, dry beaten earth path leads north from The Buck back to B9002, parallel to east side of remnant fence from part-way down.



14. From west side of Dry Know, path becomes less distinct. Various options surveyed (see map). Driest option is to keep east of the fence and link onto grass track which leads back to the road (pictured below right). Narrow informal well used path links off this track direct to Dry Ford.



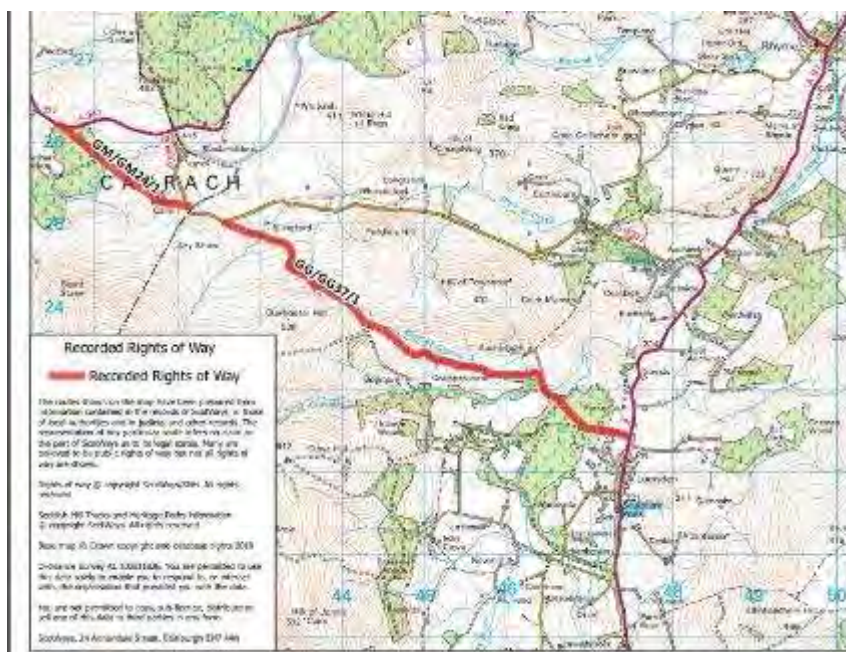
15. Alternative to climb over fence onto what appears to be clearly defined grass track west of fence down Dryford How, although after several hundred metres this peters out to become narrow, ill defined sheep/cattle track through deep heather.



Claimed right of way from Howbog which circles south side of Meikle Cairn links in from west (pictured below left), leading to broken wooden gate onto B9002 west of Dry Ford.

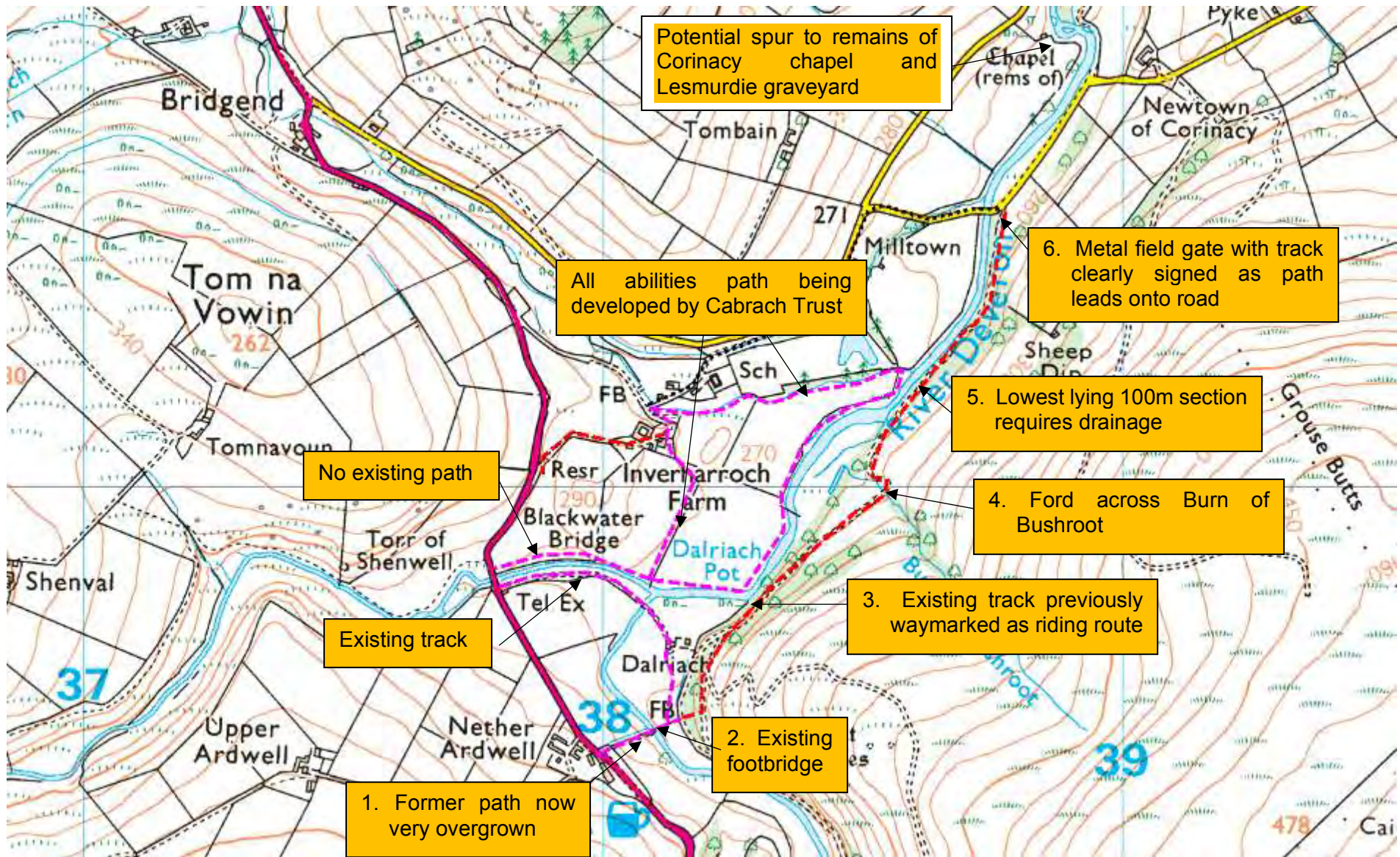


The claimed right of way is argued by some as the western end of the Corse of Laigh track, and potentially could be developed and promoted as part of an off-road link from Lumsden to Cabrach although precise alignment and current status of this route is uncertain. The CROW map differs from that shown on OS and is thought to peter out at Burn of Greens (eastern edge of woodland block east of Nether Howbog).



<b>Name of route/ GIS map ref</b>	<b>RRSW2 Corinacy Loop</b>
<b>Start/finish location</b>	Grouse Inn or Dorenell Visitor Centre, Cabrach (or Acorn/Cabrach heritage centre)
<b>Constituent sections</b>	CB15, CB31, CB32, CB17
<b>Summary description</b>	Circular loop north from the Grouse (or Dorenell Visitor Centre) using the existing track on the east side of the River Deveron and new path under development by Cabrach Trust from the Acorn Centre south along the west bank of the river to Inverharroch, linking back down to the Grouse. Heritage Centre and café being developed by Cabrach Trust provides equally good start/finish point
<b>Justification for development/promotion</b>	Attractive low level circular route linked to refreshments, food and potential to learn more about the heritage of the area. Consultations identified demand from people throughout AB54 postcode area for half day or shorter accessible, waymarked routes in the Cabrach. Ties in with Cabrach Trust's proposed developments. Eastern arm of route would be part of the proposed long distance Deveron Way.
<b>Current use</b>	Limited use by walkers. Track east of river previously promoted and still waymarked for horse riders
<b>Potential use</b>	Primarily walkers but potentially the majority could be multi-use (other than footbridge)
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	No existing functional path between the Grouse/A941 and footbridge over the River Deveron. Lack of awareness of track east of river. No existing route (other than road) west of the river. Bridge across Deveron north-west of Dalriach in poor state of repair
<b>Legal status</b>	Access rights apply to track east of river and majority of remainder of proposed route. Farmer and local people maintain that the track east of the river is a right of way (although not shown as such on CROW maps)
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	Track east of river previously signed, promoted and claimed by farmer as path under Land Management Contract
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Loop around Inverharroch in course of development by Cabrach Trust, scheduled 2021. Track east of river requires little work. Safety of route would be improved by development of off-road link between Blackwater Bridge and the Grouse.
<b>Survey date</b>	February and June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	Cabrach Trust (01466 702103) – Colin Mackenzie (tel. 07876 270860, 01340 821248. <a href="mailto:cmackenzie@mackz.net">cmackenzie@mackz.net</a> . Alternatively Peter Bye-jensen. Sam Dowdall appointed spring 2020 as project manager <a href="mailto:sam.dowdall@cabrachtrust.org">sam.dowdall@cabrachtrust.org</a> tel 07800 653927, responsible for applying for and securing funding and co-ordinating implementation of woodland planting and path development. Confirmed 100% supportive of HDDT promoting paths they develop. From 2021 they will be looking at developing further paths including west of new path along Black Water to A941, and west of A941 around Tom na Vowin and potentially to Shenval. Endorsed need/scope to work with Dorenell access ranger(s) on this and to keep in touch with HDDT.

	<p>Mhairi McBain, Grouse Inn, Lower Cabrach AB54 4EL – previously initiated/been involved in discussions to try and establish Deveron Way and promote access in and around Lower Cabrach and linking through to Glass. Very supportive of path development and promotion.</p> <p>Callum McBain, Newton Farm, Lower Cabrach tel. 01466 702229 – attended consultation session at Grouse Inn Sept 2019, at which he said he had previously claimed track east of river under LMC (precursor to SRDP) and had no issue with people using this. No response when tried to contact spring 2020. Further discussion summer 2020. Confirmed he recognised the route as ROW and in principle no problem with people using it but as he is only a tenant, would require agreement from landowner (Mr. Moran of Cabrach). Agreed with Dorenell access rangers and Moray Council that in view of ongoing issues with denial of access, approach to Mr. Moran should come either from Dorenell wind farm ranger, Moray Council or be included in feasibility study which rangers propose commissioning exploring scope for various routes in the area.</p>
<b>Alternative options</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explored option to link from footbridge to Dalriach then up to track east of river but fences, ditches and boggy areas restrict access along former track down to Dalriach, main access to which is now from the west</li> <li>• Scope to develop spur either along west bank of Deveron north of Corinacy bridge or through field leading down from roadside gate to the remains of the old Corinacy Chapel and Lesmurdie private graveyard but costs unlikely to justify benefits, those who are sufficiently interested visit already.</li> </ul>
<b>Priority for development</b>	High
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear, level and if necessary create and fence stoned path link between A941 opposite visitor centre/Grouse Inn down to footbridge over River Deveron.</li> <li>• Replace gate across south end of footbridge</li> <li>• Install cross drains and excavate top ditch along lowest section of track to remedy drainage problems</li> <li>• Replace gates as required on track east of River Deveron</li> <li>• Explore scope for off-road path link between Blackwater Bridge and Grouse Inn</li> </ul>



1. The line of the original path connecting the Grouse Inn down to the footbridge over the River Deveron is still visible from the river but not readily identifiable from the road, is now overgrown, with rubbish across it, and no easy access facility over or through the fence. The original ramped path needs clearing and levelling and a 1.5m self-closing gate installing in the fence.



The alternative is currently to use the gate opposite the Dorenell visitor centre to access the next field north, follow the grass track along the southern edge of the field and use the gate in the fence to access the footbridge. The gate currently has live electric across it.



2. Footbridge across the River Deveron was apparently restored several years ago with money raised by the Grouse (understood to have been co-ordinated by Mhairi McBain) in memory of a local person. No attempt made to assess the structural stability of the bridge. Narrow gate at eastern end is tricky to open and not reliably stockproof, requires replacement with self-closing gate set back from the bridge.





There is no clear path (other than sheep tracks) across the grass field immediately east of the river but the proposed route continues due east to an open gateway, from which a clearly defined track leads up to the well defined stoned track which runs roughly parallel to the east side of the River Deveron.



All gates along the track have been relatively recently replaced with metal field gates (all open at time of survey), with the track clearly waymarked at each gateway as a public path, with a horseshoe waymark disk confirming promotion as a riding route.



4. There is an open shallow ford across Burn of Bushroot, which is relatively easy to pick your way across even in wet weather. Any alternative access would need to maintain full useable width of the tractor for tractor access. North of the ford the track is mainly firm and well drained.



5. The lowest lying 50-100 m section of the track is waterlogged during wet weather, which would be relatively easily remedied by an interceptor ditch on the top side and culverted cross drains.



The final section of track runs across a mown grass field to a gate leading onto the public road on the east side of the Corinacy bridge across the River Deveron.



Potential scope for spur to Corinacy chapel and graveyard of the Leslie family, previously inhabitants of Lesmuirdie House. Access rights across the relevant fields west of the River Deveron apply under Land Reform Act but currently no path or signage, fields full of lively cattle at time of survey. Although there is potential to fence a path parallel to the existing fence along the west bank of the Deveron, or to develop a path along the riverbank, the west bank is impassable beyond the old chapel because of undercutting and in the light of other access being developed in this area, the costs of developing a path to the chapel from the bridge would need seem to be justified by the benefits.



The proposed route follows the very quiet minor road west over the River Deveron, turning south at Milltown, past Lesmuirdie House, and then branching off south, past the old school

(under development by Cabrach Trust as a heritage centre) to Inverharroch Farm, from where Cabrach Trust are currently developing a circular all abilities path.

A firm grass track leads from Inverharroch Farm west to the A941, which is already fully accessible. Cabrach Trust have long-term plans to create a path along the Black Water west to the A941 but there is at present no safe off-road link from Inverharroch south to the Grouse or Dorenell Visitor Centre.. Immediately south of the Blackwater Bridge, between the river and the telephone exchange, a firm, level, clearly defined grass track leads east to Dalriach.



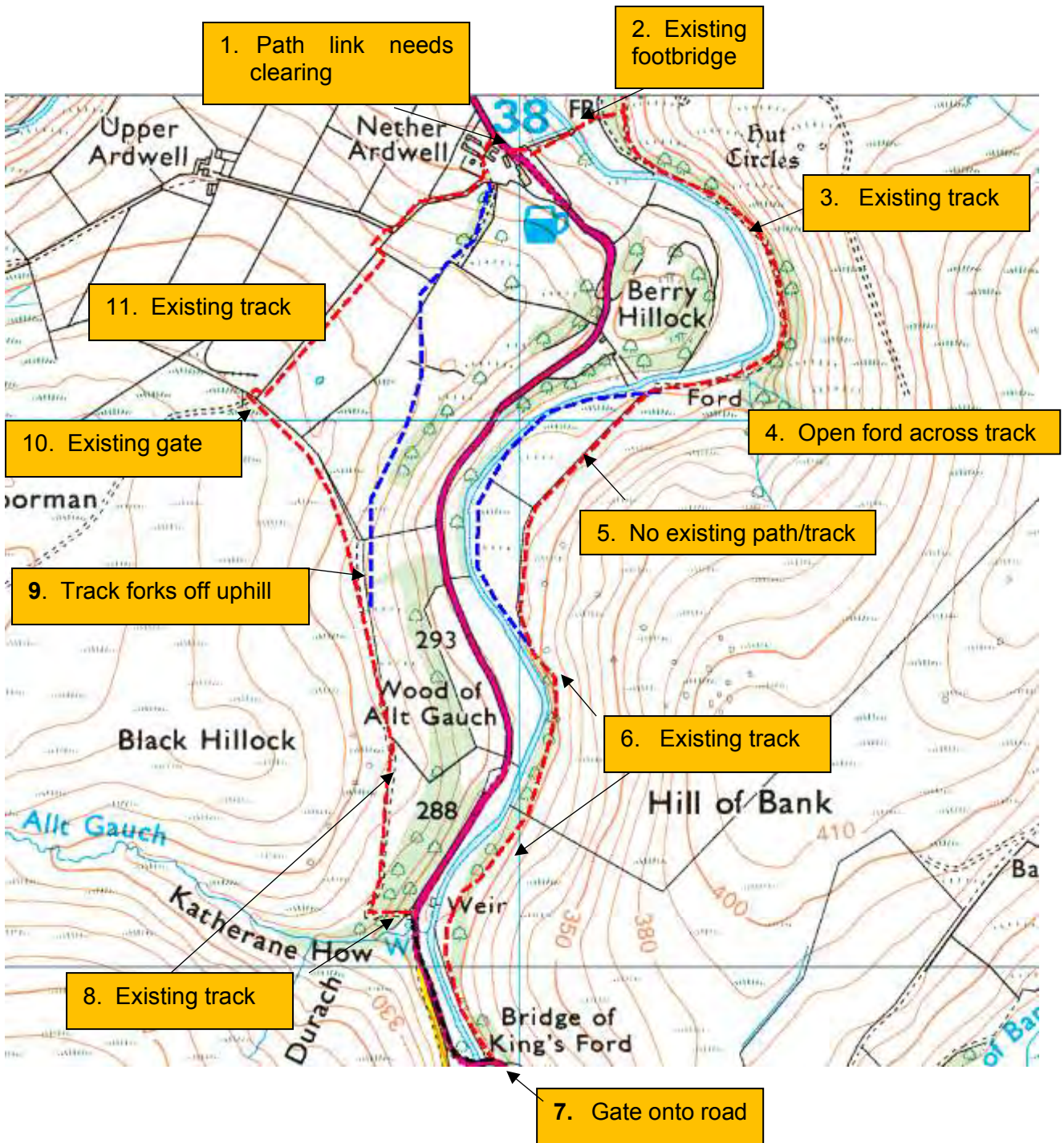
The bridge across the River Deveron just south of the junction with the Black Water is still in regular use by farm vehicles but shows evidence of erosion and instability under the pillars, particularly at the western end



From Dalriach, a beaten earth grass path leads back to the footbridge.

<b>Name of route/ GIS map ref</b>	<b>RRSW3 Grouse Inn south circular loop</b>
<b>Start/finish location</b>	Grouse Inn or Dorenell Visitor Centre, Cabrach
<b>Constituent sections</b>	CB15, CB14
<b>Summary description</b>	Circular loop south from the Grouse (or Dorenell Visitor Centre) crossing the River Deveron by the existing footbridge, following the existing track on the east side of the river south to Bridge of Kings Ford, a short section along public road north to the well and then returning via the existing track around the eastern slope of Black Hillock, west of the river
	Identified during Dorenell wind farm consultations as key route for development and included amongst proposals in the subsequent access management plan. Attractive circular route using existing tracks most of the way, ideal half day outing for local people and visitors, linked to refreshments at Grouse Inn. Eastern arm potentially part of Deveron Way
<b>Current use</b>	Limited use by local walkers.
<b>Potential use</b>	Potentially multi-use other than footbridge
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Lack of awareness of path, lack of readily identifiable path in middle section east of river, drainage issues on higher section west of river
<b>Legal status</b>	Access rights apply to the entire route under LRA Farmer and local people maintain that the track east of the river is a right of way (although not shown as such on CROW maps) and was claimed as LMC. Waymarked with horseshoe disk on gates
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	Landowner is notoriously anti-access
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Most of the route exists already and requires relatively little work to address drainage issues and replace gates so the route is considered physically viable and sustainable subject to landowner agreement
<b>Survey date</b>	September 2019, February/June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	Mhairi McBain, Grouse Inn, Lower Cabrach AB54 4EL – previously initiated/been involved in discussions to try and establish Deveron Way and promote access in and around Lower Cabrach and linking through to Glass. Very supportive of path development and promotion.  Dorenell Wind farm (Stephen Reeves, access ranger ( <a href="mailto:Stephen.Reeves@edf-re.uk">Stephen.Reeves@edf-re.uk</a> tel. 07384 529124) initially said there was no route to the west of the river but subsequently keen to see this route taken forward.  Callum McBain, Newton Farm, Lower Cabrach tel. 01466 702229 farms grounds east of river, including ploughed fields on the haugh south of Berry Hillock. In autumn 2019 confirmed he recognised track east of river as ROW, claimed in past as LMC and had no issue with people using this but during further discussion summer 2020 suggested that tenants the ground,

	<p>path development or promotion would require agreement from landowner (Mr. Moran of Cabrach), who also owns the ground west of the river.</p> <p>Mr. Moran has previously resisted and denied access on much of his land. Agreed with Stephen Reeves and Moray Council that approach to him should come either from Dorenell wind farm ranger or be as part of feasibility study which rangers propose commissioning exploring scope for various routes in the area.</p>
<b>Alternative options</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some consultees suggested there was existing “path” following the riverbank north from Bridge of Kings Ford on the east side of the river (shown in blue on map below) but there is no path or evidence of public access along this section. During discussion with the farmer, agreed that it made more sense for the proposed route to follow the fence/line of the former track around the foot of the hill to avoid interference with land management.</li> <li>• Consultations suggested that historically there was a track south from Nether Ardwell to Wood of Allt Gauch, roughly following the contour (shown in blue on map). Survey identified a benched grass track but this is now fenced across. The proposed route further west avoids the farm steading and links with another existing waymarked route which would be preferable from a land management/ farming perspective.</li> </ul>
<b>Priority for development</b>	High
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear, level and if necessary create and fence stoned path link between A941 opposite visitor centre/Grouse Inn down to footbridge over River Deveron.</li> <li>• Replace gate across south end of footbridge</li> <li>• Install pipe to provide dry crossing over ford south-east of Berry Hillock</li> <li>• Clear and level path along contour around west side of Hill of Bank</li> <li>• Replace gates as required with self-closing or 2-in-1 gates</li> <li>• Excavate drainage ditch and install cross drains to improve access up track north-east of Black Hillock</li> </ul>



1. Path link between the Grouse Inn and footbridge overgrown and restricted by dumped material, hurdle in fenceline. The original ramped path needs clearing and levelling and a 1.5m self-closing gate installing in the fence.
2. Existing footbridge over River Deveron (pictured below right), requires further assessment of stability and gate replacing at eastern end.



3. No existing path south from footbridge along riverbank through grazed field, which is fenced across at southern end. Proposed route continues in line with footbridge through open gateway following clearly defined vehicle tracks to join existing stone track through wood.



4. shallow open ford across track, beyond which well drained, firm, relatively level track continues along east bank of river



5. Track finishes at open gateway into ploughed fields on haugh south of Berry Hillock. No evident path along riverbank, fields usually in arable, or grazed by cattle. Proposed route follows the fence along the contour of the field on the uphill side of the fence.



6. At the southern end of the ploughed fields a firm, relatively recently graded grass track on stone base resumes. There is one waterlogged section leading up to a broken wooden gate across the track on the west side of Hill of Bank which requires a top ditch excavating, cross drains installing and the track regrading and stoned, together with the gate replacing with a 2-in-1 gate.







The clearly defined track continues south of the gate, dipping down between the treeline onto improved grass along the river where there are clear vehicle tracks across the grass.



7. There is no evidence of the stoned track either below or above the treeline, but the vehicle track becomes much clearer beyond the water quality monitoring station, leading through to an unhung metal field gate onto the road on the east side of Bridge of Kings Ford.



The route crosses the river by the road bridge, and follows the A941 north to the well.

8. A clearly defined track turns off the A941 immediately south of the well, leading west to a double strand electrified coiled wire gate on spring hook fastening which leads into Wood of Allt Gauch.



The route continues along the clearly defined grass track, climbing north around the east side of Black Hillock, through a further double coiled electrified wire gate across the track, beyond which the track is still clearly defined, dry and firm, running along the edge of the heather moor, parallel to electric fence on the downhill side.



9. The original track (shown in blue on the map extract) continues due north roughly following the contour, visible as a benched firm grass track, but is impassable due to fences across the track. Although it would be easy to install a gate in the fenceline, cattle tend to congregate and there is machinery stored on the track south of Nether Ardwell so to avoid these, the proposed route forks north-west up the hill on a clearly defined beaten earth path through the heather (pictured below right), parallel to the dyke/fence.



10. On the brow of the hill, an old metal field gate, wired shut at the time of survey, leads into fields to the north. The proposed route follows the fence north, downhill, to join the stoned Upper Ardwell track through an open gateway.



A new side gate has recently been installed by the Dorenell rangers across the stone track, and waymark posts installed, between Upper and Nether Ardwell.



The stoned track continues down to the Dorenell visitor centre at Nether Ardwell.

<b>Name of route/ GIS map ref</b>	<b>RRSW4 Dumeath Stone Circle and Walla Kirk</b>
<b>Start/finish location</b>	Haugh of Glass (parking at village hall)
<b>Summary description</b>	Circular loop south from Glass, following quiet road south past Dumeath stone circle before branching off on the firm grass track which leads down to the historic cemetery at Walla Kirk. Development of the circular route would depend on rebuilding Walla Kirk bridge over the Deveron and re-establishing a link path back up to the road which forms the eastern arm of the route.
<b>Justification for development/promotion</b>	Identified during community consultations as one of the key aspirational routes for the area which would create an attractive relatively short easy circular walk with historic interest for both local residents and visitors in an area with no existing promoted off-road walks.
<b>Current use</b>	Regular use of track down to Walla Kirk cemetery west of the Deveron.
<b>Potential use</b>	Potentially multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Bridge over Deveron was apparently built by the council to allow children from the east side of the Deveron to walk up the track to catch the school bus. The bridge apparently fell into disrepair when the council stopped maintaining it once school transport arrangements changed. Only the pillars now remain and there is no longer any evident path or functional link back up to the road on the east side of the river.
<b>Legal status</b>	Locals insist that the track down to Walla Kirk is a ROW and would almost certainly meet the required criteria although is not shown on CROW maps
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Depends on cost/benefit of rebuilding Walla Kirk bridge and future maintenance
<b>Survey date</b>	October 2019
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	<p>Malcolm Hay of Edinglassie (tel. 01466 700274) owns the land west of the River Deveron. He has no issue with public access down the track to the old cemetery, and has confirmed that in principle he has no objection to reconstruction of the bridge (provided it is at no cost or risk of liability to him) although he questions the cost/benefit of doing so.</p> <p>Landowner south of the river (Auchinhandoch) were amongst the key proponents of developing this route and reinstating the bridge and is very supportive of developing/restoring a path link south from the bridge to her track and then onto the road.</p>
<b>Alternative options</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aspirational route north from Walla Kirk along the east bank of the River Deveron identified during community consultations, roughly as shown in pink on map below. Relevant landowners consulted but none supportive of this proposal (see report for Cabrach to Glass community link). Although there appear to be some sections of existing track/mown path, these are apparently private paths through areas managed specifically for wildlife.</li> </ul>

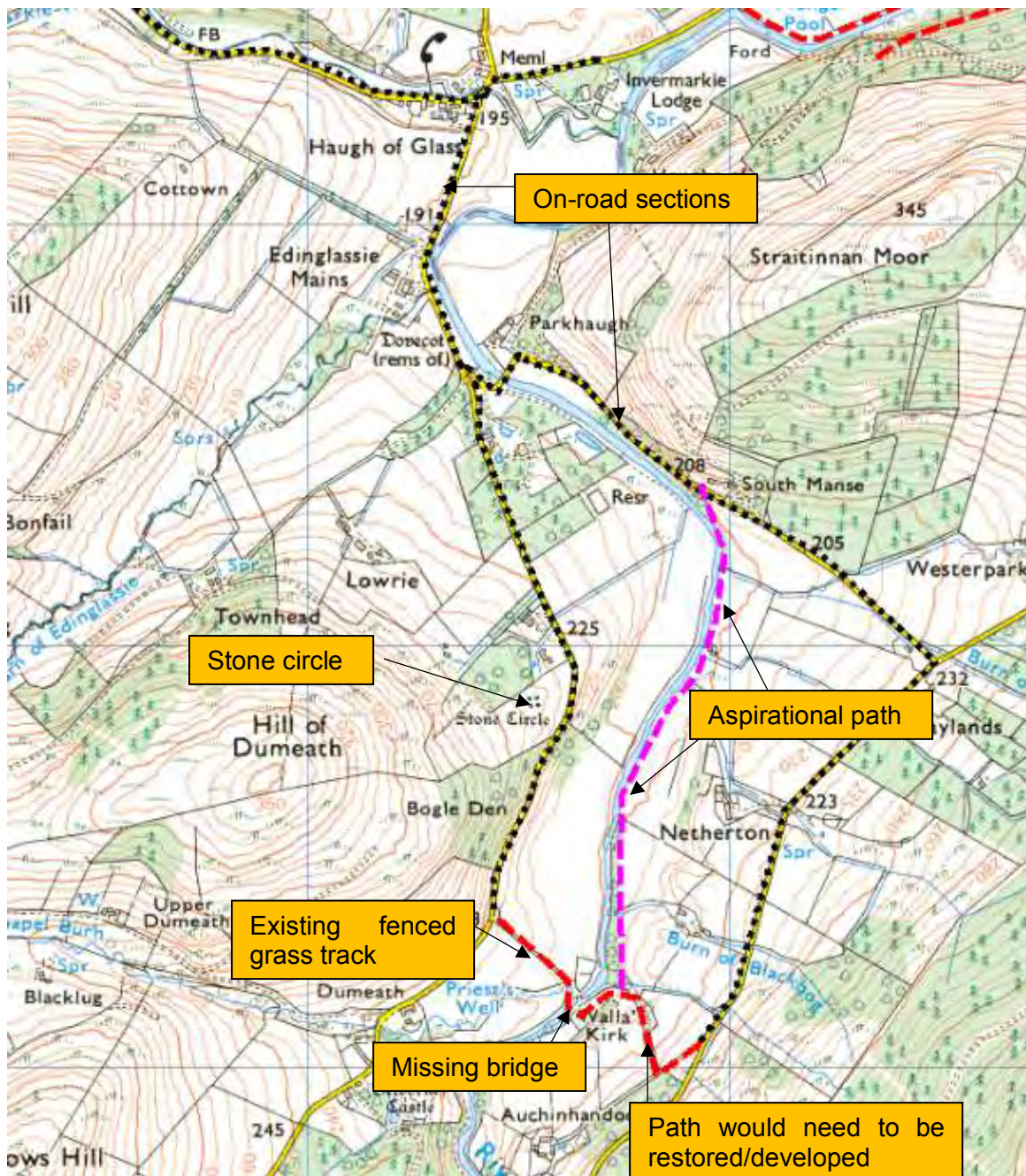
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some local people suggested it should be possible to walk along the west bank of the Deveron north from Walla Kirk, but there is no evidence of any path and the landowner strongly refutes any right of access along the west riverbank.</li> </ul>
<b>Priority for development</b>	Low
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commission structural survey of remaining bridge pillars/stanchions and scope to rebuild a functional bridge using these, or a new bridge in the same location, which would then allow assessment of cost/benefits and future maintenance implications.</li> <li>Path south from Walla Kirk bridge not surveyed but landowner felt that regular use would recreate the path without need for clearance or capital path work</li> </ul>



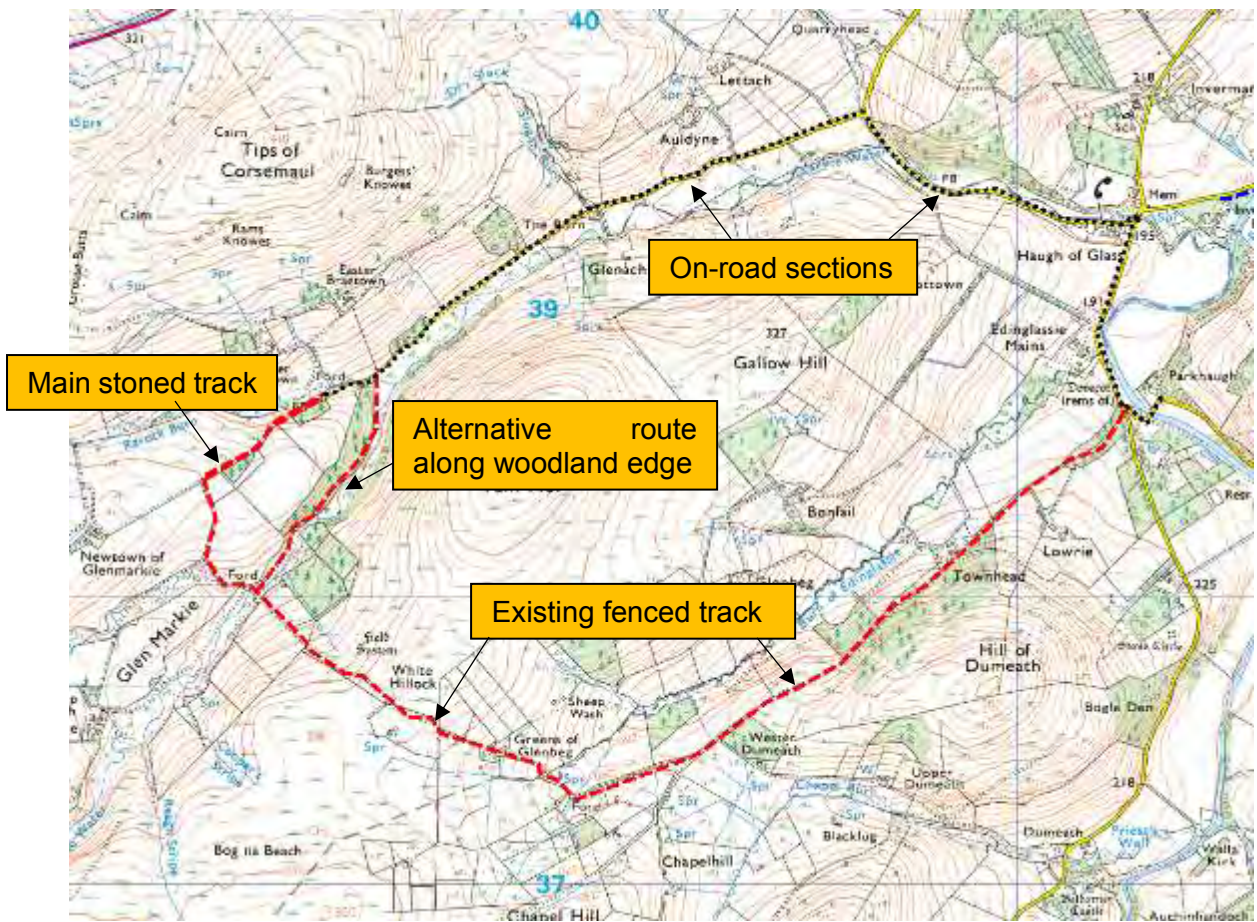
Fenced mown grass track from road down to Walla Kirk cemetery is in regular use and fully accessible



Stanchions of former bridge across the River Deveron still in place but would require structural survey to assess scope to rebuild build, cost and implications



<b>Name of route/ GIS map ref</b>	<b>RRSW5 Edinglassie loop HG7</b>
<b>Start/finish location</b>	Haugh of Glass (parking at village hall)
<b>Summary description</b> Enjoyable circular loop south west from Glass, following existing fenced farm/estate tracks and quiet lanes.	
<b>Justification for development/promotion</b>	Identified during community consultations as one of the key aspirational routes for the area which would create an attractive relatively short easy circular walk with historic interest for both local residents and visitors in an area with no existing promoted off-road walks.
<b>Current use</b>	Used regularly by local people of all ages including mothers pushing buggies and with young children, dog walkers, runners and as part of longer walks
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Lack of awareness of scope and accessibility amongst people not local to the area
<b>Legal status</b>	Shown in core path plan as “other paths”
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	Landowner resistance to use by anyone other than locals he already knows
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Requires no physical improvement, fully accessible, already fenced from adjacent farmland which minimises disturbance from dogs. Tracks well maintained and easily able to support multi-use recreational use.
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner consultation response</b>	Malcolm Hay of Beldorney Castle (tel. 01466 700274) owns Edinglassie and all the land through which this route passes. He does not stop local people he knows using this route but objects strongly to any suggestion of anyone else using the route, waymarking or promotion. His views is that recreational access is not viable alongside livestock farming and running a “wildlife” estate (or sporting enterprises) and as the law does not allow him to decide for himself when to exclude access he is not prepared to agree to anything which encourages access on his land. Although the Land Reform Act specifically states that it does not increase landowners’ liability in any way, he maintains otherwise, and he is not interested in discussing scope for positive management or integration of access with profitable land management.
<b>Alternative options</b>	
<b>Priority for development</b>	HDDT will need to decide whether to promote routes which are currently used and accessible under LRA but landowners do not wish to see promoted
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	None required





<b>Name of route</b>	<b>RRSW6 Rhynie circular route</b>
<b>Start/finish location</b>	Rhynie village centre or car park at Kear Church
<b>Constituent sections (see more detailed reports)</b>	RH Rhynie south circular (as far as Water of Bogie) RH3 Water of Bogie to Parkhead Wood (Cottown alternative) RH8 Druminnor CL9 Clatt Kirk Road RH13 Bridge of Kearn Woodland Path RH14 Mains of Drumminor RH19 Rhynie south path
<b>Summary description</b> Circular route around Rhynie using existing paths and tracks, linked together by short sections on quiet road. Includes Rhynie's famous symbol stones and optional spur to the remains of an atmospheric stone circle in Corrstone Wood.	
<b>Justification for development/promotion</b>	Community consultations identified strong demand for development and promotion of paths of different lengths around Rhynie directly accessible from the village centre. Although many of the paths included in this proposed route are used daily, consultations suggest that many local people are unaware of some of these paths and the potential to use them as a flexible circular route. The proposed route also offers scope to attract visitors in taking in various historic features of interest.
<b>Current use</b>	Mainly pedestrian
<b>Potential use</b>	See individual route notes
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	See sectional reports
<b>Legal status</b>	See sectional reports
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	See sectional reports
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Some sections of the path would benefit from improvement but otherwise the route is entirely practical, viable and sustainable. Great opportunity for local volunteer involvement
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	See sectional reports
<b>Priority for development</b>	High



<b>GIS map ref / name of route</b>	<b>RH1 Rhynie south circular</b>
<b>Start location</b> <b>Finish location</b>	Junction A97 and Manse Road, Rhynie (OSGR NJ 499 270) Junction path east of Water of Bogie with public road (OSGR NJ501 266) plus additional section south-west of rectory
<b>Summary description</b>	Manse Road leads south-east down from Rhynie village centre to the car park by the old kirk. An informal path crosses the Bogie Water by a footbridge, climbing north-east to join quiet tarmac lane west of Drum Wood which links back up to public road east of Rhynie. An additional short section links west of the rectory to re-join the public road east of the Water of Bogie.
<b>Justification for development/ Promotion</b>	The most frequently used circular “path” around Rhynie with scope for further promotion for visitors and locals who are unaware the path link exists. Key part of any off-road Rhynie-Clatt link
<b>Current use</b>	Walked daily
<b>Potential use</b>	All multi-use other than narrow footbridge
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Narrow footbridge over Water of Bogie
<b>Legal status</b>	Both Manse Road and the eastern arm of the route parallel to the Water of Bogie are public road, remainder is core path and claimed ROW.
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	None
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Practical, already in daily use, no issues with promoting
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	Not consulted – already core path
<b>Priority for development/ Promotion</b>	High
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	None other than signage and waymarking and volunteer clearance of overhanging vegetation on path east of footbridge



1. Existing footbridge over Water of Bogie

2. Unsigned unsurfaced but well drained path enclosed by hedges and fences both sides leads from footbridge north-east up to minor public road (picture left looking north from footbridge, picture right looking south from public road)



<b>Name of route</b>	<b>RH4 Symbol stone path</b>
<b>Start location</b> <b>Finish location</b>	A97 south of Rhynie Cemetery car park/RH1 Rhynie south circular
<b>Summary description</b>	A short, narrow, linear unbound surfaced path running along the north side of the cemetery and then up to the road, fenced both sides, now looking somewhat neglected but regularly used by local people as part of a short circular walk from Rhynie. The Crow Stane is in the field alongside the A97 at the western end of this path, accessed by walking along the eastern verge of the road and then through a field gate.
<b>Justification for development/promotion</b>	Key link in proposed Rhynie circular route. Important part of Rhynie path network.
<b>Current use</b>	Regular use by walkers
<b>Potential use</b>	Mainly pedestrian
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Narrow kissing gates near cemetery
<b>Legal status</b>	Core path and claimed ROW
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	None
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Some sections of the path would benefit from improvement but otherwise the route is entirely practical, viable and sustainable. Great opportunity for local volunteer involvement
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	None – already core path
<b>Priority for development</b>	High
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	Remove kissing gates which appear to serve no function. Address drainage issues Replace gate off A97 with 2-in-1 gate incorporating 1.5m self-closing section





Gate onto A97 with grass verge beyond



A narrow unbound stone surfaced path, increasingly encroached by grass, runs along the verge on the east side of the A97 back into Rhynie. This path is used daily as part of a circular walk in conjunction with the Rhynie south path (RH19), which also forms part of the proposed longer Rhynie circular.



<b>GIS map ref/ name of route</b>	<b>RH3 Bankhead link</b>
<b>Start location</b>	Barflat - southern terminus of minor road south east of Rhynie (OSGR NJ 502259)
<b>Finish location</b>	Public road east of Bankhead, south east of Rhynie (OSGR NJ508 257)
<b>Summary description</b> Clearly defined historic grass/stoned farm track enclosed both sides by fences/dykes	
<b>Justification for development / promotion</b>	Well used route, part of Rhynie circular and proposed Rhynie-Clatt link. This link track avoids going through the farm yard and steading at Bankhead.
<b>Current use</b>	Used daily by walkers, horse riders and MTBS
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	None
<b>Legal status</b>	Core path
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	None
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Practical, already in daily use, no issues with sustainability or promotion
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	Not consulted – already core path
<b>Priority for development / promotion</b>	High
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	None other than signage and waymarking

At terminus of public road above Barflat, unsigned firm broad farm track enclosed by fences both sides continues east (pictured below left), past Sandholes, skirting north of Bankhead to re-join minor road east of Bankhead (pictured right looking west from road junction)



<b>GIS map ref/ name of route</b>	<b>RH8 Druminnor</b>
<b>Start location</b>	Minor road south of Druminnor castle (OSGR NJ 512262)
<b>Finish location</b>	Public road south east of Bridge of Kearn (OSGR NJ515 265)
<b>Summary description</b>	Clearly defined attractive historic grassy track along south side of burn with great views of Druminnor Castle and its beautiful gardens
<b>Justification for development</b>	Already used daily but not well known locally, part of proposed Rhynie circular. Reduces length on road of Rhynie-Clatt link.
<b>Current use</b>	Used daily by walkers (possibly also other types of use)
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	None other than gates either end
<b>Legal status</b>	None but long history of use
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	In places relatively close to and unfenced from gardens surrounding Druminnor Castle locals confirm owners are happy for people to use this track provided they do so responsibly
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Already in daily use, no issues with sustainability or promotion
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	Not consulted, already fully accessible
<b>Priority for development</b>	High
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	None other than signage and waymarking to confirm route

Deer gate leads onto well defined grass track south of Druminnor Castle, fenced to south side. Double deer gate at eastern end back onto public road





<b>GIS map ref / name of route</b>	<b>RH11 Water of Bogie to Cottown</b>
<b>Start location</b> <b>Finish location</b>	Minor public road east of Water of Bogie (OSGR NJ 501266) Public road at Cottown (OSGR NJ508 267)
<b>Other relevant routes</b>	RH1 Rhynie south circular RH2 Cairndard RH3 Water of Bogie to Parkhead Wood RH8 Druminnor
<b>Summary description</b>	Historic track, now partly amalgamated into field at west end and farmyard east end and currently fenced across half-way.
<b>Justification for development</b>	Suggested as part of Rhynie to Clatt link and Rhynie circular
<b>Current use</b>	Past history of public use but no current use other than some sections by farmers
<b>Potential use</b>	Multi-use
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Fence across line of old path without access facility at NW corner of Drum Wood. Middle section overgrown. Eastern link runs through farmyard although owners acknowledge public have right of access and are happy to allow this if anyone prefers not to follow the road
<b>Legal status</b>	Locals suggest this was claimed ROW but does not appear on CROW maps
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	Eastern end links onto road through someone's yard which would potentially conflict with curtelage and privacy under LRA
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Not currently accessible and dubious rights of access through yard raises questions re. viability so alternative route which is already fully accessible proposed instead
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	See above
<b>Priority for development</b>	Low
<b>Recommended capital work</b>	None – alternative route proposed

4. Clearly defined grass/stone farm track branches off public road to gate leading into grazed field, beyond which original track no longer evident



Fence across line of existing track at eastern side of field (pictured right) with no access provision into shelterbelt



Original track which runs along northern side of shelterbelt clearly visible but overgrown in places. Track emerges between buildings through farmyard onto minor public road (pictured below right)



<b>GIS map ref / name of route</b>	<b>RH13 Bridge of Karn Woodland Path</b>
<b>Start location</b>	Cottown, east of farm (OSGR NJ 509 267)
<b>Finish location</b>	Bridge of Karn (OSGR NJ 515 268)
<b>Summary description</b>	Unsigned but clearly defined beaten earth path through woodland parallel to road developed and maintained through local residents walking the path
<b>Justification for development / promotion</b>	Many people are unaware this path exists. It reduces the length on road as part of Rhynie symbol stone circular and is safer around blind bends. Also potentially part of Rhynie to Clatt link.
<b>Current use</b>	Walked daily by local residents
<b>Potential use</b>	Pedestrian
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Lack of awareness of path
<b>Legal status</b>	None other than general rights of access under LRA
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	None
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Self-sustaining route provided people continue to use it and occasionally trim back overhanging branches or vegetation
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	Local residents say they have spoken with the owners of Druminnor Castle in the past who have no objections to use of this route.
<b>Priority for development / promotion</b>	High



<b>GIS map ref / name of route</b>	<b>RH14 Mains of Druminnor</b>
<b>Start location</b> <b>Finish location</b>	Junction with minor road east of Cottown (OSGR NJ 513 268) Corrstone Wood (OSGR NJ 510 272)
<b>Summary description</b>	Unsigned stoned farm track leading up through steading to the remains of ancient stone circle in Corrstone Wood
<b>Justification for development / promotion</b>	Spur off Rhynie circular to visit the remnants of one of the best remaining stone circles in the AB54 postcode area
<b>Current use</b>	Pedestrian use by visitors and occasional locals
<b>Potential use</b>	Pedestrian – not currently a through route
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Lack of awareness that the farm is happy for people to walk through the yard
<b>Legal status</b>	None. Technically access rights do not apply through steading under LRA but farmer apparently happy for people to access stone circle up his main track, through steading, which is preferable to tramping across crops
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	See above
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Stoned farm track so no issues re sustainability
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	See above under legal status
<b>Priority for development / promotion</b>	High as part of Rhynie circular
<b>Recommended capital improvements work</b>	Would benefit from clear signage and waymarking and gate into wood would benefit from replacement to prevent it being inadvertently being left open and stock straying as a result



<b>Name of route</b>	<b>RH19 Rhynie south path</b>
<b>Start location</b> <b>Finish location</b>	<b>Wheedlemount Road south west of Rhynie</b> <b>A97 south of Rhynie, north of Craw Stane</b>
<b>Summary description</b>	Popular grass path along a field boundary used daily by dog walkers and local residents from Rhynie
<b>Justification for development/promotion</b>	Western arm of the proposed Rhynie circular. Path already exists but would benefit from physical improvements.
<b>Current use</b>	Pedestrian
<b>Potential use</b>	Mainly pedestrian
<b>Restrictions/limitations on current use</b>	Steps up to stile off A97 at eastern end of path. Stile at western end.
<b>Legal status</b>	ROW
<b>Issues relating to rights of access relevant to the route</b>	None
<b>Practicality of route, viability, sustainability</b>	Some sections of the path would benefit from improvement but otherwise the route is entirely practical, viable and sustainable. Great opportunity for local volunteer involvement
<b>Survey date</b>	June 2020
<b>Landowner / consultation response</b>	Not consulted as existing promoted path
<b>Priority for development</b>	High
<b>Recommended capital improvements</b>	Replace stile at eastern end with 1.5m self-closing gate, make good gap with post and rail fence. Replace stile at western end of path with self-closing gate to make more accessible to people of all ages and abilities



