

By email to: eplanning@highland.gov.uk

The Highland Council
Headquarters
Glenurquhart Road
IV3 5NX

15th December 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

25/03322/FUL

**Formation of car park, path and access to the public road
Land 1205M NE Of Craig Cottage, Craig, Strathcarron**

Mountaineering Scotland is a membership organisation with 16,000 members and is the only recognised representative body for hill walkers, climbers, mountaineers and ski-tourers who live in Scotland or who enjoy Scotland's mountains. We represent, support and promote Scottish mountaineering, and provide training and information to mountain users for safety, self-reliance and the enjoyment of our mountain environment.

The existing FLS car park on the north side of the A890 at Craig is important to hillwalkers as a safe, off road place to park before heading to the Munros, Sgùrr Chòinnich and Sgùrr a' Chaorachain, or the Corbetts, Sgùrr na Feartaig and Beinn Tharsuinn. We understand this car park will soon be closed to accommodate upcoming harvesting operations. There are very few alternative places to safely park for the day in the immediate area. We are therefore pleased to see a proposal for a replacement facility.

This proposal includes a "path route" to link the new car park to the existing path network. The applicant has provided no specification for this path so it is not known how it will be constructed and what materials will be used.

The Design and Access Statement describes the path "crossing beneath the railway line by way of an existing underpass". However, the photographs of the site show a culvert under the railway line, not an underpass. I am concerned that this is not a practical or safe way for walkers to cross the railway, especially if the water level is higher than on the day these photographs were taken.

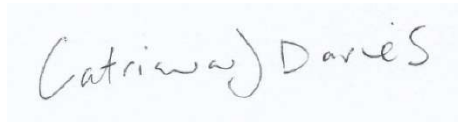
I have contacted the applicant to ask if they have plans to make their proposed route a usable path but have received no response.

My safety concerns about routing the proposed path through the culvert are twofold. Firstly, the risk of walkers slipping and falling on the wet and uneven surface that forms the bed of this watercourse, especially as it is low so they may have to stoop to pass through. Secondly, and potentially far more seriously, walkers, unwilling to risk wet feet at the beginning of a long day in the hills or slipping and suffering injury, may choose to leave the path and cross the railway line instead.

When this proposal was first brought to my attention it appeared that, in addition to retaining a safe, off-road parking facility for hillwalkers in this area, it had the added benefit of allowing walkers and climbers to avoid using the level crossing over the railway line at Craig and instead use an existing underpass. However, unless there is an adequate path to link the new car park to the existing path network, my concern is that it will shift walkers away from the level crossing at Craig, which is a relatively safe way to cross the railway line, and create a situation that inadvertently encourages walkers to trespass on the railway line and cross at a far less safe point.

For these reasons we cannot support this application in its current form. We would be very willing to work with both the applicant and The Highland Council's Access Officer to try to identify solutions to these issues.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Catriona Davies". The signature is written in a cursive style and is placed on a light blue rectangular background.

Catriona Davies
Access & Environment Officer
Mountaineering Scotland

Email: access@mountaineering.scot

