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To: [Forestry FLS Communities](#)
Subject: Objection to Proposed Balmacara Campsite
Date: 12 March 2024 18:06:41

To whom it may concern

I am writing to you with an objection to the project for Balmacara Old Campsite, Phase 1 ...What will be Phase 2 myself and others ask ?

First of all, do we really need more Campsites in the area with several already nearby ? Namely at Shiel Bridge, Morvich, Ardelve, Auchtertyre, Reraig, Ashaig and Broadford, all within a ten mile radius of the proposed site at Balmacara. Many of those mentioned have vacancies in Summer because so many visitors do not want to be on a site for various reasons. Add to the Campsites the proliferation of Glamping Pods.

The road junction at Balmacara Mains is a notorious Accident Black Spot. With this proposal there would be caravans and oversized Motorhomes pulling out on to a very fast and busy 60mph road (A87) that has a blind spot on the corner of the main road. Many motorists ignore the speed limit ! Locals know it is a risky junction, but Heaven help an unwary visitor when the trucks come hurtling down the hill. The alternative access junction closer to Reraig is not much better when turning towards Kyle. While it was a Campsite nearly 30 years ago, the road was far less busy then. Also the Single Track access road to the Campsite is very narrow, with a soft verge one side and a deep ditch the other. Passing places are inadequate. Throughout the Tourist Season Motorhomes come to grief on such roads sadly.

Balmacara is a small Community. The impact on the village would be huge. Just a few would benefit financially. As for an absentee wealthy Landowner making more profit, there would be huge resentment from Locals most of whom are against this project. James McColl already owns the campsite at Reraig. Indeed a local Crofter has been refused permission by HC for 7 Static caravans on his land owing to the nature of the roads ! It would not sit well if a non resident were given the go ahead.

It would be detrimental to so many other residents and locals to the area . The Old Campsite is used by Young Mothers with buggies and Toddlers learning to walk, who live locally, also the Elderly and Infirm, since it is the ONLY place where steep and rugged ground does not have to be negotiated. Children use it as a playground, somewhere to learn to ride a bike, and sledging in Winter. Toddlers come from the Infant School to learn about Nature and Wildlife. Forestry School of a kind. The Elderly use it to Socialise and walk without having to use a car, some even ride their mobility Scooters around the site. Dog Walkers and many Cyclists use the park for exercise. It says on the report that Access would remain as it is. How would that be compatible with Cars, Motorbikes and Campervans driving around ? That would not be safe at all. It is not a great idea having Children playing with so many Strangers around either !

Apart from the community access being taken away, there is a very real risk of a serious fire with all the trees around the area.

We already had a huge one a couple of years ago that came all too close to the village. Campers would most likely be lighting BBQ's and Fires, and you can place all the signage you like saying No Fires, they will be ignored as they are all around this area. Indeed we often find discarded BBQ's left in the car park under the trees where visitors camp overnight for free against Forestry policy.

How many Trees will be destroyed for this proposal to make it safe ? The site earmarked as hard standing for Motorhomes has some huge trees nearby, many of which have fallen this past Winter. A dangerous place for visiting campers. Unless of course the plan is to fell large numbers of Trees ? We should be looking at Restoration not Destruction. There are several fine old Lime Trees at the site, which should be protected, and Oak.


The area designated for Tents is an absolute Midgey Hole and I would not want to camp there! Also the traffic noise coming from the very busy road is not pleasant. There could be the additional problem of noise at night coming from the Campers after a drinking session and anti-social behaviour. A warden might well be there 24/7 but having been on campsites myself.....it doesn't work. Not very nice for a quiet Village. Littering could be yet another problem.

It should be of note that the Site often floods in wet weather and becomes very unpleasant underfoot. The actual River turns into a raging torrent. Also after years of neglect all too often limbs fall from the trees.

Last but by no means least, the impact on Wildlife which is already at risk from huge Visitor numbers around Skye and Lochalsh. The Campsite is a Wildlife haven, there are Red Squirrels, the occasional Otter in the Burns, Heron, Amphibians and a huge variety of Birdlife unequaled elsewhere in this area. Wild Orchids grow in the Meadow. To put such an area at risk purely for profit is heinous.

What this Site truly needs is a safe play area for local children, with a Forestry School, and a regeneration plan like what has been achieved at The Plock in Kyle. Children have been encouraged to plant Trees and grow Vegetables. Fun events for the Community are regular throughout Summer. Visitors have more than enough, put Locals first !

Yours Sincerely


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