

8/1/64

Tel No 01467 620574

Beechcroft
Old Chapel Road
INVERURIE
Aberdeenshire
AB51 4QN
2nd December 2000

Norman Davidson
Forest District Manager
Ordiquhill
Portsoy Road
Huntly
Aberdeenshire AB54 5SJ

Dear Mr Davidson

Relocating the Gordon Way Path

At the recent meeting of the Council of the Bailies, concern was expressed about the relocation of the Gordon Way Path between Oxen Craig and the Mither Tap on the following grounds:-

- the Gordon Way is meant to keep walkers away from busy routes, and the alteration would lead them to one of the busiest routes on Bennachie
- there would be a steep rise to near the Mither Tap summit from the Bennachie Centre - not the best start for a hike.
- The route in an easterly direction is mostly downhill after the Brindy Hill, and diverting it would involve a climb towards the Oxen Craig.
- the plateau is more likely to experience changeable and inclement weather conditions.
- the English Quarry is scenic and tranquil, with interesting trees, wildlife and geology.
- west of the English quarry, there is deep peat and the path is very boggy, but there are ways of laying paths over peaty ground.

Yours sincerely

Dr Geoffrey M. Gill
Clerk to the Bailies

8/1/64

fm 10/7/4

Gordon Way Path Relocation

Fred Gordon
Norman Davidson
Julie Snodgrass

We met on Wednesday 21 June to investigate possible alternate routes for a section of the Gordon Way. The aim being to avoid existing peaty sections which are difficult to maintain to a reasonable standard.

Fred had already made a preliminary investigation and we considered the route he proposed. Having walked the route we agreed that Fred's suggestion was viable and in some ways consolidates the routes that are already being used on Bennachie.

The route avoids the section of the Gordon Way from the end of the peat road east to Heather Brig. One downside of this proposed route is that the English Quarry would no longer be included en route. However the path from Heather Brig to the quarry is in good condition and could be kept as an informal route. The route is illustrated on the attached map.

The new route leaves from the eastern end of the peat road on an existing path. The path, although not part of the waymarked network, is in good condition and requires minimal work to be of a suitable standard. It leaves the existing Gordon Way at a reasonable angle and the walker should not feel that they are being taken in the wrong direction.

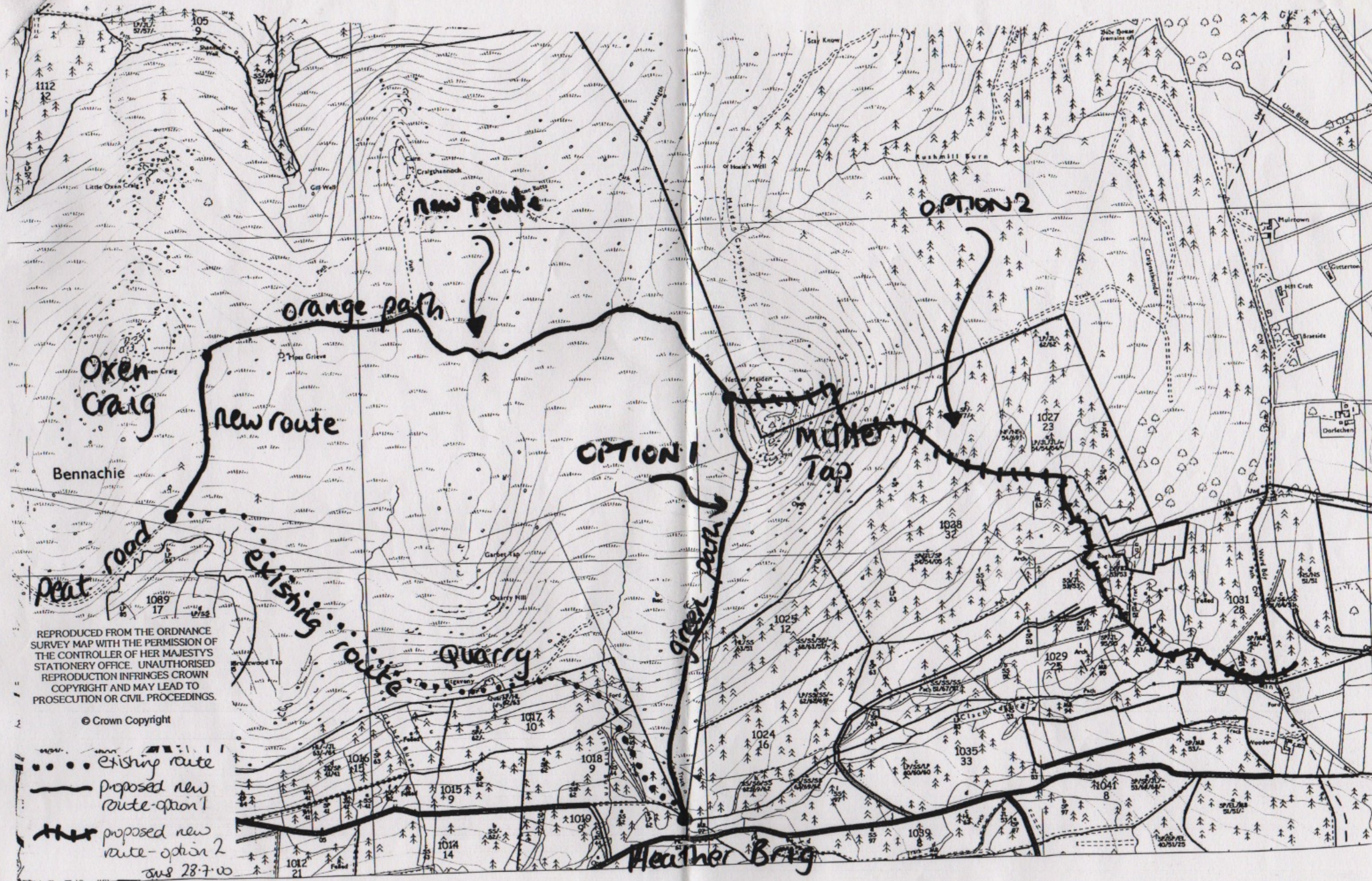
The path rises up and over the plateau at a good gradient and passes close under Oxen Craig on its eastern side. It then joins our existing waymarked orange route (from Back O Bennachie to Bennachie Centre). This path is in reasonable condition. However it has had less maintenance work than some other paths in recent years and some path maintenance would be desirable.

On reaching the edge of Mither Tap the route would then join the green Mither Tap path (circular walk from Bennachie Centre). It skirts the western edge of the Mither Tap and descends on the 'triangle path' to Heather Brig. The route then rejoins the existing Gordon Way from Heather Brig to the Bennachie Centre.

There are several advantages to this route. It allows the walker to climb Oxen Craig and Mither Tap with only short deviations from the waymarked route. It follows in the main, existing waymarked routes so there is, overall, a reduced length of path to maintain. The paths are robust, and are unlikely to need significant maintenance work. Most of the waymarker posts that would be required are already in place and would only need Gordon Way tiles added. The walker should not feel as if they are deviating from the direction they have been going in.

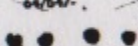

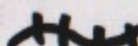
The route would be slightly longer. The existing route from the end of the peat road to Heather Brig is approximately 2 km. On the proposed route the length from the same two points would be approximately 3.5 km. So the Gordon Way would become 1.5 km longer. It should still be easily walked within a day and this extra length is unlikely deter visitors. Some work may be required at the junction from the peat road. It would be advisable to

disguise a short stretch of the current route and improve the first section of the new one.
This should ensure that visitors who already know the Gordon Way use the new route.



REPRODUCED FROM THE ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP WITH THE PERMISSION OF THE CONTROLLER OF HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE. UNAUTHORISED REPRODUCTION INFRINGES CROWN COPYRIGHT AND MAY LEAD TO PROSECUTION OR CIVIL PROCEEDINGS.

© Crown Copyright

-  Existing route
 -  proposed new route-option 1
 -  proposed new route-option 2
- Aug 28.7.00