

Ballachurry Farm Cottage

Bernahara

Andreas

IM7 3HH

13/7/21

Dear Mr Johnstone

Re Donkey Track Inquiry – submission

I was born in 1965 to the Guilcagh Farm in Andreas, just up the Andreas/St Judes Road from the access to this track. My father had always lived in Andreas and was farming the Guilcagh farm with his brother at that time.

Whilst we moved to Kirk Michael in 1968 my families relationship to the farm continued for a number of years.

I returned to live on the Bernahara in 2004.

In all my years of passing what is now claimed to be an ‘public highway’ I have never known or seen it being used, pedestrian or otherwise.

My alert to the activity of recreating this track was the DOI creating a bridge on a very dangerous corner on the Bernahara some long months ago, just along the road from the entrance to the lane to my home. The bridge in its appearance and strength looks as if was built to accommodate vehicles and had no planning approval for the quite drastic impact on the rural street scene.

No warning or alert had been given to the residents for this activity, so we were in the dark as to what it was for. Initially I was told it was purely ‘culvert repair’.

My late mum passed in February 2021 and she never recalled use of this track and suggested my dad may have used it as a short cut as a boy, on foot.

The long standing Local Authority Clerk whom I asked about the ‘track’ (now retired) had not known of the track and suggested perhaps its intended use historically may have been for pedestrians as a short cut to the Kerrogarroo Chapel. Either way the short distance that this stretch of land affords no real use for anyone other than perhaps locals who may occasionally walk the loop from the village? By the nature of this distance I see no other use for reopening this stretch of land for ‘green lane’ users it what would be in modern day – I suppose – off road vehicles.

All of this aside, even for recreational use for persons outside of the village, there is no picnic facility or justifiable activity that could be supported without provision of parking. For which there is none in this locality that would not create congestion and traffic hazard in this very rural and already narrow road on the Bernahara side, and fast road on the Andreas road end.

If Green lane users were to use this track for vehicular activity at either end the access egress would be a definite traffic hazard and an accident waiting to happen.

At a time when the DOI has much more pressing financial demands, not least the state of the road surfaces on the Regaby and Bernahara roads, I see absolutely no point in creating work and spending money for no reason.

I am sure that if residents felt they would like to 'create' a pedestrian short cut then I am sure we could establish our own local resource to provide such without having to rely on costly DOI expenditure on already tight national purse strings.

Historic feature on a map whether it was 1986 or 1886, without LOCAL demand for such , I do not feel justifies wider 'green land ' groups to be imposing themselves on our community.

The track is not even a KM long?

In closing my response to the three points raised

I do feel this was an historic foot path, when most traffic would have been pedestrian, horse and cart or 'donkey'.

If the track was to be refurbished it should be as a public footpath/right of way only – but would this be possible if it is not already recorded as a public footpath in the national record of such?

I know of mature local residents – of retirement age - who do recall walking the track, using it as a short cut – and to that end it would be nice, but not for vehicles.

I hope this helps the discussion

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