

Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000

REVIEW OF STATUTORY DIRECTION

SUMMARY FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Prepared by Natural England

1. INFORMATION ABOUT THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Access authority: Northumberland County Council
Relevant authority: Natural England
Local access forum: Northumberland Joint Local Access Forum

Natural England is about to review the following direction:

Land Parcel Name:	Direction Reference:
Hulne Park	2005070107

This is in line with the relevant authority's statutory duties (see Annex 1).

Your views on the current direction are sought to assist Natural England in deciding whether the exclusion is still necessary for its original purpose; and if so, whether the extent and nature of the exclusion is still appropriate for the original purpose.

The relevant authority may decide to revoke the direction or that no change to the extent and/or nature of a direction except the end date is necessary. In which case a Consultation Outcome Report will be published on the [Consultation Pages](#) of the Government's Website¹.

If the relevant authority decides to vary the extent or nature of an exclusion, a further round of public consultation may be necessary (see Annex 1) in which case a second Consultation Summary Report will be published.

2. SUMMARY OF EXISTING DIRECTION(S)

Land Parcel Name:	Direction Ref.	Dates of restriction on existing direction:	Reason for Exclusion
Hulne Park	2005070107	September 15th to November 15th each year	CROW s25(1)(b): Public Safety

Natural England made this long term direction on 5th November 2019.

A short summary is provided below giving the background to the direction. This should be read in conjunction with the other associated documents sent as part of this consultation. Further information is available from Katherine Sutton at restriction.representations@naturalengland.org.uk

¹ https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?publication_filter_option=consultations. To access the consultation enter "Open Access" into the free text box titled "Contains" and then filter by "Natural England" in the Department drop down.

Hulne Park is approximately 3,500ha in size and is an enclosed deer park, where Red and Fallow Deer are all farmed.

Hulne Park is open to the public between 11am and sunset, 7 days a week. The application site forms a small part of the overall park and was mapped as open access by the nature of its moorland habitat - however the majority of the park (located to the north of this site) is not categorised as open access land. Once in the park access is restricted to the permissive marked routes (3 trails), therefore no “means of access to the restricted area from the North exists.

The restricted area is located at the southern end of Hulne Park and overlooks the rest of the park that stretches out to the north. The restricted area is bounded along its southern boundary with a 2m high stone wall. A single gate is located in this wall and allows the only realistic access point into the site from the adjacent access land (Alnwick Moor). This is permanently locked as the Estate are keen to control access through the main entrance in Alnwick.

The eastern and western boundaries are fenced but the northern edge is not fenced as it slopes down into the rest of the deer park. The site undulates significantly and slopes down to the deer park from the stone boundary wall (this slope contains crags and steep slopes).

There is a public footpath that runs alongside the estate wall (to the south of the restricted area and outside the park).

Stags become very aggressive during the rut. Individual stags that have lost their fear of humans and which are readily approachable should always be regarded as potentially hazardous once they have cleaned the velvet from their antlers. The estate have confirmed that the Red Deer rutting period lasts from mid-September to mid-November and have indicated that the stags can and do get extremely aggressive at these times.

Farmed deer are temperamentally different from other farmed animals and present greater risks to visitors than wild deer. Wild Deer will normally avoid areas frequented by visitors; due to the permissive access within the park this is not always possible. The Estate has confirmed that users of the Park do stray off the promoted routes, ignoring the on-site notices.

The estate have confirmed that rutting is concentrated on the lower slopes and Natural England, as the Relevant Authority, believe it would be easy for users of the access land to “stumble” on the rut attempting to reach the radar station or by walking out the wooded area at White Hill or on the track known as High Moor Drive.

3. SUBMITTING COMMENTS ON THE REVIEW

If you wish to comment on the review of this direction then you must do so before 8th November 2024 directly to Katherine Sutton at restriction.representations@naturalengland.org.uk

A map accompanies this notice and is attached. It can also be seen on the [Consultation Pages](#) of the Government’s Website².

Using and sharing your consultation responses

² https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?publication_filter_option=consultations. To access the consultation enter “Open Access” into the free text box titled “Contains” and then filter by “Natural England” in the Department drop down.

In line with Natural England's [Personal Information Charter](#), any comments you make, and any information you send in support of them, will help us to determine the application and / or determine if the restriction is still necessary in relation to the review or reassessment of a current direction.

We may wish to pass such comments or information to others in connection with our duties and powers under the open access legislation. This may mean for example passing information, including your name and contact details, to the Secretary of State or their appointees, the Planning Inspectorate or to the relevant access authority(s).

We will summarise all responses and place this summary on [the Government's consultation website](#). This summary will include a list of names of organisations that responded but not the names, addresses or other contact details of individual respondents.

There may also be circumstances in which we will be required to disclose your response to third parties, either as part of the statutory process for consideration of representations and objections about our decision, or in order to comply with our wider obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

If you do not want your response - including your name, contact details and any other personal information – to be publicly available, please explain clearly why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. However, we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not be regarded as binding on Natural England.

Annex 1

In accordance with statutory guidance, the relevant authority has a duty to:

- review directions of a long-term character no later than their fifth anniversary; and
- revoke or vary directions where necessary.

Under CROW section 27(3) the relevant authority must review, at least every five years, any direction it has given that restricts access indefinitely; for part of every year; for part of each of six or more consecutive calendar years; or for a specified period of more than five years.

During the review the relevant authority must, having regard to the interest of the public in having access to the land, consider whether the restriction is still necessary for its original purpose; and if so, whether the extent and nature of the restriction is still appropriate for the original purpose.

Before reviewing a long-term direction the relevant authority must consult:

- the local access forum;
- the applicant or his successor in title, where reasonably practicable – for directions under section 24 or 25 made on application; or
- the relevant advisory body – for a direction made under section 26.

The authority must also publish a notice on a website (and send a copy to statutory consultees) that must explain that the authority proposes to review the direction in question; where documents relating to the review may be inspected and copies obtained; and that representations in writing with regard to the review may be made by any person to the authority by a date specified in the notice.

Once consultation is complete the relevant authority should have regard to any representations it receives before making a decision.

If following the consultation, the Relevant Authority decides to:

- leave the original direction unchanged, the relevant authority should record the date that the decision was made and should schedule a subsequent review where necessary.

If following the consultation, the Relevant Authority decides to:

- vary the extent or nature of a restriction, the relevant authority must give a new direction under the same section that was used to give the original direction. If the new direction is long-term, it must be reviewed within five years of the date it is given;
- revoke a direction, we will record the date that the decision was made.

Before varying or revoking a direction the relevant authority must: consult the original applicant or his successor in title, where reasonably practicable – for directions given under section 24 or 25 on an application; or consult the relevant advisory body – for directions given under section 26. In either case, follow the consultation procedures set out in the Relevant Authority Guidance but only if it proposes to give a new direction that would restrict access indefinitely or for more than six months continuously.