

Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000

NOTICE OF RELEVANT AUTHORITY DECISION FOLLOWING REVIEW OF DIRECTION RESTRICTING COASTAL ACCESS RIGHTS

Prepared by Natural England

Access Authority: Dorset County Council
Relevant Authority: Natural England
Local Access Forum: Dorset Local Access Forum

Direction reference: 2012056425 and 2012056426

Land Parcel Name	Direction Reference	Details of restriction on original direction
Eweleaze Farm	2012056425	No Public Access on up to 28 days per year between 1 st March and 31 st October until 31/10/2023
Shortlake Farm	2012056426	No Public Access on up to 28 days per year between 1 st March and 31 st October until 31/10/2023

Natural England has now decided how to proceed following its review of the long-term directions to restrict coastal access rights in association with the England Coast Path on this land. A consultation was held between 08 April and 13 May 2022 with statutory consultees and the general public. We received feedback from The Dorset Local Access Forum.

In summary the feedback was as follows, they would prefer for there to be no restrictions on access, but if the directions are to remain in place on either campsite, then they state they consider it essential that the landowner is required to notify Natural England of the closure dates. They also note that for Eweleaze Farm there is an undetermined planning application (Ref P/FUL/2022/01957) on this land, for change of use of agricultural land to a camping site for 42 days per year. They state that this may need to be taken into consideration when the application has been determined.

Outcome of the review:

Natural England's decision is to leave the original direction unchanged in the way it was originally proposed and extend the end date for a further six years. Therefore both directions to exclude people on up to 28 days per year between 1st March and 31st October will remain in place.

The application areas at Eweleaze Farm and Shortlake Farm are in the same ownership and used as campsites for up to 28 days per year. The exact times and dates during which access is to be excluded is to be determined by the landowner, and they have tended to close the land for one continuous block of 28 days in August. At the last review in 2017 Natural England re-instated the requirement for the landowner to notify Natural England of the closure dates in advance, however this was not done in the years since until this review. As part of this review the landowner informed Natural England that they had continued with the same campsite arrangements since 2017. And that it was due to an administrative oversight with them not understanding the need to notify the dates that this hadn't happened.

The dates for Eweleaze have now been notified for 2022 and this direction is now in place from 1 August for 28 days and can be viewed on our website. The landowner stated that they still need the ability to close these landward coastal access areas, as in the unlikely event of any issues with campers they need to be able legally exclude people to protect the other campsite users. Natural England agrees that informal management would not be sufficient in this situation and has determined to continue with the directions.

Natural England's policy for long-term directions is that they should not be given for a period of more than six years. Therefore the original direction will be extended to an end date of 26/07/2028.

Details of the restriction will appear on the relevant map of access land on the Open Access website - www.openaccess.naturalengland.org.uk.

Where a direction restricts access indefinitely, for more than five years, for part of every year, or for part of at least six consecutive years, we have a statutory duty to review it within five years of the date of its issue.

Date review completed: 27th July 2022