

**Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000:**

**PROPOSAL FOR A LONG TERM DIRECTION  
BY THE RELEVANT AUTHORITY**

**SUMMARY FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION  
Prepared by Forestry Commission**

**1. INFORMATION ABOUT THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

**Case Reference Number:** 2021019333  
**Name of site/land parcel:** COUPE 27441 – THE FORKS – NY 6377 8961

**Access Authority:** **Northumberland County Council**  
**Relevant Authority:** Forestry Commission  
**Local Access Forum:** Northumberland National Park & Countryside  
Joint LAF

The Forestry Commission has received an application under section 25 (1b) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (the Act) for a direction to exclude the public from the site indicated on the attached map, in order to carry out timber harvesting operations.

Having considered the application, the Forestry Commission now proposes to give a direction on the site that would last for longer than 6 months continuously for 250 days between the 17/05/2021 and 17/05/2026. The Act requires us to consult publicly on all such proposals for ‘long-term directions’.

This is a summary of our proposal, explaining the reasoning in support of our proposal. It is accompanied by a map of the site which can be seen on the Open Access website:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?publication\\_filter\\_option=consultations](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. Other documents relating to the proposed direction may be inspected and copies obtained by contacting the Forestry Commission at Buller’s Hill, Kennford, Nr Exeter, EX6 7XR; e-mail: [cca@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:cca@forestry.gsi.gov.uk).

## **2. SUMMARY OF RELEVANT AUTHORITY PROPOSAL**

### **i) Summary of proposed direction to restrict access**

Long term outline direction

### **ii) Why is a statutory restriction necessary?**

The risk assessment carried out identifies that timber harvesting operations present a risk to public safety; it is therefore necessary to exclude the public from the site during operations.

### **iii) What is lowest level of restriction required?**

Full Exclusion of Public access

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION TO SUPPORT THE APPLICATION FOR OUTLINE DIRECTION OF LONG TERM CLOSURE**

The proposed felling coupe, to be known as The Forks, is projected to produce around 20,278m<sup>3</sup>/16,435t of timber to supply local and national markets. The site covers approximately 39.5 hectares (Gross).

The parcel will be sold standing on the open market in May 2021 and it is expected to be worked during the 2021/2022 financial year. Due to the reliance on timber merchants, precise timings of harvesting operations are not currently known.

The risk assessment carried out identifies that timber harvesting operations present a risk to public safety; it is therefore necessary to exclude the public from the site during operations.

The work will be carried out using a range of forest harvesting techniques which included traditional harvester/forwarder operations as well as a significant proportion of the works that will be carried out using a skyline/high lead system. Estimated machine outputs are around 500 tonnes per week but this output will be lower on the steeper ground areas. Accounting for this as well as allowing time for unforeseen circumstances, it is estimated that harvesting operations will take approximately 35 weeks. It is expected that production will achieve this level of output.

In addition to the exclusion of the public other controls will include the use of warning and prohibition signs placed at strategic points around the worksite. Signs will also be placed on the forest roads approaching the worksite.

There is also a public right of way that falls within this site for which a full closure will be applied for to Northumberland County Council closer to the time of working to maintain public safety.

To maintain operational flexibility, it is not feasible to split the coupe into any smaller areas. As a standing sale site, we will not be in direct control of the operation; the merchant will need to have the ability to react to changes in the timber markets, machinery ability and changes in weather conditions by moving production around the site.

### **3. SUBMITTING COMMENTS ON THE REVIEW:**

If you wish to comment on the review of this direction then you must do so before 13/05/2021 directly to the Forestry Commission at Buller's Hill, Kennford, Nr Exeter, EX6 7XR; e-mail: [cca@forestrycommission.gov.uk](mailto:cca@forestrycommission.gov.uk)

A map accompanies this notice and can be seen on the Open Access website:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?publication\\_filter\\_option=consultations](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?publication_filter_option=consultations)

If, following consultation, we decide to give a long-term direction, we must formally review the decision, not more than 5 years after it is given. We may also revoke or vary the direction at any other time, if new evidence comes to light showing that the circumstances have changed.