

## **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**

<b>Case Reference Number:</b>	2021109501
<b>Name of site/land parcel:</b>	Watch Grain – Lewisburn – NY576904
<b>Access Authority:</b>	<b>Northumberland County Council</b>
<b>Relevant Authority:</b>	Forestry Commission
<b>Local Access Forum:</b>	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 262 days between the 21<sup>st</sup> March 2022 and 20<sup>th</sup> March 2027. 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@forestrycommission.gov.uk](mailto:cca@forestrycommission.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?**

On Public Safety Grounds

### **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**

Watch Grain – COUPE 26048/ 26153 – NORTH ENGLAND FOREST  
DISTRICT

The proposed felling coupe, to be known as Watch Grain, is projected to produce around 23,222m<sup>3</sup>/18,742t of timber to supply local and national markets. The site covers approximately 30.2 hectares (Gross).

The parcel will be sold standing on the open market in March 2022 and it is expected to be worked during the 2022/2023 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 normal forest harvesting techniques, i.e. harvester/forwarder, given estimated machine outputs of around 500

tonnes per week, and allowing time for unforeseen circumstances, it is estimated that harvesting operations will take approximately 38 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 a section of cycle trail affecting the site running along the northern boundary of the site. As the trails have no formal access rights they would normally be closed under any CRow direction, however, in addition this trail will be closed for the period of time where operations will result in a significant danger to trail users. The purchaser of the site will be required to put in place, reasonable controls so as to maintain closure of the cycle trails by the public while operations are carried out in the immediate vicinity of them.

To maintain operational flexibility it is not feasible to split the coupe into any smaller areas. We will need to have the ability to react to changes in the timber markets 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 19<sup>th</sup> December 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/search/policy-papers-and-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.