



DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

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| Application Reference Number | 18NP0009 |
| Description / Site Address | Forestry determination in respect of proposed construction of 500 metre extraction road at Whiteburnshank, Harbottle, Northumberland |
| Expiry date of publicity / consultations | 12 March 2018 |
| Last date for decision | 20 March 2018 |

Details of Proposal

This application has been submitted in order to determine whether prior approval is required from the Local Planning Authority for the proposed construction of a 500 metre extraction road at Flesh Shank within Kidland Forest, Alwinton. This request is made to the Local Planning Authority under Part 6 Class E 'Forestry Developments' of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (GPDO).

The proposed road would be 500m in length at a width of 4m and would be formed from the excavation of existing material down to hard base, protected by brash during forestry operations. Existing topsoil would be put to one side for future reinstatement of the track.

The application site does not fall within a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or Special Area of Conservation (SAC), however the River Coquet & Coquet Valley Woodlands SSSI is located approximately 1km south east of the site.

Planning Policy & Guidance

National Policies

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012)

National Planning Practice Guidance

Local Policies

Northumberland National Park Authority Core Strategy and Development Policies Document (Core Strategy) (2009)

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| Policy 1 | <i>Delivering Sustainable Development</i> |
| Policy 3 | <i>General Development Principles</i> |
| Policy 20 | <i>Landscape Quality and Character</i> |
| Policy 22 | <i>Trees, Woodlands and Forests</i> |

Supplementary Planning Guidance

NNPA Landscape Supplementary Planning Document (Landscape SPD)

Relevant Planning History

None relevant to this application



Consultation/Representations

NNPA Landscape and Forestry Officer: No objections; comments made

The application seeks the construction of a 500m track which would not incorporate the laying of any stone and is to be reinstated following extraction of the timber. As such, it is understood and welcomed that this would be a temporary track, the removal of which would then minimise its visual impact following harvesting. As a temporary track, I would not expect this application to give permission that would allow future maintenance incorporating the addition of crushed stone.

The application does not include details relating to water management. Taking into account the steeper gradient to the north eastern end of the track and nearby SSSI, the management of water is important and all work should therefore be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the UK Forestry Standard, in order to prevent pollution from entering the watercourse.

NNPA Access and National Trails Officer: No response received

Assessment

The issues to be taken into consideration in the assessment of this application are:-

- The principle of the development; and
- The siting and means of construction of the private way

The principle of the development

The formation, alteration or maintenance of private ways for the purposes of forestry can be undertaken under permitted development rights set out within Part 6 of the 2015 GPDO, provided that the works are reasonably necessary for the purposes of forestry, and meet with further criteria set out within legislation. Where these criteria are met, the Local Planning Authority can only assess whether prior approval is required to assess the siting and means of construction of the private way.

The proposed road would be undertaken on land used for the purposes of forestry and would be reasonably necessary for those purposes, and would not fall within 25 metres of the metalled portion of a trunk road or classified road. Based on the information made available to the Local Planning Authority it is therefore considered that the requirements set out within Part 6 of the 2015 GPDO have been met. The principle of the development is therefore deemed to be acceptable.

The siting and means of construction of the private way

The means of construction of the track, comprising the excavation of existing material and laying of protective brush, is considered to be appropriate. The application states that the material removed in order to form the track would be retained and reinstated post-operations in order that the site can then be managed as open habitat, which is supported.

It is not considered that the proposed track would have a significant impact upon the landscape or views of this part of the National Park, in accordance with Core Strategy policy 20.



The Landscape and Forestry Officer has identified the presence of a nearby SSSI (approx. 1km south east of the site), into which a nearby watercourse runs, and has therefore stressed that the works should be undertaken in accordance with the UK Forestry Standard in order to prevent pollution from entering the watercourse. It is understood that the works to be undertaken must in undertaken in accordance with this standard and in this regard, this request is considered to be satisfied.

The Landscape and Forestry Officer has also made comments about the future maintenance of the track in respect of the potential addition of crushed stone; however this cannot be taken into consideration as part of the assessment of this prior approval application.

Recommendation

In light of the assessment detailed above, it is considered that **prior approval is NOT required.**

Background Papers

Application file 18NP0009
EIA Screening Opinion

| | Signature | Date |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Planning Officer | <u>R Adams</u> | <u>20/03/2018</u> |
| Head of Development Management | <u>S Buylla</u> | <u>20/03/2018</u> |