



Presentment by New Forest Commoners Defence Association to the Court of Verderers July 2022

Re: Compensation Habitat for works on Holmsley Bridge

We understand that as part of the planning permission for the replacement of Holmsley bridge there was a requirement to provide compensatory habitat (on site and away) this was needed to compensate for the loss of designated habitat whilst also delivering an overall biodiversity net gain.

Having looked at the planning application and we note the applicants are now in the process of seeking to discharge conditions, the most recent request was to discharge conditions 6 and 13 attached to the planning permission.

Condition 13 is of particular interest to us, it is the 'production of a Landscape and Ecological Management and Establishment Plan' which requests 100 % natural regeneration.

Whilst we understand the principal of natural regeneration, we are not in agreement that the hogging should be left in situ at these sites, experience has shown us that this approach doesn't work. Areas which have been left to self-regenerate has seen vegetation struggle to establish as it burns off in the summer months.

NE and FE have previously agreed to remove hogging and concrete at other sites across the forest including, Stoney Cross, Bentley, Beaulieu Aerodrome and Leadon Hall. We can see no reason why the same approach of removing the hogging and reusing on other carparks within the forest, cannot be applied the area at Cadnam Cricket pitch and some sites along the A35 to give vegetation a better chance of establishing.

Drawing number B2286/18/07LS as submitted states that as part of the 5-year Landscape and Ecology Management and established plan regular inspection and maintenance visits 4/5per annum will be carried out to check the rates of grass, wildflower and native shrub and woodland species.

We note from the National Park ecologist response to the discharge of condition 13 that Natural England have not sought to provide detailed comments on this condition and as such we ask the Natural England Appointed Verderer to speak with officers to clarify the following:

1. Can the hogging be removed at the sites (and reused at FE car parks) to give the grass and vegetation a better chance of establishing?
2. Can the NFCDA be included in future visits and discussions around compensatory habitats and grazing?
3. Can NE please consider the detrimental impacts associated with loss of grazing in their advice on planning applications and look to secure a net increase in grazing as well as biodiversity net gain.

We look forward to your response.

Contact: Charlotte@realnewforest.org