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Deputy Surveyor
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Dear John

LATCHMORE BROOK RESTORATION PROJECT

I have now completed looking into the tree felling works at Latchmore Brook that you raised with me when we visited the area at the end of October and in your follow-up letter of 8 November.

It is clear that some of the tree felling we have undertaken in the vicinity of Latchmore Brook is not covered by the felling approvals that are in place. There are three areas of felling outside the approved areas, which broadly correspond to the plan you provided, with the felling having taken place in two phases during 2011 and 2012. The trees felled were typical of the Open Forest, being self-sown and of various species including willow, birch and Scots pine.

As you know, we did gain approval for tree felling associated with the wetland restoration at Latchmore, however it is clear that this inadequately anticipated the extent of tree felling required, for example to enable making safe of wartime ordnance. Subsequent supervisory errors are at the root of the tree felling not corresponding to the approval that was in place.

The situation outlined above does not live up to the high standards that we set ourselves and wish to operate by, and all staff involved have been spoken with, and we will be communicating the 'lesson learnt' to all operational managers and supervisors at a meeting this month. The area at Latchmore will, in 2013, be subject of a planning application for the works associated with restoration of the stream and mire, and therefore we do not intend any further actions in the area at this time.

The felling of trees outside of the areas where approval is in place has also been notified to Director Forest Enterprise England and also Forest Services. HLS Board members are also aware.

Yours sincerely



Michael Seddon
Deputy Surveyor