

Friends of Latchmore to the Forestry Commission

EMAIL

Subject: Tree Felling within the Latchmore Catchment Area

Date: Tue, 15 Mar 2016 12:36:19 +0000

From: Ailsa Farrand

To: Bruce Rothnie, Alison Barnes, Steve Avery, Verderers of the New Forest, James Cross, Sue Bennison, Colin Draper, Hyde Parish Council, Julie Lunt, Lisa Foster.

Dear Bruce

Thank you for your reply to my letter of 23rd January 2016 which raised concerns about the tree felling in Islands Thorns/Studley Wood.

I understand that the three maps you kindly sent were the Forestry Commission Forest Design Plans (FDP) dated 2007 – although they do not give that name on any of their titles or legend notes.

Of immediate concern, is that they do not indicate the areas around Studley Castle as being classified as “Ancient and Semi-natural Woodland” which I pointed out was shown in the Crown Lands Management Plan 2008 - map B 3.10, and the additional conditions that this should require. This important classification is confirmed by the current Natural England “Magic” on-line database, a copy of which I attach covering the area of Islands Thorns.

My letter of 23 January explained that it is unacceptable for tree-felling to take place while an Environmental Impact Assessment is in preparation for the Latchmore Brook catchment. In particular the e-mail of 26 May 2015 between Lisa Foster (Richard Buxton - Solicitors) and Steve Avery (copied to Julie Lunt (NE)) requesting that *“.. the Council will undertake whatever steps are necessary to ensure that no works will take place before the planning consent is determined, including of course consultation on the ES, which is still is being prepared and not expected until July 2015.”* was indeed given the reassurance from the New Forest National Park Authority that *“ ...Having spoken with Bruce Rothnie at the FC I am able to allay your concerns about works taking place at this time.”*

Your contention that *“ The tree felling work will not invalidate the findings of the EIA because there are no material changes to the structure and function of the woodland and streams as a result of the work.”* is clearly untenable.

These three Forest Design Plan maps were produced in 2007 using an out-of-date approach which did not take into account the whole-catchment-scale methodology which the EIA will be required to deliver. Ancient broadleaf woodland has already been felled to the north-west of the stream producing large open spaces, along with the felling and hauling of more than 100 trees for timber towards Studley Castle. Along the stream itself, planned for partially infill, trees have already been felled, together with the majority of trees already marked for removal. All this at the top of the catchment which will affect conditions all the way downstream.

Clearly this is contrary to the practice expected in these special circumstances where the legislation requires that the potential significant effects are all taken into account in delivering any conservation objectives.

I would appreciate your early response to these points.

Could you also explain to me the 50 trees per hectare rule on felling as I am rather confused along it would seem with the Verderers!

Best wishes

Ailsa Farrand

For Friends of Latchmore