



# FORWOODS

Director - Mr M. Brocklehurst BSc (Hons) MICFor  
24 Highfields Close, Ashby,  
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Ribble Valley Borough Council  
Planning section  
Council Offices  
Church Walk  
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BB7 2RA

9 August 2024

Dear Ribble Valley Planning Department,

**Prior Notification for the Construction of New Forestry Access Road  
- The Duchy of Lancaster, Fair Oak Fell, Whitewell Estate.**

A prior notification application is being submitted for the creation of a forestry access road at Fair Oak Fell, part of the Duchy of Lancaster's Whitewell Estate. This application follows on from permissions under a previous application (Your Ref :- 3/2023/1044), which was never enacted. Following a review of the proposals by the ownership, a new application is being submitted on the same basis as the last approval of application, with a revised route proposed and new documentation supporting the application for Permitted Development to avoid the sensitivities of the Biological Heritage Site (Local Wildlife Site) that was previously accounted for.

The application proposes the creation of an access track to facilitate the felling and removal of timber from two conifer stands. The proposed track will extend for around 2.1km in length and will have a typical width of 4m. The track is intended to consist of a geotextile permeable membrane topped by 350mm depth of 150mm to dust with locally sourced aggregate, of a dark grey colour advised by Elliot Lorimer of the Forest of Bowland AONB (now Forest of Bowland National Landscapes) team by email.

The track is needed for the proposed felling and restocking of existing woodlands, as well as an extensive area of new woodland creation on adjoining land which is being assessed and designed with the Forestry Commission Woodland Planning Grant to account for input from Natural England and other key stakeholders. The forestry road is initially necessary to allow forestry vehicles to access to the woodlands to fell the timber and move it to roadside. From here it can be collected by lorries for delivery to local markets. The track will then subsequently also provide future access to the area of woodland creation for the afforestation works and on-going maintenance for the site.

The timber could not be extracted without the use of specialist forestry machinery and these vehicles could not access the woodlands without a new access track being created. The ground is too wet and uneven to allow the



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vehicles to travel to the woodlands without a surfaced track. In this regard, the proposed forestry roads are considered to be reasonably necessary for forestry purposes.

The fields which are now selected to pass through, consist of existing agricultural access across fields and through field gateways. This revised route will now entirely avoid the sites non-statutorily designated as Biological Heritage Sites which were ecologically surveyed during the summer of 2023. The route of the track is now sited and planned to offer the no impact on the fields or their management programme under Countryside Stewardship which seeks for ecological gain. All other alternative routes have been considered and turned down and this route is now identified as the least impacting to access the timber and in the future provide a wider range of habitats with the afforestation and landscape design proposals this is linked to.

This submission is made under Schedule 2 Part 6 Class E of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.

Class E sets out that the formation, alteration or maintenance of a private way is permitted development when reasonably necessary for forestry purposes.

I can confirm that the proposals do not consist of, or include the provision of, a dwelling; are not within 3km of an aerodrome; are not within 25m of the metalled portion of a trunk road or classified road; and do not concern a building for storing fuel. Given this, the proposals are considered to comply with E.I and are permitted development for forestry management.

To comply with the conditions laid out at E.2, this application forms the notification to the Local Planning Authority required under paragraph 1a.

We would be grateful to receive confirmation that further details on the siting and means of construction of the private way are not required and that the works can commence within a reasonable timescale.

Should any further details be required please let me know.

Yours sincerely,



Charles Cuthbert BSc (Hons) MICFor  
Forwoods Forestry and Woodlands Consultancy Ltd.

