

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

18/00843/FUL Woodland Farm Wood

27.9.18

The Leicestershire Local Access Forum (LLAF) would wish to comment on the current application for a major change of use of a site within the National Forest

This is a very popular walking area being comparatively near urban concentrations and giving access to the neighbouring Hollow Oak Wood, Burroughs Woods, Peartree Woods and Martinshaw Woods. There are currently well used paths around this tranquil area and this application will bring a different sort of user into the area with adverse affects for **the** other users and the wildlife in this extensive woodland block. We are already seeing some of this in that the site has been being used for camping without planning permission.

Local enquiries have suggested that this has **already** resulted in problems for walkers with tents pitched on the paths.

The R49 bridleway, up the west side of the wood, would, it would appear, provide the vehicular access from the Desford road. As the site is one quite large field back from the road, this will mean vehicles will be sharing the track with riders, walkers and cyclists for quite a distance. If you are minded to approve, passing places will be needed. There is already a lot of existing traffic along the 360m of this route to the road and if you add in the construction traffic this track is going to suffer to the detriment of other users.

Footpath R43 running E-W across the top of the site only touches it briefly and should be accommodated

It is part of our remit to encourage people to use our paths and open spaces for their general health and well being but certain activities having negative impacts for other users should be resisted.

We feel that this application should not be approved bearing in mind the greater good for the majority of users.

It is in any event outside the built up area and any construction can hardly be described as in support of an agricultural activity

The LLAF is an independent statutory body, set up as a result of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW) 2000, and exists to represent the interests of everyone concerned with access to the countryside and the public rights of way network including footpaths, bridleways and byways, cycleways and areas of open access.

Section 94 of the CROW act makes it a statutory function of the Forum to give advice to a range of bodies, including local authorities, on access issues in respect of land use planning matters.

Ministers have advised that in particular forums were asked to focus on the impact and options for minimising possible adverse effects of development proposals in respect of future public access to land

To the best of our knowledge these woodlands were created with public funds under the National Forest Tender Scheme and these current plans would not have been in the application for those funds. We understand that the applicants claim the development will not affect the agreed public access but it is hard to see how this can be so as walkers and horse riders will inevitably be put off by all the activity inherent in the proposal. in any event there is mention of a bund round the site presumably to keep the public out during the build phase which could be a long period

John Howells, Chairman & Roy Denney Vice Chairman
Leicestershire Local Access Forum,
C/o Room 700, County Hall, Leicester, LE3 8RJ
(www.leics.gov.uk/laf)
Telephone - County Hall 0116 305 7086