

Peak District Local Access Forum

Date: 19 June 2014

Item: 9

Title: Review of Directions to Restrict Access

Author: Sue Smith

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of the report is to notify the Forum on the consultations for the review of long-term directions for open access land exclusions. The report asks the Local Access Forum to consider any response they may wish to make.

Background

There are 3 sites which are presently being reviewed. Public consultations took place in March/April 2014. The Access Sub-group provided a response which is attached in Appendix 1. Further rounds of consultations are required as the directions are proposed to be varied.

Information on open access land consultations and restrictions is hosted and administered by Natural England at www.naturalengland.org/openaccess.

Deer Hill, Meltham

The rifle range is outside the National Park; its fall of shot extends into the National Park. The directions are being reviewed in conjunction with Natural England as the Relevant Authority for the part of the site outside the National Park.

The Forum considered the original directions in 2004 and 2007 and the review and reassessment during 2009 and 2010. For this latest review, the direction was supported subject to the fall of shot zones being kept under review. The Forum would like to see the improvements previously negotiated and agreed with the Club sustained, but with more improvements made over time.

The Club has confirmed that the directions are required for the purposes for which they were originally applied for. Consideration is being given to the potential for structured public access on a permissive basis for those wishing to access this area for walking as well as climbing.

Subject to further consultation, it is proposed that the existing directions are varied as follows:

- Extend the end dates to provide a further 6 years
- Merge the directions for the areas within the National Park (Sites B&C)
- Amend the boundary for the area outside the National Park (Site A) to concur with the fall of shot zones.

Forum members are asked for their views on the consultation proposal and to consider whether they wish to make any changes to the LAF's response attached in Appendix 1. The outcome of this will constitute the Forum's formal response to the consultation.

West Nab, Bradfield

The land is used for clay pigeon shooting and gun testing. The Forum considered the original directions in 2004 and the review during 2009.

For this latest review, the Forum wished to see signing and waymarking implemented and maintained by the owner in future and considered that there could be scope to significantly reduce the restrictions if no shooting was taking place. The land is an important link route and measures to maintain access should be guaranteed for the long term.

The Authority has met the owner regarding the review of this long-term direction. He has confirmed that the direction is required for the purposes for which it was originally applied for. The direction is conditional on the linear access route being available at all times and to run along the southern boundary of the access land.

Subject to further consultation, it is proposed that the existing direction is varied as follows:

- Extend the end date to provide a further 6 years
- The linear access to follow the southern boundary of the access land
- The linear access to be available at all times

Forum members are asked for their views on the consultation proposal and to consider whether they wish to make any changes to the LAF's response attached in Appendix 1. The outcome of this will constitute the Forum's formal response to the consultation.

Diggle Rifle Range

The site is a rifle range with associated safety zones. The Forum considered the original directions in 2004 and the review during 2009.

For this latest review the Forum supported the direction subject to verification of use and to aim to allow permissive access at certain times with scope for an access point through the site from Diggle and the rifle Range to Broadhead Moss and for climbing on Ravenstone Rocks.

The Authority has met with the Club regarding the review of this long-term direction. The Club has confirmed that the direction is required for the purposes for which it was originally applied for. The revision of the fall of shot zones has resulted in a reduced area of restriction and consideration is being given to the potential for public access which may arise as a result of that.

Subject to further consultation, it is proposed that the existing directions are varied as follows:

- Extend the end dates to provide a further 6 years
- Amend the boundary to concur with the fall of shot zones.

Forum members are asked for their views on the consultation proposal and to consider whether they wish to make any changes to the LAF's response attached in Appendix 1. The outcome of this will constitute the Forum's formal response to the consultation.

Recommendation

- 1. That the LAF considers whether they wish to make responses to the current consultations.**

Appendix 1



Peak District Local Access Forum
c/o Peak District National Park
Authority
Aldern House
Baslow Road
Bakewell
Derbyshire DE45 1AE

Sue Smith
Access Officer
Peak District National Park Authority
Aldern House
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Derbyshire
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29th April, 2014

Dear Sue

Consultation on Review of Directions at Deer Hill, Diggle and West Nab.

Following consideration by the Access Sub Group of the Peak District Local Access Forum's Access Sub Group on 8th April and consultation on a draft letter, I am writing to set out our comments

In the Peak District National Park, the National Park Authority has the statutory responsibility for dealing with long-term restrictions in consultation with the Local Access Forum, other relevant consultees and the public. The cases below are at their second review under the CROW Act.

The role of the Access Forum is to advise on the improvement of public access and opportunities for the purpose of open-air recreation and enjoyment of the area. In that context the Access Sub Group considered the notifications below having regard to the interests of the public in having access to the land, whether the restriction is still necessary in relation to its original purpose and whether its extent and nature are still appropriate.

With these criteria in mind, our responses to the 3 current consultations are that the LAF would welcome more access in the future if opportunities arose and/or circumstances allowed it. More specifically:

1. **Deer Hill Range** - Sites A, B and C - This review was raised at the 13th March LAF meeting and referred to the Sub Group for detailed response. The rifle range is outside the National Park boundary near Meltham, but the fall of shot area within it. At the previous review, there was agreement on modified fall of shot areas being contained within the area of ownership, and to some climbing which is enjoyed and popular. The climbing venue is called Shooters' Nab. Most

of the climbing is on, or to the right of, a feature called the Rostrum. This conveniently falls just outside the fall of shot area. The same is true of the descent. We gather that there is not an issue with climbers about the rest of the venue at this time. The fall of shot area must be kept under review. If it changes the area of open access will need to be reviewed. We gather that there is no West Yorkshire/Pennines LAF for the area outside the National Park and our comments on the extent of the direction are also pertinent to the usage of the rifle range. It is understood that use by the Police by agreement with the Club has increased. Our conclusion and advice is that we would like to see improvements previously negotiated and agreed with the Club (including Climbing) sustained, but with more improvements made over time (e.g. particularly Guided Walks which should be accommodated), and gather these are under consideration.

2. **Diggle Rifle Range** - it seems as though this Range is not as intensively used now by the police, but firing is in all directions and those participating can turn up at any time with the main shooting area being the Range. Our view was that the aim should be to allow permissive access at certain times with scope for a nice access point through the site from Diggle and the rifle Range to Broadhead Moss and for climbing on Ravenstone Rocks.

3. **West Nab** - the land is used for clay pigeon shooting, and rifle/pistol testing. There is a concessionary linear route (mainly through Open Country), which links from the south - western boundary to West Nab. Shooting takes place at and is conditional on this linear access being available. On a recent visit by Terry Howard (LAF Member), there was no signage or waymarking on the route agreed, and it would appear people are gaining access anywhere from along the adjacent road over the broken down wall. As the site is completely open from the road anyone wanting to cross the site can see if shooting is taking place. We wish to see signing and waymarking implemented and maintained by the owner in future. If there is no shooting taking place, is there scope to significantly reduce the restrictions or even for there to be no restrictions? Although not discussed in the Sub Group, I suggest that the link path could become definitive to give greater certainty in the long term as not all the land it crosses is designated as access to open country? This is important as the area is very popular and links to other access areas round about.

I hope this information is sufficient and the comments helpful and look forward to hearing the outcome of negotiations and decisions in each case please.

Yours sincerely

John
John Thompson

Chair, Access Sub Group and Vice Chair
Peak District Local Access Forum

Copies to: Edwina Edwards (Chair), all LAF members, Mike Rhodes (Secretary) and Gill Millward (Derbyshire County Council)