



STORRINGTON SULLINGTON AND WASHINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Local Green Spaces Addendum

Longbury Hill Wood

January 2018

Longbury Hill Wood

This is an area of dense pine, mature woodland and Rhododendron, and is situated in the Heath Common ward of the historic parish (originally the late Saxon Estate) of Washington. It extends approximately 10 hectares (Appendix 1), enclosed by the large wooded gardens of residential properties to the east, Hampers Lane bridleway to the west, a long access track to Rosebay Cottage to the south and Rock Road to the north (Appendix 2).

Heath Common lies in the north-west corner of the parish, on Lower Greensand, and Longbury Hill marks the area with two summits. The Anglo-Saxon Washington charters of 947 and 963 both name it as 'Benna's Hill' or 'Tumulus' (Appendix 3), and remains of what is believed to be the ancient boundary-bank is partly visible in the woodland just south of the access track to Rosebay Cottage (Appendix 4), and which is a uniquely surviving feature. It is one of several sections of earthwork bank discovered in the parish and which is the subject of an academic paper in the Sussex Archaeological Collections 143 (2005) by Emeritus Professor Robin Milner-Gulland. More significantly, a surviving stretch of embanked and ditched Roman road half a mile to the east, which later formed part of the same ancient boundary, was designated a scheduled Ancient Monument in 2017 (*Historic England, List entry number: 1448051*) (Appendix 5)

The modern housing of Heath Common and earlier sand-working, as well as pine trees, now encroach on the eastern summit of Longbury Hill. This remains a prominent landmark, on which philanthropist Vera Pragnell installed a calvary in the 1920s (Appendix 6). It symbolised the free association of individuals who lived in the surrounding land, purchased by Vera to create a 'back to the land community'. The western summit of mainly plantation Scots pine and mixed broadleaf woodland, with good views, lies just outside the defined Built-Up area. In late 2017, a felling licence for the pine crop was granted, but in the 50 years it was left unmanaged, the trees and Rhododendron became a significant valued landscape feature and is common to the locality (Appendix 7).

Aside from its historic and cultural value, the privately-owned woodland provides a tranquil 'green' corridor between the public highway of Rock Road, and the quiet lanes and bridleways of Heath Common, and an effective sound barrier against traffic noise from the nearby A24. It also forms part of an attractive habitat for a wide range of birds and wildlife, closely situated between Warren Hill, owned by the National Trust, and Sandgate Park, itself a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest. Data from the Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre (Appendix 8) record sightings of 150 protected and designated species within 0.5km of the area. Three ponds exist within 500m of the woodland, and are well connected to the site, indicating that the protected Great Crested Newt *Triturus Cristatus*, could potentially be using it as a terrestrial habitat (Appendix 9). A juvenile female of the species was sighted in nearby Georges Lane, and reported to the Records Centre in December 2017 (Appendix 10).

The woodland is regarded as an integral feature of the surrounding 'Heath Common Lanes', being close to the community it benefits. It is not currently accessible to the public, but its boundary with the public bridleway of Hampers Lane provides attractive conditions and recreational value to residents, walkers, horse riders and hikers. This is evidenced by more than 100 responses to a planning application associated with a tree felling and forestry management scheme (Appendix 11, 12). It is hoped the scheme's scrub clearance of the invasive *Rhododendron Ponticum* and tree re-planting will greatly improve the biodiversity of this valued woodland, and expose the ancient parish boundary, believed to be a uniquely surviving feature of this historic landscape.

Annex A: Evidence Base

The list below contains all those documents referenced in the Longbury Hill, Green Spaces Report. Please contact Storrington & Sullington Parish Council for information on how to obtain copies of any of these documents.

	English Woodlands Forestry Limited: Supporting Statement for planning application DC/17/2117 in relation to a forestry management licence application at Longbury Hill Woos - (p1.1 ref to size of woodland) APPENDIX 1 Document http://snafpacc.horsham.gov.uk/AnitePublicDocs/01462731.pdf
	Location maps - Longbury Hill Wood - APPENDIX 2 Document
	Milner-Gulland, R, 'The Washington Estate: New Evidence of An Ancient Boundary' in Sussex Archaeological Collections, Vol 143, (2005) 205-14. APPENDIX 3 Document (pp 2,3,7)
	Ancient Boundary - APPENDIX 4 Document
	Ancient Monument - APPENDIX 5 Document
	Hare, C, 'The Washington Story', (2000) 64, 65, 68, 69,77 APPENDIX 6 Document
	Woodland Scenes - APPENDIX 7 Document
	Ecology Data Summary - Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre - APPENDIX 8 Document
	Protected Species Walkover Survey - AEW Ltd - for DC/17/2117 planning application site area only, Longbury Hill Wood - APPENDIX 9 Document http://snafpacc.horsham.gov.uk/AnitePublicDocs/01472954.pdf
	Great Crested Newt - APPENDIX 10 Image
	Public Responses - Horsham District Planning responses DC/17/2117 Longbury Hill Wood APPENDIX 11 Document. http://snafpacc.horsham.gov.uk/AniteIM.WebSearch/Results.aspx?grdResultsP=2
	Save Our Woods - APPENDIX 12 Document

Longbury Hill Wood

Planning Portal Reference: PP-06395770



English
Woodlands
Forestry Ltd

New Vehicular Access Justification and Design Considerations:1. *Current Situation*

The area of woodland known as Longbury Hill Wood extends to some 10ha in size, putting it well above the Forestry Commission minimum requirements of 3ha for UK Forestry Standard (UKFS) woodland management plan support. Access provision for vehicles, forestry equipment and especially HGV to remove harvested forest product is inadequate as the adjacent Hampers Lane is a narrow minor road with limited passing places and the access out onto Rock Road has very poor visibility. Because of this poor access the woodland has been neglected so that the existing crops have been under thinned and the woodland has become infested with invasive non-native *Rhododendron ponticum*.

2. *Purpose*

The purpose of the proposed new vehicular access is to enable vehicles and machinery on site to undertake management and particularly to enable HGV to deliver plant and remove harvested forest product (round timber).

3. *Forestry Justification (see Plan 2)*

A significant proportion of the woodland (Cpt. 1e 5.14ha) is mature pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) plantation established approximately 50 years ago as a commercial forestry crop. This crop is now ready for harvesting with the resultant timber to go to local sawmills. The remainder of the area (Cpts. 1b & 1c) fronting onto Rock Road is overstood (neglected) coppice of chestnut (*Castanea sativa*), birch (*Betulus spp.*) and oak (*Quercus robur*) that requires cutting to regenerate the woodland with the cut material going into the local woodfuel market. There are good local markets for the products to be harvested and the work will be undertaken by local contractors, therefore supporting the local rural economy.

4. *Wildlife and Amenity Considerations*

The proposed new vehicular access and hardstanding (loading bay) occupies a very small part of the overall site, equating to approximately 0.4% of land area. The remaining areas of woodland (Cpts. 1a & 1d) not mentioned in 3. above are also mature with potentially harvestable timber but have been identified as retention to maintain an element of woodland cover and to reduce the visual and wildlife habitat impacts of the proposed harvesting detailed above. Throughout the whole area of woodland there is an infestation of non-native *Rhododendron ponticum* that has a very negative impact on native flora and fauna. As part of the timber harvesting project the *Rhododendron* will also be removed through cutting, clearing, mulching and herbicide application resulting in vastly improved woodland habitat quality. All work will be undertaken in line with UKFS and European Protected Species (EPS) guidelines. The timber harvesting operations provide opportunity to regenerate the woodland and diversify structure and species composition.

5. *Vegetation Clearance Approval*

Consent to fell trees or clear vegetation is NOT being sought from Horsham District Council. ALL proposed tree felling is covered under Forestry Commission felling licence FLA 019/180/17-18 as per the 1967 Forestry Act. This licence is conditional on the felled areas

Reply to:
Cocking Sawmills
Cocking
Midhurst
West Sussex GU29 0HS

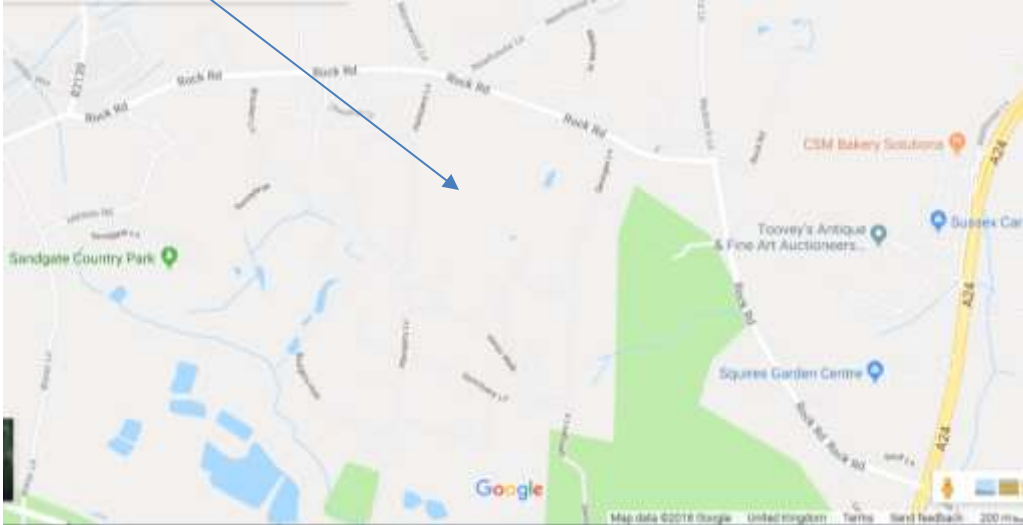
Brownings Farm
Blackboys
Uckfield
East Sussex TN22 5HG

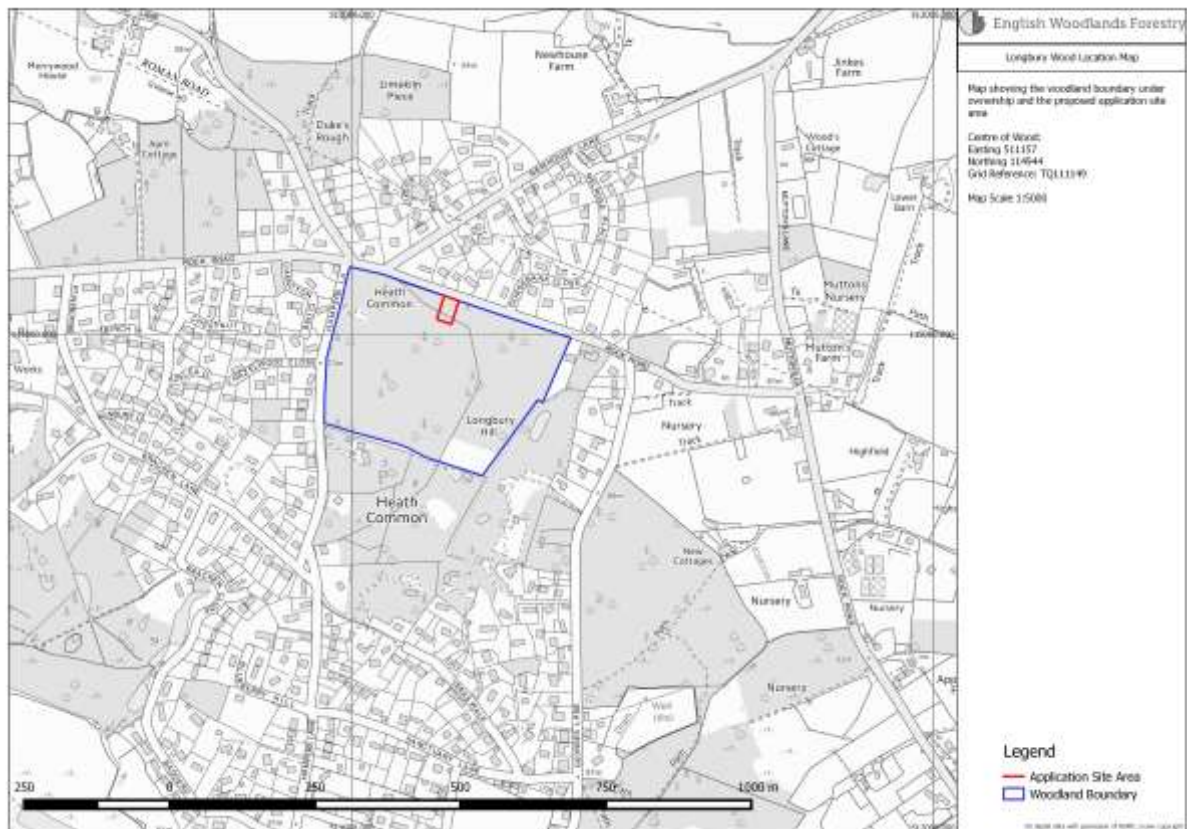
Company Reg No. 09472697
VAT Registration GB 221 2270 64

Longbury Hill Wood: Satellite image (Google Maps)



Longbury Hill Wood (Google Maps)





Longbury Wood Location Map (Legend) available on the Horsham District Council website:

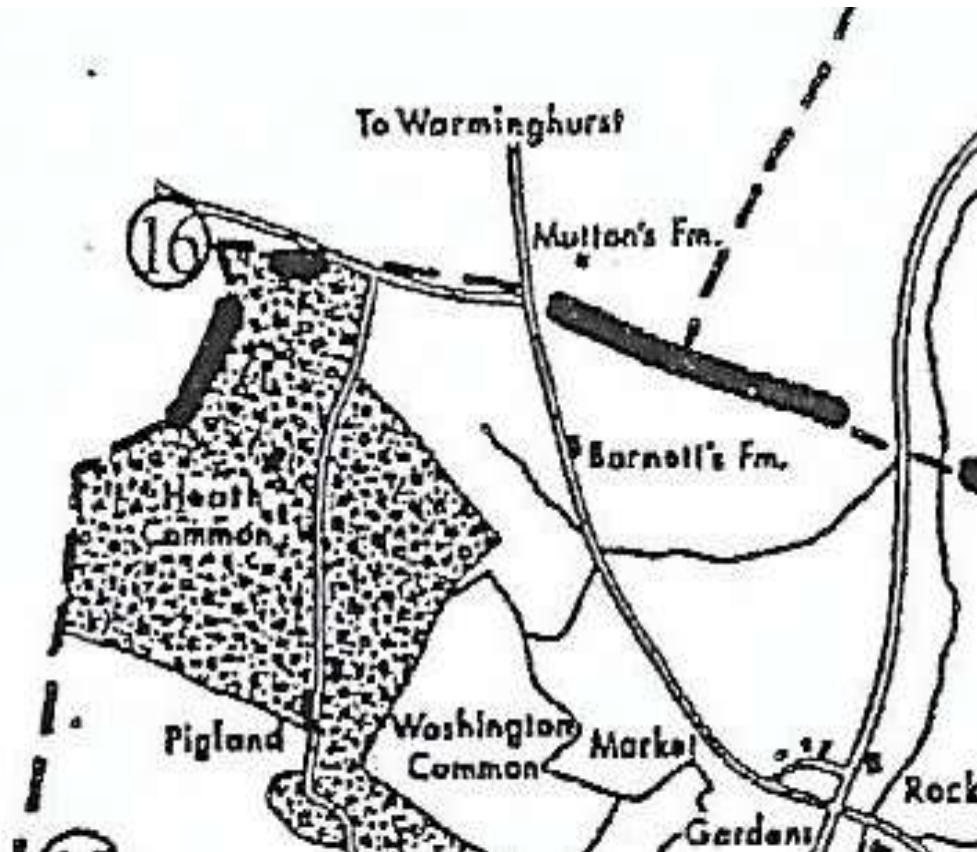
<http://snafpacc.horsham.gov.uk/AnitePublicDocs/01458566.pdf>

Map showing the woodland boundary (blue) under ownership and the proposed application site area.

Document submitted by English Woodlands Forestry on behalf of the applicant for planning application: DC/17/2117 - Proposed creation of new vehicular access into woodland from Rock Road, laying of hardstanding to form stacking area, loading bay and access track associated with forestry management activities:

<https://public-access.horsham.gov.uk/public-access/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage>

Extract from *Washington, Ashington and Wiston c 1875* (Adapted from the *Victoria County History (Sussex)* by permission.). Longbury Hill Wood (Benna's Hill) labelled 16 (Heath Common). Continuous black line indicates visible traces of Washington Estate bank. No 16 marks the probable locations of boundary-points (combining both charters) as discussed in text (Fig 10.)



Extract: Milner-Gulland, R, 'The Washington Estate: New Evidence of An Ancient Boundary' in *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, Vol 143, (2005) 205-14.

16. Benna's Hill: Doubtless Longbury Hill or its slightly lower twin to the west: the boundary goes between them to a triborder with Warminghurst and Sullington. On this stretch, and to the east, there are other places at which the bank might be visible, but the whole area is infested with impenetrable rhododendron scrub. The boundary runs close to, then merges with, the Roman road now called the 'Greensand Way' (from Pulborough or Hardham to Barcombe Mills) — here identified, incredibly, as late as 1953. From Muttons Farm to Spring Gardens the Roman road is visible as a hedge-bank within a shaw, sometimes hollowed out (as a later road?). Where it is a bank, it may represent the Roman *agger* — but it is more likely that it is in fact the Anglo-Saxon boundary bank, following the course of a derelict highway. This impression is reinforced on the east side of the A24,

where a characteristic bank runs along the north side of a small stream and up a steep hill towards Upper Chancton (the modern access-road avoids this stretch). Then it is lost in ploughland. Close by, the famous late-Saxon coin hoard was found in the 1860s.¹³

Image provided by Horsham District Council. Approximate location of the ancient boundary of the Saxon Estate of Washington, shown by broken red line. It runs parallel with Rock Road inside Longbury Hill Wood (outlined in blue), and across Heath Common towards the A283, Storrington Road. Original Map from *The Washington Estate: New Evidence Of An Ancient Boundary* - APPENDIX 3



Access track (southern boundary of Longbury Hill Wood) to Rosebay Cottage from Hampers Lane - close to what is believed to be part of the Saxon boundary bank (see next page)
 Map image © Crown Copyright 2017.
 All rights reserved. West Sussex County Council 100023447 (2012)



Traces of what is believed to be the Saxon boundary bank extending from north to south, not far from Rosebay Cottage access, is partly clear though eroded. Author's dog in the foreground

Looking north: Longbury Hill Wood near its boundary with Rosebay Cottage access track, Hampers Lane



Traces of what is believed to be the Saxon boundary bank extending from north to south, by Rosebay Cottage access, is partly clear though eroded. Author's dog in the foreground.

Looking east: The edge of Longbury Hill Wood (left) & Rosebay Cottage access track (centre), Hampers Lane

Historic England

Advice Report

25 August 2017

Case Name: Section of Roman road at Rock, north of Washington, West Sussex

Case Number: 1444710

Background

Historic England is assessing a section of the Roman road near the hamlet of Rock, Washington in West Sussex for scheduling.

Asset(s) under Assessment

Facts about the asset(s) can be found in the Annex(es) to this report.

Annex	List Entry Number	Name	Heritage Category	HE Recommendation
1	1448051	Section of Roman road north of Rock	Scheduling	Add to Schedule

Visits

Date	Visit Type
13 March 2017	Partial inspection

Context

The road is located to the south-south-east of Mutton's Farmhouse, a Grade II listed building.

Assessment

CONSULTATION

The owners, applicant, Historic Environment Record, County Archaeologist and local planning authority were consulted on the case details.

The APPLICANT responded stating that an added significance to this section of the Greensand Way is that it was reused later as the Anglo-Saxon boundary of Washington estate and parish, as described in two C10 charters. The road also continues on the far east side of the A24, on the same alignment, for a short stretch with a bank. The applicant is concerned about the future preservation of the monument as it has already been damaged by activity not requiring planning permission.

HISTORIC ENGLAND RESPONSE: the History section has been amended to include reference to the Anglo-Saxon boundary. Other sections of the Roman Greensand Way are thought to remain along its route, but it would be more appropriate to assess stretches separately where they are geographically discrete if they survive well.

No other responses were received.

DISCUSSION

The 1979 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act states monuments are scheduled by reason of their archaeological, historic, architectural, artistic or traditional national importance. The Department of Culture Media and Sport's policy statement entitled 'Scheduled Monuments and Nationally Important but Non-Scheduled Monuments' (October 2013) sets out current Government policy on the identification, protection, conservation and investigation of nationally important ancient monuments. The statement includes

Extract from The Washington Story: The forgotten history of a downland village by Chris Hare, published by Washington Parish Council 2000

'.....The Sanctuary was always the free association of individuals; it was not a collective. Its symbol was a wooden cross or calvary, carved by a Belgian who stayed with Vera once, which stood at the top of Longbury Hill, or Calvary hill as it was then known. In the 'twenties', before the trees grew up, the cross could be seen for miles around.....' *p64,65*

Longbury Hill Wood



Left: Longbury Hill Wood, Rock Road (looking west): Scots pine, mixed broadleaf trees and Rhododendron on both sides of the road. They are a common feature of the Heath Common area. (Google Maps)



Right: Longbury Hill Wood Hampers Lane bridleway



Right: Longbury Hill Wood, (looking east) extending along Rock Road.



Ecological Data Search SxBRC/17/617 - Summary Report

An ecological data search was carried out for land at Longbury Hill Wood, Storrington on behalf of Zoe Savill (Washington Parish Council) on 18/12/2017.

The following datasets were consulted for this report:

	Requested	Radius/buffer size
Designated sites, habitats & ownership maps	Yes	0.5km
Protected, designated and invasive species	Yes	0.5km

Summary of results

Sites and habitats

Statutory sites	1 National Park
Non-statutory sites	1 LWS / 1 Notable Road Verge
Section 41 habitats	2 habitats
Ancient and/or ghyll woodland	Present

Protected and designated species

International designations	12 species	80 records
National designations	64 species	606 records
Other designations	137 species	943 records
Total	150 species	1,013 records
Invasive non-native	12 species	56 records

The report is compiled using data held by Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SxBRC) at the time of the request. SxBRC does not hold comprehensive species data for all areas. Even where data are held, a lack of records for a species in a defined geographical area does not necessarily mean that the species does not occur there – the area may simply not have been surveyed.

**This summary page may be published.
The full report and maps may not be published or otherwise shared.**

The data search report is valid until 18/12/2018 for the site named above.

The Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre is managed by the Sussex Wildlife Trust as a partnership project. Sussex Wildlife Trust is a company limited by guarantee under the Companies Act. Registered in England. Company No. 698851. Registered Charity No. 207005. VAT Registration No. 191 3059 69. Registered Office: Woods Mill, Henfield, West Sussex BN5 9SD. Tel: 01273 497521



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Protected Species Walkover Survey

**Longbury Hill Wood
Access Road**

**Rock Rd
Storrington
Pulborough
RH20 3AG**

**Thomas Johnson
17-036-WA
November 2017**

Registered Office: Birch Walk, Lower Street, Fittleworth, West Sussex, RH20 1JE
Registered in England and Wales No. 06527840

Extracts from comments by residents in response to the planning application serving the forestry works, reference DC/17/2117, and published on the Horsham District Council's publicly accessible planning portal:

<https://public-access.horsham.gov.uk/publicaccess/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage>

'My family and I moved here because of the very nature of the surroundings that we currently enjoy. We believe that this wooded, quiet and secluded environment enhances our lives and wellbeing. We live near the woodland in question (Hazelwood Close) and walk past it at least four times a day with our child and dog.We feel that both the nature and aesthetic of the wooded and dense surroundings enhances our day to day living....'

Hazlewood Close resident.

:

'.....The whole area is peaceful and has so much wild life and fauna....'

Hampers Lane resident

Longbury Hill Wood is a sanctuary for flora and fauna

Rock Road resident

'Longbury Hill Wood is within the Heath Common area, a unique pocket of land that many people care about. The magnificent Scots pine trees are a special feature.....'

Bracken Lane

The amenity value of Longbury Hill Wood is significant. It is an area that provides families and dogs freedom and exercise.

Thakeham Copse resident

The Society's interest in this area arises from its location between Sandgate Park and Warren Hill. Not only does it form part of the wildlife corridor between these two sites, but its value as a wildlife habitat is further enhanced by the low level of human activity in the area.

Sandgate Conservation Society

Articles published in the West Sussex County Times, 19th October 2017

Concerns over future of woodland - see page 2



Longbury Hill Wood, Hampers Lane: Residents campaigning to save the woodland



Concerns for future of village woodland site

Sarah Page

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01243 700744 | @sarahpageWS

Concerns are growing over plans to build a new access road and hard-standing area on a village woodland site.

Julian Hanbury-Aggs is seeking planning permission from Horsham District Council for the access road at Longbury Hill Wood off Rock Road, Storrington, to 'harvest and extract timber.'

But worried residents fear that thousands of Scots pine trees are to be felled and that the works will lead to

increased traffic in the area, noise and air pollution and that it would be detrimental to wildlife. Some are also concerned that re-planting might not take place and that, eventually, the land could be used for housing.

However, Washington Parish Council says it is raising no objections to the proposals after noting that the tree felling is subject to licensing from the Forestry Commission and is conditional on the felled areas being re-stocked.

But dozens of nearby residents remain concerned

and have submitted protest letters to the district council.

They say that Storrington already suffers from poor air quality because of heavy traffic and this could worsen if the woodland - which acts as a buffer - were felled.

They say that the proposed access route is approaching a blind road summit where cars already speed. And they fear the access might attract flytippers and travellers.

Alistair Nicholls, of Hampers Lane, Storrington, said: 'It's clear from being a regular road user along Rock Road that heavy goods

vehicles of the type used for timber removal are not appropriate for this road. The blind summit is regularly ignored by car drivers who do not slow down.'

He added that a rapid and dramatic alteration of the woodland because of felling would have a serious effect on wildlife and called for multiple surveys to be undertaken.

Another resident - Craig Theobald, of Rock Road - has also put forward objections. He said: 'We are already subjected to traffic noise in what should be a quiet area.'

Great Crested Newt reported to Sussex Wildlife Trust.
Possibly a juvenile female. Found 18.12.17, Georges Lane
RH20 3JH.

