

FRIENDS OF HOPWAS WOOD

AUGUST NEWSLETTER 2012



PROPOSED THINNING OF HOPWAS WOOD

The Friends of Hopwas Wood have been notified that some 12000 trees are to be felled as part of a woodland thinning programme.

The Committee were informed by Tarmac on 16th July that they had applied for a Felling Licence from the Forestry Commission for thinning works throughout their part of the Wood, commencing late August/early September. Having contacted the Forestry Commission we have been informed that a Licence was issued on 24th July, for a period of 5 years. The Licence indicates that up to 4415 trees are to be removed. Having raised our concerns with Tarmac it appears that this represents around 10% of the trees in their ownership and will relate to removal of the younger trees in order to allow others to mature. In addition a Licence has also been issued to the Ministry of Defence (MoD) for thinning works in their area of ownership including forest wide ride widening to re-establish vehicular access. The Licence indicates that up to 7769 trees may be removed.

Our particular concerns have been raised with the MoD regarding the extent of the felling in the section of Wood bordering the canal from Wood Bridge northwards where up to 5000 trees are proposed to be removed. We are awaiting confirmation of what this represents as a percentage of the total number of trees in this area.

In addition we understand that if protected natural habitats are affected it will be the responsibility of the felling contractors to ensure that the appropriate legislation is complied with.

The Committee recognise that the responsibility for controlling felling in the Wood rests with the Forestry Commission in accordance with Government policy and as they have issued the Licences, Tarmac and the MoD do have a legal right to carry out felling in accordance with those Licences. There is no statutory requirement for the Commission to consult anyone, particularly when it relates to thinning and if we had not been informed by Tarmac we would not have been aware until the works commenced. The Committee have made a number of other interested parties aware of the situation and will continue to keep a watching brief.

LOCAL PLAN STRATEGY: PROPOSED SUBMISSION CONSULTATION

We have been notified by Lichfield District Council of the above consultation which runs until 10th September 2012. As the name implies it is a strategic document and will be followed by a Local Plan Allocations document in due course. The consultation is to allow comment on the `soundness` of the Local Plan Strategy that is to say, is the Plan justified, effective and consistent with national policy. The Committee will be assessing the document and will comment if appropriate. You can view the document for yourself at www.lichfielddc.gov.uk/localplan .

WEB SITE

With the help of Lichfield District Council we have now re-established a web site. There is still some work to be done before it is readily available but we anticipate that this will be complete by the end of August so you will then be able to search under Friends of Hopwas Wood. We would obviously like your comment.

COMMITTEE

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