

KINGSWOOD PEAK VENTURE – STATEMENT REGARDING TREE REMOVAL TO ACCOMMODATE QUAD BIKE COURSE EXTENSION

Introduction

Kingswood has submitted a planning application for development at Peak Venture, near Penistone, Barnsley. The development includes a new reception building together with staff room and extension of quad bikes course (retrospective) and associated small storage/maintenance buildings.

Barnsley Council has requested that additional information is provided in support of the quad bikes course extension (retrospective) to explain the trees removed and any measures to protect the remaining trees from development.

This note has been provided in response to this request.

Consented quad bike course at Peak Venture

Barnsley Council has previously granted consent (reference 2007/0204) for a quad bikes course.

The approved quad bikes course measuring 37 x 14 metres occupies a strip of flat, unvegetated, land lying between 2 areas of existing plantation woodland.

Kingswood implemented this consent during 2007 and has operated the quad bikes course in accordance with the approved plans over the intervening period.

Proposed extension of quad bikes course and associated tree removal

In May 2017, Kingswood's local management team decided to extend the northeastern half of the course, encroaching into the existing woodland. The local management team was unaware that this work would require further planning approvals and, given the demand for the facility to be available to visiting children for the 2017 summer season, decided to proceed with the work. A number of trees were removed to facilitate this extension of the quad bikes course.

Following the tree removal, Kingswood senior management became aware of the actions taken at the site locally and advised the local team that planning permission should have been sought prior to any works taking place. The local team was advised to stop any further work associated with the quad bikes extension and not use this facility until all the necessary planning and estates consents had been obtained.

For the purposes of the current planning application and in response to the queries raised in the Council's email of 9 January 2018, details of the tree removal carried out in May 2017 are uncertain but the information that is available is listed below:

1. The tree mix in the part of the plantation woodland subject to the clearance comprised mainly sycamore and willows
2. No notable tree species such as oak were removed
3. Self-seeded and regenerating willow and sycamore saplings together with bramble scrub was also removed
4. The trees removed were similar in age and species to those remaining in the remainder of the plantation

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Following the felling of the trees and scrub, the quad bikes course was extended into this area and the edges of the surface were demarcated by continuous and interlocked red and white plastic safety barriers defining the outer extents of the area with used tyres placed against the outer edge of the plastic barrier to provide support for quad bikes in the event that they collide with the plastic barriers. The finished surface of the quad bikes course was never completed due to the decision to cease work until consents were in place.

A photo sheet using photos taken 25-10-17 showing the implemented quad bikes extension and by implication showing where the trees previously existed on part of this area is included with this additional information as drawing ref 1958-04-011.

Measures to protect remaining trees

Kingswood has no intention to extend the quad bikes course any further than is shown on the submitted drawings covered by this application and is now evident on the ground. All tree removal associated with this development has now been completed. No further tree removal or pruning work will be carried out without the necessary consent of Barnsley Council's Estates and Planning departments.

It is therefore proposed that there will be no requirement to erect any tree protective fencing to facilitate the development that is the subject of this current application.

Statement dated 15 January 2018

Statement prepared by the agent David Clough, Axis on behalf of and agreed by the applicant Jason Andrews, Kingswood.