

North York Moors Access Forum

Principles for Woodland Creation Applications On Open Access Land

These principles will be used to inform our responses to applications for woodland creation on open access land. In all cases, the principle of the 'least restrictive option' should be applied to any proposal which affects Open Access Land.

The LAF would normally expect:

- There will be an assessment undertaken by a National Park Authority Senior Ranger with any application.
- That the relevant standards be adhered to (e.g. British Standard 5709 on stiles and gates). Access points will be provided on desire lines as advised by National Park Authority Senior Ranger and Local Access Forum.
- Local Access Forum, local user groups and Parish Council will be consulted before the application is made.
- Barbed wire should only be used if essential for stock control.
- Access should be retained at all times except when closure is required for forestry work. Any closure should be advertised at all entrances to the woodland, with maps, if only certain parts are closed.
- At 20 years Landowner and National Park Authority will review the need for fencing erected as part of woodland planting projects. Fences may be retained if it is deemed that there is reasonable need.
- All Agreements will be land charged and Agreements will require dedication of land as Open Access under Schedule 16 of the CROW Act, in the event that a parcel of land is declassified (land ceases to meet criteria for OAL at review)

We will, in general, not object to applications for the creation of native woodlands in situations where they are deemed to be appropriate. This would normally include:

On CROW Access land that is not common land, where the land has a Section 106 Woodland Creation agreement and is dedicated as Access Land after the planting has been completed.

1. Where a public right of way (PROW) goes into or borders the new woodland, unhampered access is to be facilitated and maintained (e.g. sufficient clearance for horse riders and cyclists on a bridleway) with appropriate National Park Authority permission for additional or altered furniture. In all cases gates are preferred to stiles.
2. Where the new woodland parcels cross PROWs or other tracks or desire lines the impact on vistas is considered and they should be retained where possible.
3. Where there are tracks on the ground, other amenities or points of interest, access should be retained or an alternative provided (e.g. to a viewpoint or rock scramble).