

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 06 September 2025 16:59

To: HIE Enquiries Team <enquiries@hient.co.uk>

Subject: Representation on Broadford North Wood Asset Transfer - Request for Binding Safeguards

Dear HIE Asset Transfer Team,

I support **community ownership over commercial development**, but request **specific safeguards** based on local forestry experience that demonstrates the gap between promises and delivery.

LOCAL EVIDENCE OF FAILED RESTORATION: Recent **clear-felling of nearby privately-owned forest** (Dutch-owned, approximately 3 miles away) with **failed replanting promises** demonstrates the need for **binding commitments rather than good intentions**. This forest was levelled with assurances of native replanting that **never materialized**.

While there has been one successful small-scale example locally, the **much larger clear-felling of the evergreen forest** adjacent to this area shows the scale of environmental destruction possible when economic interests override restoration commitments.

CONCERNS ABOUT CURRENT PROPOSAL: The Broadford North Wood is described as an **"extension" of already-cleared forest areas**. The BSCC proposal includes significant **"harvesting operations"** and relies on **timber revenue for sustainability**, creating inherent pressure to prioritize commercial cutting over ecological protection.

REQUESTED SAFEGUARDS: I request any community transfer includes **legally binding conditions**:

- **Maximum annual harvesting limits** (e.g., no more than 10% of standing timber per year)
- **Mandatory replanting bond** held in escrow before any cutting begins
- **Independent ecological monitoring** of restoration progress
- **Community consultation requirements** for major harvesting decisions
- **Financial penalties** for failed replanting commitments

CONCLUSION: **The Broadford North Wood** ought to be protected from **both industrial development AND excessive commercial forestry**. Community ownership is preferable to HIE's commercial sale, but only with **concrete protections** that prevent this woodland becoming another example of **"restoration" that never happens**.

Private ownership by individuals (whether Dutch or otherwise) **rather than state ownership** has already demonstrated the risks of prioritizing profit over environmental protection in our local area.

Yours sincerely,

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