

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
NORTH YORKSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

11th November 2004

Mines and Quarries at Greenhow Hill

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To update members on progress with public safety issues in relation to Open Access in the Greenhow area.

2.0 Background

2.1 At the last Local Access Forum meeting, Co.Cllr John Fort suggested that a letter was sent to DEFRA highlighting concerns about the situation at Greenhow Hill above Pateley Bridge. This area has been heavily mined over many years and as a result there are up to 500 mine shafts in a relatively localised area. A large proportion of this land has been mapped as open country and there are fears that the new access right could compromise public safety. A copy of the letter and the response from DEFRA is included in this report as an annex, for your information.

3.0 Guidance

3.1 DEFRA have now issued guidance for Local Authorities and Land Owners on their responsibilities with regards to the Mines and Quarry Act. The guidance can be viewed on the DEFRA's website: www.defra.gov.uk. Also they have instructed the Countryside Agency to include payments and guidance for low impact work to manage the danger, in their Access Management Grant Scheme. A copy of the guidance is available if members request one. These are positive steps forward and I am sure the work of the County Council and the Local Access Forum in highlighting the problem, has a significant influence in their decisions.

3.2 In order to make the most of the available guidance and grant money it would be useful to convene a meeting. inviting representatives from DEFRA and the Countryside Agency, along with representatives from the local authorities, the Local Access Forum and the landowners whose land is effected. The aim of the meeting would be to ensure that appropriate measures are taken in the Greenhow area to satisfy public safety needs, without causing an unreasonable burden on the landowners.

4.0 Recommendation

4.1 It is recommended that:

(a) a meeting be convened to discuss open access on former mining land in the Greenhow area; and

(b) the Local Access Forum nominate a representative to attend the meeting.

Contact Officer

Chris Jones

Access Officer

01423 712950