

Design & Access Statement

Background

Over recent years the Forestry Commission and partners have invested heavily in Dalby Forest to develop the site into a regionally significant visitor attraction, which provides recreation facilities for a wide range of audiences. Visitor numbers have increased from 350,000 to 460,000 over the last 10 years.

We have increased our car parking capacity to accommodate this increase and are currently we are completing a strategy for arts development in Dalby Forest. This strategy is as part of the Forestry Commission's national Forest Art Works programme and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Arts Council England and the Forestry Commission.

It also aims to increase the number of visitors to Dalby Forest even further, in particular focussing on off peak times and dates for these visits. It aims to establish Dalby Forest as a new Forest Art Works site with high quality arts. The strategy is launched in May with an exhibition of works by Helen Sear, artist in residence of 2017.

Now, we would like to ask for planning permission for a sculpture by Turner prize winner Rachel Whiteread to be launched in the autumn of 2018. This is the final project of the 14-18 Now programme of celebrations of WW1 by the Imperial War Museum as well as the launch of the Forestry Commission's centenary celebrations in 2019:

Following the 1st World War the nation's forests were left dramatically depleted, meaning there was a lack of timber that could be used in manufacturing and mining. On 1 September 1919 the Forestry Act was passed. This set up the Forestry Commission to care for Britain's remaining woods and create new ones for a strategic timber reserve. Dalby Forest was acquired in 1920 and the first trees were planted in the early 1920s.

We are proposing to celebrate our centenary with this highly relevant contemporary sculpture, in a location that was highly relevant to the establishment of the Forestry Commission and it still is...

Aims of the project

This project aims to:

- Kick start a year of celebrations of the Forestry Commission centenary.
- Celebrate the establishment of the Forestry Commission in a location that was part of organisations right from the start, with a high quality piece of art – a Nissen Hut.
- Firmly establish Dalby Forest as a Forest Art Works location with high quality art by established and emerging artists.

Rachel Whiteread - *Nissen Hut* sculpture

- This new, permanent sculpture for Dalby forest will be the cast of the interior of a Nissen hut
- These iconic, domed huts were constructed to house prisoners of war, and later labour camps, for workers who planted Dalby and other forests across the country
- This sculpture, which will be unveiled 99 years after the FC was created, will bring to life the story of our foundation and the original planting of Dalby
- By existing in the forest environment in perpetuity, the sculpture will change with the seasons and over the years, as nature starts to grow in and around it.

Design - Nissen Hut

The sculpture will be constructed as per drawings submitted in this planning application (appendix 4, 5, 6, 7):

- Scale of sculpture - 5.1m wide x 11m long x 3.2m high
- Scale of the site – approx. 11m wide x 17m long
- It will be constructed on the eastern slope along Ellerburn trail on the edge of the site of a previous work camp furthest from the houses.
- The sculpture will be constructed from precast reinforced concrete sections in the shape of corrugated panels over a pre fab structure.
- The sculpture will be located on a crushed stone pad foundation.

Landscaping

The landscaping will be implemented with a large amount of planting of shrubs and low level trees to ensure path blends into the landscape. The base will be level area excavated into the slope with a retaining wall on the uphill face. Vegetation and planting will ensure that the piece as well as the access paths blend into the surrounding.

Access

The access paths will be constructed in such a way that the sculpture is accessible for wheelchair users using the BT Countryside for All specifications. We have incorporated additional routes to allow visitors to continue their journey along Ellerburn trail.

Forest Design Plan

According to the Forest Design Plan the area at the back of the proposed site for the sculpture is marked to be felled between 2022 and 2026. Between that felling area and the sculpture is an area of scrubs and small trees. This forms an ideal barrier which ensures that the sculpture remains surrounded by trees, which continues to blend into the landscape and the visual impact remains limited.

Strategic fit

North York Moors National Park Authority

This project contributes to the North York Moors National Park's Business plan and the targets to:

- Improve the conservation and awareness of the historic environment and cultural heritage of the National Park.
- Provide high-quality facilities for people visiting the National Park.
- Identify key audiences and messages and deliver communications priorities.
- Provide on-site visitor information at key locations.
- More people will be aware of and associate with positive images with the National Park.
- Increase the profile of the North York Moors to achieve the Second Purpose and support the local economy; Continued growth of the visitor economy.
- Ensure the Authority has a robust framework of planning policy documents and processes in place to help meet local housing needs, and ensure new development protects and enhances the National Park's landscape and built heritage.

Forestry Commission

The project fits very well into the mission of Forestry Commission England: to work with others to keep the Public Forest Estate as a special place for wildlife, people to enjoy and businesses to thrive- and achieve this by adopting a strategy that integrates all the three drivers of sustainable land management.

It fits in to our vision and overall goal to secure and grow the economic, social and natural capital value of the Public Forest Estate for the people of England.

This project specifically makes a major contribution to the delivery of our emerging arts strategy for Dalby Forest – in particular the first strand of ‘Working with Artists’. This strategy aims to establish Dalby Forest as a new site set up as part of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Arts Council England and the Forestry Commission England, with a range of high quality arts activities and sculpture to encourage new and existing audiences to enjoy the forest in various different ways.

Summary

A new sculpture will be created in the shape of a Nissen Hut to represent the Forestry Commission and its centenary. The sculpture will be created by Turner prize winning artist Rachel Whiteread as part of the 14-18 Now programme of arts activities commemorating WW1. The new Sculpture will be located on a former site of a work camp set up after WW1. It will be nestled on the bank and will blend into the landscape. The access trail will blend into the landscape and from Ellerburn Trail it will be obvious and make it clear to visitors where it is located. Over time, the vegetation will ensure this trail also blends into the landscape.