**A 17. White Moss SSSI – Proposals by Natural England**

With regards to Agenda Item A17, for the Executive meeting on the 14th of April. I wondered if as one of the ward councillors I might be permitted to formally submit a few written observations to the Executive.

The application is extensively opposed by a large number of residents and both Irthington and Stanwix Rural Parish Councils and I whole-heartedly concur with the context of the letter you have received. Whilst I acknowledge that Natural England has been tasked with making changes to their sites by DEFRA, I have great concerns in the following areas:-

**Timescale** – The application has indicated that the felling will be within one timescale, a more practicable situation would be for a resubmission of the plans with a phased schedule for felling, along with an assessment of what impact the felling has. It would be wrong to fell the entire site and then assess whether it has worked.

**Lack of Consultation** – There has been no consultation on this by the applicant, residents only became aware of the plans when a consultee (the County Council) decided to undertake a further consultation. I feel that Natural England needs to be more communicative with residents as to their intentions, before work commences.

**Wildlife Habitat** – The plantation of Scotch Pine has established a habitat that would not have existed otherwise, and the proposed felling will remove this. There are no details within this submission of what will be done to relocate the Red Squirrels which currently reside there. The plans need to be fleshed out to include a strategy for wildlife relocation, some of which are classed as ‘Priority Species’.

**Existence of Oak Trees at the site** – There are 40 plus Oak Trees included in the felling order. Much of these predate the Scotch Pine and the oldest I believe is about 150 years. I do not feel that these ought to be classed as a feature detrimental to the site. They have existed for generations and I hope that some consideration could be given to giving the Oak Trees on the site a Tree Preservation Order. Although I recognise that this is not a panacea for the current situation I hope that it would at least circumnavigate the situation of applications being sprung on local residents. I also feel that the Oak trees on the site have the age and quality to be worthy of a TPO.

In brief, I feel that the current application by Natural England is too much, too soon and without adequate consultation and would fully support any efforts to preserve this site.

Yours Sincerely

James Bainbridge

Councillor for Stanwix Rural – Carlisle City Council.