

Carl Sargeant AC / AM  
Y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol  
Minister for Natural Resources



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-04-605  
Ein cyf/Our ref CS/00632/15

William Powell AM  
Chair Petitions Committee  
Ty Hywel  
Cardiff Bay  
Cardiff  
CF99 1NA

5th  
May 2015

Dear Bill,

I refer to your letter regarding the petition from the Friends of Cwmcarn Forest Drive. I can confirm that Natural Resources Wales (NRW) will (through the use of contractors) be starting to undertake significant felling work within Cwmcarn forest around the Drive in early May 2015.

Some preparatory civil engineering works have already been undertaken to enable the felling to take place. This has included the removal of sculptures and playground equipment some of which have been restored and relocated to other visitor sites for the public to enjoy.

The large scale felling is necessitated as part of the work to address the impact of larch disease (*Phytophthora ramorum*) on Welsh forests. The Forest Drive which runs through the forest, has been closed since November 2014 and will remain so until the felling work has been completed. This is in order to protect the public from the hazards posed by felling operations and timber haulage.

NRW have indicated that they cannot guarantee reopening the Forest Drive upon completion of the work as the road is likely to be damaged by the forestry operations and the cost of reopening may be prohibitive. However, NRW staff are committed to exploring options for the road's future and to this end, they will consult with local groups including the Residents Association and the Friends of Cwmcarn Forest Drive.

NRW aims to gather ideas for future use and potential sources of funding to deliver these. This element of stakeholder engagement will be timed so that the operational forestry work is in full swing and the nature of the felling work can be demonstrated to those who are interested, albeit from a safe distance.

NRW will also be carrying out work on the private access road to the visitor centre. This work aims to improve the safety of the road, particularly whilst timber haulage operations are taking place over the next two years. During this work visitors will still be able to access the visitor centre and other attractions via using the public highways.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'CS', written in a cursive style.

**Carl Sargeant AC / AM**  
Y Gweinidog Cyfoeth Naturiol  
Minister for Natural Resources