

Agenda Item: Applications for Community Right to Bid under the Localism Act 2011 – Asset of Community Value Nomination for Hagg Wood, Intake Lane, Dunnington, YO19 5HY.

Dear Democratic Services Team and Lead Executive Member,

I am writing as a local resident to formally object to the nomination submitted by Dunnington Parish Council to register Hagg Wood as an Asset of Community Value (ACV). While I recognise that parish councils may nominate assets beyond their immediate boundaries, this application raises significant concerns regarding governance, process, jurisdiction, and necessity. Therefore, I respectfully request that the nomination be rejected for the reasons set out below.

1. Lack of Meaningful Public Consultation

A primary concern is the lack of meaningful public consultation. The nomination appears to have progressed without open engagement with local residents or transparent discussion at the parish level. Given that ACV designation can introduce statutory constraints and affect future land use and financial exposure, such a step should be underpinned by a clear democratic mandate, which is not evident in this case.

2. Absence of an Operational Framework and Financial Assessment

No published business case, management plan, or supporting financial and risk assessment has been provided. Hagg Wood is a substantial 107-acre ancient woodland, and any community-led involvement would necessarily bring ongoing responsibilities, including specialist forestry management, insurance liabilities, and maintenance of access routes such as Public Rights of Way. Without a defined operational framework, the implications for long-term stewardship and public cost remain unclear.

3. Redundancy Given Existing Statutory Protections

The site already benefits from extensive statutory and environmental protections. Located within Kexby Parish and recognised as replanted ancient woodland, Hagg Wood is managed under a long-term Forestry England Forest Plan in accordance with the UK Forestry Standard. Public access is already secured through existing footpaths. In this

context, the ACV designation does not appear to provide any additional practical benefit beyond protections already firmly in place.

4. Cross-Parish Jurisdiction and Precedent

There is a broader issue of cross-parish jurisdiction. The nomination seeks to apply asset status to land entirely outside Dunnington Parish boundaries, risking tension between neighbouring communities and undermining established governance structures. Decisions relating to land use within Kexby Parish should properly rest with its own residents and elected representatives, and proceeding otherwise risks setting an undesirable precedent.

5. Inappropriateness for ACV Designation

Hagg Wood is not an appropriate candidate for ACV status, particularly when compared with typical community assets such as a local pub at risk of conversion or a playing field under threat of development. The site already benefits from long-term protections, including public access via established routes recorded on the definitive map and safeguarded under Section 56 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Furthermore, sustainable woodland management is actively overseen by Forestry England, who hold a lease with approximately 950 years remaining.

Conclusion

An ACV nomination ought to rest on clear evidence of community backing, transparent decision-making, and a well-defined appreciation of the long-term responsibilities and risks involved in ongoing management. In the present case, those essential criteria do not appear to be met, particularly given that the site already benefits from robust statutory protections that safeguard both its ecological significance and public access. On that basis, I respectfully request that City of York Council decline this nomination.