

# FiPL Assessment Panel 27<sup>th</sup> October 2021 – Princetown

## Minutes and Notes

### Attendees

- Will Dracup (Acting Chair)
- Peter Harper
- Martin Perryman
- Daniel Alford
- Layland Branfield
- Eamon Crowe
- Helen Brooker
- Mark Brown

### Apologies

- Russel Ashford (provided notes on applications)
- John Howell (provided notes on applications)
- Quintin Steele (Non-voting member)

### DNPA Staff

- James Sharpe
- Samuel Taylor
- Hannah Gibbons
- Simon Pryor
- David Attwell
- Louise Davis

### Welcome

Welcome talk by Will Dracup (acting panel chair)

Introductions by those present

Approval of minutes of last panel meeting (September FiPL meeting).

Declarations of Interests

- Discussion as to when this should take place
- Chosen to begin at start of meeting
- Declarations stated

James Sharpe chosen to be chair once, Will Dracup leaves due to declarations

- Accepted by panel members

JS Mention that FiPL funds / treasury for year 1 has been reprofiled

- This year been dropped to £250,000.000
- Remaining funds for year 1 have been added to Year 2

## Applications Over £5000

### Application: DNP-FPL-118

- Objectives of Project: Education, science, wellbeing, conservation.
- Total Grant requested: £44,482.00
- Weighted Score: 5.6
- Discussion
  - Presented by Simon Pryor
  - Introduction to site and application
  - Applicant has withdrawn cattle facility
  - Stewardship discussion
    - Applicant not in stewardship agreement
    - Could this money be found through stewardship
    - Discussion / mention of other proposals – where does stewardship come into account
    - FiPL should complement and not undermine other existing schemes
  - Suggestion to see what the trust can get from CS scheme first then possibly reapply
    - Discussion on this point
    - CS can't / won't fund some aspects
    - FiPL is about getting people ready for ELM
    - FiPL is a transitional scheme
    - Proposal may fall apart if aspects go to CS scheme
  - Agreed that the trust deserves support
    - Clear clarification given as to what the money is used for and how it will be used
  - Comments from those absent given via James Sharpe
  - Revisit to CS scheme discussion
  - Discussion on funds
    - Are they asking for too much
    - Only funding items not on CS
    - 50% on machinery should be given
- Our score for the project is high, meeting all the criteria for the programme well. Our recommendation is to approve funding for this project
- Vote:
  - Recommendation: That the Panel defer, but approve the project in principle, subject to compliant cost comparisons being provided for all items, explanation of how benefits will be maintained and a justification for 100% funding, if the applicant thinks this justified, or provide a

match funding offer. The applicant should be clear about how the birdwatching hide meets programme outcomes and is good value for money.

- Motion: Capital items, 50% on machinery, year 1 payments, with suggests that applicant seeks CS for year 2 payments.
- Votes For: 7
- Votes Against: 0
- Votes Abstained: 1

### **Application: DNP-FPL-156**

- Objectives of Project: Archaeological survey, restoration, scrub clearance.
- Total Grant requested: £8,464.49
- Weighted Score: 7.6
- Discussion:
  - Presentation by David Attwell
  - Introduction on the site and application
    - Mention that the applicant has no other opportunity for other funding
  - Cheaper archaeological quote available
    - Given after the application had been submitted, as to why not on the current application
  - Application / project ticks all the boxes
  - Insights into the archaeology
  - Certain archaeology won't get into new ELM
  - Is there an ecology survey?
    - Currently has not been undertaken
    - HS agreement
    - Archaeology won't score on CS
    - Archaeology is best for FiPL
  - Timescale
    - Keen and confident to do in a single year
    - Suggestion split over 2 financial years
  - Comments from absents via James Sharpe
    - Supportive of application
  - Should survey work be taken place?
- Vote:
  - Recommendation: To approve the project on condition of relevant consents being granted, additional evidence of the best value costing for historic environment being provided in writing, the applicant aims to complete work in Yr1 but consideration might be given to splitting the work into stages in case all not complete by end Feb.
  - Votes For: 8
  - Votes Against: 0
  - Votes Abstained: 0

## David Attwell (DNPA) left meeting

### Application: DNP-FPL-176

- Objectives of Project: Improvement of vegetation management
- Total Grant Requested: £92,550.00
- Weighted Score: 1.6
- Discussion:
  - Presentation by JS
  - Introduction to site and application
  - Doesn't consider this to be a complete survey
  - Responses to this application may apply to other applications
  - Main cost element is cattle grids
  - Applicant is in HLS agreement
    - Hedgerows is not part of common
      - If given cattle grid, hedgerows won't be affected by wandering cattle
    - Do we provide funding for surveys etc to improve / inform the application
      - Better this can then be used to inform other applications and proposals
      - FiPL doesn't have the capability to survey all sites and applications
    - Discussion over gates and cattle grids
    - Down to owners of the hedges to maintain not FiPL funding or the commoners
    - Should commoners' association pay for legal fees etc
      - Public money should not be used for this
      - Heritage fund lottery gives seed money for investigations
      - Other schemes currently fund many aspects of the project
      - What are we going to learn from this?
- Vote:
  - Recommendation: the project be deferred but an offer made to support appropriate habitat survey and feasibility work so that a suitably evidenced proposal could be brought forward in the future. The FiPL team will offer further advice on the nature and level of outcomes sought.
  - Motion: Propose that the application is turned down.
  - Votes For: 7
  - Voted Against: 0
  - Votes Abstained: 1

## 20 Minute Break

## Chairman has left meeting due to declarations to the remaining applications

James Sharpe is now appointed panel chair

### Application: DNP-FPL-112

- Objectives of Project: Bring Common into good management plan, improvements of east Dartmoor SSSI, common prepared for future ELM scheme
- Total Grant Requested: £277,365.00
- Weighted Score: 7.2
- Discussion:
  - Presentation by Louise Davis
    - Not a complete application
  - Introduction to site and overview of application
    - Approve some funding to get the project off the ground but not approve large scale funds
    - Investment to get a project off the ground
    - Lots of work needs doing
  - Habitat assessment needed
    - Aspects in SSSI
  - Help commoners get back into shape and push into ELM scheme
    - Outside of agreement for 14 years
  - Eligible for CS stewardship for next year
    - Can possibly break agreement when ELM comes about
    - Natural England do fire plan for free (but have no capacity)
    - CS can do fire management
    - CS can't fund cattle grids
  - Pony's collection is commoners' responsibility
  - Suggestion to put in CS application
    - Association may fall out
    - This can protect applicant's interest
    - Can also help applicants when ELM comes about
  - Consent will be needed by CS for fire plan
  - Complaints / concerns received to FiPL team about the cattle grids
    - Low confidence on deliverability on cattle grids
  - Suggestion that panel defer until can be approved
  - Pony management and hedge trimming from first year to be abandoned (hedges = verges)
  - Does this come under habitat management?
  - What should the Commoner's Association fund
    - Association should fund the cost of the meetings
    - Association should fund the proposal of the cattle grids
    - Livestock management also removed from application and funded by association

- Suggestion that year 2 and year 3 costs be deferred until year 1 supported proposals are complete
- Suggestion that the applicants re-submits / applies for years 2 and 3 later with removal of the above
- Conclusions: Defer year 2 and year 3 until habitat assessment is complete. But encourage that association apply after this. Some aspects of year 2 will not be accepted (e.g. pony management/cattle grids). Approve yellow highlighted (on costs sheet presented) elements in year one: remove elements with cattle grids. Foggers to be used by other neighbouring Commons. Recommendation for CS application
  - Votes For: 6
  - Votes Against: 0
  - Votes Abstained: 1

### **Application: DNP-FPL-152**

- Objectives of Project: making farm more efficient, making farm less vulnerable to volatile market spikes, making the farm more environmentally focused, enhance areas for wildlife management.
- Total Grant Requested: £33,948.30
- Weighted Score: 8.8
- Discussion:
  - Presentation by Louise Davis
  - Introduction to site and application
  - Why not already in an organic scheme
    - May benefit from this scheme
  - Will follow a conversation plan
  - Why need carbon analysis
    - Working with farming carbon tool kit
    - Show carbon input and help reduce
    - Other scheme will do full soil carbon test
    - Southwest river trusts will do this
  - Does this applicant meet all the boxes?
  - Some guidance rates don't match what application is applying for
    - Is there a clear commercial gain? = 40%
    - Some small commercial gain? = 80%
    - No commercial gain? = 100%
  - How will the wood be used?
    - Commercial gain
    - Personal use
  - Comments from those absent via James Sharpe
    - One in support
    - Questions about scrub management
  - Applicants happy to draw up habitat management plan
  - Be able to show carbon trends by going organic
  - More details are needed on soil sampling

- Can the budget stand this application?
  - Suggestion applicant apply in year 2.
- Vote:
  - Recommendation: That the panel note the additional details and confirm their support for this project
  - Motion: Deferring soil sampling until more information is provided. Suggestion that this may be done by other body.
  - Votes For: 6
  - Votes Against: 0
  - Abstained: 1
  - Scrub management: Agreed: Votes For 7 (unanimous)
  - Organic conversion: Leave out of application due to business decision.
    - Votes For: 4
    - Votes Against: 0
    - Votes Abstained: 3

### **Application: DNP-FPL-130**

- Objectives of Project: create a new farm yard area for more year round educational work; great variety of animals.
- Total Grant Requested: £88,000.00
- Weighted Score: 7.6
- Discussion:
  - Presentation by Louise Davis
  - Introduction to site and application
  - Got planning for all application already
    - Now just want agricultural
  - Continues to be fully farmed
    - Cattle and pigs
  - Discussion on FiPL
    - Currently application is for year 1 only
    - Application to be split over year 1 and year 2
    - Currently have matched funding
  - Discussion on the outcomes of what the fund could do for the trust and those who use it
  - Discussion over scoring of application
    - Very high legacy
  - Comments of those absent
  - Will this help them better claim under ELMS
  - Suggestion that funding be cut by 50% to be in line with other funding schemes.
- Vote
  - Recommendation: To support this project, contingent on gaining all permissions and providing evidence of costings. This needs to be undertaken promptly and, should change of use not be granted, the applicant should present a revised plan.

- Motion: Application to be split over year 1 and year 2. 45,000 in total (cap)
  - Vote For: 7
  - Votes Against: 0
  - Votes Abstained: 0

### **Date of Next Meeting**

Provisionally set for Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> November at Parke