

From: Gemma.Montrose@transportscotland.gsi.gov.uk
[mailto:Gemma.Montrose@transportscotland.gsi.gov.uk]

Sent: 06 February 2015 15:59
To: Cook, Michael (Councillor)
Subject: RE: Flags at Lamberton Toll

Dear Councillor Cook,

Thank you for your email dated the 15 January 2015. I am currently looking into your request and will respond as soon as possible.

Kind regards

From: Cook, Michael (Councillor) [<mailto:MCook@scotborders.gov.uk>]

Sent: 15 January 2015 17:43
To: Montrose G (Gemma)
Subject: Flags at Lamberton Toll

Dear Ms Montrose

Flags at Lamberton Toll

I write as Chair of the Berwickshire Area Forum, a devolved committee of Scottish Borders Council, populated by SBC Elected Members, Berwickshire Community Council representatives and community planning partners, among others.

At its meeting on 4th December 2014, in response to a question concerning the flags flown at the national border at Lamberton Toll, the Berwickshire Area Forum (BAF) resolved that I should write to the responsible authority to explore what flexibility there might be in relation to the flags flown.

Before I deal with the detail, by way of background, historically, SBC had responsibility for the Northbound layby at Lamberton, while Northumberland CC looked after the Southbound one. My records show that in April 2004 under the auspices of Scottish Borders Council, there were two flag poles: one flying the Saltire; the other, the Union Flag. Previously, the Saltire and the EU flag were flown. By September 2004, Northumberland County Council were also flying the Union Flag and a St George's Cross at the Southbound layby. Following a 2006 report on the entry points into Scotland prepared for the then Scottish Executive, Transport Scotland took over responsibility for the Northbound layby through the Trunk Road maintenance contractor. At that juncture, 3 poles were erected flying 3 Saltires.

Northumberland County Council has retained responsibility for the flags on the English side of the Border, flying combinations of the St George's Cross, Union Flag, and what is commonly referred to as 'the Percy Flag', the flag of Northumberland.

I turn now to the BAF's request:

1. What flexibility is there in flying flags other than the Saltire? In short, would you be willing to countenance a flag denoting Berwickshire, the ancient county in which Lamberton and the initial portion of the A1 is situated? This would involve a flag most probably bearing the Berwickshire emblem – a bear chained to a tree. The BAF is keen to highlight the regional distinctiveness of our area, and to seek to mirror the position on the Northumberland side of the Border, where opportunity is given to emphasise the local as well as national dimensions of the area's identity. Simply put, we are keen to exploit the kind of opportunity highlighted in the attached correspondence of 10th August 2004 from Ian Reay of NCC.
2. In attempting to maintain a coherence between what is flown on respective sides of the Border, would you also be willing to consider the flying of the Union Flag, reflecting the shared identity and relationship which exists across the Border, and which NCC is clearly happy to mark? Indeed, the BAF

believes there would be merit in flags being flown which cover the different elements of identity: local flag, Saltire or St George's Cross and Union Flag.

3. Without making any commitment as this would be up to the BAF, would your willingness to accommodate these requests be assisted if the BAF was willing to assist with the cost of some flags?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Michael Cook

Michael Cook
Councillor for East Berwickshire
Scottish Borders Council

-----Original Message-----

From: Reay, Ian [SMTP:IanReay@northumberland.gov.uk]
Sent: 10 August 2004 15:26
To: Romanis, Dave
Subject: Border Crossing Flagpoles [No Viruses detected]

***** THIS EMAIL WAS RECEIVED FROM THE INTERNET *****

Dear David

Thank you for the information you've provided to my colleague Caroline Wishart regarding the flagpoles at Lamberton Toll on the A1.

For your information, this is a summary of our plans, and what progress has been made so far.

The County Council is running a campaign to encourage wider appreciation of the Northumberland Flag which is one of the very few county flags in England. We are organising a music and culture festival in October which will be a culmination of the campaign and has the Northumberland Flag as its main theme.

Leading up to the festival we are encouraging residents to 'fly the flag' and as such we are giving away flags and car bumper stickers, together with a number of promotional items.

One recurring theme in relation to the flag is the number of people that contact us to complain about the lack of a Northumberland, or even a St. George's flag, at the border crossing point on the A1. We are constantly reminded that Scotland herald the entrance to their country by flying their flag - and why can't we do the same !

So, we have taken this opportunity to try and progress the siting of flagpoles at the southbound viewing point to match those on the northbound carriageway, but take it one step further and emulate this at Carter Bar. We are proposing to site 2 flags on each carriageway on the A68 lay-bys and have the Northumberland Flag and St. Georges flag flying on the southbound location, and two flags on the northbound carriageway, the choice of which flags to fly will be at your discretion.

Tynedale Council have been helpful, and they have specified that planning permission is not needed at the A68 crossing point as the flags will be regional or national flags, and the Highways Agency have given their permission for us to erect the flagpoles under a Section 6 Agreement of the Highways Act at the viewing points.

Unfortunately, Berwick Borough Council have been less forthcoming up to this point, and have still not made a decision on whether planning permission is needed for the Lamberton Toll location. Also, the Highways Agency have said that the A1 at that point is the responsibility of the Scottish Executive, but I feel confident that given the circumstances they will support the proposal using the Section 6 Agreement - if only we can ascertain exactly who has responsibility for the southbound lay-by !

We feel that this presents the County Council, the relevant District Councils and yourselves with a unique opportunity to gain some positive publicity, and to boost our collective tourism efforts. Our Chief Executive

is extremely keen that we progress this issue, and I feel sure that he would personally add his weight to the push to make it happen.

We also are contemplating some added interest by consulting residents on dedicating the flag locations to famous Northumbrians, and have some sort of ceremony to mark the official 'opening'. This may be something your council would like to be involved in as a joint event?

Caroline has spoken to John Askew in your PR office, and he certainly seemed very interested in our proposals.

Hopefully you will be able to furnish us with some information on the heights of the existing flagpoles, and your thoughts on the subject of the flags that are regularly 'removed' from their poles! Also, if you have any suggestions on how we might cut through some of the red tape that is hampering our efforts at the A1 that would be most helpful.

If you require any more information, please don't hesitate to contact Caroline or myself.

Best regards

Ian Reay
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