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Cherwell District Council

BY EMAIL ONLY

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To whom it may concern,

Planning Consultation: Adderbury Neighbourhood Development Plan

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 12th October 2017.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.


Natural England is a statutory consultee in neighbourhood planning and must be consulted on draft neighbourhood development plans by the Parish/Town Councils or Neighbourhood Forums where our interests would be affected by the proposals made.

In our review of the Adderbury Neighbourhood Plan we note that the proposals do not have the capacity to impact on statutory designated sites, and that the Local Nature Reserve has been allocated as a Local Green Space, which will enhance its protection. We also approve of the incorporation of our previous recommendation relating to net gains in biodiversity. Policies relating to Biodiversity Net Gain should propose the use of a biodiversity measure for development proposals. Examples of calculation methods are included in Annex A.

In addition, the recently produced [Neighbourhood Plan for Benson](#), in South Oxfordshire provides an excellent example of planning for biodiversity. Although the Plan has not been to referendum yet, we are of the opinion that the policy wording around the Environment, Green Space and Biodiversity is exemplary. We recommend that you consider this document, when reviewing yours.

Other than the above, we have no further comment to make on this draft of the Neighbourhood Plan. Nevertheless, please re-consult us on any further drafts or revisions of the Plan.

Yours sincerely,


Sustainable Development Adviser
Thames Team

Annex A

Natural Environment Issues to Consider

The [National Planning Policy Framework](#)¹ sets out national planning policy on protecting and enhancing the natural environment. [Planning Practice Guidance](#)² sets out supporting guidance.

Your local planning authority should be able to provide you with further advice on the potential impacts of your plan on the natural environment and the need for any environmental assessments.

Biodiversity net gain

Under section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 Local Planning Authorities are required to conserve biodiversity. The NPPF section 109 states “*the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity wherever possible*”. **Suitable methods for calculating biodiversity net gain can include the Defra biodiversity offsetting metric³ and the environment bank biodiversity impact calculator⁴.**

Priority and protected species and habitat

You'll also want to consider whether any proposals might affect priority species (listed [here](#)⁵) or protected species. Natural England has produced advice [here](#)⁶ to help understand the impact of particular developments on protected species. Consideration should also be given to the potential environmental value of brownfield sites, often found in urban areas and former industrial land, further information including links to the open mosaic habitats inventory can be found [here](#).

Ancient woodland and veteran trees

You should consider any impacts on ancient woodland and veteran trees in line with paragraph 118 of the NPPF. Natural England maintains the Ancient Woodland [Inventory](#) which can help identify ancient woodland. Natural England and the Forest Commission have produced [standing advice](#) for planning authorities in relation to ancient woodland and veteran trees. It should be taken into account by planning authorities when determining relevant planning applications. Natural England will only provide bespoke advice on ancient woodland/veteran trees where they form part of a SSSI or in exceptional circumstances

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

² <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/natural-environment/>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/biodiversity-offsetting#guidance-for-offset-providers-developers-and-local-authorities-in-the-pilot-areas> Note; the 'Guidance for developers' and 'Guidance for offset providers' documents provide a calculation method.

⁴ <http://www.environmentbank.com/impact-calculator.php> , and

http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=3&ved=0ahUKEwi7vcbI0aDQAhVMDcAKHb8IDEUQFggsMAI&url=http%3A%2F%2Fconsult.welhat.gov.uk%2Ffile%2F4184236&usq=AFOjCNFfkbJJQ_UN0044Qe6miLffxckg

⁵ <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140711133551/http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/biodiversity/protectandmanage/habsandspeciesimportance.aspx>

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/protected-species-and-sites-how-to-review-planning-proposals>