

From: [National Forest Planning](#)
To: [PLANNING POLICY](#)
Subject: EXTERNAL: Blackfordby Neighbourhood Plan - NFC Comments
Date: 06 October 2021 11:11:32

Dear Ian,

Thank you for consulting the National Forest Company (NFC) on this document.

The NFC welcomes the various references to the National Forest throughout the document, including the reference to The National Forest Way.

Please note that the whole of the Neighbourhood Plan area falls within the National Forest, which covers 200 square miles. Therefore the box which follows paragraph 4.48 would be more accurately worded 'of which 26ha are National Forest woodlands'.

Policy G2: Design: The NFC considers that Blackfordby's location within The National Forest should be referenced in this Policy. The Policy could require development to reflect the character of The National Forest particularly where there is no strong local character.

Criterion (c) refers to development being enhanced by existing trees/hedges to promote biodiversity. The NFC would request that this criterion was worded to also make reference to the need for new development to plant new native trees, woodland and hedgerows, in addition to the retention of existing trees and hedges.

The second sentence of criterion (c) refers to plots being enclosed by 'native hedging, wooden fencing or walls'. The NFC hope that this sentence could be less prescriptive and allow for other design features, for example the use of timber in building construction.

Policy H1: Residential Site Allocation: The NFC considers that this Policy should include the requirement for a specific wildlife corridor, noting that Policy ENV6: Biodiversity and Habitat Connectivity refers to John's Wood in respect of habitat connectivity and that this wildlife corridor shown in Figure 11 passes through the allocation site. The footpath which passes through the centre of the allocation is also the route of the National Forest Way, a long-distance promoted walk through all the landscapes of the National Forest (see <https://www.nationalforest.org/visit/national-forest-way>). The Policy should refer to the National Forest Way and stipulate that the existing public right of way should be retained on its current route.

Policy ENV 6: Biodiversity and Habitat Connectivity: The identification of two areas of habitat connectivity is welcomed, as is the reference to the National Forest within the Policy.

Policy BE4: Tourism: The creation of new, or expansion of existing, visitor facilities or tourism accommodation is a key aspect of the NFC's work and the NFC welcomes reference in the supporting text to The National Forest Way. The NFC considers that the Policy could be reworded to actively seek good quality design by asking for tourism development to contribute to the distinctive rural character of the Plan area (as opposed to not having a detrimental effect on the area).

The NFC has written a Sustainable Tourism Accommodation design guide, which sets out a rationale for encouraging development that helps create a distinctive National Forest character and sense of place. This document

(<https://www.nationalforest.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/0047%20NFC%20Sustainable%20accommodation%20guide%20v7%20WEB%20ABE25FINAL.pdf>) provides useful guidance in achieving the aspirations of Policy BE4: Tourism. The Policy could be amended to encourage tourism accommodation which accords with the guide.

Policy TR2: Footpaths: The NFC welcomes the aspiration to improve and extend footpaths in the Plan area, and hope the Policy could also include the improvement and expansion of cycleways in addition to footpaths. The NFC also considers that the wording of the Policy could be amended to include reference to improving access to local National Forest woodlands.

We would be grateful if you could take these comments into account and inform us of the progress of this document.

Kind Regards



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