

CHAPTER 4 NATURAL & MAN-MADE ENVIRONMENT

4.2. TREES AND WOODLANDS

4.2.1. PARAS 4.2.1 & 4.2.3

Objections

5	The Forestry Authority
6	The Forestry Authority

Supporter

898	Somerset County Council.
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1.1.1 ISSUES

- (i) Whether Paragraph 4.2.3 should be amended to delete the inference that, in view of the UK Forestry Standard, woodland schemes are not sustainable.
- (ii) Whether the Plan should explicitly encourage the use of woodland grant schemes.

Inspector's reasoning and conclusions

I find PC29 corrects the misleading impression that woodland schemes are not sustainable. PC30, which I support, appropriately voices the Forestry Authority's commitment to appropriate planting and positive management of woodland.

4.2.1.1. RECOMMENDATION

I recommend that the Plan be modified by PCs 29 and 30.

4.2.2. OMISSION

LOCAL PLAN OBJECTIVE

Objection

585	Somerset Wildlife Trust
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Issue

Whether a further objective on biodiversity conservation, other than of trees and woodlands, relevant to flora and fauna should be added.

Inspector's reasoning and conclusions

This section of the Plan concerns the protection and conservation of trees and woodlands. Nature conservation as such is dealt with in Policies NC/1 to NC/4 and in the explanatory information on landscape character areas. I consider no modification is required.

4.2.2.1. RECOMMENDATION

I recommend that no modification be made in response to this objection

4.2.3. POLICY OMISSION AND CHANGE NO 34

Objection

4	The Forestry Authority
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Issue

Whether the text should be expanded to accentuate the benefits of positive management of existing woodlands and encouragement of appropriate new plantings.

Inspector's reasoning and conclusions

PC34 adds a new sentence to paragraph 4.2.10 recognising the priority task of ensuring the positive management of new woodlands and encouragement to plant native species. I concur with the change.

4.2.3.1. RECOMMENDATION

I recommend that the Plan be modified by PC34.

4.2.4. POLICY TW/1 & CHANGE NO. 31

Objections

85	Council for the Protection of Rural England
586	Somerset Wildlife Trust

Supporters

531	West Somerset Watchdogs
1015	Old Cleeve Parish Council

Objection to the change

2432	Council for the Protection of Rural England
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Supporters of the change

2100	English Nature
2563	Somerset Wildlife Trust

Conditionally withdrawn objections

506	English Nature
899	Somerset County Council

Issues

- (i) Whether in the interest of biodiversity reference should be made to wildlife.
- (ii) Whether the Policy is sufficiently strong in terms of conservation.
- (iii) Whether PC31 should be expressed in a more negative form.

Inspector's reasoning and conclusions

Issues (i) and (ii)

Wildlife is included in PC31, which I support for its comprehensiveness. The change ensures the safeguarding of trees of value to wildlife which are not subject to Tree Preservation Orders or within sites of nature conservation interest.

Issue (iii)

I do not support the formula sought by objection 2432. It would not improve the Policy but would revert to the negative tone of the deposit draft Plan version.

4.2.4.1. RECOMMENDATION

I recommend that

- (i) **No modification be made in connection with objection 2432; and**
- (ii) **In respect of the remaining objections the Plan be modified by PC 31.**

4.2.5. PARA 4.2.8 & CHANGE NO 32

Objection

86	Council for the Protection of Rural England
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Objection to the change

2433	Council for the Protection of Rural England
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Supporter of the change

2101	English Nature
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Issues

- (i) Whether the paragraph should explicitly refer to all hedgerows, banks and stone walls.
- (ii) Whether PC 32 is comprehensible

Inspector's reasoning and conclusions

Issue (i)

Notwithstanding the concern expressed in objection 86 to protect stone walls this part of the Plan deals only with trees and woodlands. I consider PC32 appropriately meets the objection with regard to hedgerows and banks.

Issue (ii)

I find unclear the reference in the second sentence of PC 32 to broadleaf species such as occur in Ancient Woodlands in the Brendon and Quantock Fringes. I shall recommend alternative wording.

4.2.5.1. RECOMMENDATION

I recommend that the Plan be modified by PC 32, subject to the replacement of the second sentence by the following:

Where the latter occur in Ancient Woodland, as in the Brendon and Quantock Fringes, they have considerable environmental value.

4.2.6. PARA. 4.2.10. OMISSION

Objection

87	Council for the Protection of Rural England
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Issue

Whether a preference for replanting schemes incorporating native species should be expressed.

Inspector's reasoning and conclusions

I consider the encouragement of new plantings of native species in PC34, which I support above, appropriately meets the objection and I make no further recommendation here.

4.2.7. Policy TW/2 & CHANGE NO 35

Objection

587	Somerset Wildlife Trust
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Supporters

507	English Nature
532	West Somerset Watchdogs
901	Somerset County Council
1016	Old Cleeve Parish Council

Conditionally withdrawn objection

284	Dr A Groos
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Objection to PC35

2564	Somerset Wildlife Trust
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Inspector's note

Objection 284 is conditionally withdrawn. The hedgerows in Old Cleeve referred to in the

objection fall outside the purview of Policy TW/2.

Issue

Whether 'important' should be deleted from the Policy.

Inspector's reasoning and conclusions

Policy TW/2 is based on the Hedgerows Regulations 1997. Contrary to the advocacy in objection 2564 that all hedgerows should be protected I consider PC35 is appropriately selective in widening its application only to those of landscape, character, and wildlife significance.

4.2.7.1. RECOMMENDATION

I recommend that the Plan be modified by PC35.

4.2.8. PARA 4.2.10.

Objection

902	Somerset County Council
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Issue

Whether The Hedgerows Regulations 1997 (SI.1160) should be quoted in full.

Inspector's reasoning and conclusions

I agree with the inclusion by PC33 of the full title of the Hedgerow Regulations in paragraph 4.2.10.

4.2.8.1. RECOMMENDATION

I recommend that the Plan be modified by PC33.