

# Purbeck District Council – Consultation on the National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites

## Woodland Trust comments

The Woodland Trust's comments on the above are as follows.

1. We have previously responded to the 'Proposed Changes to Pre-Submission Core Strategy Consultation' (Sept/Oct 2011) that we would like to see the 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence of the 'Green Infrastructure Provision' of Paragraph 7.1.8 amended to read (upper case) - "Green infrastructure provision could include additional provision of footpaths, allotments, planting of street trees AND NATIVE WOODLAND, new play areas,.....".

The NPPF adds further weight to this requirement by stating that: '*Local planning authorities should: set out a strategic approach in their Local Plans, planning positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure*', (DCLG, March 2012, para 114). Also para 117 states that: '*To minimise impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity, planning policies should:....promote the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species populations, linked to national and local targets, and identify suitable indicators for monitoring biodiversity in the plan*'

The new **England Biodiversity Strategy which** makes it clear that expansion of priority habitats like native woodland remains a key aim – '*Priority action: Bring a greater proportion of our existing woodlands into sustainable management and expand the area of woodland in England*', (*Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystems services*, DEFRA 2011, p.26).

A reading of these new policies in the National Planning Policy Framework together with the England Biodiversity Strategy indicates that native woodland creation should form a high priority for this Core Strategy. We therefore reiterate our suggested Proposed Changes wording proposal above.

2. We have previously responded to the 'Proposed Changes to Pre-Submission Core Strategy Consultation' (Sept/Oct 2011) that we would like to see the reference in Policy LHH amended to read (upper case) : - "...health and vitality of landscape (including ANCIENT AND NATIVE WOODLAND, trees and hedgerows and heritage assets....". This is so the Core Strategy can follow National Government policy in protecting absolutely the irreplaceable habitat of ancient woodland.

The NPPF adds further weight to this requirement by stating that: "...*planning permission should be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and the loss of aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland, unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss*" (Note addition of word 'clearly' to policy statement; DCLG, March 2012, para 118).

We therefore reiterate our suggested Proposed Changes wording proposal above, as the NPPF now makes the case for protecting ancient woodland even more necessary.

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