

Date: 04 September 2023
Our ref: 444211



Maureen Chaffe
Ford Parish Council

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BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Maureen Chaffe,

Ford Parish Council Neighbourhood Development Plan 2022-2031 consultation (reg 14)

Thank you for your consultation with Natural England early for our views on the neighbourhood plan Natural England on 20 July 2023 and received on the same date.

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.

What follows is Natural England's comments on Ford Parish Council Neighbourhood Development Plan (2022-2031).

Please note that Natural England has not provided advice on all aspects of the plan, instead focusing on aspects within Natural England's remit; the absence of comments on a policy should not be taken as Natural England giving support.

Policy SP1 – Spatial Plan for the Parish and Policy SA1 – Ford Airfield

With relation to the Ford Airfield proposal Natural England have previously provided our comments to the outline proposal F/4/20/OUT on 23 November 2020 (our ref: 332624) and have no further comments to make with respect to this proposal or allocation.

Policy EH1 – Protection of trees and hedgerows

We support this policy's requirements relating to the enhancement of ecological networks and preservation of existing trees and hedgerows, in line with the aims of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (paragraphs 131. 174. 180.) and the goals and actions of the Government's Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 (EIP), specifically point 3 of the delivery plan for goal 1.

We would however suggest strengthening the wording of this requirement by removing the "*wherever possible*" clause. This strengthening is especially important in relation to ancient or veteran trees given their irreplaceable nature and the very strong requirements of paragraph 180.c) of the NPPF.

Policy H3 – Windfall Sites

We support this policy's requirements relating to the conservation and enhancement of:

wildlife, habitat, green corridors, open space and the natural environment, in line with aims of section 15. the NPPF and the overarching goals and actions of the government's EIP.

If you have any queries relating to the advice in this letter please contact me at Nathan.Burns@naturalengland.org.uk

Yours sincerely,

Nathan Burns
Sussex & Kent Area Team