

Date: 17 December 2015  
Our ref: 170680  
Your ref: Wroughton Neighbourhood Plan



Forward Planning  
Swindon Borough Council

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**BY EMAIL ONLY**

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Planning consultation:** Wroughton Neighbourhood Plan

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated and received by Natural England on 05 November 2015.

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 generally welcomes the neighbourhood plan which sets out development management policies which will guide the future sustainable development of Wroughton.

We support section 6: A great environment in which to live, which sets out to conserve and enhance the woodlands and other open spaces within the parish. This is particularly important for Clouts Wood which is a Site of Scientific Special Interest (SSSI).

Reference could also be made to the National Character Areas which divide England into 159 natural areas, each defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity and economic and cultural activity. The new NCA profiles provide an integrated, locally specific evidence base that can be used for making decisions about the natural environment. The NCAs highlight the significant opportunities in each area and therefore provide a useful planning tool that can help guide the design of projects so that they are appropriate to the locality and deliver the maximum benefits for the natural environment. Wroughton falls within [NCA Profile:108 Upper Thames Clay Vales](#).

We are pleased to note policy EN3: to designate this area as open space, which is adjacent to existing Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) at the South of Wroughton, such as King's Farm Wood, Diocese Meadows and Markham Banks. There are also Local Wildlife Sites (Coombe Bottom and Wroughton Reservoir), at the area of land where policy EN4 is located, however these have not been referred to as LWSs in the plan. Coombe Bottom interest features are, a very steep-sided chalk coombe with ancient and secondary woodland in the upper part and unmanaged calcareous grassland farther down.

Reference could also be made to provisions of green infrastructure, which would fit into section 4: Access to services or section 6. Green infrastructure (GI) can perform a range of functions including improved flood risk management, provision of accessible green space, climate change adaptation and biodiversity enhancement. GI can be designed to maximise the benefits needed for development, such as promoting opportunities for recreation, improving links between communities and promoting sustainable transport, such as walking and cycling routes. For further information on



GI, including its economic benefits, see Natural England's [website](#).

Proposals may present opportunities to incorporate features such as roosting opportunities for bats, the installation of bird nest boxes and the use of native species in landscape planting and we advise including a policy with the requirement for ecological enhancements.

We would be happy to comment further should the need arise but if in the meantime you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us.

For any queries relating to the specific advice in this letter only please contact Kayleigh Cheese on 0300 060 1411. For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to [consultations@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:consultations@naturalengland.org.uk).

We really value your feedback to help us improve the service we offer. We have attached a feedback form to this letter and welcome any comments you might have about our service.

Yours sincerely

Miss Kayleigh Cheese  
Sustainable Development Team  
Somerset, Avon and Wiltshire Area