

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Local Plan](#)  
**Subject:** Local Plan Response from The Woodland Trust  
**Date:** 17 June 2019 13:30:03  
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To whom it may concern

The Woodland Trust welcomes the draft local plan's repeated commitment to "contribute to the objectives of the Northern Forest". The NF is an exciting initiative which will deliver many benefits to Warrington and its residents, such as:

- reduce the risk of flooding;
- store thousands of tonnes of carbon;
- make people happier and healthier; and
- create new jobs

We would therefore welcome more substantive commitments to supporting the Northern Forest and would offer the following suggestions:

- **Introduce a tree levy on new residential and non-residential developments to supporting tree planting either on- or off-site.** This is already being looked at by other councils in the Northern Forest and there are examples of similar schemes in the National Forest area.
- **Require developers to plant three new native trees for each new dwelling.** Here is example wording along these lines from the Hull Local Plan: "Three new trees of native species and local provenance will be required to be planted for each new dwelling (this excludes conversions and changes of use). A presumption that the trees will be planted as part of the development rather than off-site will apply when appropriate. The planting of new trees will be encouraged in new commercial development in appropriate places or within landscaping schemes wherever possible."
- **There should be more explicit protection for ancient woodland, in both the policies and site allocations, as required by revised national planning policy.** NPPF paragraph 175 states: "When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles... c) Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists." Ancient woodland is defined as an irreplaceable natural resource that has remained constantly wooded since AD1600. The length at which ancient woodland takes to develop and evolve (centuries, even millennia), coupled with the vital links it creates between plants, animals and soils accentuate its irreplaceable status. The varied and unique habitats ancient woodland sites provide for many of England's most important and threatened fauna and flora species cannot be re-created and cannot afford to be lost. As such, the Local Plan should prevent the damage, fragmentation and loss of these finite irreplaceable sites. Woodland Trust best practice guidance on ancient woodland is available here: <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/publications/2017/09/planning-for-ancient-woodland/>.

We would be pleased to discuss any aspects of our response with the Council and further information about the Northern Forest is available at our dedicated website:

<https://thenorthernforest.org.uk/>.

Yours faithfully

Richard O'Callaghan

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**Stand up for trees**

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