

Tree Strategy

Consultation Summary February 2019

Approach to Consultation

The council is strongly committed to involving as many people as possible in the review of its Tree Strategy to ensure that stakeholders and the community have an opportunity to have their say.

Consultation on the draft revisions began on 1 November 2018 for 6 weeks. Consultation was conducted via Let's Talk and was promoted by

- Sending a briefing note to all ward councillors.
- Links to the Let's Talk area placed on all ward websites
- A link sent to all Let's Talk registered users
- Use of social media including Facebook and Twitter

Consultation Feedback

136 responses were received through Let's Talk. In addition written responses were received from

- The Green Party
- Save Newcastle Wildlife
- Greening Wingrove
- Campaign to Protect Rural England
- Local Joint Action Forum

Issues raised and how they have been addressed.

The attached report summarises the comments received, who raised them and the Council's response. Highlights include:

1. 100 of the Let's Talk respondents supported the Strategy and many stated that they would like to see more trees planted.
2. Of the 12 Let's Talk respondents who did not support the strategy many stated that the reason why was because they wanted to see more trees planted and that the planting target was not ambitious enough.
3. Following feedback received during consultation our commitment to community and business engagement, consultation and information outlined in the strategy has been strengthened.
4. A commitment has been made in the strategy to support the development of community woodland where possible.
5. The tree replacement policy now includes a tree compensation standard.

6. The Council's commitment to the preservation of veteran trees has been strengthened to include an outline of our role as a partner in the Northumberland Veteran Tree Project.
7. The Parks Trust relationship with the Council in terms of tree management has been clarified.

Consultation Comments	Raised by	Suggested Response	Update
General			
Target not ambitious enough	GP LT	Target set after taking advice from Treeconomics. It is a net target which will be applied across the whole city, not just on council land. It needs to be acknowledged that the council has limited control on tree planting and felling on private land although it will do all it can to encourage private land owners to follow the strategy guidelines.	Comments responded to in Sec 4.2
No management of existing trees	LT	The existing Tree Strategy adopted in 2012 provides a framework for the management of our trees. The refreshed strategy aims to update how we do so in line with national and local policy and industry best practice.	Comment noted
Plain English	LT GW	To be reviewed	Complete
5 year view not long enough	LJAF	The city's tree canopy cover will be reviewed every 5 years. In addition tree management activity in the council will be published in an annual report. The Strategy will be reviewed every 5 years to ensure it keeps up to date with industry standards	Comment noted. A response is included in the policy document. Sec 1.6
Clarify link with Biodiversity Action Plan	SNW	The Core Strategy and emerging Development and Allocations Plan provide policies to safeguard and enhance wildlife corridors and green infrastructure networks	Comment noted. A response is included in the policy document. Sec 2.3.6
No reference to community woodlands	SNW	The Council supports the creation of community woodland. This will be clarified in the strategy document.	Comment noted. A response is included in the policy document. Sec 4.4.4
No Schools Trees Strategy	SNW GW	The strategy will be used for school trees on Council land. Where this is not the case the Council will work with the schools to encourage the use of the strategy.	Comment noted. The strategy covers trees on all council land regardless of location. A response is included in the policy document. Sec 5
No reference to churchyards and cemeteries	SNW GW	The strategy will be used for cemetery trees on Council land. Where this is not the case the Council will work with the land owners to encourage the use of the strategy.	Comment noted. The strategy covers trees on all council land regardless of location. A response is included in the policy document. Sec 5
Specific policy for air quality management areas	SNW	Recognise the benefits of trees to improve air quality - dealt with in Air Quality plan	Comments noted. The strategy recognises the contribution trees make to improving air quality and will take this into consideration. The issue is covered in Sec 2.3.3 and Sec 4.1
Town moor tree policy required including enforcing planting and preventing felling	SNW	The strategy covers trees on the Town Moor	Comment noted. A response is included in the policy document. Sec 5.1 and 5.10
Embed the Tree Charter	SNW	Agreed to include a link to the Tree Charter	Comment noted. A response is included I Sec 1.3.3

How will woodland management be funded?	LJAF	Most of the City's woodland will transfer to the Parks Trust on 1 April 2019. The management of this will be the responsibility of the Parks Trust through approved Woodland Management Plan. The costs associated with this management will be covered by the Parks Trust. Woodland on council land will be managed by the Council's Arbor Team.	Comment noted. Issue addressed in Sec 5.12
The statement "only the Council's Tree Team will specify and carry out work on Council trees' how does this fit with volunteers etc maintaining trees and hedges	LJAF	Volunteers deemed competent can work with the Council under the guidance of and in accordance with the management guidelines in the Tree Strategy. The Council appreciates the work volunteers carry out and the benefits they offer in doing so.	Comment noted. A response is included in the policy document. Sec 5.1
Need specific mention of street trees especially the use of smaller trees in these areas	GW	The Council acknowledges the benefits of street trees and will plant trees appropriate to their location as outlined in the Tree Strategy.	Comment noted. Covered in Sec 5.6 and Tree Management Plan
Outline cost benefit value of trees	GW	The full iTree Eco Survey to be commissioned this year will do this. Full iTree survey will do this, agreed	Comment noted. full iTree Eco Survey to be commissioned this year will do this as outlined in Sec 4.1
Make it clear that the strategy is being implemented	GW	An annual monitoring report will be prepared for the Portfolio holder and published on the Council website.	Comment noted. Sec 9 outlines how the implementation of the strategy will be monitored
In terms of risk category. How is this calculated?	LJAF	QTRA and risk zoning will be used as set out in the Risk Management guidelines	Comment noted. Risk Management Guidelines address this
Protection of trees (T1)			
The presumption that trees are retained should be explicit and felling should only occur in very exceptional circumstances and all other options to retain have been fully explored. A full explanation in these cases should be recorded and made publicly available.	GP	An annual monitoring report will be prepared for the Portfolio holder and published on the Council website.	Comments noted. Issues addressed in Sec 9
Planting Plan (T2)			
Consult on it prior to implementation	GP	Agreed. Local communities will be consulted on proposed planting plans where appropriate	Comment noted. Sec 4.5 has been included to make clear our commitment to community engagement
Introduce more variety of species	GW	agreed - acknowledged in TS	Comment noted. Issue covered in Sec 4.4.2, Policy T2 and Tree Management Guidelines Sec 8
Good tree provenance and locally sourced and native species	GP	agreed - acknowledged in TS	Comment noted. Issue covered in Sec 4.4.2, Policy T2 and Tree Management Guidelines Sec 8
Focus on enhancing bio diversity	GW	agreed - acknowledged in TS	Comment noted. Issue covered in Sec 2.3.6 and Sec 8 in the Management Guidelines
Species tolerant to wet roots	GP	agreed - acknowledged in TS	Comment noted. Issue covered in Sec 4.4.2, Policy T2 and Tree Management Guidelines Sec 8

Fruit trees for the food chain and encourage community activity	GP	Where opportunity and community participation it will be considered	Comment noted. Sec 8 amended to confirm commitment where appropriate
Large canopy cover in city centre and built up areas required.	GP	agreed - acknowledged in TS	Comment noted. Issue covered in Sec 8
Increased canopy cover should not cause overcrowding.	LJAF	agreed - acknowledged in TS. Also acknowledge good woodland management means felling is sometimes necessary to enable trees to thrive	Comment noted. Issue covered in Policy T2.
Successional replacement - plant now to mitigate anticipated felling of old trees in the next 40+ years	GW	agreed - acknowledged in TS. Also acknowledge good woodland management means felling is sometimes necessary to enable trees to thrive	Comment noted. A suggested tree replacement guide has now been included in the Management Guidelines
Construction/Development (T3)			
Plans for developments come before tree protection	LT	an assessment is made thru the planning process and the strategy gives a commitment to replace trees	Comment noted. Issues are covered in Sec 6.1 and will be further strengthened in the SPD
Clearer replacement policy with numbers of trees required to compensate for the size/age of the trees lost	SNW GW	Agreed - Look at including the replacement tree suggestion as guidance subject to funding etc where appropriate,	Comments noted. Tree replacement guidance now included in Management guidelines Sec 2
Development not an acceptable reason to remove trees (ambiguity between the policy (p21) and management guidelines (p 31)	GP	Where trees are removed for a permitted development we will use replacement street suggested and emerging SPD	Comment noted. Policy T3 sets out how trees lost or damaged through development will be dealt with (using BS5837). A suggested tree replacement guide has now been included in the Management Guidelines
New developments - specify number of trees required per development	SNW	Use tree replacement guidelines	Comments noted. Issues covered in 6.1
Threats to trees from developments between now and eco survey completion	GP	Covered by TS	Comments noted. Issues covered in 6.1
Protection of trees (T4)			
Protect all trees even those not visible to the public	GP	Local planning authorities can only make a Tree Preservation Order if it appears to them to be 'expedient in the interests of amenity to make provision for the preservation of trees or woodlands in their area'. Orders should be used to protect selected trees and woodlands if their removal would have a significant negative impact on the local environment and its enjoyment by the public. Before authorities make or confirm an Order they should be able to show that protection would bring a reasonable degree of public benefit in the present or future.	Comment noted. Issue covered in 6.2
Oblige landowners to do the same	GP	Refer to Protecting and Enhancing England's trees and woodland guidance. Encourage land owners but no power	Comment noted. Issue covered in Sec 6.4
Selling Council land(T5)			
Strengthen to have restrictive clauses to protect trees on land being sold	GP	TPOs are put in place when appropriate	Comments noted. Issues covered in Sec 5.10

Public register of those who ignore the clauses	GP	Cannot do - GDPR	Comment noted but will not be included in the strategy as such an initiative is contrary to Government Data Protection Regulations
No mention of Parks Trust and how council will work with them	GP	Include details of the requirement for Parks Trust to have Woodland Management Plans that need to be in line with the Strategy. Policy T5 covers this	Comments noted. Issues covered in Policy T5 and Sec 5.12
Engagement (T6)			
Public engagement and awareness	GP	Agree and a process will be put in place including a published annual report	Comment noted. Issues covered in Sec 9
Request public access to eco survey asap	GP	Agreed a summary will be published on the website	Comment noted. Issues covered in Sec 9
How will community engagement be used to help deliver the strategy	SNW GW GP	Public will be involved in providing info for the eco survey. In addition we will work with schools, 'Friends of' and other volunteer groups and community organisations to help deliver the Strategy	Comment noted. Sec 4.5 has been included to make clear our commitment to community engagement
Implement a "one – stop shop" for all tree-related information. Residents and businesses should have access to clear and precise information about the City's tree stock and the role it plays to the health and well-being of all and the eco -services trees provide.	GP	A Newcastle Trees Website will be developed	Comment noted. Issue dealt with in Sec 4.3
Develop a policy that there is a presumption of new (not just replacement) tree planting in large scale planning applications unless exceptional circumstances dictate otherwise.	GP	Will be covered in the emerging SPD	Comment noted. Issue dealt with in Sec 6.1
Hedges (T8 & T9)			
Apply same criteria to hedges as trees and include hedges in the eco survey	GP	The methodology employed by the iTree Eco Study does not include hedges as such but will include hedgerow trees. Hedgerows are acknowledged as an important part of the environmental infrastructure and, as stated in the Tree Strategy, the City will seek to protect and manage existing hedges and encourage the planting of new ones	Comment noted. Sec 7.1 now includes text
Plant more hedges	CPRE	The methodology employed by the iTree Eco Study does not include hedges as such but will include hedgerow trees. Hedgerows are acknowledged as an important part of the environmental infrastructure and, as stated in the Tree Strategy, the City will seek to protect and manage existing hedges and encourage the planting of new ones	Comment noted. Sec 7.1 now includes text
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LT – Let's Talk			
SNW - Save Newcastle Wildlife			
CPRE - Campaign to Protect Rural England			
LJAF - Local Joint Action Forum			
GW - Greening Wingrove			