

Bewick House, 22 Thorpe Road,
Norwich, Norfolk NR1 1RY

E-mail

[norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk](mailto:info@norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk)



17 February 2026

Norfolk Wildlife Trust Response: Docking Neighbourhood Plan, Regulation 16

Thank you for consulting Norfolk Wildlife Trust on the Docking Neighbourhood Plan, Regulation 16. We welcome the consideration given within this Plan to the natural environment.

The following comments relate to the 'Natural Environment' section of the Plan, with particular consideration of the requirement to meet the 'basic conditions'.

Natural Environment

The supporting text on page 15 includes a link to NWT Neighbourhood Plan guidance (footnote 3).

This has been updated and the correct link for this is: [Neighbourhood planning | Norfolk Wildlife Trust](#).

Para 32, page 15: This refers to NWT guidance which is not in the revised Neighbourhood Planning guidance document. For accuracy, we recommend some replacement wording for the first sentence, for example, or similar:

'Safeguarding what remains of our natural heritage is essential for nature's future recovery and the importance of increasing biodiversity cannot be underestimated.

Green Infrastructure (GI) is a network of multi-functional green and blue spaces which can deliver a wide range of environmental and other benefits, including increasing biodiversity.

This network includes features such as woodlands, hedges, lakes, ponds, playing fields, street trees, green roofs/walls, parks, open spaces, allotments, roadside verges, rivers, SuDs etc.'

We also recommend the following additional wording at the end of paragraph 32:

The strengthened 'biodiversity duty' that the Environment Act 2021 introduced, advises that public authorities who operate in England must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England.

Para 37, page 16: The Norfolk LNRS has been published and therefore we recommend updating the wording in paragraph 37 to reflect this. ([Local Nature Recovery Strategy - Norfolk's Local Nature Recovery Strategy - Norfolk County Council](#))



Policy 1: Biodiversity and Green Ecological Corridors

We support the policy wording that ‘Development proposals within or adjacent to areas occupied by Priority Habitats should demonstrate they will not have an adverse impact on these habitats..’

However, we strongly recommend that there is additional wording to protect and to seek opportunities to enhance other existing habitats and species. This could include County Wildlife Sites although we appreciate that these have some protection within the Local Plan.

We particularly welcome the wording around buffer zones.

Policy 2: Trees

Replacement Trees

We particularly welcome and support the policy wording that ‘Developers should replace trees on a 2 to 1 ratio requirement..’

The NPPF, Ch 2, page 5 states:

*‘Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives... c) **an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change...**’*

As a consequence of climate change, the distribution of tree species will alter in the future. It is unclear precisely what these changes will be. However, Natural England’s Technical Information note provides useful guidance: [Natural England Technical Information Note TIN053 - Guidance on dealing with the changing distribution of tree species](#)

Whilst we support the ambition that ‘replacement trees must be native British species of local provenance.....’, we recommend also including reference to increasing tree species diversity and including climate-resilient species to ensure successful adaptation to climate change.

Regards

Julie Cullis

Planning & Policy Officer