

APPENDIX 4 - Consultation Record

Consultation conducted via Citizen Space between 12th March and 19th April

Consultee Name	Consultee Comment	FC Response
STATUTORY		
Devon CC	<p>Heritage Baseline</p> <p>Recent archaeological survey work, including transcription of archaeological features from aerial photographs and LiDAR, has been placed on the Devon and Somerset County Historic Environment Records. This information is available online via the South West heritage Trust (Somerset) and Devon County Council.</p> <p>Details of the Blackdown Hills AONB and East Devon River Catchments National Mapping Programme (NMP) project are also available online. This project has helped to identify and record the location and extent of archaeological earthworks, often hidden beneath forestry, particularly evidence of extractive industries such as iron mining and whetstone mining.</p> <p>Heritage Assets Specific to Forestry Areas</p> <p><u>Blackborough</u>: Is notable for its extensive and coherent belt of whetstone mining of probable 18th to early 20th century date running N-S on the eastern scarp of Newcombe Common. There are also more irregular areas of pitting in Newcombe Errish Plantation.</p> <p><u>Shaldon</u>: Contains less coherent, dispersed evidence of whetstone mining and possibly other forms of mineral extraction. There are also a number of deserted post-medieval farmsteads, such as Newhouse, Rooks Cliff and Old House. Newhouse is surrounded by the ridged earthworks of former in-field orchards.</p> <p><u>Culm Davy</u>: There are relic field boundaries in Whitehall Plantation. These represent post-medieval enclosure of former common, prior to afforestation. A smaller area of boundaries north of Clements Common may be associated with early afforestation. There is extensive evidence of open-cast mineral extraction on the north side of Whitehall, possibly for iron-bearing deposits, whetstones or gravel.</p> <p><u>Huntsham</u>: is covered by EA LiDAR data but has not been studied. Remains 'terra incognita'.</p> <p><u>South Cleave</u>: No known archaeology, though the area was part of the NMP study.</p> <p><u>Strete Raleigh</u>: Evidence of prehistoric activity (scatters of flint tools) and also medieval or post-medieval field boundaries were observed prior to quarrying. Parts of these features may survive in the unquarried fringes. The northern boundary is also the historic parish boundary between Rockbeare and Whimble and is therefore a significant historic landscape feature.</p> <p>Management Issues</p> <p>The types of earthwork feature referred to above are can be quite robust, but their extensive nature, areas of relative slighthness and lack of understanding of them as heritage assets can make them vulnerable to gradual erosion or wholesale loss to vehicular movements and mechanised cultivation techniques. They can also be attractive to 'adrenaline sports' such as off-road quad, motorcycle and cycling, which can also cause significant erosion of the archaeology.</p> <p>Generally speaking the felling or thinning of forest cover, leaving such earthwork features in open or wooded heath environments would enhance their conservation and public access to and understanding of them (see the opening up and interpretation of the whetstone mines in private forestry at Witness Moor, Payhembury).</p> <p>Subsidence caused by the extensive underground whetstone mines may be a local H&S issue in paces, both in terms of public access and operational activities.</p>	<p>Noted, passed to Beat team to inform management and operations.</p> <p>Noted, passed to Beat team to inform management and operations.</p>

Somerset CC	No Response	-
Natural England	Comments received in January 2018	-
Environment Agency	No Response	-
Mid Devon DC	No Response	-
Taunton Deane BC	No Response	-
East Devon DC	No Response	-
Historic England	No Response	-
Bickenhall CP	No Response	-
Curland CP	No Response	-
Hemyock CP	No Response	-
Huntsham CP	No Response	-
Orchard Portman CP	No Response	-
Otterford CP	No Response	-
Pitminster CP	No Response	-
Rockbeare CP	No Response	-
Sheldon CP	No Response	-
Staple Fitzpaine CP	No Response	-
Uffculme CP	No Response	-
Upton CP	No Response	-
West Buckland CP	No Response	-

NGOs

Blackdown Hills AONB	<p>National Mapping Programme based on Lidar system which has covered the whole of the Blackdown Hills AONB https://historicengland.org.uk/research/current/discover-and-understand/landscapes/blackdown-hills-nmp/ .</p> <p>Recreation and access did not feature very heavily in the Forest Management Plan – no real understanding as to why this was the case. How do we formulate a strategy for R&A in East Devon if there are no guidelines/benchmarks? A map showing the Herepath and car-parks would be useful background plus to explain current FC/FE policy on promoting access The use of data cubes and people counters was also raised.</p>	<p>The Forest Plan sets the objectives and proposals for land management not recreation and access. Recreation and access is included to illustrate how this and land management influence and complements the other. This is outlined on page 9, as below:</p> <p><i>Visitor numbers will be maintained. Road and ride corridor and car park aesthetics enhanced and maintained. Felling together with a delayed restock program will continue to diversify stand and age structure. Viewpoints enhanced and maintained at time of intervention, where possible.</i></p>
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Blackdown Hills AONB cont.	The Somerset Catchment Partnership were not represented under the 'Water Management' section of the document Need County Wildlife Site reference/ where to obtain the data- as important wildlife designations (but not statutory)	Page 43 updated accordingly.
Somerset Wildlife Trust	Comments received in January 2018	-
Wessex Water	No Response	-
Blackdown Hills Trust	Comments received in January 2018	-
Butterfly Conservation	Comments received in January 2018	-
Neroche Woodlanders	No Response	-
Ancient Tree Forum	No Response	-
Otterhead Lakes	<p>1. Pleased to see mention of protecting and enhancing scheduled and unscheduled cultural and heritage assets.</p> <p>2. Similarly mention at Quants of the unfinished reservoir though there are other heritage features there including lost gardens.</p> <p>3. Concerned that Otterhead Lakes is described correctly as being managed as a nature reserve with a forest school and fishing licence but with no mention of the lost gardens, Victorian designed landscape and surviving garden plants.</p> <p>4. This becomes of greater concern as parts of the lost gardens, Victorian designed landscape and some of the surviving garden plants such as for example Rhododendron maximum hybrids 'Eileen' and 'Lady Eleanor Cathcart' are within the Otterford Forest boundary also lime (linden) trees.</p> <p>5. Mr Sam Negus and I spent several hours a few years ago looking at heritage features such as the remains of Anders Lane Farm, the estate yard, dogs' graves, railings and garden plants within Otterford Forest as above at 5.</p> <p>6. Visitors to Otterhead are unaware of the boundaries between Otterford Forest and the Otterhead Estate Trust leased land.</p> <p>7. There is information about heritage features at Otterhead on the Estate Trust's website www.e-voice.org.uk/otterheadestate</p>	<p>Acknowledged Page 15 updated accordingly.</p> <p>Comment passed to Beat team to consider</p>
South West Heritage Trust	<p>There are a few points to note with regards to the historic environment. I appreciate that the coupes will be subject to an individual consultation process, but flagging sites which could be impacted by works at this stage would be beneficial.</p> <p>Buckland Coupe 62998a contains site 43645, the site of Quants Farm.</p> <p>Otterford Coupe 62048 contains site 43469, the site of a Bronze Age barrow</p> <p>PriorsPark Coupe 62996 contains site 45644, a quarry & lime kilns, with the kilns located at the southern end of the clear fell area;</p> <p>Castle Neroche/Staple Common Coupe 62988 contains site 38900, site of a cottage & buildings, as well as the parish boundary</p> <p>Appendix 8, Thurlbear Wood, table 1.9.3 could do with updating with all known historic environment information - there are four limekilns mapped within our records, (not all identified beyond mapping) as well as quarrying and areas of boundaries and earthworks in Didworthy Coppice. https://www.somersetheritage.org.uk/her</p>	<p>Observations passed to Beat team to inform management and future operations.</p> <p>This comment should be raised with the current managers and authors of Appendix 8, the Somerset Wildlife Trust.</p>

<p>Somerset Geology Group</p>	<p>I think the draft FC plan needs some strengthening re <u>potential opportunities for multiple conservation interest gains re landscape/heritage/biodiversity / recreational use aspects for the smaller FC non-SSSI</u> areas. They missed out on the Neroche-Project type approach a few years ago - particularly for example the <u>Blackborough area</u> – but some of my comments below may also apply to other such areas, such as landscape considerations for the steeply sloping areas of the Culm Davy block (which is illustrated in the draft plan).</p> <p>This response is prompted by the fact that I happened to walk in the <u>Blackborough area</u> at the weekend – and saw a notice about the consultation. The FC land there is closely adjacent to Garnsey’s Tower ruin - with people apparently regularly using the FC ride to walk there - along a flat route from an informal parking area, with potentially spectacular views from the FC ride of typical Blackdowns AONB landscape at its best: across the Bodminscombe valley below (with its ancient field enclosures) to the adjacent ridge of Hackpen (with its typical semi-natural woodland and more open former ‘common land’ remnants on the steep upper slopes and promontory). This interest, and that below, is not yet identified in the draft FC plan.</p> <p>The only information I can find about Garnsey’s Tower, which would appear to be on adjacent privately owned land, is from an Uffculme parish history book - which indicates it is probably a c 1700s folly related to ‘gentrification’ of Bodminscombe Manor below, Garnsey apparently being the family that held that manor within the Uffculme parish. The ruin is in poor repair at the moment and would benefit from some conservation repairs. A quick look at the website indicates no heritage information readily available, but it is often mentioned in walks booklets and as a destination for local walks.</p> <p>This is an example of the opportunity for a multi-agency multiple-interest conservation plan for this wider Blackborough area - including potential pluses for adjacent forestry managers/ landowners - and I suggest this could be mentioned in both the FC and AONB plans - and related to objectives/strategic opportunities in the National landscape Character Area document for the Blackdowns.</p> <p>There is also a Devon Local Geological Site on other adjacent forestry land at Blackborough, plus associated industrial archaeological remains (Bill Horner Devon CC archaeologist is aware of areas which have had recent investigations re the whetstone quarrying in this general area). Plus there is evidently regular recreational use for walking by families, horseriding, etc in the area, with as above, spectacular views of typical AONB historic landscape – but some views are likely to be largely lost by mature trees, rather than enhanced, under the draft FC plan - which I suggest could be modified.</p> <p>There is scope for heathland restoration on the top flat ground, semi-natural woodland/ open areas restoration on the steep slopes below, plus more detailed wetland conservation planning for the area of the old Water Works. There is scope for heritage conservation work re the geology, whetstone industry and features such as Garnsey’s Tower and improved footpath maintenance and associated interpretive material - including potentially oral/local history community input, such as in the Neroche project.</p> <p>There are, for example geology fossil collections from the late1800s from the area which have never been seen by local people - which I think I mentioned at the last AONB Heritage forum meeting – as well as whet stones. Some are held in store at RAMM - and include chalcedonised specimens if I remember the literature correctly (a hydrated form of quartz very similar to chert and flint). Interestingly the recent forestry work near Garnsey’s Tower, apparently accessed via the FC ride, has broken up the steep ground surface there to reveal numerous, and often large, freshly broken fragments of the Cretaceous Upper Greensand ‘Blackborough Sandstone’, including highly siliceous bands: not fossiliferous, but apparently ‘chalcedonized’ in parts and ranging in colour from pale translucent white-blue to deep red (known locally as ‘bottle flint’).</p> <p>So the Forestry Commission land at Blackbrough is a central - and potentially key element - for landscape conservation in this part of the AONB.</p>	<p>We know that the forest is a dynamic environment and individual spots which have great views today will eventually become obscured and new veiwpoints open as the crops grow and are then harvested. I know what you mean about the brilliant view from Blackborough and to capture this we have installed the bench at this spot. The life of a bench is approximately 10 years at which point we also anticipate the view at this point will be disappearing. As such these temporary view points are not acknowledged in the plan.</p> <p>It is difficult to capture partnership projects in a document like the Forest Plan which is meant to be a document more focussing on the Forestry Commissions direct intentions, rather than aspirations, these are better outlined elsewhere.</p> <p>Garney’s Tower and the noted LGS are not on FC land and therefore it is not appropriate to include aspirations or future management within this document. Aspirations for restoration should be followed up with landowner.</p> <p>This Forest Plan has appraised the recent heathland creation and considered the suitability of other sites for heathland creation. Future open habitat creation is focussed on areas where it will consolidate management and complement surrounding habitats, in line with the FC Open Habitats Policy,</p> <p>In the current climate we would be very happy to be part of a larger initiative but are not in a position to lead one</p>
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	<p>I've just realised too - at the end of last week - that the Local Geological Site at Otterhead (a small old quarry, just off the main track) is - I think - just within the FC leased land from Wessex Water (correct). It looks to be immediately adjacent to - rather than within - the Local Nature Reserve in the valley bottom area there.</p> <p>It's one of four LGSs within the Somerset part of the AONB, that we'll be updating info on in the next year or so, as part of our Somerset Geology Group partnership project with Somerset Environmental Record Centre to review Somerset's LGSs. Please could you feed any information and management recommendations on this LGS directly to me so I can incorporate them in our management of the site. A detailed management prescription is not really appropriate to include in the Forest Plan we could certainly make reference to the location of an LGS on our land.</p>	<p>Please could you feed any information and management recommendations on this LGS directly so we can incorporate them in our management of the site. A detailed management prescription is not really appropriate to include in the Forest Plan we could certainly make reference to the location of an LGS on our land</p>
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NEIGHBOURS AND INDIVIDUALS

Member of Public	<p>I cannot comment on some of the areas but have visited / used quite a few regularly.</p> <p>Thurlbear Wood SSSI is coppiced regularly and managed well but seems to suffer from parallel footpaths springing up everywhere thus degrading the site. I believe this is a major problem for an area of such importance.</p> <p>I am wary of the type of "recreation" use, for instance although shooting (pheasants) might be lucrative the flora and fauna in woodlands can be severely degraded by the concentration of birds.</p> <p>Thank goodness we are all stakeholders in these areas as they would be lost under private ownership</p>	<p>Concerns passed to local Community Ranger to monitor</p>
Member of Public	<p>Clear felling and planting too many conifers is inappropriate to the needs of the community. These woods are of vital community and wildlife value, far more than wasteful commercial value.</p>	<p>Level of clearfelling and conifer replanting has been greatly reduced as a result of Neorche Project and future reversion of woodlands to native cover through thinning.</p>
Member of Public	<p>Our house is adjacent to the woodlands and we love to hear the birds, especially the owls at night. The tree roots protect us against landslip.</p>	<p>Acknowledged.</p>
Member of Public	<p>Not being familiar with the true concept (s) of the plan nor having attended any presentation I can only speak of South Cleave, which is near to my place of residence.</p> <p>I have noticed that the very large machinery for felling is indiscriminate in it's nature both to single and groups of hardwoods which could have been preserved and wasteful in harvesting. I have noticed some contractors leave waste - litter and signage which is outdated but this is improving now.</p> <p>I am pleased to note that shooting does not take place here now by forestry employees as this was dangerous and as far as I am aware risk assessments for those walking were not in place. I have not witnessed shooting here now for 4-5 years.</p>	<p>Concerns passed to local Beat to monitor</p>
Member of Public	<p>Ditches and drainage need to be cleared and maintained so that water flows in the correct channels. The ditch around the derilict cottage in culm Davy wood hasn't been cleared in about 20 years it is full of silt and mud .during the recent rain the stream flows down the track and around the bank rather than through it so much that the track is being washed away. General track maintenance to stop some areas deteriorating. Education of people dumping rubbish, biodegradable and general rubbish and dropping litter.</p> <p>Keeping tracks and foot paths open and clear of fallen branches and rocks for all walkers, cyclists and horse riders to enjoy a lovely wood</p>	<p>Comments passed to the Beat team to consider.</p>
Member of Public	<p>The section concerned is just on the northern tip of Staple Park where the orange dotted line does not follow the bridleway on the OS which should come out on the eastern side and go round the field boundary.</p>	<p>Page 39 updated accordingly.</p>