

Clipsham

Consultation report and our response to issues raised

June 2024



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Executive summary

Between 4th and 24th March 2024, we held a consultation on proposals for the designs of a new woodland straddling the border of Rutland and Lincolnshire near the village of Clipsham. The 220-hectare woodland, will adjoin Pickworth Great Wood and Clipsham Park Woods.

The proposals we consulted upon were informed by site surveys and early engagement with statutory stakeholders as well as the local community.

We received 33 responses to the consultation which included over 90 comments. Whilst some comments were supportive, others highlighted concerns about our proposals, raised questions or made suggestions.

After carefully considering the responses, we are making the following changes and amendments to our proposals for the new woodland as follows:

- We have clarified the location of the potential new car park
- We have updated the maps to show the current correct footpath alignments, in line with the local authority's definitive plans
- We have changed the alignment of planting behind properties near Clipsham
- We have removed one of the potential access points off Holywell Road.
- We will include wider spaces between planting next to Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Local wildlife sites
- We have made amendments to our tree species plan and Red Oak areas closest to the SSSI will now be planted with a mixture of Sessile Oak and Scots Pine

Over the coming weeks, we will be finalising our designs to reflect these changes, ahead of an application to the Forestry Commission for review before we can begin to create the new woodland.

This report outlines our approach to our consultation and engagement with the local community and other key stakeholders, summarises the key concerns, issues and questions raised, and our response.

About the Consultation

2.1 Introduction

Forestry England is creating a new multi-purpose 220-hectare woodland on land we have bought at Clipsham Farm. The land was previously used for arable and pasture farmland and will provide a thriving woodland which will be planted with a mix of tree and shrub species, including mixed conifer and broadleaf trees, specially selected to be resilient to future climate conditions. The new woodland will be a 'Coronation Wood' to celebrate the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III. It will link two existing woodlands, Clipsham

Park and Pickworth Great Wood, which are already managed by Forestry England, to create joined up area of woodland which together will cover 433 hectares. The new woodland will have public access for visitors, providing a high-quality green space for people to explore and enjoy, a valuable wildlife habitat, and a sustainable source of timber for a green economy.

The consultation invited views from the public and stakeholders on our proposals for the planting and design of the new woodland.

Feedback will help to shape and inform our final designs which will be submitted to the Forestry Commission for permission to create the new woodland.

2.2 Purpose

The aims of the consultation were to:

- Provide the public and our stakeholders with sufficient information about our proposals to allow informed responses and suggestions
- Understand the reasons for any issues or concerns raised about our proposals
- Identify issues we might not already be aware of
- Provide adequate time for people to respond
- Consider all responses carefully ahead of making any changes to our proposals.

2.3 Early engagement

In October 2023 we wrote to people at over 400 addresses in the Clipsham, Holywell and Castle Bytham area, inviting their views on the issues important to them for us to consider as we develop our designs for the creation of a new woodland on land in Clipsham. We also wrote to Rutland County Council, Lincolnshire County Council, South Kesteven District Council, and the local parish councils and notified other stakeholders we consult with when creating new woodlands including local political representatives, local interest and wildlife groups, and Natural England. The letter included a map showing the boundary of the new site and invited responses via an online survey.

We received over 50 responses, from residents and businesses, parish councils, a ward councillor and the Yew Tree Avenue Trust.

The feedback is summarised in Appendix A, and together with further design and survey work and engagement with stakeholders, this helped to shape the design proposals we presented in the March 2024 public consultation.

2.4 How our consultation designs were informed by feedback to early engagement

Feedback to our early engagement included questions and concerns about issues including:

- · Public access and use of the new woodland
- Traffic and parking

- Views and neighbouring properties
- Wildlife and archaeology
- Protecting the new woodland from deer
- Tree planting and choices
- Research trials and the seed stand

Appendix D describes how the designs presented at the public consultation responded to this feedback.

2.4 Public consultation - who we consulted

We invited local people who responded to our initial early engagement survey, as well as representatives from Rutland County Council, Lincolnshire County Council, South Kesteven District Council, and local parish councils.

We also contacted immediate neighbours who lived or worked very close to the new woodland offering to meet with them to discuss the proposals.

Other stakeholders such as local political representatives, local interest and wildlife groups, and Natural England were also contacted.

A list of stakeholders we contacted and those that responded are included Appendix F and Appendix G.

2.5 Dates and duration

The public consultation was open for 3 weeks from 4^{th} March to midnight on the 24^{th} March 2024.

2.6 What we asked.

The consultation survey included one open question inviting written feedback or questions about our proposed plans for the new woodland.

We also asked respondents to give their name and email address and, where applicable, supply details of the organisation on whose behalf they were responding.

2.7 Methods of responding

Respondents to the consultation were invited to give their views between the 4th March and midnight on the 24th March 2024 by:

- Completing the questionnaire included on our website at: <u>Clipsham Coronation</u> <u>Wood Forestry Commission England Citizen Space (forestryengland.uk)</u>
- Email at: <u>Woodland.creation@forestryengland.co.uk</u> (where responding via the survey was not possible)
- Completing a paper survey at one of the public information events

• Leaving comments or suggestions at the public information events held at the Olive Branch, Clipsham, and Castle Bytham Village Hall (comments from these events have been summarised separately in Section 3.4 of this report).

2.8 Overview of consultation responses

We received 33 responses to the consultation. 19 were submitted by completing the consultation online, and the rest by email. The responses were coded into over 90 separate comments and categorised as either positive, negative/concerns, questions or suggestions.

2.9 Consultation materials and publicity

2.9.1 Consultation materials

We published consultation information about the new woodland on our website. This included:

- An overview of the new woodland creation programme and Government tree planting objectives
- A site appraisal of the existing site with photographs and maps to give context
- An overview of the surveys undertaken and the objectives and principles that have informed our design proposals for the new woodland
- An overview of planting types included in the proposals
- Visuals of how the new woodland might look soon after planting and, in the future
- A summary of feedback to the early engagement and an overview of how feedback had been incorporated into the designs presented in the consultation
- Information on how to respond to the consultation.
- Comment boards at the consultation information drop in events inviting attendees to use sticky notes to leave comments about the proposals.

2.9.2 Consultation activity

We publicised the consultation in the following ways:

- Media release: Distributed to local news outlets
- Dedicated web page: On the Forestry England website
- Emails to around 60 people in the local area
- Emails to stakeholders
- Emails: to the occupants of immediate neighbouring properties offering a meeting to discuss the proposals
 - Posters: Posters publicising the consultation were put up in public areas around Clipsham. We also shared the poster with the local Parish Councils (Clipsham, Castle Bytham, Stretton, Careby, Aunby and Holywell and Greetham)
- Consultation public drop-in events: We held two public information consultation drop in events on:

13th March: Castle Bytham Village Hall from 4pm to 7pm. 14th March: The Olive Branch, Clipsham from 4.30pm to 7pm

The event displayed the information already available to view on the website on large posters around the venue and Forestry England staff were on hand to talk about the

proposals, answer questions or queries, and listen to any concerns from those attending.

Attendees were also encouraged to leave immediate feedback on comment boards, and to respond to the consultation formally via the online survey or, if this was not possible, by completing a paper copy at the event, or by email.

Attendees were asked to leave their contact details if they would like to be kept updated about the proposals. More than 30 people attended the event in Clipsham and 20 people attended in Castle Bytham.

2.9.3 Analysis of consultation responses

Responses received by completing the survey or by email, were analysed by assigning (or coding) the points made by each respondent to one or more codes within a code frame. Codes were organised by theme and separated into positive, concerns/negative, and questions or suggestions. Each code reflects a point raised, sometimes by multiple individuals in a variety of ways. From this it was possible to count how many times respondents had raised the same or similar points.

3. About the responses

We received a total of 33 responses to the consultation, 19 via the online survey and the rest by email or paper copy. Ten of the responses were received from stakeholders (Appendix G). Comments were analysed into over 90 different codes which were then summarised into nine overarching themes.

Theme	General positive	Concern	Question	Suggestio n
Archaeology, views and historic landscape		2		3
Consultation, communication, and signage		3		8
General positive comment	11			
Other		2		1
Woodland development and maintenance		2	3	3
Access to and users of the new woodland		1		12
Parking and traffic		2	1	5
Paths and footpaths		1		9
Woodland design, planting and tree species		6	11	10
Total mentions	11	18	15	51

Comments posted on the comment boards at the drop in event have been summarised separately in Section 3.4 of this document.

3.1 Positive comments

We received 11 general positive comments. These included mentions of the benefits the new woodland would have on wildlife, nature and the environment, and general positive comments for example 'The proposals are generally very positive'; 'fully supportive', 'very happy with the proposals'.

3.2 Concerns/ negative comments

The negative themes and issues have been summarised in the table below:

Themes and specific concerns	Mentions
Woodland design, planting and tree species	4
Link neighbouring ancient woodlands	2
Natural regeneration and role of open habitats have been overlooked	3
Concern about use of Red oak and Scots pine in close proximity to ancient woodland and SSSI	2
Consultation, communication and signage	3
Bridleway incorrectly marked on materials/OS map out of date	3
Archaeology, views and historic landscape	2
Presence of archaeological remains/earthworks on the site	2
Other	2
Privacy and security of properties close to boundary	1
Welfare of animals grazing on land adjacent to the new woodland	1
Woodland development and maintenance	2
Flooding potential and water run-off	1
Concern about fire-risk	1
Parking and traffic	2
Concern about car-parking and antisocial behaviour	1
Paths and footpaths	1
Footpath alignment inaccurately depicted and in close proximity to trees	1
Concern about fire-risk	1
Parking and traffic	2
Concern about car-parking and antisocial behaviour	2
Access to and users of the new woodland	1
Access and paths for wheelchair users, mobility scooters, pushchairs and people with limited disability	1
Total mentions	20

3.3 Questions & suggestions

We received 64 questions and suggestions about the proposals. Those most frequently mentioned have been summarised into themes in the table below.

Theme	Questions and suggestions
Woodland design, planting and tree species	18
Access to and users of the new woodland	12
Consultation, communication, and signage	8
Paths and footpaths	9
Woodland development and maintenance	7
Parking and traffic	6
Archaeology, views and historic landscape	3
Other	1
Total	64

Questions and suggestions within in each theme included:

Woodland design, planting and tree species:

- How would calcareous grasslands be protected
- How much of the new woodland would be used for timber v permanent habitat
- Suggestions for tree planting and more information about tree species
- Inclusion of wider buffers between planting next to SSSI and Local wildlife sites

Access to and users of the new woodland theme:

 Provision of access and paths for wheelchair users, mobility scooters, pushchairs and people with limited mobility and disabled parking

Consultation and communication:

- Create Friends of Clipsham Coronation/and opportunities for volunteering
- Show the correct alignment for bridleways and footpaths

Paths and Footpaths:

- Include paths for cyclists, horse riders and carriages,
- Include surfaced bridleways and the provide all-weather paths where possible

Woodland Development and Maintenance:

- The use, type and colour of tree guards, questions and suggestions included:
- How we will minimise the risk of fires
- Questions about harvesting

Parking and Traffic:

- Clarity on the location of the proposed parking, and strategies to manage parking issues and traffic through the village
- More information about the routing of operational traffic and timber haulage

Archaeology, views, history and landscape:

 Consider historical views when planning the rural landscape and preserving some of the archaeological earthworks on the site

The code frame summarising the comments received to the consultation are included in Appendix E. Our response to the key questions raised are set out in Section 4 of this document.

3.4 Feedback from the consultation drop in event.

Over 50 people attended the two public information drop in events held at the Olive Branch, Clipsham (4.30 pm-7pm), and Castle Bytham Village Hall (4.00pm-7pm) on the 13^{th} and 14^{th} March.

The event displayed the information already available to view on the website on large posters around the venue and Forestry England staff were on hand to talk about the proposals, answer questions or queries, and listen to any concerns from those attending. In addition, visitors to the event were invited to leave comments on feedback boards.

The board invited free comments using sticky notes. A total of 8 post-its were attached to the boards. These can be summarised as:

- Concerns that the footpath/bridleway route shown on the consultation maps were out of date, with comments to show their actual location
- Include circular routes for walkers and riders
- 7.5 tonne weight limit on Clipsham Road
- The area between the existing accesses of Castle Bytham Road is very wet
- Concerns about woodland construction and maintenance traffic through Castle Bytham
- Use of some of the planting blocks for biodiversity and net gain for local developments

4. Our response to key issues raised.

We have considered all the feedback we received to the consultation, and our responses to the key issues raised are set out in the tables on the following pages. Where we have received detailed very specific feedback from stakeholders, we have responded to these separately.

We have grouped the issues into broad themes for a more readily understood overview of the issues. Positive comments about the proposals have been noted, but for conciseness, these have not been included in the tables.

Following further design work and in response to consultation feedback, we have made the following changes to our proposed designs for the new woodland:

- We have clarified the location of the potential new car park
- We have updated the maps to show the current correct footpath alignments, in line with the local authority's definitive plans
- We have changed the alignment of planting behind properties near Clipsham
- We have removed one of the potential access points off Holywell Road.
- We will include wider spaces between planting next to SSSI and Local wildlife sites.
- We have made amendments to our tree species plan and Red Oak areas closest to the SSSI will now be planted with a mixture of Sessile Oak and Scots Pine

	Access to and users of the new woodland		
1.	Access and paths for wheelchair users, mobility scooter users, pushchair users, people with limited mobility	The paths within the new woodland will be generally unsurfaced grass rides and stone vehicle tracks and there will be no stiles or steps. We have carefully considered where we can afford to spend our limited money for the best benefit, so our proposals do not include surfaced paths.	
2.	Include paths for horse riding, cyclists and carriage drivers	We have no plans to introduce additional bridleways or cycle paths. Riders are welcome to enjoy the new woodland using the existing partly surfaced bridleway.	
3.	Provide disabled parking and paths 3 suitable for wheelchair users - in line with Paths for All, Outdoor Accessibility Guidance	Our draft design includes proposals for a small car park to the south of Castle Bytham Road which would include provision for disabled parking. This would need funding and planning permission to go ahead. We have updated our maps to clarify the proposed location of the carpark, and this is available to view at: Clipsham Coronation Wood - Forestry Commission England - Citizen Space (forestryengland.uk)	
4.	Expand access into adjoining woods	Forestry England manages a number of woodlands nearby, some of these are owned by someone else, and may not be open to the public. These will therefore have to remain separate from the new woodland.	
5.	5Limit access to some areas of the woodland to dogs (eg some wildlife habitats, ponds and watercourses)	Visitors will be welcome to walk their dogs in the new woodland and we expect all dog owners to be responsible and keep their pets under control in all the forests and woodlands we care for, following signs and our Forest Dog Code. We anticipate there will be fewer people walking their dogs in the woodland furthest from Clipsham village, as this has been designed as a quieter area away from the path network, allowing wildlife to thrive here.	

	Footpaths and bridleways	
6.	Do not use limestone becomes sticky when wet	Our design proposals do not include hardstanding paths. However, these comments have been passed onto our civil engineering team for their information.
7.	Make footpaths all weather where possible	Existing Public Rights of Way, stone vehicle tracks and unsurfaced grass rides will give access to walkers in a lot of the new wood, with a new, short, circular route from Clipsham Village for visitors to enjoy. We are carefully considering where we can afford to spend our limited money for the best benefit, so our proposals do not include surfacing sections of the unsurfaced bridleway.
8.	Link the diversion of E135 to the network of paths in the new woodland?	The permanent diversion is not yet formally in place, if it is put in place, we will review if a connection to our new woodland would be feasible.
9.	Carefully plot legal alignment of public footpaths ahead of any planting or fencing	This is undertaken in detail as part of our approvals process and ahead of any planting for the new woodland.
10.	Change proposed footpaths to bridleways to improve the safety for cyclists on the busy road between Clipsham and Castle Bytham, include paths for riders and cyclists	We have no plans to introduce additional bridleways or cycle paths. Riders are welcome to use the existing bridleway.
11.	Include surfaced bridleway to make a stone or sealed surface circular route	Existing Public Rights of Way, stone vehicle tracks and unsurfaced grass rides will give access to walkers in a lot of the new wood, with a new, short, circular route from Clipsham Village for visitors to enjoy. We are carefully considering where we can afford to spend our limited money for the best benefit and so our proposals do not include surfacing sections of the unsurfaced bridleways.

	Archaeology, views and historic landscape		
	571		
12.	Consider the views when planning the rural landscape eg Clipsham Hall, Yew Tree Avenue and Holywell Hall, park and garden	As part of our design development for the new woodland, we conducted a Landscape and Visual Appraisal to assess the landscape and visual impact of the proposed project on the surrounding environment including nearby properties, public spaces and viewpoints. In our early engagement with local people, we clearly heard that it is important to have views from the public footpaths within and around the site and where possible our designs have framed and enhanced existing views and will seek to establish open spaces between the new woodland and key viewpoints.	
13.	Undertake an archaeological evaluation ahead of tree planting / presence of archaeological earthworks and options for preserving some of them on the site	We have undertaken a geophysical survey to show where there may be sensitivities on the site, this includes the presence of geological structures and architectural remains that maybe above or below ground. Our design includes open spaces to protect and maintain the archaeological features identified as well as existing important habitats.	
	Consultation, communication and signage		
14.	Include questions about the use of the new woodland in future consultations	We hope to encourage responses to our early engagement and consultation by keeping our surveys short and including open questions to encourage unrestricted responses and valuable insights. Responses often include suggested uses of the new woodland.	
15.	Maps show the bridleways and footpaths incorrectly	We thank those who flagged that the route of the public bridleway was incorrectly marked on our proposed plans. The maps have been updated and the correct route, as currently on the council definitive maps, will be reflected in our final designs. We are aware these do not always match the routes as they are on the ground. An updated map showing the correct alignment, is available to view on our website at: Clipsham Coronation Wood - Forestry Commission England - Citizen Space (forestryengland.uk)	
16.	Create Friends of Clipsham Coronation/volunteering opportunities	Forestry England works with many 'friends of' societies and community groups that help manage our woodlands. Whilst we have limited resource to support long term volunteering opportunities on the site, we would be happy to discuss this idea with anyone interested in taking this forward. We hope to	

		host a community planting day when we begin planting the new woodland for local people to join in creating this special place.
47	Voor us informed as plans progress	
17.	Keep us informed as plans progress	As our proposals for the new woodland progress, we will post updates on the Clipsham page on our website at Clipsham Farm Woodland creation Forestry England
18.	Retain the white wooden direction sign	Our plans for the new woodland will not affect the location of the white wooden direction signs
19.	Include information boards on public paths where ridge and furrow earthworks are visible	Suggestions for the inclusion of signage and information boards will be considered as we develop our signage strategy in the next stage of our detailed design development work.
	Parking and traffic	
20.	Strategies to manage parking at entrance of the bridleway at Castle Bytham	Our draft design includes proposals for a small car park to the south of Castle Bytham Road. This would need funding and planning permission to go ahead. We have updated our maps to clarify the proposed location of the car park and these are available to view at: Clipsham Coronation Wood - Forestry Commission England - Citizen Space (forestryengland.uk).
21.	More information about timber haulage routes	It will be about 10-20 years before any timber can be harvested from the site. Transport routes for the sustainable timber will be agreed with the local highways authority as required.
22.	Carefully consider the routing and timing of operational traffic to and from the new woodland	To plant and manage the new woodland, forestry vehicles will use routes we already use to manage woodlands next door. It will be about 10-20 years before any timber can be harvested from the site. Transport routes for the sustainable timber will be agreed with the local highways authority as required.
Woodland development and maintenance		ce
23.	Colour and use of plastic tree guards	We are proposing to fence most of the woodland so only a few very small areas will require the use of tree guards (about 2.5% of the whole tree planting area). The tree guards will be plastic and recyclable and, depending on availability, will be green.

24.	Flooding potential and water run-off	Tree planting will generally reduce the risk of flooding as tree roots help to stabilise the ground, absorb water from the soil and help to reduce runoff. We are planning to clear out the ditches to improve drainage when it will have less impact on wildlife.
25.	Minimise risk of fires	Our proposed designs for the new woodland feature natural fire breaks to reduce the risk of fire by planting broadleaves and shrub layers. Disposable barbecues are not allowed anywhere in our forests or woodlands, and we will consider the inclusion of signage to warn of potential fire risks as part our signage design strategy.
26.	Maintenance of the new woodland, tree felling and harvesting	It will be about 10-20 years before any timber can be harvested from the site. Once the woodland has been planted, further information about its management, maintenance and harvesting will be included in a forest design plan. This will be developed through a consultative process and reviewed every 5 years.
27.	Phase the development of the new woodland -village end first	We anticipate that planting across all of the new woodland will take place in the autumn/winter 24/25 and take approximately 3 to 4 months to complete. Additional trees that need some shelter to grow well may be planted into the new woodland at a later date.
28.	Preparation for planting and soil removal	In preparing to plant the woodland we are sowing a low maintenance grass, which helps control weeds, ensuring the trees can establish. There will be no soil removal.
	Woodland design, planting, and tree sp	ecies
29.	Link neighbouring ancient woodlands	The new woodland at Clipsham will link to Pickworth Great Wood and Clipsham Park Wood through a series of connected broadleaf corridors designed to run north to south and east to west across the new woodland.
30.	Plans to avoid trees overshadowing existing hedges in the future	An independent hedgerow survey has been carried out to assess the quality of hedges. As part of our planting approach, we will retain a buffer between the hedges and adjacent tree planting. This also allows space for hedge maintenance.

31.	Precautions to protect SSSI and AW areas and prevent seeding of non-native species	Our designs for the new planting include a low-density broadleaf buffer around the Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and native broadleaved species will also be planted alongside Ancient Woodlands (AW). Planting locations chosen for some non-native species also take seed dispersal into account.
32.	Clarify the woodland plans that are for timber or permanent habitat	The woodland is multipurpose, designed for sustainable timber production, habitats for wildlife and people to enjoy. It will be about 10-20 years before any timber can be harvested from the site. Once the woodland has been planted, further information about its management, maintenance and harvesting will be included in a forest design plan. This will be developed through a consultative process and reviewed every 5 years.
33.	How will areas of calcareous grassland be protected	We have undertaken a grassland survey as well as a Preliminary Ecological Assessment Survey to identify healthy habitats and we will seek to retain those designated as good priority habitats within the woodland.
34.	More information about specific trees, include more native trees, broadleaved and European species	Tree species have been chosen to reflect changes in the climate and to help ensure the new woodland will continue to sequester carbon and survive in the drier climate for up to 200-300 years. Many traditional native species are not predicted to fare well under predicted future climates, based on the Forest Research Ecological Site Classification. Around 24% of the trees we want to plant are native and the site will also feature 'near-natives' such as sycamore, walnut and Norway maple which are already naturalised or likely to adapt to climate change. The non-native trees have been carefully chosen to provide a sustainable timber crop, improve resilience of the woodland to climate change and increase biodiversity. The full species list are submitted as part of the regulatory process.
35.	Opportunities and role of open habitats have been overlooked	Open space will be retained and managed in several areas of the new wood to protect good quality grassland habitats, safeguard heritage features and manage views. All of our new woodlands feature at least 10% open space, in line with UK Forestry Standard guidance. Open space along forest tracks and hedges will also provide valuable habitat and connectivity across the site.

36.	Opportunities for natural regeneration have been overlooked	Planting young trees, will allow for greater control over the tree species in the woodland, ensuring the desired mix of trees for diversity, resilience and timber production. There are limited seed sources to support natural regeneration at Clipsham due to the surrounding agricultural land. Also, there is competition from grazing animals and deer.
37.	Proposals for Agroforestry	We have no plans to introduce agroforestry into our proposals, but we are incorporating fruit trees, tree stands, seed trials and looking into options for grazing the open space grasslands.
38.	Recommend that historic field systems are planted with meadow species or grasslands to avoid disturbance of historic environment	We have assessed the ridge and furrow features on the site, and they are deemed to not be well preserved. Other historic features have been surveyed and where appropriate these will be maintained as open spaces.
39.	Retain a 3 metre strip either side of public footpaths	In newly planted areas of the woodland, we will retain a buffer either side of public rights of way. Forestry tracks will also offer broad, surfaced routes which visitors will be welcome to use.
40.	SSSI woodlands and LWS grasslands should include native broadleaved woodland creation to strengthen ecological networks	Planting adjacent to SSSI woodlands and local wildlife sites (LWS) will be low density broadleaf trees. This will create ecological links to nearby native woodlands. Conifers and non-native broadleaf trees will also provide valuable new habitat for woodland wildlife.
41.	Undertake a flora, fauna and fungi survey	We have undertaken a Preliminary Ecological Assessment of the site at Clipsham to assess the ecological features present, or potentially present on the site. We have no plans to undertake a specific fungi survey.
42.	Use of Red oak and Scotts pine in close proximity to ancient woodland and SSSI	We have made amendments to our species plan and Red oak areas closest to the SSSI will now be planted with a mixture of Sessile oak and Scots pine, with Red oak restricted to the central area of this block.
	Other	

43.	Welfare of animals grazing on land adjacent to new woodland/plant sycamore away from sycamore	Many woodland boundaries will feature shrubs and native trees to enhance views. Where used, sycamore will be planted behind these, beyond the reach of animals on nearby land.
	Use of some of the planting blocks for biodiversity and net gain for local developments	Due to the funding for the scheme, we are not able to use the woodland planting for biodiversity net gain.

Appendix A: Clipsham early engagement feedback - October 2023

In October last year, we wrote to people at over 400 addresses in the local area inviting their views on the issues important to them as we develop our designs for the creation of a new woodland on land in Clipsham.

We received over 50 responses, from residents and businesses, parish councils, a ward councillor and the Yew Tree Avenue Trust.

The feedback is summarised below, and together with further design and survey work and engagement with stakeholders, has helped to shape the design proposals we have included in the March 2024 public consultation.

This summary focuses on those responses that raised questions, issues and suggestions about our proposals. We also received a range of other general positive and supportive responses.

A. Respondents told us that overall, the objectives for the new woodland considered most important to them, in order of priority, are:

- 1. Link adjacent woodlands at landscape scale to improve habitat connectivity
- 2. Provide additional opportunities for informal access to the countryside
- 3. Seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity
- 4. Sequester atmospheric carbon, supporting Government in achieving net zero emissions targets
- 5. Produce a resilient and sustainable supply of high-quality timber
- 6. Incorporate a new seed stand, helping to secure future supply of climate resilient tree species
- 7. Seek opportunities to pilot, innovative silvicultural activities

B. Responses to the open questions (Is there anything special about the site you would like us to consider, any other comments), have been summarised under the following headings:

- Access to the new woodland
- Footpaths and connectivity
- Design considerations for the new woodland
- Use of the new woodland
- Special views from the new woodland
- Suggested names for the new woodland

Access to the new woodland

Suggestions for parking - including:

- On the south side of the Clipsham to Castle Bytham Road where the contour of the road allows safe access in both directions.
- On the north side of the Clipsham to Castle Bytham Road a few hundred yards south of the entrance to Yew Tree Avenue where there is already a large area of hard standing
- Do not include parking at the junction of Main Street

Issues and concerns

- The weight limit for heavy vehicles on Clipsham road
- The safety of Clipsham Road and pedestrians
- The local woodland would increase visitors and traffic to the area
- Light pollution and the proximity of the woodland boundary and paths to houses
- How the deer population will be managed
- The potential for anti-social behaviour in the new woodland
- Concern about public access along a private road

Footpaths and connectivity

Suggestions

- Connect existing blocks of woodland into one larger area
- Improve connectivity between Castle Bytham and Clipsham and Yew Tree Avenue
- Include more footpaths and circular walks
- Provide year-round access from Clipsham Village (current access is unusable in winter)

Design considerations for the new woodland

Suggestions

- Consider existing hedgerows and leave some areas of the woodland undisturbed
- Protect the roadside nature reserve (Hollywell Road), and take measures to limit damage to the edge of Robinsons Field and Hollywell Bank
- Include glades and rides to encourage diversity of species
- Make the woodland dog walker friendly and consider fencing
- Include arable land, plant species native to the area no monocultures
- · Protect woodland from external noise
- Measures to protect breeding birds, Lapwing, Skylark, Yellow hammer, and Linnet

Use of the new woodland

Suggestions

- Create a children's forest
- Do not allow shooting clubs
- Include a picnic spot
- Set up a charitable trust/Friends of Clipsham Wood

Tree choices and species

Suggestions

- Include diverse planting and deciduous trees and trees that are resilient to climate change
- Plant species native to the area, no conifers

Special views from the new woodland

Suggestions

- View from northern boundary of Pickworth Wood 1518N 9848E a view in an arc towards the north
- Western side of Holywell Quarry 1627N 9882E Ridge viewpoint just to the north of Holywell guarry 1627N 9882E with fine views in all directions
- Halfway along the Clipsham to Castle Bytham Road where there is a view to the south 1638N 9777E.
- The footpath running east from the village 1610N 9721W towards Holywell 1600N 9822E should remain open to the south to allow sunlight to enter even late in the day.
- Views from existing paths and particularly from the path through Holywell quarry
- The immediate area adjacent to the road
- Views from the entrance of Pickworth Great Wood looking north
- Views to Yew Tree Avenue
- From the village of Clipsham
- Views east or west from top of ridge
- Views across to Clipsham Hall
- Views to Holywell Hall

A name for the new woodland

The most frequently mentioned name suggestions for the new woodland included:

- Clipsham Coronation Wood
- Quarry Woods
- Kings Wood
- Clipsham Wood/Forest
- Holywell Woods
- Holywell Great Woods

Further details can be found in Our response to key themes from early engagement¹

Appendix B: Email to local residents

Dear neighbour

Public consultation on draft design proposals for Clipsham Coronation Wood

Thank you for your response to our early engagement survey about our new woodland at Clipsham.

I am now contacting you about the public consultation on our draft design proposals for the new woodland. These are available to view and comment upon until 24th March at: Clipsham Coronation Wood - Forestry Commission England - Citizen Space (forestryengland.uk)

While we continue with our detailed planning for the new woodland we are keen to hear your views on our initial design proposals. These have been informed by site surveys as well as the valuable insights gained from you and other local people in the autumn of last year.

The new woodland will be a valuable place for timber production, wildlife, and people. It will have public access so you will be able to explore and enjoy it to support your health and wellbeing.

Public drop-in events

As part of the consultation, we will also be holding 2 drop-in events where you can view our proposed designs and speak with members of the Woodland Creation project team:

Date: Wednesday 13th March Time: 4.00pm - 7.00pm

Location: Castle Bytham Village Hall, Pinfold Road, Castle Bytham, NG33 4RJ

Date: Thursday 14th March Time: 4.30pm - 7.00pm

Location: The Olive Branch, Main Street, Clipsham, LE15 7SH

As a direct neighbour we realise you may have specific issues you wish to discuss. The drop in events are for general queries, so if you would like to book a slot to discuss a neighbour specific query please email woodland.creation@forestryengland.uk outlining your query by 12th March.

The new woodland at Clipsham will be one of many that Forestry England is planting and will support Government targets to increase tree planting across the UK.

Please share the consultation details with any friends or neighbours who may also be interested in our plans.

Kind regards

Woodland Creation Woodland Creation Team Forestry England

woodland.creation@forestryengland.uk www.forestryengland.uk/woodland-creation

Responding to the consultation

The consultation will be open from 4th March to 24th March.

Online: We encourage you submit your response online. You can view our plans and submit your views at <u>Clipsham Coronation Wood - Forestry Commission England - Citizen Space (forestryengland.uk)</u>

If you are unable to do this, you can respond via email, typing 'Clipsham consultation response' in the header of your email and including your name, address, and postcode in your response.

Next steps

The consultation will close on 24th March. All responses will be summarised and included in a consultation report along with our response to the key issues raised and published on our website. Consultation feedback and further surveys will help shape the final design proposal we will submit to the Forestry Commission for regulatory review ahead of planting the new woodland.

Appendix C: Consultation feedback form

A proposed new woodland at Clipsham

Overview

Forestry England would like to share with you draft plans for the proposed new wood near Clipsham.

Why your views matter

Your feedback, as well as site surveys, has helped shape proposals showing how the new woodland could look. Forestry England value your comments and feedback on the proposal and welcome you to our consultation event.

Your feedback

1. Please use this space to add feedback on the proposed plans						
2. Are you responding as: Please select all that apply						
☐ A local resident						
☐ A local business						

Yo	ur details
det	can submit information without completing the address, postcode, are you and email ails, but if you chose to do so they will be held by Forestry England as per our privacy cy Privacy Policy Forestry England .
Γ	1. What is your address?
L	2. What is your postcode?
	3. What is your email address?

 $\ \square$ A political representative

Appendix D: Consultation information, exhibition boards and information available to view and download on the website at: Clipsham Coronation Wood - Forestry Commission England - Citizen Space (forestryengland.uk)



We are planting new woodlands to expand the nation's forests

We are working on designs for a new woodland straddling the Rutland and Lincolnshire border, next to the village of Clipsham, which will adjoin Pickworth Great Wood and Clipsham Park Woods. We would like your comments and feedback on our initial proposals. Your feedback will inform our final designs for the woodland.

Working with public and private landowners, we're choosing the right places for woodlands to grow and flourish, carefully planting a mix of tree species to be resilient in our changing climate.

Every new woodland will have public access so you can explore and enjoy them to support your health and wellbeing. They will be valuable places for wildlife, often linking other woods to provide green corridors for wildlife to move and thrive across the landscape.

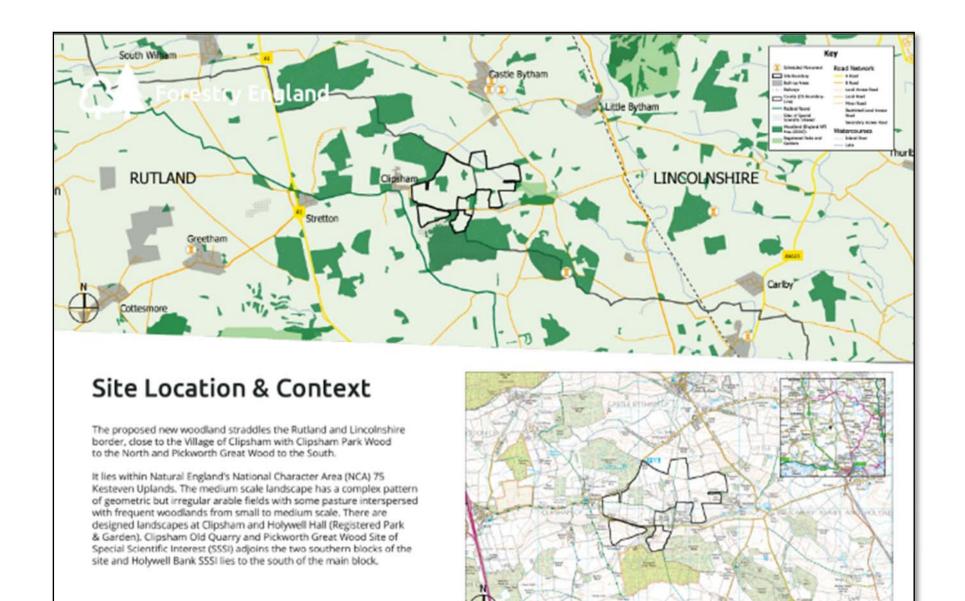
Our plans are part of the government's commitment to increasing tree planting rates across the UK to 30,000 hectares per year by the end of this parliament, supported by the Nature for Climate Fund. We aim to plant at least 2,000 hectares of new, high-quality woodlands across England.

In time, each new woodland will provide sustainable timber, contributing to a green economy. And they'll have wider environmental benefits including absorbing carbon, improving soil health and air quality, and combating flooding.

Scan the QR code to find out more:

forestryengland.uk









Types of woodland we could plant









Red Cak

with Sycamore and Big Leaf Macke

Down Recivered

Service Tree, Field Maple, Hawthorn, Hazel



Alder Euckshorn,



Sycamore



Gard Fedwood, research plot

Draft Design

How we design new woodland

We are designing the new woodland with a natural capital approach, with benefits for people, wildlife and the wider landscape. Our designs meet the UK Forestry Standard, which takes into account the following elements (Forestry Commission, 2021):



Detailed desktop surveys, site surveys and analysis have and will infor our design, this research includes:

- Preliminary ecological appraisal (Spring 2023 & 2024)
- Breeding bird survey
- Natural Vegetation Classification
- Hedgerow Survey (Spring 2024)
- Historic Environment Records
- Geophysical Surveys
- Landscape Appraisal
- Local Environment Records
- Soil Mapping
- Ecological Site Classification
- Climate matching tools
- Utilities searches
- Responses to initial consultation

Objectives for the new woodland



Future forest resources and resilience: plant a mix of trees for a lasting supply of PSC and PEFC certified sustainable timber. Incorporate seed stands and research plots, helping to secure future supply of climate resilient tree species.



Sequester carbon: support Government net zero emissions targets by planting and managing woodland that will thrive in future climate scenarios.



Retain and Manage Important Habitats: Link adjacent ancient woodlands at a landscape scale to improve habitat connectivity. Maintain ponds and hedges and create open space within the woodland for wildlife to thrive.



Benefits for the wider landscape: help to reduce soil erosion and flooding, and Improve the soil and air quality.



Public access for health and wellbeing: create low-key public recreation opportunities by increasing access to the countryside



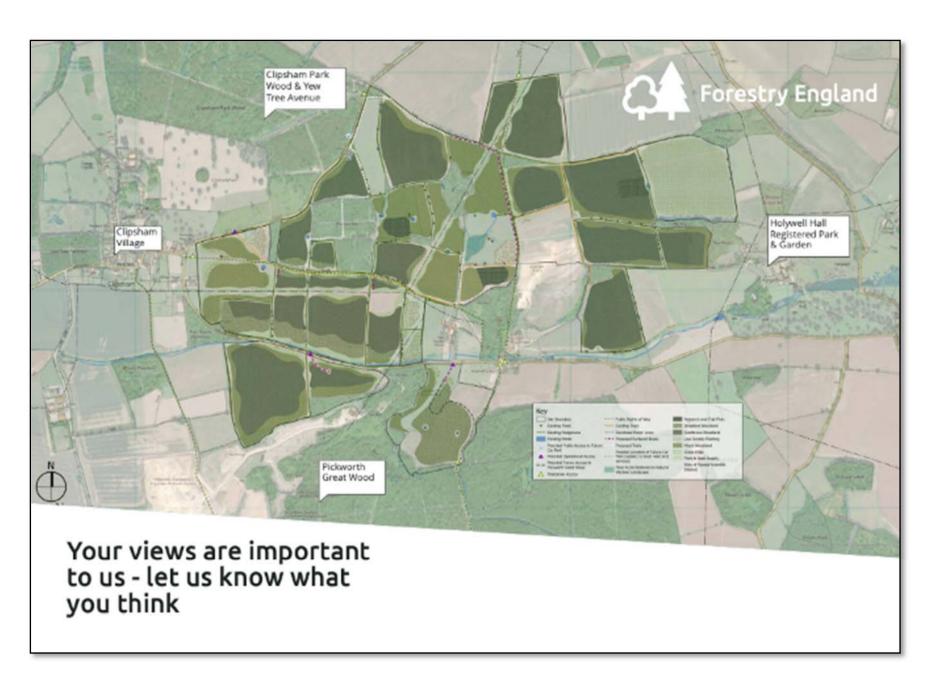
How the new woodland could look

Our initial designs include proposals to:

- Plant shrubs and lower density broadleaf edges close to Clipsham, maintaining the view from the public footpath to the veteran Oak tree. Recain open space where priority habitat and heritage features have been identified.
- Create ecological links by connecting broadleaf habitat in Clipsham Park Wood, Pickworth Great Woods (ASNW) and Holywell Hall Registered Park and Garden.
- Provide visual diversity in the landscape by planting a mix of conifer, broadleaf and conifer/ broadleaf mixes as well as native tree and shrub mixes.

- Include a seed stand to ensure the future supply of climate resilient trees.
- Create a circular route linked to the Public Rights of Way, complimenting the existing footpaths and informal access on surfaced forest roads and grass rides.







Your views are important to us - let us know what you think

Responding to this consultation

We encourage you to submit your response online. You can view our plans and submit your views by completing the online feedback form at:

 https://consult.forestryengland.uk/forest-districts/ clipsham-coronation-wood

If you are unable to do this, you can respond via email at • woodland.creation@forestryengland.uk

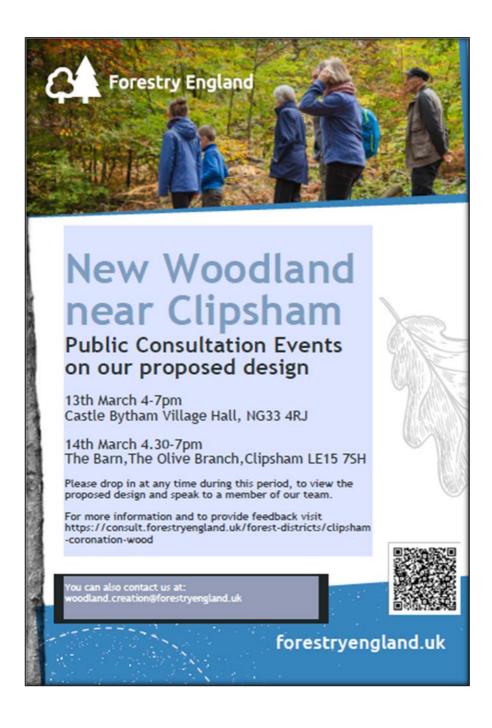
All views should be received by Sunday 24th March 2024

What's next?

- · Review of consultation feedback
- · Further design work to refine our proposals
- Application to the Forestry Commission for permission to create the new woodland
- · Initial planting (Winter 2024)







Our response to key themes from early engagement

We invited local people to share their initial views about our plans to create a new woodland near Clipsham.

Here's our responses to the key themes and questions people raised. You can download a summary of all the feedback given from our website at https://consult.forestryengland.uk/forest-districts/clipsham-coronation-wood

1. Public access

The new woodland at Clipsham will be open to the public. Once we have finished creating the woodland we will dedicate the woodland under the Countryside and Rights of Way act so people can walk freely.

Our proposal for new trails has been designed for local people to enjoy the site whilst being mindful of not significantly increasing car traffic. Existing Public Rights of Way, stone vehicle tracks and unsurfaced grass rides will give access for walkers in a lot of the new wood, with a new, short, circular route from Clipsham village for visitors to enjoy. Existing Public Rights of Way will link the new woodland to the wider countryside. We will monitor visitor numbers and impacts to inform how we manage the site.

Our draft design includes open spaces and glades that would provide peaceful picnic spots. We are carefully considering where we can afford to spend our limited money for the best benefit, so our proposals do not include surfacing sections of the unsurfaced bridleway.

Some woodlands nearby that we manage, but are owned by someone else, are not open to the public and have to remain separate from the new woodland. The Yew Tree Avenue is managed on behalf of Forestry England by the Clipsham Yew Tree Avenue Trust. Information on the avenue and their work is on their website https://yewtreeavenue.co.uk/.

Visitors will be welcome to walk their dogs in the new woodland, but we won't fence the full woodland boundary. We expect all dog owners to be responsible and to keep their pets under control in all the forest and woodland we care for, following signs and our Forest Dog Code.

We would be happy to hear from local organisations and schools who would like to use the new woodland for children's activities such as forest schools and educational visits.

Forestry England works with many 'friends of' societies and community groups that help manage our woodlands. We would be happy to discuss this idea with anyone interested in taking this forward. We hope to host a community planting day when we begin planting the new woodland for local people to join in creating this special place.

2. Traffic and parking

So we can manage and maintain the new woodland, we need access from the road for our forestry vehicles. We plan to use an existing access point to the north of Clipsham off Castle Bytham Road to manage the main site. For land south of Holywell Road, we are exploring the possibility of creating new access from the road, using existing access or field gates. To plant and manage this woodland, forestry vehicles will use routes we already use to manage and maintain woodlands next door. It will be about 10-20 years before any timber can be harvested from the site. Transport routes for the sustainable timber will be agreed with the local highways authority as required.

Our draft design includes a small car park to the South of Castle Bytham Road. This would need funding and planning permission to go ahead.

We would like a sign with the name of the new woodland at the main entrance. For security, we may put some fencing along the site boundaries. Some barriers have already been installed at some vehicle access points.

We have used our experience to design the woodland to discourage antisocial behaviour where we can, such as minimising secluded areas and improving visibility. Regular maintenance activities can deter vandalism and littering, as will regular use by the local community. If we get reports of anti-social behaviour, we monitor them to assess ways of preventing or minimising them.

3. Views and neighbouring properties

The design sensitively considers how close the new woodland will be to our new neighbours. The design includes open space closest to properties with shrubs and low-density broadleaf trees before the main woodland. We will have more broadleaf species in these areas because they are shorter than some conifer species, generally live longer and need managing less often.

We clearly heard that it is important to have views from the public footpaths within and around the site. Where possible, our design will frame and enhance existing views and we will establish open spaces between the new woodland and key viewpoints

4. Wildlife and archaeology

We want to keep existing hedgerows so we will survey them to have a plan for maintaining them. Our design includes glades and rides with trees planted away from the hedgerows, access tracks and powerlines which will benefit biodiversity such as butterflies. Our design keeps open spaces to protect and maintain the archaeological features and existing important habitats.

Our design takes account of other important designations. For example a strip of broadleaf trees has been included in the areas closest to Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). SSSIs are some of the country's most important wildlife sites. We do not anticipate significantly increasing traffic along the stretch where the Holywell roadside nature reserve is.

Our breeding bird survey that followed British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) guidelines found 48 bird species on site. The new woodland is likely to benefit species such as the green woodpecker, mistle thrush, yellowhammer and willow warbler. These are all birds of 'Conservation Concern' listed as amber or red on the lists that assess the status of UK bird populations. Planting and initial woodland maintenance will be outside of the bird breeding season (typically between March and August) where possible to minimise the risk of disturbing nesting birds and their young. If we believe activities must take place during the nesting season, they will not go ahead without a check and approval by an ecologist.

5. Protecting the new woodland from deer

The UK is home to six species of deer and their natural predators, such as bears, lynx and wolves, are extinct. Without predators, deer populations can become unnaturally big and their browsing can damage young trees. In the short-term, this can kill the trees and in the longer-term, it can reduce the resilience of the new woodland to climate change, reduce plant and animal diversity and lower the carbon captured from the atmosphere.

Forestry England is part of the <u>Deer Initiative</u>, a partnership that promotes sustainable deer management in England and Wales. We will use deer fencing to protect larger blocks of new planting and tree tubes in smaller areas. Our highly skilled wildlife rangers replace the role of Britain's missing predators by safely and humanely controlling deer populations in our woodlands, working to the highest standards. More information about how Forestry England manage deer can be found <u>here</u>².

Deer fencing would be removed after trees become established.

Appendix E: Code frame for consultation responses received on-line and by e-mail

Theme	Total mentions
Archaeology, views and historic landscape	5
Consider historical views when planning the rural landscape - eg Clipsham Hall, Yew Tree Avenue and Holywell Hall, park and garden	1
Consider options for preserving some of the archaeological earthworks present on the site	1
Presence of archaeological remains / earthworks on the site	2
Undertake an archaeological evaluation ahead of tree planting in the areas immediately to the east and north of the quarry or consider planting that is unlikely to disturb any potential below- ground archaeological remains	1
Consultation, communication, and signage	11
Amend future maps to clearly show which areas of woodland are part of the new woodland	1
Bridleway incorrectly marked	2
Create Friends of Clipsham Coronation/volunteering	1
Include information boards on public paths where ridge and furrow earthworks are visible	1
Include questions about the use of the new woodland in future consultations	1
Interest in volunteering	1
Keep us informed as plans progress	1
OS maps out of date	1
Retain the white wooden direction sign	1
Signage to define boundary between Forestry England and private woodlands	1
General positive comments	11
General positive comment	11
Other	3
Interested in volunteering	1
Privacy and security	1
Welfare of animals grazing on land adjacent to new woodland	1
Woodland development and maintenance	8
Do not use plastic tree guards/what colour will they be	2
Flooding potential and water run-off	1
Minimise risk of fires	2
More information about maintenance of the new woodland	1
Phase the development of the new woodland -village end first	1

Tree felling - when will this take place	1			
Will soil be removed in preparation for planting	1			
Access to and users of the new woodland	13			
Access and paths for wheelchair users, mobility scooter users, pushchair users, people with limited mobility	3			
Expand access into adjoining woods				
Include paths for Horse carriage drivers	2			
Include paths for horse riding	3			
Limit access to some areas of the woodland to dogs (eg some wildlife habitats, ponds and watercourses)	1			
Provide disabled parking that leads on to paths suitable for wheelchair users - in line with Paths for All, Outdoor Accessibility Guidance	2			
Parking and traffic	8			
Clarify the location of the future car-park	1			
Concern about car-parking and anti-social behaviour related to this	2			
Consider the routing and timing of operational traffic to and from the new woodland	1			
Consider traffic calming to mitigate impact on wildlife of increased visitor traffic to the new woodland	1			
More information about timber haulage routes	1			
Strategies to manage parking at entrance of bridleway at Castle Bytham	1			
Surface existing public footpath that runs parallel to new unsurfaced footpath proposed within the woodland boundary	1			
Paths and footpaths	10			
Carefully plot legal alignment of public footpaths ahead of any planting or fencing	1			
Change proposed footpaths to bridleways to improve the safety for cyclists on the busy road between Clipsham and Castle Bytham	1			
Do not encourage public to visit grazing animals on land adjacent to footpaths	1			
Do not use limestone becomes sticky when wet	1			
Footpath alignment inaccurately depicted and in close proximity to trees	1			
Include cycle paths	1			
Include surfaced bridleway to make a stone or sealed surface circular route	1			
Link the diversion of E135 to the network of paths in the new woodland?	1			
Make footpaths all weather where possible	2			
Woodland design, planting and tree species	24			
Clarify the woodland plans that are for timber v permanent habitat	2			

Link neighbouring ancient woodlands	1
More broadleaf/native tree species	2
More info re tree planting, species	4
Natural regeneration overlooked	3
Opportunities and role of open habitats have been overlooked	2
Plant sycamores away from horse areas	1
Precautions to protect SSSI and AW areas and prevent seeding of non native species	1
Prioritise European Tree Species	1
Proposals for Agroforestry	1
Recommend that historic field systems are planted with meadow species or grasslands to avoid disturbance of historic environment	1
Retain a 3m strip either side of public footpaths	1
SSI woodlands and LWS grasslands should include native broadleaved woodland creation to strengthen ecological networks	1
Undertake a flora, fauna and fungi survey	1
Use of red oak and scotts pine in close proximity to ancient woodland	2
What plans to avoid trees overshadowing existing hedges in the future	1
Total	96

Appendix F: Letters/emails announcing the launch of the consultation

Letters/emails were sent to the following stakeholders:

Cto	اما	h 0	Iما	~ ~
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Respondents to the early engagement questionnaire as well as those who requested to be added to the distribution list

Direct neighbours -with an offer of a meeting

Rutland County Council (Planning, Highways, Greetham Ward Councillor, County Archaeologist, Landscape Officer, PROW Officer)

Lincolnshire County Council (Highways, County Archaeologist, PROW Officer, Colsterworth Rural Ward Councillor. Local Access Forum)

Clipsham Yew Tree Trust

Castle Byham Parish Council

Stretton Parish Council

Careby, Aunby and Holywell Parish Council

Greetham Parish Council

South Kestervan District Council - (Planning, Glen Ward Councillor)

Gareth Davies MP for Grantham and Stamford

Alecia Kearns MP for Rutland and Melton

Butterfly conservation

Rutland Climate Action Group

Leicester and Rutland Wildlife Trust

Lincolnshire Wildlife trust

Holywell Hall

Stamford stone company

Ornothology (Leicestershire Ornothologist Authority

Historic England

Natural England

Environment Agency

National Grid and Western Power

Appendix G: Stakeholder responses

We received consultation responses from the stakeholders listed below:

- Clipsham Parish Council
- Leicester and Rutland Wildlife Trust
- Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust
- Historic England
- Lincolnshire County Council -Public Rights of Way
- Lincolnshire Joint Local Access Forum
- Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Officer
- Lincolnshire County Council Trees and Woodland Creation
- Natural England
- Rutland Countryside Access Forum