



Eric Dougliss
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25th March 2008.

Dear Eric,

**Consultation on Oxfordshire County Council Forestry Statement
'Oxfordshire's Trees and Woodland, Today and Tomorrow'**

Thank you for inviting the Cotswolds Conservation Board to comment on the draft Oxfordshire County Council Forestry Statement.

The Cotswolds Conservation Board was established by Parliamentary order under part iv of the Countryside and of Rights Of Way Act 2000 (the CRoW Act). The duties of the Board are:

- *To conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB*
- *To increase the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the AONB, ensuring these are compatible with its conservation and enhancement.*

In carrying out its twin duties, the Board shall seek to foster the economic and social well-being of its local communities

A management plan was completed for the Cotswolds AONB in March 2004 as required by section 89 of the CRoW Act. The management plan has been adopted by the Conservation Board and all the 17 local authorities with territory within the Cotswolds AONB including Oxfordshire County Council.

The Cotswolds Conservation Board, through its management plan, is seeking the following points within the Forestry Statement:

- That all woodland planting and management takes full account of the landscape character of the AONB, biodiversity and the historic environment.
- The protection and enhancement of ancient and semi-natural woodlands, veteran trees and other important groups and individual trees.
- The promotion and development of markets for timber, wood products and other appropriate profitable uses of woodlands consistent with conserving

Conserving, enhancing, understanding and enjoying the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

and enhancing the AONB, to encourage their return to economic viability and associated management.

The themes and actions within the strategy contribute to the last two bullet points, but not the first point covering landscape character.

The Board would like to see reference to Landscape Character Assessments and any resulting Landscape Strategies and Guidelines. The Cotswolds Conservation Board also has specific woodland creation guidelines for each of the 19 Landscape Character Types. These documents are important to conserving the character of Oxfordshire by providing guidance on where to plant or not plant new woodland. Oxfordshire is well endowed with LCAs as they have been produced for the County, some Districts and the Cotswolds AONB and possibly the Chilterns and NWD as well. Reference to LCAs should also be included within the actions table, linked in particular to the planting of new woodland.

In the context of landscape conservation, the role of the 3 AONBs within Oxfordshire relating to forestry and woodland should be explained within appendix 3. The 3 management plans will have policies and actions specific to woodland and forestry and to landscape conservation and management using landscape character assessments etc.

Other comments.

Theme 2, last bullet point – the grey squirrel should be identified by name along with deer.

Actions – there is no action for Oxfordshire County Council to lead by example by having a policy to purchase local timber and wood for its own uses.

If you need clarification or would like to discuss any of the points above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



Mark Connelly
Land Management Officer