

**Categories:**

Yasmin

Please could this consultation response be added to the case file?

Thank you  
Laura

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**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 28 July 2025 12:31

**To:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** FW: Planning Application Consultation for National Forest Company ref 25/00676/OUT

Dear Laura

Thank you for consulting the National Forest Company (NFC) on the above application for '*the erection of up to 135 dwellings, amenity space, areas for outdoor play, landscaping and all associated infrastructure (all matters except access reserved)*'.

National Forest planting

Based on the red line area of 6.39ha, policy 21 of the Core Strategy refers to the National Forest development planting guidelines which expect that 20% of the site, or 1.28ha to be National Forest planting. The submitted planning statement includes a section on arboriculture but makes no reference to dedicated National Forest planting. It is also noted that neither the Illustrative Masterplan nor the Illustrative Landscape Strategy demonstrate compliant National Forest planting of this scale.

The submitted Design and Access Statement states that 'the site provides 26% of green infrastructure which will be landscaped to reflect the surrounding landscape character and appearance'. However, not all areas of green infrastructure will contribute to National Forest planting. Currently, the green infrastructure areas are labelled to include existing vegetation, open space, amenity space, SUDS features, play areas and new woodland planting. The amount of woodland planting isn't quantified but is well below that required. The post-development habitat plan submitted as part of the BNG calculation shows even smaller areas of woodland planting within the green infrastructure.

The applicant needs to submit a plan to demonstrate that 1.28ha of National Forest planting can be accommodated on-site. At least half of that area should be plantation woodland. The remainder could be formed from other habitats if they are designed as one connected block of green infrastructure. The SUDS ponds and surface water drainage outfall will not contribute to the National Forest planting requirement; for drainage ponds to contribute they must be ecologically designed and be permanently or seasonably wet and surrounded with tree planting, located adjacent to existing or proposed woodland due to the potential for habitat connectivity. Whether the play

area can be incorporated into the National Forest planting area will depend upon its design and surroundings. We advocate natural play, with play and exploration being encouraged across the landscape.

While we are supportive of roads, cycleways and footpaths being lined with native tree planting, these add to a National Forest character but do not amount to National Forest planting. Likewise, while we are supportive of the retention of existing hedgerows and trees, these features will not contribute towards the creation of the National Forest.

In terms of the connectivity between existing woodlands, the site provides an opportunity to improve connectivity between woodlands to the west and south of the application site to the large woodland complex to the east. This could provide meaningful woodland connectivity and wider biodiversity benefits as outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework. The NFC would request that any woodland belts have a width of at least 15m.

While we appreciate that all matters are reserved, the application has not demonstrated that the required National Forest planting can be achieved on site. Accordingly, we would expect National Forest planting to be explicitly shown on a plan and compliance to that plan to be required by condition to ensure the agreed woodland planting is achieved at the reserved matters stage. The plan should clearly demonstrate significant areas of woodland/tree planting as advised above.

#### National Forest character

Any future applications should have regard to the inclusion of National Forest character in the design of the development. This can be achieved by using timber in the design, street tree planting and integrated/natural approach to the play facilities.

#### Conclusion

The current layout does not demonstrate that the required National Forest planting can be achieved on site. Amended/additional plans are required clearly demonstrating a compliant amount and type of National Forest planting. The applicant should demonstrate how National Forest character will be achieved.

On receipt of amended plans/details, we will be happy to provide further comment.

Kind Regards,

**Philip Metcalfe** | Green Infrastructure & Planning Manager

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**Sent:** 14 July 2025 11:14

**To:** National Forest Planning <[planning@nationalforest.org](mailto:planning@nationalforest.org)>

**Subject:** Planning Application Consultation for National Forest Company ref 25/00676/OUT

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