

Annex C

Workshop	MDE DPD Natural Environment theme
Date	22 nd May 2008
Time	14:00 – 17:00
Location	Room A, Gibson Building
Attendees	Jenny Mentz (TMBC) John Taylor (Kent RIGS) Caroline Drewett (MVCP) Stella Bandu (KDAONB) Sarah Taylor (KCC) Richard Moyse (KWT) Debbie Salmon (KWT)
Apologies	Michaela Kennard (Environment Agency) Sean Hanna (Natural England) Andrew Shaw (HWAONB)

Agenda

Welcome

Update on MDE DPD

Discussion on draft Natural Environment policies

NE1: Local Sites

NE2: Biodiversity

NE3: Impact of development on biodiversity

NE4: Trees, hedgerows and woodland

NE5: Landscape protection and enhancement

Habitat networks and opportunities in T&M

Monitoring & implementation

AOB

General

- The Geo Conservation Commission is producing a UK Geodiversity Action Plan (GAP), in collaboration with Natural England. It went out to draft consultation in Jan 08 and also talks about the establishment of a GAP partnership. This would provide the same structure and process for geological sites as is already in place for biodiversity through BAP.
- Make reference to the AONB Management Plans being statutory documents.
- Check consistency of wording with PPS9 and throughout the chapter. Either 'protect and enhance' or 'conserve and enhance'.
- If TMBC are going to proceed with Landscape Character Assessments as SPD, it would be a good idea to talk to Gillian Barr at Canterbury City Council as they are considering doing something similar and may be able to provide guidance as to the content on the assessments.
- KCC are currently trying to develop a Biodiversity protocol in consultation with KWT, the Environment Agency, Natural England and the RSPB.
- Where an application could impact on species where site protection is a key action (identified through the Habitat Action Plan), then mitigation measures will be required. Where site protection is not a key action for a species, this is less of an issue.
- Include definitions of 'conserve' and 'protect' in the document. This may form part of a wider glossary.
- KCC are in the process of producing a Biodiversity leaflet for developers and LA officers.
- For consistency use RSS or Draft South East Plan or South East Plan.

Introduction

- Make reference to Protected Species in Para 1 alongside BAP and AONBs.

NE1

- The responsibility for LWS designation lies with the Kent Biodiversity Steering Group, not Kent Wildlife Trust. Include this in Para 2.
- RIGS are designated by Kent RIGS, under UK RIGS, there is no equivalent steering group. Ideally LWS and RIGS would go through the same processes for consistency, but limited funding for this at present. Make reference to Kent RIGS designating RIGS sites in Para 2.
- RIGS may be able to supply information on the current management regimes on any sites, either voluntary or as a planning condition.
- The management of RIGS sites is important, not just monitoring their condition.

Protected Species

- There are a number of different lists for protected species including UKBAP, Local BAP, Red Data Book, Section 74 species, species of conservation concern etc. Not all of these are included in the Validation Guidance Note. These lists are regularly updated so including a list of species in the DPD would likely result in out of date information quite quickly. The TMBC Nature Conservation Strategy is the document that contains such lists at the moment, rather than them being in the Local Plan, however the strategy is out of date. TMBC could produce an SPD, but this

would be difficult to update. Alternatively a guidance note, similar to that on Renewable Energy could be produced to direct people to the correct organisation. General support for this option, however KCC have produced an Appendix to Kent Design SPD on biodiversity that contains all of this information already. No sense in duplicating work, but the KCC document was produced after Kent Design and has not been through any SPD process and is still in draft form. ST to find out when this will be in a final version as one solution may be for TMBC to adopt this as a material consideration for DC purposes rather than through policy.

- Refer to BRANCH in the Protected Species section in relation to climate change impacts, as new areas of habitat will need to be created due to the impact of climate on the existing habitats of protected species.

NE2

- The effects of climate change do not themselves cause habitat fragmentation. Habitats become more vulnerable to fragmentation due to climate change as species cannot move. Amend Para 1.
- Routes and links between fragments of habitat help migration, not fragments themselves. Amend Para 1.
- BRANCH mapped a select number of species as indicators of habitat, it did not map habitats themselves. Amend Para 1.
- The wording 'monitoring and management' of reprovided sites in the long term should be included as re-provision alone will not ensure the longevity of new provision. Is there a possibility of attaching a condition to any planning permission to report on the condition of the reprovided site to the LPA annually as this would be enforceable?

Key diagram

- Living Landscapes is a subset of KLIS. KLIS is the source of this data and there is more data available for habitats in Kent than any other area. KLIS has recently been updated but has yet to go live on the web site, no major changes but hopefully easier to use. In order to allow us to manipulate the raw data, we need to be able to access the KCC data. KCC GIS to talk to TMBC GIS about access and data sharing. Without this, KCC would have to do our data manipulation.
- Natural England are trying to produce a regional priorities/opportunities map of the region through the South East Biodiversity Forum. The contract is due to begin in Summer 08 to help implement Policy NRM4 of the SE Plan. Need to keep an eye on this to make sure data links up. BAP Steering group involved in this project.
- Map broad areas rather than specific sites on a key diagram. From the Living Landscapes work, $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{3}$ of the borough areas should remain white to avoid scaremongering. If a polygon is created using the outside edge of all opportunity areas from KCC, this will cover all of the borough due to buffering, so trimming the boundary may be necessary. This approach was endorsed by the attendees. The idea being to look for opportunities for habitat creation within these discrete areas. DC policies could look for contributions to habitat creation within these areas from development sites both within and outside of these areas. This would help

to reinforce the network rather than increase fragmentation via inappropriate and small scale on site provision in all cases.

- Combine the KCC opportunity data, designated sites (although some of these included in KCC data), Open Space Strategy (appropriate types only) and flood boundaries. Areas within the flood boundary may help to highlight those areas of greatest priority.

NE3

- Cross reference to the key diagram in this policy.
- Include wording that off site provision of habitats should contribute to the habitats network.
- Include 'extent' in bullet point 5.
- Include 'monitor' in bullet point 4.

NE4

- Cross reference to the key diagram.

NE5

- Implementation of part of this through the Valley of Vision.
- Possible monitoring indicators in the AONB Management Plan or Countryside Quality Counts.
- Character Area Assessment could adopt the matrix approach in the Kent Landscape Characterisation Report as this has been used in the AONB character area work. This matrix provides information on the quality and action required.
- Note of caution that the character of an area at the moment may not be the desirable character of the area in the future e.g. character may be arable fields and fences, where as the habitat opportunity for an area may be woodland and hedgerows.
- All participants endorsed the idea of character assessments as SPD.

Monitoring

- Natural England are currently, and have been for some time, trying to produce a set of indicators for monitoring purposes.
- Are there any mechanisms in place in TMBC to monitor the loss of and reprovision (in ha) of designated sites and habitats?

Actions

- Are the Valley of Vision team on the LDF database? JM to check and add them if necessary.
- JM email ST for a GIS contact about getting copies of or access to the habitat opportunity mapping layers from KCC.
- Check methodology for trimming opportunity boundaries with KWT/KCC.
- ST to email JM a copy of the Sussex environment partnership multifunctional green networks policy.
- ST to check on the status and timetable of the Biodiversity Technical Appendix to Kent Design.
- Explore the possibility of allowing the KWT access to decision notices and planning conditions information so they can help to monitor loss of and impact on sites. JM to raise this with BG/LP.