

The Old Ragged School
Brook Street
Nottingham
NG1 1EA

Tel: 0115 958 8242

E-mail: info@nottswt.co.uk

Web: www.nottinghamshirewildlife.org

Newark & Sherwood District Council

Castle House
Great North Road
Newark
Notts
NG24 1BY

31 July 2020

Re: Forest Corner Consultation

Sherwood Forest, once part of a royal hunting forest, is today a National Nature Reserve covering 450 acres. It incorporates some truly ancient areas of native woodland. Part of it, Birklands and Bilhaugh, is a designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC). These designations recognise that Sherwood Forest has an important range of species that are characteristic of Sherwood's unique combination of habitats and are also scarce and in some cases threatened. The old acidophilous oak woodland is notable for its rich invertebrate fauna, particularly spiders, and for a diverse fungal assemblage. Bird species include internationally rare nightjar and woodlark and nationally scarce woodland/woodland pasture bird assemblages - redstart, spotted flycatcher, lesser spotted woodpecker and tree pipit. All have declined due to centuries of habitat loss and fragmentation, and some are persisting now in small areas of remnant habitat separated by impermeable areas of farmland and built development

Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust cares for key parts of Sherwood Forest such as Rainworth Heath and Strawberry Hill Heath Reserves. With our partners - The Forestry Commission, The University of Nottingham, local authorities, community groups and private landowners - we are restoring and reconnecting the Sherwood landscape. We are looking to the future. Our education programmes are reconnecting thousands of young people with the wildlife and history of this iconic area. Currently we are delivering a range of projects with our partners through the Miner to Major Project (M2M), a project that has been developed through the Sherwood Habitats Strategy Group (SHSG). Membership of the SHSG includes Newark & Sherwood District Council.

Our vision for the Sherwood Forest Heathlands Nature Recovery Network is to recreate the once extensive and interconnected heathlands, woodlands and wood pasture landscapes of Sherwood. This will be a landscape where farming, conservation and sustainable tourism can work together for a shared vision that benefits all and provides an inspirational environment for people to live and work. To reconnect and enhance Sherwood's ancient heathland habitats through the implementation of landscape-scale, multi-

The Old Ragged School
Brook Street
Nottingham
NG1 1EA

Tel: 0115 958 8242

E-mail: info@nottswt.co.uk

Web: www.nottinghamshirewildlife.org

partner conservation initiatives, and by reconnecting local communities to their landscape. This will support more robust populations of scarce species.

Significant progress has been made in restoring the lost heathland, acid grassland, and broadleaved woodland and parkland habitats of Sherwood. If we are, however, to achieve major landscape-scale habitat creation and restoration and to achieve truly integrated land use (farming, forestry, nature conservation, recreation, employment and housing) we need to look 50 years ahead and plan a long term strategy for achieving the vision on the ground.

The Sherwood Forest landscape of legend is recognised internationally and draws thousands of visitors per year both locally and from abroad. Despite some excellent visitor attractions in the area, disappointment is often expressed that Sherwood Forest is not as expected; lacking the large scale forested and semi-natural landscapes of popular myth. Technically, the ancient hunting forest landscape of Sherwood can be recreated; albeit the habitats would initially consist of basic assemblages that would develop and evolve over time. What will be more difficult will be the necessary co-ordination and commitment of all partners to achieving such an aim and to target resources towards meeting it. Once there is substantive progress on the ground, the tourism potential of the area (particularly for overnight stays) could increase dramatically, and contribute significantly to the local economy through both direct provision and support services. It will however, be crucial to assess both the direct and indirect impacts on the habitats and species of the NNR and SAC, which should include consideration of the more widespread impacts of increased visitor numbers, traffic and other transport modes. As a result there may need to be compensatory habitat management or creation work undertaken off site as well as within the immediate site boundary.

We support the strategy to encourage increased tourism, recreation and economic regeneration which benefits local communities and to facilitate the development of Sherwood Forest as a visitor destination. This strategy however, must be sustainable and appropriate for this internationally important forest and the special wildlife that it supports.

We hope you find our comments helpful. We would like to be kept informed of the evolving masterplan and be involved in future consultations.

Yours sincerely,



Mark Speck
Senior Conservation Officer (North)
Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust
Tel: 0115 958 8242
mspeck@nottswt.co.uk

The Old Ragged School
Brook Street
Nottingham
NG1 1EA

Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust



Tel: 0115 958 8242

E-mail: info@nottswt.co.uk

Web: www.nottinghamshirewildlife.org

President

Sir Andrew Buchanan Bt.

Registered Charity No. 224168R

A company limited by guarantee.

Registered in England No. 748865.