

Policy 9

Id No	Respondent	Policy 9
97	Alnwick District Council	Given the primary purpose of the AONB designation is to conserve and enhance natural beauty, the phraseology of this policy gives the wrong impression about the scale of development likely to be acceptable
12	Alpha Recovery	Under theme 3B the key objectives are welcomed. In particular section j) which has amongst the criteria " the potential contribution of development to the strengthening of local communities and their social cohesion". This is important in settlements such as Seghill.
257	Bellway Homes NE Division	Under theme 3B delivering Sustainable Communities the key objectives are welcomed. In particular section j) of Policy 9 which has amongst the criteria for suitability of development land "the potential contribution of development to the strengthening of local communities and their social cohesion". This is important in settlements such as Ferryhill where Bellway Homes have a large land holding.
177	Berwick-upon-Tweed Borough	This policy could be strengthened by specific mention of Conservation Areas and Scheduled Monuments.
14	Brian Cazaly Ltd	<p>Criterion (e) should be rephrased; the policy is about protecting and enhancing the environment, this should not include 'promoting' appropriate development in National Parks and AONBs.</p> <p>Par 2.164 Under theme 3B Delivering Sustainable Communities the key objectives are welcomed. in particular section j) of policy 9 which has amongst the criteria for suitability of development land "the potential contribution of development to the strengthening of local communities and their social cohesion". This is important in villages such as Nedderton.</p>
248	CABE	<p>Para 2.166 welcomed as it states that "revised green belt boundaries should be brought forward in LDF's. All too often the status quo is maintained from one plan to another by the LPA.</p> <p>CABE support the aspirations of promoting a high quality in design [section a) p60] but would wish to see some reference to standards of design quality that already existing as national guidance [e.g. Building for Life, Ecohomes, Lifetime Homes, Secured by Design] or adaptation of these standards into mandatory minimum quality standards appropriate for the region.</p>
16	Camtech Properties Ltd	Under theme 3B Delivering Sustainable Communities the key objectives are welcomed. Particularly section j) which has a criterion for lend development "the potential contribution of development to the strengthening of local communities and their social cohesion". This is important in settlements such as Newton Aycliffe where Camtec has a large land holding.
282	City of Durham Trust	Strongly support, especially (j) and para 2.161 regarding "safeguarding from inappropriate development"
123	Council for National Parks	CNP supports policy 9 which seeks to promote appropriate development in the Northumberland National Park, and the recognition in para 2.159 that the National Park is highly prized for its unspoilt open landscapes and subject to strong protection through the planning system.

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28	Durham Cathedral	Welcomes recognition of need for more landscaping when considering World Heritage Site. Similar recognition of management considerations needs to be given to other RSS policies that impact on the Cathedral's wider interests in the region since this is fundamental to the implementation of policy 9 and 34
202	Durham County Council	Policy 9 - there is lack of meaningful reference to landscape character, biodiversity and geodiversity as general issues as the policy only refers to sites of national and international importance but on cultural heritage covers international down to very local. The policy should include clauses such as: "- seeking to conserve, enhance or restore landscape character and local distinctiveness; - seeking to conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, and restore habitat networks at a landscape scale".
98	English Heritage	Para 2.161 Support - The first sentence would read better were the reference to Historic Parks and Gardens inserted after the reference to Historic Battlefields. It is not only 'important' but 'imperative' that the character and setting of our World Heritage Sites is safeguarded. It would be useful to flag, at this point, the mixed and uncertain picture with regard to the condition of the regions heritage assets generally and the importance of gathering more information on the issue, and implementation programmes for repair and regeneration. Support overall content of policy.
95	English Nature,	Para 2.154 Propose include a new separate policy on climate change. Reason: note text of para 2.154 recognizes the significance of climate change as the single most significant issue that affects global society in the 21st Century Since it is a UK and EU priority the RSS should reflect this. Although the submission draft has been amended to we do not believe it is an adequate response to merely look for more reliable estimates of greenhouse gas emissions. The UK trend in greenhouse gases is upward and gathering more precise figures to underpin this realization will not solve the problem We recommend a new policy which is specific to climate change and provide more weight to the topic particularly with regard to the impact that the transport sector has on greenhouse gas emissions. Propose amend following criterion to read: e)" promoting appropriate development in the Northumberland National Park and the region's AONBs, the Northumberland Coast and North Pennines, and in the three areas of Heritage Coast, North Northumberland, Durham and East Cleveland, and in relation to the region's two European marine sites Berwickshire and North Northumberland Coast and Teesmouth" to reflect the contribution to these marine sites to the quality, diversity and local distinctiveness of the region's environment. Propose amend text in criterion (f) to read: f) "contributing to the implementation of the National Park, AONB< Heritage Coast and European marine site Management Plans" to reflect these Management Plans in the Policy Propose amend text in criterion (k) to read:

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k) “identifying and giving appropriate protection to the region’s internationally and nationally important biodiversity and goediversity and contributing to the implementation of the Local Biodiversity Action Plans” to reflect Biodiversity Planning process in the Policy

Propose add new paragraph after 2.164 to read:

“Soils are a vital natural resource that form the foundation of our region’s landscape, land use and wildlife, and serve a wide range of essential functions. Soils deliver benefits to the region in terms of support of ecological habitat and biodiversity, the protection of cultural heritage, providing a platform for construction, food and fibre production and through environmental interaction they regulate the flow and filtering substances from water and emit and remove atmospheric gases.

To fulfill these essential functions careful identification, protection and management of the soil resources within the region is a key component of sustainable management. An analysis of the competing demands and the capacity of soils to meet these demands are important in both rural and urban environments.

Opportunities must be taken to, improve, conserve and develop better knowledge of soils within the region and recognize their importance for the delivery of wider objectives to the rural economy, biodiversity, landscape, flood risk management, waste management and improvement of water resources and quality.

Where significant development of “Greenfield” land is unavailable, the use of proper quality land should be favoured in preference to that of a higher quality, except where this would be inconsistent with other sustainability considerations”

Reason: to give greater emphasis to the importance of protecting and managing the region’s soil resources in line with Defra’s First Soil Action Plan for England 2004-2005, and Government policy for the safeguard of best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land

Propose insert new criterion (n) into policy to read:

n) protecting and managing soil resources and recognizing their importance for the delivery of wider objectives to the rural economy, biodiversity, landscape, flood risk management, waste management and improvement of water resources and quality”

Reason: to give greater emphasis to the importance of protecting and managing the region’s soil resources in line with Defra’s First Soil Action Plan for England 2004-2005, and Government policy for the safeguard of best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land

200 Environment Agency

2.153

This is a very encouraging statement, although the use of “should be an integral consideration” lessens its impact. This is an example of the weak wording issue we mentioned in our ‘overall opinion’. The paragraph also needs to be more closely linked with the detail in paragraphs 2.159 –2.164. We think this section could be re-ordered to improve the flow of issues. The section leaps from the importance of the built and natural environment to climate change and then back again. To improve clarity we suggest moving paragraph 2.153 to after 2.158 and heading paragraphs 2.154 to 2.158 as ‘climate change’ The climate change policy suggested later in the response would then fit logically at this point.

2.154 –2.158

We support the inclusion of this climate change related text, but do have some

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suggestions to strengthen the section:

2.155

When referring to the IPPC emissions scenarios, it should be stated that the expected sea level rise of 6cm to 66cm is by the 2080s.

Climate change mitigation is partially addressed through the mentions of emission reductions, but there could be further reference to examples of adaptation. For instance, landscape scale approaches to conservation to allow species to migrate and adapt, water efficiency measures in housing, Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS), 'climate proofed' buildings (maximize natural ventilation etc.), and consideration of the potential to expand the tourism sector, in a sustainable manner.

2.158

"..the North East Assembly will work with regional and national partners to seek to compile reliable estimates of regional greenhouse gas emissions - When will these estimates be produced? We agree that a baseline for greenhouse gas emissions for the North East region needs to be calculated and a database updated annually.

We recommend that a regionally specific 'climate change' policy be inserted after paragraph 2.158.

2.163

This paragraph states "These factors make water a key economic resource; the North East being a net exporter of water from its substantial storage capacity at Kielder and other reservoirs". This sentence implies the North East is exporting large quantities of water, when in fact the exports from Northumbrian Water Limited (NWL) are extremely small compared to other water company exports in England and Wales. In 2004/05, NWL exported less than 1Ml/d - to United Utilities and Yorkshire Water combined - and the Yorkshire Water export will stop by 2007, leaving only the United Utilities export, which can be 1Ml/d maximum. In comparison, Seven Trent Water export 56Ml/d to Yorkshire Water. There is the potential for exportation, but Kielder is not a "net exporter of water; and we would recommend this statement be amended.

"Water quality is important to the quality of life of the region's population, as a source of drinking water, and for industrial and agricultural use.

Water quality is also key in terms of maintaining a high quality environment, generally, where people can go fishing, walking, cycling etc. There should also be a mention here, that, if water is such an important part of our quality of life, we should be using it wisely, putting in systems that conserve water (in terms of sustainable design and construction techniques) and reducing use.

2.164

Forestry development must be undertaken in a way that is beneficial to the environment and not detrimental to such aspects as groundwater recharge and river flows. It should be subject to an appropriate level of environmental assessment, for example, EIA.

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We would like to see 'shall' rather than 'should'.

We need to protect the environment for its own sake, not just because it attracts development. The North East contains some of the least populated areas in the UK, surely we want to maintain that uniqueness. This could be addressed by reordering the points as follows:

Current g) to m) should be a) to g).

Then stating 'where development is necessary'

Current a) to f) become h) to m)

163 Friends of the Earth North East

Friends of the Earth strongly supports policy 9 as essential to securing a high quality of life and sustainable future for the region.

We suggest the following amendments:

- The RSS needs to provide a strong steer to other strategies, plans and programmes if its vision for the region is to be delivered. The language in the RSS policies therefore needs to be as clear and unambiguous as possible. We would therefore like to see the phrase, 'Strategies, plans and programmes should...' replaced with 'Strategies, plans and programmes will...'. This is in line with both the South East Plan and East of England RSS.
- Point a), replace 'promoting' with 'ensuring' and add, 'in line with the requirements of policy 4: sustainable consumption and construction.' Add 'sympathetic to its surroundings' to incorporate point b).
- Point c), add 'in line with policy 3: Climate Change.'
- Point e), amend to read: 'promoting small-scale development appropriate to their character and purpose...'
- Point k), replace 'appropriate protection' with 'strong protection'

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329	Friends of the Earth South	<p>South Tyneside Friends of the Earth strongly supports policy 9 as essential to securing a high quality of life and sustainable future for the region.</p> <p>We suggest the following amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The RSS needs to provide a strong steer to other strategies, plans and programmes if its vision for the region is to be delivered. The language in the RSS policies therefore needs to be as clear and unambiguous as possible. We would therefore like to see the phrase, 'Strategies, plans and programmes should... ' with 'Strategies, plans and programmes will... ' This is in line with both the South East Plan and East of England RSS. • Point a), replace 'promoting' with 'ensuring' and add, 'in line with the requirements of policy 4: sustainable consumption and construction.' Add 'sympathetic to its surroundings' to incorporate point b). • Point c), add 'in line with policy 3: Climate Change.' • Point e), amend to read: 'promoting small-scale development appropriate to their character and purpose....' • Point k), replace 'appropriate protection' with 'strong protection'. <p>We would also suggest the addition of a new point n), as we feel protection for urban fringe countryside, and particularly farmland, is not adequately addressed:</p> <p>New point n), "protecting existing urban fringe countryside to underpin and maintain green belt designation."</p>
215	Government Office For The	<p>Para 2.154 The account of the Government's climate change commitments should be modified as follows: Having ratified the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework on Climate Change, the Government has agreed to a legally binding target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 12.5% below base year levels over the period 2008-2012, and committed itself to achieving a domestic goal of a 20% cut in carbon dioxide emissions below 1990 levels by 2010, rising to a 60% cut by 2050. These domestic goals go beyond the requirements of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol.</p> <p>We question the added value of this policy as much of the detail reappears in Chapter 3? Makes reference to 'promoting appropriate development in the Northumberland National Park and AONB's'. However, there is no guidance on what is meant by 'appropriate development'.. Gives impression of being heavily dominated by historical aspects. Suggest that a better reflection of interdependence between historical and nature conservation might be assisted by perhaps combining points e.g. 'g' and 'h'. Part 'k': internationally and nationally important biodiversity and geodiversity sites are to be afforded 'appropriate protection' whereas ancient woodlands at 'f' of Policy 38 are to be given 'strong protection'? Such statements and the sense of relative importance could better reflect what is in the new PPS9, which sets out Government's general policy line, in a few paragraphs on international, national and ancient woodland sites. In PPS9, national sites and ancient woodlands both require the same justification for damage - development must clearly outweigh the conservation interests. Not important if the RSS describes this as 'appropriate' or 'strong' protection, but it probably ought to be used for both and not risk imparting a sense of hierarchy. 4.129 in the Environment Tech paper notes that many of the ancient woodlands are SSSI in any event.</p>
164	Hallam Land Management Ltd	This is supported
454	Hartlepool Civic Society	Support
160	Highways Agency	promoting high quality design; sympathetic to surroundings and conservation of historic areas.

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681	Member of Public	Para 2.158 there should be defined commitment to estimating greenhouse gas emissions. Targets should be set and monitored for reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, reduction in emissions and reflect national targets set by government
273	Member of Public	Generally support but want amendment to para c) so that the required policies and proposals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions would clearly show how these would impact on regional and national targets
432	Member of Public	Again this policy leaves a wide open door for development in areas not specifically covered in your initial designations. It is a charter for developers and those who will destroy the very environment of the North East. Is there no relationship to all the existing plans other than some vague assumption they will hold god for a few years until this and LDF's somehow produce better guidance? Where the North East has invested billions in remediation to remove the industrial dereliction from mining and heavy industry why are we not saying now this will not be tolerated or supported..the vested interests are already at work to drive a new series of mines through the framework regardless of huge impact o the environment. It is also evident that you have not given any weighting to what communities themselves feel about their environments..at RSS level you cannot ignore or assume the great public do not feel strongly about their environment and will do all they can to protect it. If the RSS takes this stance then it will be totally devoid of any support and credibility at community engagement level.
471	Member of Public	I strongly support this policy as essential to securing a high quality of life and sustainable future for the region, but I suggest the following amendments: The RSS needs to provide a firm basis other strategies, plans and programmes if its vision for the region is to be delivered. The language in the RSS policies therefore needs to be as clear and unambiguous as possible. I would therefore like to see the phrase, 'Strategies, plans and programmes should seek to maintain...', replaced with 'Strategies, plans and programmes will maintain...'. Point a), replace 'promoting' with 'ensuring' and add, 'in line with the requirements of policy 4: sustainable consumption and construction.' Point c), add 'as a mechanism to combat Climate Change.' Point e), amend to read: 'promoting small-scale development appropriate to their character and purpose...' Point k), replace 'appropriate protection' with 'strong protection'. Point l), replace '...existing woodland of amenity and nature conservation value,' with 'all woodland,...' New point n), "identifying and protecting existing urban fringe farmland to underpin and maintain green belt designation."
471	Member of Public	I agree that strategies, plans and programmes should seek to maintain and enhance the quality, diversity and local distinctiveness of the environment throughout the North East, particularly by: including policies and proposals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and taking into account the land use implications of the predicted impacts of climate change and plan for both the successful adaptation to the resulting effects and the maximization of potential economic, environmental and social opportunities. These must be key principles underpinning all aspects of the Strategy. It is in the Region's interests to be in the forefront of action on climate change. We will become increasingly attractive to investors if we are seen to be proactive on this globally important issue. A high profile, forward looking stance will also help to retain younger well-educated people in the region. This consideration argues against proposals for airport expansion, as air traffic growth is not environmentally sustainable and is a major contributor to greenhouse emissions.

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459	Member of Public	<p>I broadly support this policy, however an additional clause is required to be consistent with Policy 36 and the UK's commitment to the 2002 EU Recommendation on Integrated Coastal Zone Management:</p> <p>n) Adopting and supporting the principles of ICZM approach to the development of the Northumberland Coast AONB, North Northumberland, Durham and Cleveland Heritage Coast Areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i A broad "holistic" perspective (thematic and geographic) ii A long term perspective iii Adaptive management (responding to new information and conditions) during a gradual process iv Local specificity v Working with natural processes vi Participatory planning vii Support & involvement of all relevant administrative bodies viii Use of a combination of instruments
453	Member of Public	<p>Support with these amendments</p> <p>RSS needs to provide a strong steer to other strategies plans and programmes if its vision for the region is to be delivered. The language in the RSS policies therefore needs to be clear and unambiguous as possible. We would therefore like to see the phrase "Strategies plans and programmes should" replaced with "strategies plans and programmes will"</p> <p>Point a) replace "promoting" with "ensuring" and add "in line with the requirements of policy 4: sustainable consumption and construction" Add "sympathetic to its surroundings" to incorporate point b)</p> <p>Point c) add "in line with policy 3: Climate Change"</p> <p>Point e) amend to reward "promoting small scale development appropriate to the character and purpose"</p> <p>point k) replace "appropriate protection " with " strong protection"</p>
353	Member of Public	<p>This policy is quite good, but the wording is too weak. eg a) Promoting high quality design – this should not be promoted, it should be demanded, no poor quality design should be allowed to progress to implementation</p>

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449	National Trust North East	<p>We support most of this policy, but would like to see the addition in part i) to read as follows:</p> <p>i) Identify, assess and give an appropriate degree of protection to historic parks and gardens and their settings, and where appropriate, identify this setting within proposals maps through Landscape Character Assessment and visual analysis.</p> <p>j) identifying parks and gardens of historic importance, battlefields,</p> <p>Para 2.24 PPG15 refers to the setting of a historic park as a material consideration. If the setting of registered parks and gardens is not defined it can be difficult to tell how a development proposal will affect those historic assets</p> <p>The Trust has a number of properties in the region that are protected by their heritage designation, but are compromised by inappropriate development close to the property which affects their setting. The Trust would like to be able to ensure that LDFs recognize the setting of historic parks and gardens, by considering views into and out of historic parks and gardens as well as the park and garden itself.</p> <p>This policy refers to urban areas as well as rural areas, and covers issues that affect urban as well as rural heritage assets. It currently sits in the "Rural" chapter of the RSS, and this does not seem to be an appropriate location, as the policy does not just relate to rural issues. Some elements of this policy such as those above would perhaps be better located within Policy 34.</p>
217	Northumberland & Newcastle	Supported but no account been taken to damage to attractive villages and countryside caused by creeping clutter of excessive highways structures and advertising hoardings.
222	Northumberland County Council	The County Council considers the policy to be weak on nature conservation. RSS environment policies need to accord with the duties of public bodies in general and planning authorities. In particular, concerning nature conservation including those required under the Habitats Regulations 1994 and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
136	Northumberland National Park	The policy in particular seeks to promote appropriate development in the National Park and to contribute towards the implementation of the statutory National Park Management Plan in the preparation of strategies, plans and programmes and is supported.
338	Northumberland Tyne & Wear NHS	Should enhance mental health.
406	Port of Tyne	Page 59, Item 2.161. It is important to get the correct planning balance on proposed World Heritage sites. They can have a marked effect on economic growth.
89	Sport England	<p>Amendments needed to improve linkages between RSS and regional plan for sport</p> <p>Protecting & Enhancing the Environment should be given an extra criterion, based on the following;</p>

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N) Providing guidance on the locations where normally permissible land use & activity such as sport & formal/informal recreation may be detrimental to the character of the natural environment.

The supporting text to the policy would need to be supplemented with an additional paragraph along the following lines;

Outdoor sport & recreation are a significant land use & can offer protection to important open space & countryside within & adjacent to urban areas, but increasingly within the Region's open countryside. With the correct guidance, sport & recreation has an important role to play in protecting & revitalizing the Region's open countryside as the primacy of agriculture (& with it the accompanying stewardship role) continues to decline. There are however rural environments within the North East that need to be protected from all but the most informal & low key recreational usage

151 Sunderland ARC

Protecting and Enhancing the Environment is supported

29 Sunderland City Council

Protecting & Enhancing the Environment: Concern was raised at the Consultation Draft stage to the part of this policy that sought to permit major developments in exceptional circumstances in the designated areas (national parks, AONBs and Heritage Coasts – including the Durham coast that extends into south Sunderland). The objection was to the explicit presumption in favour of development.

The policy has been amended to delete the wording, but it now states “e) promoting appropriate development...”. No explanation is provided of what appropriate development might be in this Region's case and it is considered again that the policy is too open to interpretation.

There is no clear element of regionality in it and suitable guidance on matters pertaining to these types of designated areas at this level is provided by national statements in PPSs. Therefore it is considered that this part of Policy 9 should be deleted. In addition it is noted that the presumption in favour of exceptional development in the designated areas has been included in Policy 33 on Landscape character. This should be objected to for the above reasons.

254 UK Coal Mining Ltd

Criterion l) promotes the identification and protection of existing woodland of amenity and nature conservation value, particularly ancient woodland. It is suggested that this criterion should be amended reflect the varying national, regional, country and district levels of potential nature conservation designation and should recognize that each identified area should not necessarily be afforded the same level of protection. UK Coal supports criterion m) in relation to encouraging and implementing the Regional Forest Strategy and other community forestry strategies.

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Woodland Trust

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The Woodland Trust supports the amendment to Paragraph 2.164 (previously 2.86) as it gives a fuller, more accurate, idea of the range of benefits provided by trees and woodlands, and directs the reader to the Regional Forestry Strategy as a source of further information

The Woodland Trust objects to Policy 9 (previously 13) part i) as this does not include ancient and veteran trees.

Ancient and veteran trees are increasingly recognized as cultural and historic monuments and play host to a huge variety of biodiversity which can be virtually restricted to its tree 'island'. The perpetuity of these irreplaceable trees should be ensured, as with noteworthy buildings, as a connection to our social and natural history.

The Woodland Trust and the Ancient Tree Forum (ATF) is concerned that due to a lack of awareness and mapping ancient and veteran trees are frequently unprotected and can be easily lost to development.

The ATF has pioneered the conservation of ancient trees and is the main UK organization concerned solely with their conservation. The ATF seeks to secure the long-term future of ancient trees through advocacy of no further avoidable loss of ancient trees, good management of ancient trees, the development of a succession of future ancient trees, and seeking to raise awareness and understanding of the value and importance of ancient trees.

The importance of such trees has been recognized by both PPS 9 on Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (Paragraph 10) and the recently published Heritage Counts 2004: The state of England's historic environment (Section 3.2.4)

Recommendation: amend part i) of Policy 9 to read:

"identifying and giving an appropriate degree of protection to historic parks and gardens, ancient and veteran trees, battlefields, ancient field systems, green lanes trackways, industrial monuments and other non-scheduled archaeological sites, which reflects their national or regional importance;"

The Woodland Trust supports the identification and protection of woodland, for both amenity and nature conservation in part l) of Policy 9.

We are also pleased to note the specification of ancient woodland within this bullet point. Ancient woodland is not only irreplaceable but is our richest habitat for wildlife, being home to more species of conservation concern than any other habitat. Ancient woodland is also increasingly recognized as a key part of our cultural and historic heritage (Heritage Counts 2004: The state of England's historic environment (Section 3.2.4) for example).

The Woodland Trust supports the insertion of parts c) and d) to Policy 9 as this recognizes the reality that climate change is already with us and has significant impacts on the natural environment. We are particularly pleased that the inclusion of these two sections addresses both the causes climate and looks to adapt to the impacts.

Adaptation to impact is particularly important as mitigation efforts, while crucial in tempering the worst effects of accelerating climate change are now widely accepted as being insufficient to prevent climate change taking place. This means that adaptation strategies must be accorded a much more prominent role in strategies such as the RSS.

In their current state, key habitats such as ancient woodland are simply not sustainable in a time of rapid environmental change. The fragmented character of ancient woodlands and the immobile nature of many of their characteristic results in species restricted to ever decreasing islands of habitat by the environmentally hostile landscape. Not only is this an avoidable tragedy but it also prevents the UK meeting its legislative and policy commitments under the Habitats Directive (1994) and the UK BAP, for example. We must therefore develop and implement strategies

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that enable the widest possible biodiversity to survive and evolve. All semi-natural habitats need to be part of ecologically functional landscapes, so that wildlife has the space it needs to adapt and evolve in the face of environmental change.