

## **4.8 Protection of Trees and Hedgerows**

### ***Reasoned Justification***

- 4.68 The value of trees, woodlands and hedgerows is widely recognised and their existence contributes greatly to the identified landscape character areas within the district. Trees can offer many environmental, economic, social and climatic benefits. By their absorption of CO<sub>2</sub> trees help create a significant carbon sink and therefore can play a key part in helping to combat climate change.
- 4.69 The Council expects all development proposals to fully consider the existing trees both on and adjacent to the site. Development will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that there exists a harmonious and sustainable relationship between trees and structures.
- 4.70 Where necessary the Council will protect trees using Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) in order to retain significant trees; tools such as the TEMPO (Tree Evaluation Method for Preservation Orders) system will be used to help identify trees that are suitable for preservation. In identifying suitable trees and woodlands for protection particular regard will be given to relevant priority Biodiversity Action Plan habitats, aged/veteran trees and ancient woodland.
- 4.71 Hedgerows are distinctive features of the countryside and are the most traditional form of field boundary in the district. Many date back to the first enclosure of the land and some, especially in the case of those in the vicinity of Dickleburgh and Rushall, are indicators of a much older land pattern. In addition to their visual benefits the network of countryside hedgerows often contain a great range of plant and wildlife species and can form important linkages between other habitats such as woods.
- 4.72 The Hedgerows Regulations 1997 make it clear that the presumption is in favour of retaining hedgerows that qualify as 'important' unless satisfied that the circumstances justify removal. On development sites, the Council will promote and encourage the retention of hedgerows; the presumption will be for the retention of all sections of 'important' hedgerows.
- 4.73 The Council will continue to promote the planting of new trees, woodlands and hedgerows as part of new developments (see Policy DM 4.9) and to complement existing features.

### ***Policy DM 4.8 Protection of Trees and Hedgerows***

**The Council will promote the retention and conservation of significant trees, woodlands and traditional orchards and will serve Tree Preservation Orders where necessary.**

**The Council will presume in favour of the retention of ‘important’ hedgerows as defined by the Hedgerows Regulations 1997.**

**The Council will safeguard and promote the appropriate management of protected and other significant trees and hedgerows, unless the need for, and benefits of, a development clearly outweigh their loss.**

### **Notes**

- The importance and multiple benefits of protecting trees and hedgerows is clearly identified **National Planning Policy Framework** Section 11, paragraphs 117 and 118, and the **Joint Core Strategy** objectives 1, 8 and 9.
- Policy DM 1.4 requires development to avoid environmental harm and protect local distinctiveness, and Policy DM 3.8 sets out design principles that include retaining important natural features.
- The identified Landscape Character Areas in the district are detailed in the **South Norfolk Landscape Assessment** (Vol. 1 – Landscape Types of South Norfolk, Vol. 2 – Landscape Character Areas of the Norwich Policy Area, and Vol. 4 – Landscape Character Areas of the Rural Policy Area)
- The **Norfolk Biodiversity Action Plan** prepared Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership details action plans for important habitats and species and addresses the contribution that trees and hedgerows make to environmental biodiversity.  
<http://www.norfolkbiodiversity.org/actionplans/>
- Detailed regulations, recommended standards and advice for development affecting trees and hedgerows include:
  - The *Hedgerows Regulations 1997*  
<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/regulation/hedgeregs/default.aspx>
  - Forestry Commission - *The case for trees in development and urban areas, 2010.*  
<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infd-88nfvy>
  - *BS 5837 Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction* – Recommendations.  
<http://shop.bsigroup.com/en/ProductDetail/?pid=00000000030213642>