

TORBAY COUNCIL

Report No: **Env/40/03**

Title: **Occombe Valley Woods Local Nature Reserve**

To: Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Leisure, Environment and Marine Services issued on 28th March 2003

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Environment and Marine Services of the wish of Torbay Coast & Countryside Trust for Occombe Valley Woods to be designated as a Local Nature Reserve and to seek approval to proceed with consultation.

2. Relationship to Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 Torbay Coast & Countryside Trust currently manages some 1700 acres of Council-owned land within the Borough and Occombe Valley Woods forms an important part of this land holding. It is considered that the desire to designate these woods as a local nature reserve is in line with the Council's commitment to further enhance appropriate areas of land. The site is already a County Wildlife Site.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 That the declaration of Occombe Valley Woods as a local nature reserve in line with the plans submitted by the Coast & Countryside Trust with a letter dated 21st March 2003 (reference MB/2/15/iv) be supported, and
- 3.2 That Torbay Coast & Countryside Trust and English Nature be advised of any positive decision in respect of 3.1 above so that the appropriate consultation can be undertaken prior to any declaration being made.

4. Reason for Recommendation

- 4.1 To support Torbay Coast & Countryside Trust in its aims for managing these woods. It is also a requirement of a grant from English Nature (EN) that Torbay Council support be given to these woods being designated as a local nature reserve by the 9th April 2003. EN has confirmed that it will work with the Torbay Coast & Countryside Trust regarding consultation on these proposals.

5. Background

- 5.1 Torbay Coast & Countryside Trust was established in December 1999 with one of its aims being to safeguard and enhance areas of natural beauty and importance within Torbay. As part of its work it has produced a draft management plan for Occombe Valley Woods and a copy of this is attached to this report. The Trust has also sent a copy of the plan to English Nature.

- 5.2 A consultation process needs to take place prior to a formal declaration being made and, subject to recommendation 3.1 above being approved, English Nature will work with the Countryside Trust in order to undertake this work.
- 5.3 Any significant objection to the declaration of Ocombe Valley Woods as a local nature reserve would be raised with the Portfolio Holder prior to any final decision being taken.

6. Alternative Options (if any)

- 6.1 The Council need not support the declaration of Ocombe Valley Woods as a local nature reserve but this would seem to be contrary to its aims and objectives and those of Torbay Coast & Countryside Trust.

Michael J Yeo
Acting Director of Environment Services

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IMPLICATIONS, CONSULTATION AND OTHER INFORMATION

Part 1

These sections may be completed by the Report author but must be agreed by named officers in the Legal, Finance, Human Resources and Property Divisions. If these are not completed and agreed the Report will not be included on the agenda.

Does the proposal have implications for the following issues?

Insert name of responsible officer

Legal (including Human Rights)	The Council is the owner of the freehold of the woods and has already entered into a long lease with the Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust. There is therefore no objection to the application.	Tony Chidlow
Financial – Revenue	None	
Financial – Capital Plan	None	
Human resources (including equal opportunities)	None	
Property	This proposal would prevent the future development of the area of land concerned but it is considered that this is in line with Council policy and with the 60 year lease that was granted to Torbay Coast & Countryside Trust in December 1999.	Mike Yeo

Part 2

These sections must be completed by the author of the Report.

Does the proposal have implications for the following issues?		
Please give details as appropriate		
Sustainability	Yes	Torbay Coast and Countryside Trust will aim to manage these sites in a sustainable manner.
Crime and Disorder	No	
*OfSTED Post Inspection Action Plan	No	
*Social Services Action Plan	No	
*Change Management Plan	No	

* not applicable to reports to Licensing, Development Control and Area Development Committees

Part 3

These sections must be completed by the author of the Report.

Does the proposal have implications for the following Directorates? If so, please inform the relevant Director. Please give details as appropriate		
Chief Executive/Corporate Services	No	
Education Services	No	
Environment Services	No	
Social Services	No	
Strategic Services	No	

Part 4

Is the proposal contrary to or does it propose amendment to the Policy Framework or contrary to (or not wholly in accordance with) the Council's budget?	Yes	Fill in Box 1	No	✓	Fill in Box 2
1. Details of the nature and extent of consultation with stakeholders and relevant select committees.					
2. Details and outcome of consultation, as appropriate. Subject to the recommendation being approved consultation will be undertaken on this proposal.					

Part 5

Is the proposal a Key Decision in relation to an Executive function?	Yes	Reference Number	No	✓

Part 6

Ward

Preston

Appendices

Appendix 1

Ocombe Valley Woods Local Nature Reserve Management Plan 2003/2013
(Limited Distribution)