

# Deputation Submitted by Ms Morgan

Imagine...

it's a wonderful spring day - to take away the stresses of the day / the pandemic; you want to go out to watch spring blossom, hear the 1<sup>st</sup> the skylarks, the swallows arrival

enjoying the sunshine on a glorious summers day, seeing the sunshine sparkle through the leaves, spotting an adder slipping into the undergrowth; bats flying at dusk; glowworms in the hedgerows

a crisp autumn day, you're amazed at the incredible colours of the magnificent ancient oaks; the fascinating fungi

the silhouettes of awe-inspiring snow covered trees, glimpses of woodland mammals, the call of an owl

These are all things you don't have to imagine.

We have them today, on our doorstep, in this unique **SINC designated** ancient woodland site.

Experts have advised this area qualifies to be granted an 'upgrade' in status from SINC a SSSI or indeed a SAC as it does have enough rare breeding populations of bats to qualify.

Whilst the climate emergency & the increasing need for water is recognized, the parallel biodiversity crisis must not be overlooked, in particular in respect to the choice of location of this reservoir.

Woodlands make up just 9% of England<sup>i</sup>. England is the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest wooded country in Europe. Hard to believe when we're fortunate to have this **exceptional place on our doorstep**.

Woodland provides invaluable homes for wildlife, in particular ancient woodlands. The older the tree, the more vital it is. "They are irreplaceable, home to many vulnerable, threatened species. We believe there should be **no further loss of ancient woodland & ancient trees**."<sup>ii</sup> It takes centuries for ancient woodlands to establish, so any efforts to mitigate will not be effective in our lifetimes, if at all.

This is on top of an already dire situation - a quarter of UK mammals are at risk; 15% are threatened with extinction<sup>iii</sup>

Compounding this, birds & mammals, rely on wildlife corridors to live of which Havant Thicket is significant. With the increasing number of local developments impacting woodlands, the **wider cumulative impact on these wildlife corridors, is disastrous**.

Any remaining / displaced mammals, that are lucky enough to survive, will be condensed in the remaining woodland, itself impacted by the significant building works, & new roads buildings & infrastructure.

But don't take protection unique areas like Havant Thicket, from me.  
Here are some of the experts:

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Today's HBC Planning Committee agenda:

"very obvious significant impacts"... "The permanent loss of ancient woodland & veteran trees is essentially impossible to mitigate"

very rare Bechstein Bat, - “associated with areas of Special Areas of Conservation”, so impact here ‘would affect SAC supporting habitat’  
Bats, Hazel Dormouse, skylarks, song thrush, dunnoek, linnet, warblers & tits reptiles, rare/notable aquatic invertebrate – have all been reported as having

“... **substantial impacts to a suite of protected & notable species**, resulting in the loss of a considerable extent of semi-natural habitat. Given the scale & timescale of impacts there is essentially **no scope for retention of meaningful habitat** within the site”

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The **Queens Green Canopy** May 2021:

“Ancient Woodlands have been around for **centuries long enough to develop into complex ecosystems**. They are some of our **most precious habitats**, with incredible communities of plants, fungi, insects & other fauna.

These habitats are also **historical treasure troves**. **..Ancient woodland is priceless**”.<sup>iv</sup>

Woodland Trust chief executive, last year has “emphasised the central role that trees & woods play in the life of the nation”...“giving people **access to our natural heritage**, to do something **positive for the environment**, & **helping to safeguard it for our children in the face of a combined climate & nature crisis**.”

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“Our economies, livelihoods & well-being all depend on **our most precious asset: Nature**”.  
“Our **unsustainable engagement** with nature is endangering the prosperity of current & future generations”. “At the heart of the problem lies deep-rooted, widespread institutional failure.”<sup>v</sup>

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Sir David Attenborough:

“The natural world is in serious trouble; it **needs our help as never before**...Our planet is unique...It’s **also fragile**.”<sup>vi</sup>

“The fact is that no species has ever had such wholesale control over everything on earth, living or dead, as we now have. That lays upon us...an **awesome responsibility**. In (y)our hands now lies ..that of...other living creatures.”

“**We can now destroy or we can cherish, the choice is ours.**”<sup>vii</sup>

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i & iii State of Nature 2019 report

ii The Woodland Trust

iv The Queen’s Green Canopy

v HM Treasury: The Economics of Biodiversity : The Dasgupta Review Feb 2021

vi NYE 01/01/2021

vii [A Life on Planet Earth](#), 2020