

Historic England comments on England Peat Strategy (EPS_3rd draft_NE)

5th June 2020

Please note that these are further comments, to accompany the edits on the text.

Page 2 Para 6– is it possible to clarify what is meant by ‘significant landowners’ – large land owners?

Page 4 Vision and Objectives, 4th bullet – ‘bringing 75% of peatland SSSIs into favourable condition’ - this will need on-going site monitoring in order to establish this; i.e. commitment through funding. We have raised the importance of longer-term monitoring, in the historic environment/peatland restoration revised section.

Page 6, para 2 In the paragraph which discusses ‘deep’ and ‘shallow’ peat – it would be useful to clarify these terms, as there could be some confusion with depth and thickness. Could it be clarified by referring to it as depth from surface? Also it is worth noting that some peat can be many metres thick i.e. much more than 0.40m.

Page 6, footnote reference – is there further information available on this document/data? It would be useful to include where it might be found.

Page 8, last paragraph ‘Water’ - ‘historic activity’ needs qualifying – to distinguish from prehistoric activity that was not as harmful.

Page 10/11 Recreation section – we have separated out the historic environment into its own section, as discussed, but it is important to include clear links to the historic environment in the text that remains.

We have comment around some of the phrases and terminologies used:

- ‘sense of place’ – what is this referring to specifically?
- ‘health and wellbeing’ – How do peatlands improve this? Could you include some explanation of why they are special?
- ‘wilderness’ – this is a very loaded, subjective term, based on our modern perceptions, so best avoided.

When you rework this section, we’ve some suggestions as follows:

- If you’d like more case studies as examples of the multiple services peatland sites provide, we’d suggest:

- o The Broads – with its clear recreation uses, it results from medieval peat cuttings [see Heritage Statement of Significance, supplied]

- o Somerset Levels – there is lots of information here <https://avalon-archaeology.com/>, including public engagement through trackway reconstructions (<https://avalon-archaeology.com/about/amc-reconstructions/the-prehistoric-trackways/>)

o Palaeofest – this was part of ‘Project Wildscape’ (see <https://projectwildscape.wordpress.com/> and <https://ioahc.net/>) on the Humberhead Levels, and included many public engagement activities and outreach events (sediment coring, pollen identification, flax processing, and making a timber trackway reconstruction)

o In terms of Wicken Fen (the case study already included) – there are further, multiple heritage/historic environment aspects, including the associative value with early botanists [see Heritage Statement of Significance, supplied]