

Response ID ANON-3J6N-9B3R-1

Submitted to Tree Protection Bill - Call for Evidence
Submitted on 2026-09-11 17:14:52

Introduction

1 Confirmation of having read the Northern Ireland Assembly Committee's Privacy Notice.

I confirm that I have read the privacy notice.

2 What is your name?

Please provide information to support your answer.:

3 What is your email address?

Please provide information to support your answer.:

4 If you are providing a submission on behalf of an organisation or business, please state its name.

Please provide information to support your answer.:

Foyle Civic Trust and Enagh Seniors Group

5 The Committee for Infrastructure has agreed to publish all responses as part of the survey results. If you would like to have your survey results anonymised and for us not to publish your name or organisation, please indicate so here.

I would like my views to be anonymous and understand that my name and organisation details will be withheld, along with any identifiers in the response, but my views will still be published.

Clause 1 - Tree preservation orders: councils

6 Do you agree with Clause 1 of the Bill?

Yes

7 Please provide information to support your answer here:

Accessible:

I try to monitor the conservation of trees and woodlands in the Derry City and Strabane District Council area. Especially new housing development sites where there are ancient hedge rows and trees they are usually bulldozed and burned two such sites are being developed currently at Ballyowen and Cosquin. but hedges and trees are gone new trees are planted as cosmetic exercise and take 50 years or more to develop and create niches for Biodiversity to exist.

Clause 2 - Provisional tree preservation orders

8 Do you agree with Clause 2 of the Bill?

Yes

9 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

The status/reasons for the need of protected will not have changed after six months. It is better that it becomes effective on that date.

Clause 3 - Penalties for contravention of tree preservation orders

10 Do you agree with Clause 3 of the Bill?

Yes

11 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

Every trees protected counts with the tree cover in N.Ireland being the least in Europe at 8% of the land. there is little appreciation of the Trees role in Climate Change or citizens well being. "They are just a nuisance".

Clause 4 - Replacement of trees

12 Do you agree with Clause 4 of the Bill?

Yes

13 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

Such large trees require long term maintenance until growing well. spring or summer drought like we have just had is unpredictable. site conditions may well be unfavourable for tree establishment with subsoil compacted by heavy machinery. subsoil ripping of such sites would improve root conditions.

Clause 5 - Council to inspect replacement trees

14 Do you agree with Clause 5 of the Bill?

Yes

15 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

The main drawback to this is how many councils have employees competent to do so. they may well have to contract landscape management professionals to do so whether such people exist. it is similar to an old clause in land leases with the London guilds the tenant had to plant and maintain 10 timber trees annually as well as establish hedges.

Clause 6 - Enforcement of duties as to replacement of trees

16 Do you agree with Clause 6 of the Bill?

Yes

17 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

What ever happens on the ground/site I am sceptical that Councils will have the capacity under present circumstances of budgetary constraints to perform such duties. perhaps a central unit could be established within the DAERA Forestry Division to do so. They enforce felling licences and so may have the capacity and long term views for continuity and management of tree protection. What if the trees are burned by a wild fire?

Clause 7 - Tree Protection Map

18 Do you agree with Clause 7 of the Bill?

Yes

19 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

an easily available map should enable a member of the public or developer to refer to such a map, if they have concerns about certain trees. how will the presence of such a map be publicised?

Clause 8 - Determination of planning applications

20 Do you agree with Clause 8 of the Bill?

Yes

21 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

But does it go far enough? although there is protection for hedge row and presumably the trees there in? perhaps about 8,000 miles of hedge row were removed in London's district in recent times most due to the intensification of Agriculture. now farmers are being paid to set aside land to grow wild?

Clause 9 - Permitted Development

22 Do you agree with Clause 9 of the Bill?

Yes

23 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

Several years ago a developer was able to build expensive houses on the edge of the Prehen ancient woodland, encroaching on the edges of the same. Housing developers like to have a pleasant woodland location as a selling point, but never contributed anything to the current woodland environment adjacent to such sites.

Clause 10 - Ecosystem services

24 Do you agree with Clause 10 of the Bill?

Yes

25 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

Within the last two months I tried to get the local planners and 3 councillors to conserve about seven purple leaves yew on an nearby development site that had been fenced off from public view. The trees were of considerable amenity value to an adjacent school and a busy retail site. But alas when passing recently the trees were gone. They were about 50 years old and were at least perches for rooks that live off the grass verges and discarded food scraps. There is a clump of ancient hedgerow trees oak ash and yew remnants of an old hedgerow with a young oak tree in the fence line so far they have been spared, but again planners not really interested "What's the value of trees to get worried about?".

Clause 11 - Interpretation: 2011 Act

26 Do you agree with Clause 11 of the Bill?

Yes

27 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

The Woodland Trust should be given more legal powers to monitor tree conservation and protection. They have the knowledge and interest to protect ancient woodland and they make management plans accordingly.

Clause 12 - Interpretation: 2015 Order

28 Do you agree with Clause 12 of the Bill?

Yes

29 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

I support such efforts to protect as much woodland as possible. Associated with housing development comes the need for sand and gravel extraction. The aggregate needed should be sourced from rock quarries that provide road aggregate. The tree cover often exists over sand and gravel deposits that are much sought after in river valleys even Lough Neagh, sand dredging. Housing is a basic need of the growing population but not at the expense of the ecosystems that provide the air we breathe.

Clause 13 - Interpretation: general

30 Do you agree with Clause 13 of the Bill?

Yes

31 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

.Let them be valid and operational

Clause 14 - Commencement

32 Do you agree with Clause 14 of the Bill?

Yes

33 Please provide information to support your answer here

Accessible:

The sooner the better, it takes centuries to grow a mature tree but it can be felled in minutes with a chain saw (the Sycamore Gap Tree) or bulldozed over?