

# **Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2014-2019**

## **Strategic Environmental Assessment**

### **Screening Report: September 2013**

Produced by North Yorkshire County Council on behalf of the Nidderdale AONB

## 1. Introduction

1.1 This report has been produced to determine whether it is necessary to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2014 to 2019, in accordance with European Directive 2001/42/EC on ‘the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment’ (‘The SEA Directive’) and ‘The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations, 2004 (Statutory Instrument 2004 No. 1633), which implements the Directive in England and for relevant non devolved plans and programmes in the UK as a whole.

## 2. AONB Management Plans and Guidance on SEA

2.1 Part IV, Section 89 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 sets out the requirement for conservation boards or relevant local authorities to publish and review a management plan for their AONB that, “*formulates their policy for the management of the area of outstanding natural beauty and for the carrying out of their functions in relation to it*”. These management plans must be reviewed “*at intervals of not more than 5 years*”.

2.2 The previous Nidderdale AONB Management Plan (2009 to 2014) had been subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment. However, as the Plan has been subject to review rather than a more fundamental rewrite, there is some uncertainty over whether SEA would be required for this plan.

2.3 In 2012, Natural England, the National Association of AONBs and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) published an ‘Advice Note to AONB Partnerships, the Conservation Boards and Relevant Authorities on Management Plan Reviews’, which gave some early guidance on considering the need for SEA:

*“The requirements of the SEA and Habitats Directives, and the need for compliance with them, apply to new management plans, and to revisions or re-issues of existing management plans.*

*AONBs and National Park Authorities (protected landscape managing bodies) should screen their revised or amended Management Plan to evaluate whether the individual or cumulative effect of the changes which they are proposing is likely to have a significant effect, as defined under the Strategic Environmental Assessment or Habitats Regulations. They may wish to seek informal guidance from Natural England (and Environment Agency, English Heritage for SEA) at this screening stage”.*

That same guidance goes on to state that:

*“Given that all the extant AONB Management Plans have been assessed under the regulations, the AONB Partnership/Conservation Board (protected landscape managing body) may decide that the proposed changes to the extant plan are not likely to have a significant effect, and may conclude that there is no requirement to carry out further assessment. The AONB Partnership/Conservation Board should record the screening decision and supporting reasons for it”.*

2.4 This Screening Report has been written to enable a judgement to be made on whether an SEA should be undertaken. In line with the ‘tripartite’ guidance outlined above, it discusses whether the Howardian Hills AONB Management Plan 2014 to 2019 is likely to exhibit significant environmental effects, and documents supporting reasons for the report’s

conclusions. A further screening report, to establish whether appropriate assessment under the Habitats Regulations is necessary, is also published alongside this report.

### **3. The Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2014-2019**

3.1 The draft Nidderdale AONB Management Plan sets out the draft vision for the Special Qualities of the AONB, including policies and objectives that relate to the following topic areas:

- Landscape;
- Natural Environment;
- Heritage and the Historic Environment;
- Understanding and Enjoyment;
- Living and Working in the AONB.

The vision for the new Management Plan is the same as the Plan that was presented in 2009 – all the above topic areas are covered within the new Management Plan and no new topic areas have been added. However, the old Management Plan contains high-level policies and then a detailed action plan for each policy, and the new Management Plan contains high-level policies and objectives listed for each policy.

Appendix 1 shows how the policies that underline each topic area have changed between the current draft of the AONB Management Plan and the 2009 Management Plan.

### **4. Screening**

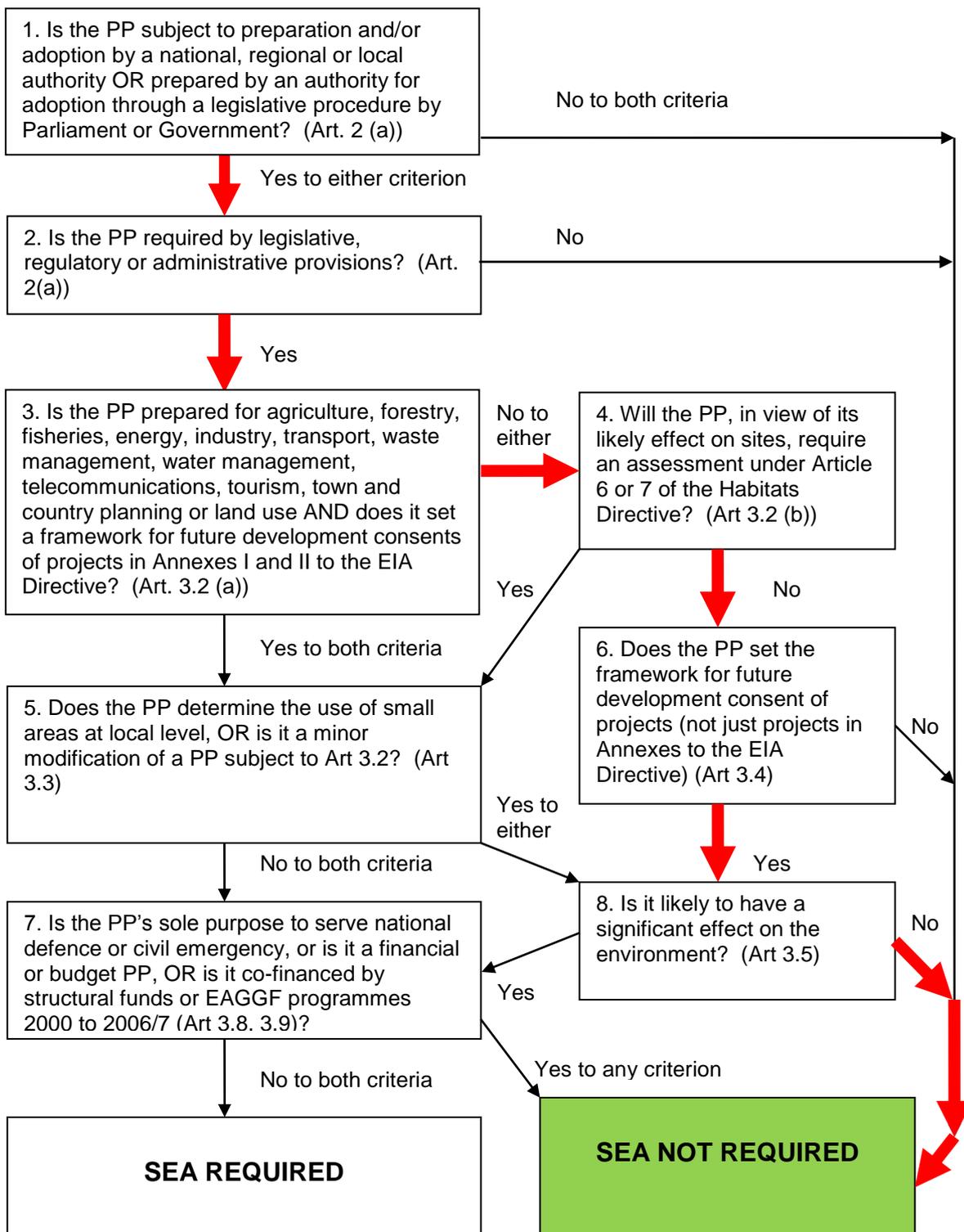
4.1 The SEA Directive and accompanying national regulations describe the types of plans for which the undertaking of SEA is mandatory. There are also a number of other plans where a decision must be taken on whether SEA should be undertaken.

4.2 The Government has set out in a series of steps a means to determine which plans and programmes require SEA<sup>1</sup>, as required by the SEA Directive. Figure 1 describes the steps that should be taken to determine the need for SEA. The path taken by the AONB Management Plan 2014-2019 is indicated by a series of red arrows.

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<sup>1</sup> ODPM, 2006. A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, ODPM, London.

Figure 1: Deciding whether the SEA Directive is applicable to Plans and Programmes (PP)



Anticipated status of The Nidderdale AONB Management Plan 2014-2019  
(Adapted from ODPM, 2006)

- 4.3 Figure 1 shows a considered view of the status of the Nidderdale AONB Management Strategy 2014-2019 in relation to the requirements of the SEA Directive. There remains some uncertainty of the status of the plan in relation to the requirements of the Habitats Directive, which will not be clarified until a screening report, which has been produced alongside this report, has been consulted upon.
- 4.3 Further explanation of the reasons for selecting the Nidderdale AONB Management Plan's pathway through the flow chart is shown in table 1.<sup>2</sup>

Table 1: Establishing the need for SEA

Stage	Answer	Reason
1. Is the PP subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government (Art. 2 (a))?	Yes	The Management Plan will be prepared and adopted by Nidderdale AONB.
2. Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions (Art. 2(a))?	Yes	The Management Plan is being prepared under section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000.
3. Is the PP prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use AND does it set a framework for future development consents of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive (Art. 3.2 (a))?	No	Although the Nidderdale AONB Management Plan is prepared for a number of these purposes, it does not fall into projects described in Annexes I and II of the EIA Directive.
4. Will the PP, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive (Art 3.2 (b))?	?	An assessment of the likely effect of the Nidderdale AONB Management Plan on Natura 2000 sites has concluded that there are no likely significant effects on Natura 2000 sites alone or in-combination with other plans or projects, if the precautionary policy, <i>“individual proposals flowing from the management plan that may themselves be considered to be projects for the purposes of the Habitats Regulations will need to be permitted in accordance with those Regulations in order to be compliant with the</i>

<sup>2</sup> Please note, the Nidderdale AONB Management Plan for 2014-2019 has been screened based on its divergence from the 2009-2014 Management Plan. This means that policies and objectives not covered in the previous Management Plan would highlight areas where SEA may be necessary, depending on the significance of the identified divergence. In this case, the removal of policies that were previously in the 2009-2014 Management Plan, but do not appear in the latest revision, are not screened for potential significant effects on the environment.

		<i>Plan</i> ” is included and an additional objective establishes a principal to work with site managers when promoting European sites. However, there remains some doubt over whether appropriate assessment is necessary until the opinion of consultees has been sought.
5. Does the PP determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Art 3.2 (Art 3.3)?	Not applicable	This question need only be answered if questions 3 or 4 are answered in the affirmative.
6. Does the PP set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in Annexes to the EIA Directive) (Art 3.4).	?	A narrower interpretation of ‘framework for development consents’ would exclude the AONB Management Plan as it does not direct projects that would generally fall within the planning system.  However, public bodies have a duty to consider the natural beauty of AONBs in their decisions, including in planning decisions <sup>3</sup> . Taking a broader interpretation of ‘framework’ <sup>4</sup> (see footnote 3), the Management Plan may affect the outcome of future development consents, though only in as much as they affect the special qualities of the AONB.
7. Is the PP’s sole purpose to serve national defence or civil emergency, or is it a financial or budget PP, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7 (Art 3.8, 3.9)?	Not applicable	This question need only be answered if the answer to question 6 is ‘no, or the answer to question 8 is ‘yes’.
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art 3.5). (See appendix 3 for criteria and characteristics determining significance).	No	The modifications of the new Nidderdale AONB Management Plan (2014-2019) from the previous Management Plan (2009-2014) do not change the broad overall intent (see Appendix 1). As the previous version of the Management Plan has already been subject to

<sup>3</sup> Part IV, Section 85 (1) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 establishes a general duty on public bodies: “In exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land in an area of outstanding natural beauty, a relevant authority shall have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty”. Public bodies are listed as relevant authorities.

<sup>4</sup> The Directive is not clear on what constitutes a framework for development consents, but a broad interpretation has been taken in this assessment, informed partly by wider experience of SEA as described in the Resource Manual to Support Application of the UNECE Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (United Nations draft document, 2006). This describes such frameworks as documents that place limits on types of activity from an area contain conditions to be met by applicants if permission is to be granted, or that are designed to preserve certain characteristics of an area. (See: [http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/eia/sea\\_manual/documents/SEA%20Manual%20-%20Chapter%20A3%20-%20slides.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/eia/sea_manual/documents/SEA%20Manual%20-%20Chapter%20A3%20-%20slides.pdf).)

	<p>SEA means that further significant effects on the environment, are unlikely.</p> <p>Criteria for significance are presented in Annex II of the SEA Directive, in which a range of characteristics of plans are listed as influencing judgements on significance, as well as a range of characteristics of the area likely to be effected by the plan. Appendix 3 at the end of this report shows the SEA Directive's significance criteria alongside the likely effects of the plan.</p>
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## 5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The conclusion of this screening report is that a Strategic Environmental Assessment will not be required for the Nidderdale AONB Management Plan 2014-2019. This is because the policies and actions do not display significant divergence from the previous management strategy, which has already been subject to SEA (see Appendix 1).
- 5.2 Further work being undertaken via a Habitats Regulations Assessment screening report will clarify uncertainties over whether the Nidderdale AONB Management Plan 2014-2019 would require assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive.

## 6. Consultation

- 6.1 The three statutory bodies for the purposes of SEA screening are Natural England, the Environment Agency and English Heritage. This report has been sent to those three bodies and placed on the Nidderdale AONB website. The consultation on this screening report will run from 22 November 2013 to 24 January 2014.
- 6.2 Responses to this consultation should be made via the AONB's website ([www.nidderdaleaonb.org.uk/Pages/Management-Plan-review](http://www.nidderdaleaonb.org.uk/Pages/Management-Plan-review)) or in writing to Paul Burgess, AONB Manager, Nidderdale AONB, The Old Workhouse, King Street, Pateley Bridge HG4 5LE.

## 7. Further Information

Consultation responses and requests for further information on this screening report should be made to:

The Environmental Policy Officers  
 Natural Environment Team, Waste and Countryside Services  
 North Yorkshire County Council  
 County Hall  
 Northallerton  
 North Yorkshire  
 DL7 8AD  
[mwsustainability@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:mwsustainability@northyorks.gov.uk)  
 Telephone: 01609 536493

## Appendix 1: Comparison of AONB Management Plan Policies

2014-2019 Management Plan Draft Policies and Objectives	Comparable 2009-2014 Management Plan Policies	Divergence from old Management Plan	Notes on likely significance of divergence to the environment
<b>LANDSCAPE</b>			
<p>L1 - Promote awareness and understanding of the special qualities of the AONB.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Monitor landscape change by publishing an annual report on environmental indicators in the 'Framework for Monitoring Environmental Outcomes in Protected Landscapes'.</li> <li>2. Enable local people and visitors to contribute data on landscape change using websites and social media by 2015.</li> <li>3. Promote the Ecosystem Services approach in local decision-making by creating a database of Ecosystem Services by 2016.</li> </ol>	<p>L1 Maintain the distinctiveness of the AONB's landscape by respecting variations in landscape character and by enhancing the quality of damaged or degraded landscape features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve openness and tranquillity of the AONB's moorland plateau landscape;</li> <li>• Improve management of field boundaries;</li> <li>• Ensure that management of the traditional farmed landscape of the Pennine Dales Fringe is consistent with local styles and traditions;</li> <li>• Commission research on the processes, direction and drivers of landscape change to improve understanding and the ability to adapt to the continuing evolution of the AONB's landscape.</li> </ul>	<p>Moderate.</p> <p>The high-level policies are similar, although the new objectives differ from the old actions.</p>	<p><u>Not significant.</u> The new objectives relate to monitoring and data contribution and therefore are unlikely to have a significant effect on the environment.</p> <p>The effect of implementing the new action plan is also unlikely to have a significant effect on the environment as the actions and objectives are similarly focussed on research and information sharing.</p>
<p>L3 - Take action to ensure characteristic features of the AONBs landscape are resilient to climate change by working independently and in partnership with other protected areas across the northern uplands where possible.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Commission research to identify barriers to migration and dispersal of wildlife species and coordinate a programme of landscape-scale habitat enhancement to overcome at least 25% of barriers by 2018.</li> <li>2. Restore of 0000ha of peat before 2019 by providing financial and logistical support for the Yorkshire Peat Partnership.</li> <li>3. Increase the extent and productivity of native broadleaved woodland by 00ha by 2019 and support development of a local biomass energy market.</li> <li>4. Develop a Payments for Ecosystem Services</li> </ol>	<p>L4 Promote the value and importance of moorland peat to the conservation of landscape, biodiversity and archaeology. Protect existing deposits and facilitate restoration to increase the capability of peat to store and sequester carbon in the AONB.</p> <p>L6 Facilitate development of new native woodland on sites that have the potential to reinforce landscape character, that enhance biodiversity, improve ecological connectivity and which contribute to sustainable development by encouraging new planting and natural regeneration where possible.</p> <p>L7 Promote re-structuring of geometric conifer plantations, especially on land in upper valley landscapes, by encouraging establishment of native tree and scrub species on plantation edges and by supporting proposals to fell and re-stock with native broadleaves.</p>	<p>Moderate.</p> <p>Objectives 1 and 4 of new policy L3 are not covered by old policies outlined in the 2009-2014 Management Plan.</p>	<p><u>Potentially significant.</u> Objective 1 of new policy L3, although not covered by the old policies, commissions research to identify barriers to migration and dispersal of wildlife, which is unlikely to have an effect on the environment.</p> <p>However, objective 4 of the new policy could potentially have a significant effect on protected sites with the AONB. For this reason, this objective has been screened through the SEA framework developed for the 2009-2014 Management Plan and the results of this screening are presented in Appendix 2.</p>

<p>pilot and create a habitat bank of biodiversity offsets by 2016.</p>	<p>NE4 Enhance management of existing ancient semi-natural woodland and encourage creation of new native woodland planting on suitable land to improve ecological connectivity between isolated stands.</p>		
<p>L4 - Resist applications for planning permission for major development, and applications for smaller scale development that conflict with the purposes of designation in and adjacent to the AONB boundary.</p> <p>Objectives:  1. Provide local planning authorities and their statutory consultees with advice on the impact of major development on the AONB, and publish consultation responses on the AONB's website on a quarterly basis.  2. Publish an analysis of planning applications, decisions and outcomes in the AONB Annual Review.  3. Organise an annual forum for planning authority representatives.</p>	<p>L8 Resist applications for planning permission in the AONB that involve major development that is incompatible with the AONB's landscape including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Large-scale industrial, residential and commercial development;</li> <li>• Development of new transport networks, quarries, waste disposal sites, telecommunications and large-scale renewable energy installations;</li> <li>• Overhead power supply;</li> <li>• Pipelines;</li> <li>• Water resource or water treatment facilities.</li> </ul>	<p>Low.</p> <p>The high-level policies are very similar. Objective 1 of the new policy is covered under the action plan of the old policy. Although objectives 2 and 3 of the new policy are not included within the old management Plan, they are unlikely to have an effect on the environment.</p>	<p><u>Not significant.</u> Objectives 2 and 3 of the new policy relate to publication of data and organising a forum for planning authority representatives to share information – the inclusion of both of these objectives is unlikely to have a significant effect on the environment.</p>
<p>L5 - Promote the highest standards of design, choice of materials and environmental performance standards in new development, and in the conversion and restoration of old buildings.</p> <p>Objectives:  1. Advise local planning authorities and their statutory consultees on the impact of development and publish planning consultation responses on the AONB's website on a quarterly basis.  2. Publish an AONB Design Guide by 2018.  3. Devise a procedure for providing pre-planning application advice on potential AONB impact of development by 2015.</p>	<p>L9 Ensure the highest standards of design, materials and environmental performance in new development and resist applications for planning permission in the AONB that involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development that is incompatible with landscape character, local tradition and design;</li> <li>• New buildings, conversions and curtilage development that reduces biodiversity or damages archaeology and the character of historic buildings or features;</li> <li>• Proposals that compromise the openness and tranquillity of the AONB's moorland plateau and upper valley landscapes in the Yorkshire Dales Character Area.</li> </ul>	<p>Low.</p> <p>The high-level policies of both management plans are essentially the same. The actions of the old management plan relate to provision of training for planning control in local authorities and also planning surgeries on a monthly basis. The new objectives are also based on the provision of advice to local authorities and others on design.</p>	<p><u>Not significant.</u></p>
<p>L6 - Encourage sustainable development to create affordable housing, new enterprise</p>	<p>L10 Encourage small-scale sustainable development to create social housing, new enterprise based on</p>	<p>Low.</p>	<p><u>Not significant.</u></p>

<p>based on environmental qualities including farm diversification and green tourism ventures, small-scale renewable energy schemes and other small-scale development that makes a positive contribution to maintaining landscape character and to the repair of damaged or degraded landscape features.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Advise the North Yorkshire and York Local Enterprise Partnership on AONB priorities for the Single Local Growth Fund strategy and organise at least two events to promote funding opportunities to AONB businesses by 2015.</li> <li>2. Ensure that the Local Development Strategy for Yorkshire Dales Leader reflects the aspirations of AONB residents and businesses and facilitate at least 10 grant applications by 2018.</li> <li>3. Implement actions attributed to the AONB contained in Dales Tourism Partnership's strategy by 2018.</li> </ol>	<p>environmental qualities including farm diversification and green tourism ventures, small-scale renewable energy schemes and other small-scale development that makes a positive contribution to reinforcement of landscape character and to the repair of damaged or degraded landscape features.</p> <p>LW6 Encourage promotion of AONB environmental qualities in food and non-food product marketing to stimulate development of an environmental economy in the AONB.</p> <p>LW9 Support implementation of Local Development Framework policy and objectives on farm diversification and development of sustainable rural enterprise.</p> <p>LW10 Ensure that the farming industry has access to high quality business advice and intelligence about future market opportunities to enable the sector to grow and prosper.</p> <p>LW11 Encourage the development of cooperative ventures in the farming industry.</p> <p>LW12 Support industry-led initiatives to reduce energy costs and enhance the environmental sustainability of farm businesses.</p>	<p>The first objective of the new Management Plan policy is covered by several of the old Management Plan policies. The second objective, which seeks to ensure that the Yorkshire Dales Leader takes into account the aspirations of AONB residents and businesses, is not included in the earlier Management Plan. The third objective, which aims to implement the actions for the AONB in the Dales Tourism Partnership's strategy, is not included in the 2009 Plan.</p>	<p>Although the second and third objectives were not included in the previous Management Plan's policies, they are unlikely to cause significant environmental effects. Ensuring that the aspirations of the AONB residents and businesses are reflected in the Yorkshire Dales Leader Programme are thought not to have a significant effect on the environment as the programme's aim is to produce a sustainable approach to rural development. Similarly, the Dales Tourism Partnership aims to encourage sustainable tourism, and the actions attributed to the AONB are likely to exhibit negligible environmental effects.</p>
<b>NATURAL ENVIRONMENT</b>			
<p>NE1 - Work in partnership with land managers and conservation organisations to ensure designated sites, including those designated for their geological interest, are managed to the highest standards in accordance with international, national and local guidelines.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support work by land managers and Natural England to ensure that at least 50% of</li> </ol>	<p>NE1 Ensure that improvements to the conservation status of upland heath and blanket bog habitats being carried out by owners and managers on land designated as a Special Area of Conservation in the AONB are sustained by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting adoption of Defra's Heather and Grass Burning Code and preparation of burning plans;</li> <li>• Continuing management of grazing to increase species diversity;</li> <li>• Restoring hydrological systems to facilitate</li> </ul>	<p>Low.</p> <p>The new Management Plan policy covers several of the old management Plan policies.</p>	<p><u>Not significant.</u></p>

<p>SSSIs are in Favourable Condition by 2019. 2. Support work by land managers to ensure that at least 50% of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation are maintained in accordance with conservation management plan objectives by 2019.</p>	<p>moorland re-wetting;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further enhancing the conservation value of ancient semi-natural woodland on moor edges and in gills;</li> <li>• Controlling the spread of bracken and rush;</li> <li>• Improving the diversity of semi-natural grassland habitats on the moor edges.</li> </ul> <p>NE2 Support work to maintain wild bird populations associated with the North Pennines Special Protection Area in the AONB at levels that are appropriate to the carrying capacity of habitats in the designated area.</p> <p>NE3 Ensure that Natural England's target for SSSI condition in the AONB is met by 2010 and support continuing conservation management by wonders and managers.</p> <p>NE5 Increase the value of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) in the AONB by improving the quality and availability of SINC survey data and supporting owners and managers to enhance standards of SINC habitat management where necessary.</p> <p>NE8 Promote identification and conservation of geological sites and features.</p> <p>NE9 Carry out research and survey work to monitor habitat quality and changes in populations and distribution of wildlife species on designated sites and in the wider countryside.</p>		
<p>NE2 - Support landowners to improve management of priority habitats listed in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan so that 90% are in favourable or recovering condition by 2019, and ensure funding is available to create 00000ha of new priority habitat by 2017.</p> <p>Objectives:</p>	<p>NE6 Improve the conservation value of National, Regional and Local Biodiversity Action Plan habitats in the AONB outside designated sites to improve ecological connectivity and adaptation to climate change.</p> <p>NE7 Facilitate improvements to riverine and wetland habitats by maintaining minimum flow in</p>	<p>Low.</p> <p>Both old and new policies seek to improve conservation of UK BAP habitat.</p>	<p><u>Not significant.</u></p>

<p>1. Create a framework for collecting, storing, sharing and monitoring biological and ecological data by 2015.</p> <p>2. Identify opportunities for extending priority habitats by producing a Habitat Suitability Map by 2015.</p> <p>3. Produce a strategy for tackling Non Native Invasive Species by 2017.</p>	<p>river systems with reservoirs, working with owners and managers to reduce the intensity of agricultural management along river catchments and by targeted action against invasive non-native flora and fauna.</p> <p>NE9 Carry out research and survey work to monitor habitat quality and changes in populations and distribution of wildlife species on designated sites and in the wider countryside.</p>		
<p>NE3 - Work with landowners and partners to secure compliance with Water Framework Directive criteria for 'Good Ecological Status' for all rivers and still waters by 2019.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <p>1. Overcome obstacles to fish migration and in the Laver catchment by removing or modifying at least five weirs by 2017.</p> <p>2. Eliminate sources of diffuse water pollution identified in the Catchment Appraisal of the Nidd by 2015.</p> <p>3. Establish Catchment Partnerships covering the AONB's rivers by 2015.</p> <p>4. Other rivers/water bodies?</p>	<p>L5 Support measures to restore the natural hydrology of moorland water catchments in the AONB to enhance biodiversity, maintain water quality, reduce diffuse pollution and help mitigate downstream flood risk by promoting improved management of moorland and farmland.</p> <p>NE7 Facilitate improvements to riverine and wetland habitats by maintaining minimum flow in river systems with reservoirs, working with owners and managers to reduce the intensity of agricultural management along river catchments and by targeted action against invasive non-native flora and fauna.</p>	<p>Low to Moderate.</p> <p>The wording of the policies is different as the newer Management Plan policy takes into account the Water Framework Directive requirements for all water bodies. However, many of the requirements of the WFD would have been covered by the old action plan, which is clearly focussed at achieving the sort of good ecological status now formally required by legislation.</p>	<p><u>Not significant</u> as the overall intent of both policies and their objectives/actions is the same.</p>
<b>HERITAGE AND THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT</b>			
<p>HE1 - Protect the historic landscape and features of archaeological importance by resisting inappropriate development and supporting owners and managers to improve condition where possible.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <p>1. Reduce the number of structures listed in the Heritage at Risk register by 50% by 2018.</p> <p>2. Organise an annual heritage skills training programme.</p> <p>3. Repair and improve access to at least four landmark historic structures in Upper Nidderdale by 2018.</p> <p>4. Develop action plans in consultation with</p>	<p>HE2 Ensure that new development does not have an adverse impact on the historic environment and heritage assets of the AONB, especially in the AONB's Conservation Areas.</p> <p>HE3 Conserve Listed Buildings, Schedules Monuments and Historic Parks and Gardens that appear on the 'Heritage at Risk' registers.</p> <p>HE4 Support preparation of Heritage Management Plans by owners of heritage assets and ensure that management of these assets is adapted to predicted climate change impacts.</p> <p>HE5 Provide training opportunities for the</p>	<p>Low.</p> <p>The objectives of the new Plan are covered by several old Plan policies.</p>	<p><u>Not significant.</u></p>

local communities to implement recommendations in at least five Conservation Area Appraisal reports by 2016.	acquisition of heritage skills.		
HE2 - Support innovative proposals for sustainable future use of historic buildings and structures where this does not cause unacceptable harm to the asset or the wider landscape.  Objectives: 1. Facilitate at least two Heritage Asset Management Plans covering multiple features of historic interest by 2019. 2. Increase the value of heritage tourism by creating a 'Travel Through Time Trail' in Upper Nidderdale by 2018. 3. Complete the volunteer-led survey of 50% of farm buildings by 2016.	N/A	High.  The new management Plan policy HE2 is not covered in the old Management Plan.	<u>Not significant.</u>  The proposal for innovative use of historic buildings should not result in a significant effect on the environment, especially as the actions relate to the creation of Management Plans, creating a time trail and a survey and the headline policy is effectively moderated by the words ' <i>...where this does not cause unacceptable harm to the asset or the wider landscape</i> '.
HE3 - Encourage initiatives designed to increase awareness and understanding of archaeology and the historic environment.  Objectives: 1. Implement the HLF-supported research and development plan for a former WW1 training and internment camp by 2016. 2. Organise an annual Heritage Forum. 3. Organise an annual heritage events programme.	HE6 Improve the knowledge and understanding about the AONB's historic environment and heritage by supporting the network of local history groups and heritage volunteers; by sponsoring professional research and by disseminating the results of the Historic Landscape Characterisation of the AONB. HE7 Update NYCC's Historic Environment Record for the AONB by targeting research to address key gaps, and encouraging all researchers in the AONB to lodge their data with the HER.  HE8 Ensure sustainable conservation of archives and collections and facilitate public access to these resources where possible.  HE9 Enable people to enjoy heritage through education, by removing barriers to access and by encouraging participation in events to celebrate the AONB's heritage.	Moderate.  The new Management Plan policy is broadly very similar in intent to several of the old Management Plan policies. However, the objectives of the new Management Plan policy HE3 are not covered by the older policies.	<u>Not significant.</u>  The new policy objectives relate to research, creating a forum and organising an annual events programme. These objectives are unlikely to have any significant effect on the environment.
<b>UNDERSTANDING AND JOYMENT</b>			
UE1 - Support North Yorkshire County Council's efforts to improve the quality and	UE1 Improve the quality and accessibility of the rights of way network in the AONBs.	Low.	<u>Not significant.</u>

<p>accessibility of the rights of way network.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Make the rights of way network easier to use by reducing the number of obstructed rights of way by 00% by 2019.</li> <li>2. Enable more people to enjoy using the rights of way network by removing stiles and gates from 000kms of rights of way.</li> <li>3. Provide advice to event organisers on mitigating the environmental impact of large-scale outdoor activities.</li> </ol>	<p>UE3 Ensure that walkers are able to use and enjoy open access land.</p> <p>UE4 Encourage people to exploit the AONB's recreation infrastructure on foot, on bicycles and on horseback to promote health and well-being as part of an active lifestyle.</p> <p>UE5 Improve opportunities for cycling in the AONB.</p>	<p>All of the new objectives suggested for new policy UE1 are covered by several old Management Plan policies, except for objective number 3.</p>	<p>Objective number 3, although not covered by old Management Plan policies, relates to mitigation of the environmental impact of large-scale outdoor activities and is therefore unlikely to have a significant detrimental environment effect.</p>
<p>UE2 - Reduce the impact of vehicular use of Unsurfaced Unclassified Roads where this is having an adverse impact on conservation of the natural and cultural heritage of the AONB and its enjoyment by the public.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Seek to prevent illegal vehicular use on public footpaths and bridleways by erecting signs on all affected routes by 2015, and by encouraging the police to take enforcement action.</li> <li>2. Carry out an environmental assessment of all Unsurfaced and Unclassified Roads by 2015.</li> <li>3. Publish an action plan for all Unsurfaced and Unclassified Roads currently used by recreational vehicles by 2016.</li> </ol>	<p>UE2 Reduce the environmental impact of recreational vehicles using unclassified roads and the rights of way network and increase the value of the highway network to non-motorised users by improving safety standards on designated routes.</p>	<p>Low.</p> <p>The headline policies of the old and new management Plans are broadly similar. In addition, the new policy objectives relate to unobtrusive actions.</p>	<p><u>Not significant.</u></p>
<p>UE3 - Increase understanding and awareness of the AONB through communications, events and volunteering to deliver AONB statutory purposes.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use printed and electronic media to distribute information about the AONB to visitors and local communities via the AONB's website, an annual printed newsletter for visitors and at least quarterly e-news</li> </ol>	<p>UE7 Ensure that more people are aware of AONB purposes and boundaries, and enhance people's understanding of the designation and the importance of conservation by communicating information about AONB special qualities.</p> <p>UE8 Provide information and organise activities and events that help people of all ages and abilities to enjoy the AONB.</p> <p>UE9 Raise awareness of the AONB across socio-</p>	<p>Low.</p> <p>The headline policies of the old and new management Plans are broadly similar. In addition, the new policy objectives relate to unobtrusive actions.</p>	<p><u>Not significant.</u></p> <p>The objectives on supply of information are unlikely to have a significant environmental impact.</p>

<p>bulletins for residents and volunteers.</p> <p>2. Implement the Heritage Lottery Fund supported Interpretation Plan for Upper Nidderdale by 2018.</p> <p>3. Implement the Heritage Lottery Fund supported plan to raise awareness of Upper Nidderdale in urban communities neighbouring the AONB by 2018.</p> <p>4. Organise an annual programme of public events designed to convey key AONB messages and increase participation by 00% by 2019.</p> <p>5. Encourage participation in volunteering by providing financial and organisational support for existing AONB volunteer groups.</p>	<p>economically and ethnically diverse communities in urban areas of West Yorkshire.</p> <p>LW15 Provide visitors to the AONB with information about activities, events, attractions, and services provided by local tourism businesses.</p>		
<b>LIVING AND WORKING IN THE AONB</b>			
<p>LW1 - Work closely with established and new businesses to ensure that changing practices, and plans for growth and expansion, increase business viability and have a positive effect on the AONB.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <p>1. Provide advice and guidance to farmers and landowners seeking planning permission to expand or diversify their agricultural businesses.</p> <p>2. Ensure AONB businesses are eligible to receive Rural Development funding, including Leader and Structural Investment Funding, by influencing the development of funding strategies by 2015.</p> <p>3. Ensure good quality broadband coverage of the AONB by identifying and helping to overcome environmental constraints on infrastructure development by 2016.</p> <p>4. Support all proposals for affordable housing submitted in accordance with current Local Plan policy during the period of the Management Plan, and ensure that future Local Plan policy reviews retain a</p>	<p>LW1 Support Local Development Framework policy and objectives on provision of affordable housing in the AONB.</p> <p>LW7 Support creation of new enterprises that complements and enhances landscape and that capitalise on the AONB's environmental assets.</p> <p>LW8 Create training opportunities based on the AONB's landscape.</p> <p>LW10 Ensure that the farming industry has access to high quality business advice and intelligence about future market opportunities to enable the sector to grow and prosper.</p> <p>LW11 Encourage the development of cooperative ventures in the farming industry.</p>	<p>Low to moderate.</p> <p>The objectives of the new Management Plan are covered by the old Plan policies, with the exception of objective number 3.</p>	<p><u>Not significant.</u></p> <p>The objective for provision of good quality broadband coverage across the AONB could potentially have implications for protected sites. However, the objective specifies that environmental objectives will be identified and overcome in order to achieve this objective and therefore it is likely that SACs and SPAs will not be negatively impacted.</p>

<p>commitment to meeting evidence-based need for affordable housing.</p> <p>5. Create at least five apprenticeships or bursaries linked to management of heritage features in Upper Nidderdale by 2016.</p>			
<p>LW2 - Support growth of businesses that do not cause landscape harm, that comply with the principles of sustainable tourism, and actively contribute to improving environmental quality.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <p>1. Provide support to tourism businesses through the Yorkshire Dales Tourism Partnership and Business Network to increase the value of tourism across the Yorkshire Dales National Park and Nidderdale AONB by 20% by 2020.</p> <p>2. Carry out actions attributed to the AONB in the Yorkshire Dales Strategy for the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism.</p>	<p>LW6 Encourage promotion of AONB environmental qualities in food and non-food product marketing to stimulate development of an environmental economy in the AONB.</p> <p>LW7 Support creation of new enterprises that complement and enhance landscape and that capitalise on the AONB's environmental assets.</p> <p>LW9 Support implementation of Local Development Framework policy and objectives on farm diversification and development of sustainable rural enterprise.</p> <p>LW13 Support the Europarc Sustainable Tourism Charter Implementation plan.</p> <p>LW14 Support the Dales and Harrogate Tourism Partnership.</p>	<p>Low.</p> <p>All new Management Plan policy objectives are covered by the old policies.</p>	<p><u>Not significant.</u></p>

## Appendix 2: SEA Analysis Matrix for Objective 4 of Policy L3 in the 2014-2019 Management Plan

Objective 4, Policy L3 of the AONB Management Plan has been identified as a new feature of the Management Plan that could potentially have significant environmental effects, as it represents something of a departure from the 2009 approach. While the assessment team's initial consideration was that the objective would generally have a positive effect, to remove doubt it has been subjected to assessment against the 20 SEA objectives published in the Environmental Report for the 2009 AONB Management Plan.

The assessment has predicted the effects of Objective 4 as a whole on each strategic environmental assessment objective, referring to the baseline established in the 2009 Environmental Report. While this is now several years old, it is thought sufficiently contemporary to enable this sort of screening assessment to take place.

As a comparator, the same assessment has been performed on Objective 4, but without the inclusion of policy L3.

List of SEA Objectives:

1. To protect and enhance the landscape.
2. To protect and where applicable enhance biodiversity (habitats) and geo-diversity.
3. To protect and enhance fauna and flora (individual species).
4. To ensure no adverse effect arises on population (i.e. demographic balance).
5. To safeguard human health.
6. To protect and enhance soil quality.
7. To protect water.
8. To protect air and climate.
9. To maintain cultural heritage.
10. To protect material assets including natural resources.
11. To avoid significant adverse effects between the above relationships (combination).
12. To create more vibrant cohesive, safe and mixed communities.
13. To protect the quality and character of individual settlements and communities.
14. To protect people, environment and properties from flood risk.
15. To reduce the need and desire to travel by car.
16. To promote healthy lifestyles.
17. To raise standards of education and training and promote employment skills.
18. To promote the development of an economy that supports social and environmental objectives.
19. To promote good governance.
20. To minimise the consumption of natural resources; including fossil fuels, minerals, land take and water.

Policy Scenarios		SEA Objectives																			
		Landscape	Bio & Geodiversity	Fauna and flora	Demographics	Safeguard human health	Soil quality	Protect water	Air and climate	Cultural heritage	Natural resources	Combination	Vibrant communities	Protect settlements	Protect from flood risk	Reduce car travel	Healthy lifestyle	Education standards	Develop economy	Good governance	Natural resources
<b>L3, with objective 4</b>	<p>L3 - Take action to ensure characteristic features of the AONBs landscape are resilient to climate change by working independently and in partnership with other protected areas across the northern uplands where possible.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Commission research to identify barriers to migration and dispersal of wildlife species and coordinate a programme of landscape-scale habitat enhancement to overcome at least 25% of barriers by 2018.</li> <li>2. Restore of 0000ha of peat before 2019 by providing financial and logistical support for the Yorkshire Peat Partnership.</li> <li>3. Increase the extent and productivity of native broadleaved woodland by 00ha by 2019 and support development of a local biomass energy market.</li> <li>4. Develop a Payments for Ecosystem Services pilot and create a habitat bank of biodiversity offsets by 2016.</li> </ol>																				
<b>L3, without objective 4</b>	<p>L3 - Take action to ensure characteristic features of the AONBs landscape are resilient to climate change by working independently and in partnership with other protected areas across the northern uplands where possible.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Commission research to identify barriers to migration and dispersal of wildlife species and coordinate a programme of landscape-scale habitat enhancement to overcome at least 25% of barriers by 2018.</li> <li>2. Restore of 0000ha of peat before 2019 by providing financial and logistical support for the Yorkshire Peat Partnership.</li> <li>3. Increase the extent and productivity of native broadleaved woodland by 00ha by 2019 and support development of a local biomass energy market.</li> </ol>																				

**Key:**

Very Positive	Positive	Neutral	Uncertain	Negative	Very Negative
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### Appendix 3: Judging Significance in Relation to the SEA Directive

Annex II of the SEA Directive lists criteria for determining the significance of environmental effects of a plan or programme. Taken together these criteria should inform judgements about whether environmental effects can be considered to be significant.

Table 2: Table showing criteria of significance listed in Annex II of the SEA Directive alongside an assessment of their applicability to the Nidderdale AONB Management Plan 2014-2019.

Characteristic of significance	Is it significant?	Likely effect of plan
<b>1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:</b>		
The degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources.	Yes	The Nidderdale AONB Management Plan 2014-2019 will set a framework for projects across the AONB. It will inform projects that will be diverse in nature due to the different types of land management that are specified across the AONB.
The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.	No	The Nidderdale AONB Management Plan 2014-2019 will be influenced by higher tier plans (such as local development frameworks and local plans), but will not set a framework for the development of lower tier plans.
The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations with a view to promoting sustainable development.	Yes	The Management Plan is supported by many policies which seek to enhance the environment through sustainable means.
Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme.	No	The Management Plan is broadly similar in intent and actions to the previous Management Plan, which was subject to SEA (as demonstrated by appendix 1).
The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of community legislation on	No	The Nidderdale AONB Management Plan is carried out as a result of national legislation (Countryside and Rights of Way

the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).		Act, 2000) which is not transposed from higher community legislation.
<b>2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:</b>		
The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.	No	The Nidderdale AONB Management Plan 2014-2019 is unlikely to exhibit significant long term/frequent/irreversible effects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Generally, the Management Plan will limit inappropriate or damaging development in the AONB.</li> <li>- Effects on the environment of the previous Management Plan have already been taken into account. It is unlikely that additional environmental impact would occur with the new Management Plan as the intentions are broadly the same (as shown in appendix 1).</li> </ul>
The cumulative nature of the effects.	No	The difference in intent of this Management Plan, compared to the previous version is so small that it is very unlikely to exhibit any cumulative effects at any significant scale (see appendix 1).
The transboundary <sup>5</sup> nature of the effects.	No	It is unlikely that there will be any transboundary environmental effects arising from the new Management Plan.
The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents).	No	The Management Plan is likely to limit development across the AONB whilst improving land management practices and encouraging enjoyment and recreation in the AONB which therefore may enhance human

<sup>5</sup> In this instance, transboundary effects relates to environmental effects felt in other EU nations.

		health and the environment.
The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).	No	Although the spatial extent of the policies will cover the whole of the AONB, the previous SEA and the consideration of divergence from that SEA (Appendix 1) suggest that effects are unlikely to be significant.
The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: special natural characteristics or cultural heritage.	No	The Management Plan covers the AONB which is a statutorily protected landscape and has high levels of protection due to their high scenic quality and natural beauty. The Management Plan is intended to protect these features of the AONB (including heritage assets) and therefore is unlikely to cause damage to any of these assets.  In addition, the previous Management Plan underwent SEA and as the new version of the Plan is unlikely to cause effects beyond those identified within this SEA.
The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values.	No	There are many environmental quality standards relevant to the Plan, including SSSI condition/Heritage at Risk/Water Framework Directive Status of waterbodies. The Plan is unlikely to have an effect on these environmental quality standards as the intent of the Plan is generally to protect these assets. As the new Plan is broadly similar to the previous Plan version, which has undergone SEA, it is unlikely that additional effects would occur.
The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to intensive land-use	No	The Management Plan does not advocate intense land use.
The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be	No	The AONB, which the Plan seeks to manage, is a protected

<p>affected due to the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.</p>	<p>landscape. However, the policies of the Plan are unlikely to have a significant effect on the AONB as they seek to protect and enhance the landscape.</p> <p>In addition, the policies of the previous Management Plan have already been subjected to SEA and the new Plan policies are broadly similar in scope.</p>
<p><b>Overall level of significance: Unlikely to exhibit significant effects on the environment.</b></p>	

### How to Comment on this Screening Report

If you would like to express any views on the document please contact us by post or e-mail via the contact details on page 8. If you would like to discuss this assessment before making a response the telephone number of the environmental policy officers that authored this report is also available on page 8.

## Contact us

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اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے پوچھئے۔

如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。

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Aby otrzymać te informacje w innym języku lub formacie, np. w alfabecie brajla, w wersji dużym drukiem lub audio, prosimy się z nami skontaktować.

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