

# **Sustainability Appraisal of Cornwall AONB Management Plan**

## **Non-Technical Summary**

**Prepared for Cornwall AONB Partnership  
by  
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# NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report constitutes the Non Technical Summary for the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Report for the Cornwall AONB Management Plan 2011-2016 (the 'Final Draft for Public Consultation' version, dated 02 August 2010). The SA report has been produced alongside the emerging Management Plan and is being published for consultation at the same time as the consultation draft of the Management Plan to provide the public and statutory bodies with an opportunity to express their opinions on the SA Report and to use it as a reference point in commenting on the Management Plan.

## THE CORNWALL AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN

### AONBs

- 1.2 The statutory purposes of the AONB designation are:
- *'Conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty.*
  - *Increasing the understanding and enjoyment by the public of the special qualities of the area of outstanding natural beauty.'*<sup>1</sup>
- 1.3 Looking more specifically at the Cornwall AONB, the 20 year vision for the AONB is:

*'The Cornwall AONB Partnership's 20-year vision is for the Cornwall Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to remain as a number of diverse and special landscapes, recognised, respected and therefore protected so that generations to come may enjoy their natural beauty, unique character and the economic and social benefits that these bring.*

*A nationally important landscape valued and protected for the long term because it:*

- *Represents the special character of Cornwall.*
- *Underpins the local economy.*
- *Enhances everybody's quality of life.'*

### The Cornwall AONB Management Plan

- 1.4 Part 4 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW) 2000 created a statutory responsibility for local authorities and conservation boards to produce AONB Management Plans and to then review adopted and published plans at intervals of not more than five years.
- 1.5 The Cornwall AONB Management Plan Review acts as a guide for local authorities, statutory agencies and people who live and work within the AONB, and seeks to provide cohesion between the various bodies that impact on the AONB. The Management Plan evaluates what the special qualities and characteristics of the AONB are, and determines what actions are required to ensure that these qualities are conserved and enhanced for future generations.

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<sup>1</sup> Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, Section 87.

- 1.6 The objectives of the Management Plan that is the subject of this SA are:
- *To highlight the special qualities and the enduring significance of the AONB and the importance of its different features.*
  - *To present an integrated vision for the future of the AONB as a whole, in the light of national, regional and local priorities.*
  - *To set out agreed policies incorporating specific objectives which will help secure that vision.*
  - *To identify what needs to be done, by whom, and when, in order to achieve these outcomes.*
  - *To state how the condition of the AONB and the effectiveness of its management will be monitored.*

## **PURPOSE OF THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL**

- 1.7 The purpose of sustainability appraisal is to promote sustainable development by integrating sustainability considerations in to the preparation and adoption of policies, plans and programmes.
- 1.8 The objective of Strategic Environmental Assessment, as defined in Article 1 of the SEA Directive is *'to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans....with a view to promoting sustainable development'*.
- 1.9 The Government SA Guidance<sup>2</sup> on sustainability appraisal explains the difference between SEA and sustainability appraisal. Sustainability appraisal includes a wider range of considerations, extending to social and economic impacts of plans, whereas SEA is more focussed on environmental impacts. 1.
- 1.10 Although not mandatory for this kind of plan, the AONB Management Plan has been subject to SA in addition to SEA to help ensure that the plan preparation process improves the contribution that the plan makes to the achievement of sustainable development. For the remainder of this report 'SA' will refer to the combined SA and SEA process.

## **STAGES IN THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL**

- 1.11 The Government SA Guidance explains how to carry out SA as an integral part of plan preparation. The five stages (A to E) are summarised below.
- Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope**
- 1.12 The Scoping Report relates to Stage A of the SA process, and can be viewed as providing the 'tools' for undertaking the SA. This stage includes: identifying other relevant plans, programmes and sustainability objectives; a review of relevant baseline information; a review of sustainability issues that the plan should address; and presentation of the SA Framework. The SA framework consists of a set of sustainability objectives which state desired outcomes (outlined in Table 1).

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<sup>2</sup> *Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents*, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM), November 2005.

**Table 1: AONB Management Plan Sustainability Objectives**

Sustainability Objectives
SO1: To reduce our contribution to climate change through a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. To increase resilience to climate change, and reduce vulnerability.
SO2: To minimise the generation of waste and encourage greater re-use and recycling of materials in accordance with the waste hierarchy.
SO3: To minimise the consumption of mineral resources and ensure the sustainable management of these resources. To conserve, enhance and restore the condition of geodiversity in the AONB.
SO4: To minimise the use of undeveloped land and protect and enhance soil quality.
SO5: To improve access to key services, facilities and the countryside by reducing the need to travel and by providing safe sustainable travel choices, including green transport infrastructure. To reduce traffic congestion, especially seasonal congestion and minimise transport related greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution.
SO6: To reduce and manage the risk of flooding and reduce vulnerability to flooding, sea level rise and coastal erosion. To maintain and enhance water quality and reduce consumption and increase efficiency of water use.
SO7: To conserve, enhance and restore the condition and extent and interconnectivity of biodiversity in the AONB and allow its adaptation to climate change.
SO8: To protect and enhance the quality of the natural, historic and cultural landscape, including local distinctiveness, and seascape, and promote its positive contribution to the AONB's present and future wellbeing.
SO9: To encourage clean, healthy, productive and diverse waters. To protect coastal areas and ensure sustainable maritime environments
SO10: To protect and enhance the quality and local distinctiveness of the historic environment, reinforcing and celebrating the distinctive character and culture of the AONB.
SO11: To promote and achieve high quality design in development, sustainable land use and sustainable built development, maintaining local distinctiveness and encouraging a good quality of life.
SO12: To reduce poverty, social exclusion and fragmentation and provide opportunities for all to participate fully in society, decision making and the development of sustainable communities.
SO13: To reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and fear of crime.
SO14: To meet the needs of the local community as a whole in terms of general market, affordable, adaptable and decent housing.
SO15: To improve health through the promotion of healthier lifestyles and improving access to open space and health, recreation and sports facilities.
SO16: To support a balanced and low carbon economy that meets the needs of the area and promotes a diverse range of quality employment opportunities and provides substantial benefit to local communities.
SO17: To maximise accessibility for all to the necessary education, skills, training and knowledge to play a full role in society, support the local economy and protect and enhance the special qualities of the AONB.
SO18: To encourage the use of renewable energy appropriate to the special qualities of the AONB, increase energy efficiency and security and reduce fuel poverty.
SO19: To protect and enhance the relationship between the AONB, the surrounding countryside and strategic towns on the edge of the AONB.

**Stage B: Assessment of effects**

- 1.13 Using the SA Objectives as a framework, an initial appraisal was made of the sustainability effects of the emerging strategic policies to be included within the

strategic chapters of the draft Management Plan. Then once the draft Management Plan had been prepared a detailed appraisal was undertaken using the SA Objectives as a framework, and taking into account earlier findings from the SA Commentaries and the baseline information gathered during SA Scoping. The appraisal concludes as to the likely significant effects of the plan on the environment and on wider sustainability objectives, including secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long term, permanent and temporary effects, and whether these effects are positive or negative in line with the SEA Regulations. Table 2 details the scoring system used for the appraisal.

**Table 2: Key to symbols used in the appraisal**

<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
<b>++</b>	Significant positive effect on sustainability objective (normally direct)
<b>+</b>	Minor positive effect on sustainability objective
<b>0</b>	Neutral effect on sustainability objective
<b>-</b>	Minor negative effect on sustainability objective
<b>--</b>	Significant negative effect on sustainability objective (normally direct)
<b>/</b>	Policy has more than one score e.g. +/- policy could both support and conflict with the SA objective in a minor way.
<b>?</b>	Uncertain effect on sustainability objective

### **Stage C: SA Report Preparation**

- 1.14 The SA Report documents the SA methodology; the reasons for choosing the policies and approach within the Management Plan; the influence of the SA; an appraisal of the Management Plan, taking into account available mitigation; and LUC's suggestions for monitoring significant and uncertain effects.
- 1.15 The statutory consultation bodies designated in the SEA Regulations (the Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage) were consulted on the SA Scoping Report together with other stakeholders that the Cornwall AONB Partnership felt appropriate. The comments arising from the consultation on the Scoping Report were reviewed and taken into consideration in preparation of the SA Report.
- 1.16 The SA Report will be published for public consultation alongside the draft Management Plan up to 30 September 2010. Consultation comments on the draft Management Plan and SA Report will be taken into consideration in the Cornwall AONB Partnership's development of the final Management Plan and in an updated version of or an addendum to the SA Report (see above).

### **Stage E: Monitoring and implementation of the plan**

- 1.17 The purpose of monitoring is to measure the environmental effects of the plan, to measure success against the plan's objectives, to identify any unforeseen adverse effects and to enable appropriate remedial action to be taken. The monitoring of the plan will be the responsibility of the Cornwall AONB Partnership.

## **Appraisal of alternatives**

- 1.18 The SEA Directive requires the assessment of 'Reasonable Alternatives', alongside the proposed plan or programme.
- 1.19 The key stages in the plan preparation when alternatives were addressed include:
- Production of scoping report
  - Engagement with stakeholders and local people
- 1.20 To inform the strategic elements of the plan, 13 papers were produced which detailed forces for change, likely future trends, policy background, future opportunities, objectives and questions to aid policy development. Subsequently the AONB Unit held 13 workshops involving 154 members, professional officers and local businesses, between September and December 2009. These discussed policy and action in relation to the strategic theme for the management plan. A series of questions were raised at these workshops and the alternatives were addressed in the context of these discussions. Alternatives were discussed in relation to: farming, food and forestry; biodiversity; climate change; communities and economy; heritage; landscape and seascape; rivers, coast and marine; planning and development; sustainable tourism; and transport and access.

## **APRAISAL FINDINGS**

### **Climate change adaptation and mitigation**

- 1.21 In relation to climate change adaptation and mitigation, the SA appraised the sustainability performance of the AONB Management Plan against:
- Objective 1:** To reduce our contribution to climate change through a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions; to increase resilience to climate change, and reduce vulnerability.
- 1.22 Set against this appraisal were numerous international, national, regional and local policies which provided a framework of targets and goals. These include: the Kyoto Protocol; the Renewable Energy Directive; the Climate Change Act 2008; the UK Low Carbon Transition Plan; and the Draft South West Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS).
- 1.23 The Management Plan scored '+' against this objective in relation to 'likely significant effects of implementing the AONB Management Plan as a whole, taking into account mitigation'. The justification for this score was based on policies within the Management Plan which seek to: promote energy efficiency measures; increase installation of renewable energy technologies will contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions; ensure adaptation of the AONB landscape to mitigate the effects of climate change, including in coastal areas; and to increase provision of local facilities to reduce the need to travel, which contributes towards climate change mitigation.
- 1.24 In relation to this objective, the SA Report recommends that the policy on green infrastructure is expanded to include the various climate adaptation functions of green infrastructure, including climate cooling, flood management, water filtration,

and climate mitigation functions, such as reducing the need to travel, provision of sustainable transport routes and food production.

### **Waste and recycling**

- I.25 In relation to waste and recycling, the SA appraised the sustainability performance of the AONB Management Plan against:
- Objective 2:** To minimise the generation of waste and encourage greater re-use and recycling of materials in accordance with the waste hierarchy.
- I.26 Set against this appraisal were numerous international, national, regional and local policies which provided a framework of targets and goals. These include: PPS10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management; and the South West RSS.
- I.27 The Management Plan scored '0' against this objective in relation to 'likely significant effects of implementing the AONB Management Plan as a whole, taking into account mitigation'. The justification for this score was that waste management and recycling are not addressed by Management Plan policies.
- I.28 In relation to this objective, the SA Report recommends that the Management Plan could provide explicit support for waste minimisation and increased recycling by tourists.

### **Minerals**

- I.29 In relation to minerals, the SA appraised the sustainability performance of the AONB Management Plan against:
- Objective 3:** To minimise the consumption of mineral resources and ensure the sustainable management of these resources. To conserve, enhance and restore the condition of geodiversity in the AONB.
- I.30 Set against this appraisal were numerous international, national, regional and local policies which provided a framework of targets and goals. These include: MPS1: Planning and Minerals and the South West RSS.
- I.31 The Management Plan scored '+' against this objective in relation to 'likely significant effects of implementing the AONB Management Plan as a whole, taking into account mitigation'. The justification for this score was that the Management Plan policies provide generic protection to its natural beauty from all forms of development, including mineral extraction, with policies for the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity give more weight to the former.
- I.32 In relation to this objective, the SA Report recommends that more equal weighting is given to biodiversity and geodiversity objectives within policy wording, and that a new policy is added promoting the re-use and recycling of building materials to reduce demand for minerals extraction and its potential adverse impact on natural beauty.

### **Land use and soil quality**

- I.33 In relation to land use and soil quality, the SA appraised the sustainability performance of the AONB Management Plan against:

**Objective 4:** To minimise the use of undeveloped land and protect soil quality.

- I.34 Set against this appraisal were numerous international, national, regional and local policies which provided a framework of targets and goals. These include: Draft PPS 'Planning for a Natural and Healthy Environment'; PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas; PS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation; the Soil Strategy for England; and the Draft South West RSS.
- I.35 The Management Plan scored '+/?' against this objective in relation to 'likely significant effects of implementing the AONB Management Plan as a whole, taking into account mitigation'. The justification for this score was that there are a number of policies which protect areas of the AONB from inappropriate use or excessive use, whilst the green infrastructure policy will enable creation of alternative areas for recreation. It was also noted that policies to reduce soil erosion, encourage soil-efficient farming methods, reduce run-off and encourage integrated management of soil and water will support this objective.
- I.36 In relation to this objective, the SA Report recommends that a policy is developed which promotes the remediation of contaminated land through appropriate management, including bioremediation, and during redevelopment of sites.

#### **Transport, access and air**

- I.37 In relation to transport, access and air, the SA appraised the sustainability performance of the AONB Management Plan against:

**Objective 5:** To improve access to key services, facilities and the countryside by reducing the need to travel and by providing safe sustainable travel choices, including green transport infrastructure. To reduce traffic congestion, especially seasonal congestion, and to minimise transport related greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution.
- I.38 Set against this appraisal were numerous international, national, regional and local policies which provided a framework of targets and goals. These include: the Air Quality Framework Directive; PPS23: Planning and Pollution Control; and the Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- I.39 The Management Plan scored '+' against this objective in relation to 'likely significant effects of implementing the AONB Management Plan as a whole, taking into account mitigation'. The justification for this score was that the Management Plan includes the provision of improved sustainable transport options, as well as plans to join up settlements with sustainable transport routes such as cycle paths, and maintaining existing rights of way.
- I.40 In relation to this objective, the SA Report recommends that there is specific reference to increasing the frequency of public transport during high season, as this will be necessary to encourage more people to switch from car to public transport options.

#### **Water**

- I.41 In relation to water, the SA appraised the sustainability performance of the AONB Management Plan against:

**Objective 6:** To reduce and manage the risk of flooding and reduce vulnerability to flooding, sea level rise and coastal erosion. To maintain and enhance water quality and reduce consumption and increase efficiency of water use.

**Objective 9:** To encourage clean, healthy, productive and diverse waters. To protect coastal areas and ensure sustainable maritime environments.

- 1.42 Set against this appraisal were numerous international, national, regional and local policies which provided a framework of targets and goals. These include: the Water Environment Regulations 2003; the European Bathing Water Directive; PPS23: Planning and Pollution Control; PPS25: Development and Flood risk; and the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.
- 1.43 The Management Plan scored ‘+/?’ and ‘+/?’ respectively against these objectives in relation to ‘likely significant effects of implementing the AONB Management Plan as a whole, taking into account mitigation’. The justification for these scores was that the Management Plan positively addresses flooding and coastal issues through policies that aim to: inform adaptation to climate change-related tidal flood risk; ensure an integrated approach to coastal pressures, including support for managed realignment; support restoration of natural river channel form; and manage woodlands and hedges to slow water run-off. The Management Plan also addresses water resources and water quality issues through support for: land management approaches that deliver water resource benefits; community-led sustainability initiatives; improved understanding of terrestrial water management; identification of priority catchments for piloting integrated soil and water management methods and farming methods that reduce diffuse pollution.
- 1.44 In relation to this objective, the SA Report recommends that the policy goals related to green infrastructure (GI) are expanded to reflect the potential for a GI network to deliver additional benefits relating to this SA objective, such as reducing surface runoff and improving water quality by the inclusion of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).

### **Biodiversity**

- 1.45 In relation to biodiversity, the SA appraised the sustainability performance of the AONB Management Plan against:
- Objective 7:** To conserve, enhance and restore the condition, extent and interconnectivity of biodiversity in the AONB, and allow its adaptation to climate change.
- 1.46 Set against this appraisal were numerous international, national, regional and local policies which provided a framework of targets and goals. These include: the Habitats Directive; the Birds Directive; The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981); PPS9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation; and the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP).
- 1.47 The Management Plan scored ‘+’ against this objective in relation to ‘likely significant effects of implementing the AONB Management Plan as a whole, taking into account mitigation’. The justification for this score was that the Management Plan addresses the need to allow habitats to adapt to climate change, and to support species

migration through the landscape, and recognises the need to deliver biodiversity through development.

- 1.48 In relation to this objective, the SA Report makes the following recommendations: the policy on determining true economic value of the AONB landscape should also promote the economic benefits of biodiversity; the need to conserve brownfield biodiversity as well as more established habitats should be stated; the importance of reducing the effects of air pollution around roads on sensitive habitats and species should be addressed; and that the policy promoting green infrastructure and the use of the AONB for health benefits should have regard to the sensitivity of some habitats to recreational pressure, linking with other policies which address the management of recreational features.

### **Landscape and setting**

- 1.49 In relation to landscape and setting, the SA appraised the sustainability performance of the AONB Management Plan against:

**Objective 8:** To protect and enhance the quality of the natural, historic and cultural landscape, including local distinctiveness, and seascape, and promote its positive contribution to the AONB's present and future wellbeing.

**Objective 19:** To protect and enhance the relationship between the AONB, the surrounding countryside and strategic towns on the edge of the AONB.

- 1.50 Set against this appraisal were numerous international, national, regional and local policies which provided a framework of targets and goals. These include: the European Landscape Convention; the UN World Heritage Convention; PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development; PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas; and the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape Management Plan.
- 1.51 The Management Plan scored '++' and '+' respectively against these objectives in relation to 'likely significant effects of implementing the AONB Management Plan as a whole, taking into account mitigation'. The justification for these scores was that a significant proportion of the Management Plan policies seek to conserve or enhance the AONB landscape, resulting in an overall significant positive effect on this objective, with policies likely to have the greatest positive impact being those that: support forms of agriculture and forestry that enhance the landscape; support landscape scale biodiversity projects; regulate acceptable forms of renewable energy and energy efficiency development; embed landscape issues within the Local Development Framework/development management process, including tourism development; and improve the evidence base through Landscape Character Assessment and condition monitoring.

### **Historic environment**

- 1.52 In relation to historic environment, the SA appraised the sustainability performance of the AONB Management Plan against:

**Objective 10:** To protect and enhance the quality and local distinctiveness of the historic environment, reinforcing and celebrating the distinctive character and culture of the AONB.

- I.53 Set against this appraisal were numerous international, national, regional and local policies which provided a framework of targets and goals. These include: the UN World Heritage Convention; PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment; and the Cornwall and West Devon Mining Landscape Management Plan.
- I.54 The Management Plan scored ‘++’ against this objective in relation to ‘likely significant effects of implementing the AONB Management Plan as a whole, taking into account mitigation’. The justification for this score was that the historic environment is an integral component of the AONB’s cultural landscape and will be conserved and enhanced through policies which aim to protect local distinctiveness from the potential effects of inappropriate development; improve recording of, access to and understanding of historic assets; extend appropriate management to non-designated historic assets and increase the number that are designated; encourage appropriate design of highways and associated infrastructure; embed historic environment issues within the Local Development Framework/development management process, and improve the evidence base through a character led approach to management.

### **High quality design and local distinctiveness**

- I.55 In relation to high quality design and local distinctiveness, the SA appraised the sustainability performance of the AONB Management Plan against:
- Objective 11:** To promote and achieve high quality design in development, sustainable land use and sustainable built development, maintaining local distinctiveness and encouraging quality of life.
- I.56 Set against this appraisal were numerous international, national, regional and local policies which provided a framework of targets and goals. These include: the Code for Sustainable Homes; PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development; PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth; and PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment.
- I.57 The Management Plan scored ‘++’ against this objective in relation to ‘likely significant effects of implementing the AONB Management Plan as a whole, taking into account mitigation’. The justification for this score was that policies within the Management Plan address the need for sensitivity to the purposes of AONB designation, and character of the landscape and settlements.
- I.58 In relation to this objective, the SA Report recommends that reference is made to a local design guide, if available, and that the GI policy should refer to the function of GI in creating the setting for and enhancing the character of new development.

### **Social inclusion, education and reducing anti-social behaviour**

- I.59 In relation to social inclusion, education and reducing anti-social behaviour, the SA appraised the sustainability performance of the AONB Management Plan against:
- Objective 12:** To reduce poverty, social exclusion and fragmentation, and provide opportunities for all to participate fully in society, decision making and the development of sustainable communities.
- Objective 13:** To reduce crime, anti-social behaviour, and fear of crime.

**Objective 17:** To maximise accessibility for all to the necessary education, skills, training and knowledge to play a full role in society, support the local economy and protect and enhance the special qualities of the AONB.

- 1.60 Set against this appraisal were numerous international, national, regional and local policies which provided a framework of targets and goals. These include: PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development; the Housing Green Paper; PPS3: Housing; PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth; the Sustainable Communities Plan; and An Action Plan for Community Empowerment: Building on Success (CLG 2007).
- 1.61 The Management Plan scored '+', '0' and '0' respectively against these objectives in relation to 'likely significant effects of implementing the AONB Management Plan as a whole, taking into account mitigation'. The justification for the first score was the positive inclusion of policies which seek to reduce social exclusion by promoting local decision making. A '0' was given against Objectives 13 and 17 as there are no policies within the Management Plan which directly address the reduction of crime or anti-social behaviour, or that promote enhancing the skills base to reflect modern industries.
- 1.62 In relation to this objective, the SA Report recommends that the Management Plan could actively promote the training and skills enhancement of young people and less skilled AONB residents, to encourage appropriate rural industries and the low carbon economy.

### **Housing**

- 1.63 In relation to housing, the SA appraised the sustainability performance of the AONB Management Plan against:
- Objective 14:** To meet the needs of the local community as a whole in terms of general market, affordable, adaptable and decent housing.
- 1.64 Set against this appraisal were numerous international, national, regional and local policies which provided a framework of targets and goals. These include: PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development; PPS3: Housing; PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas; and the Code for Sustainable Homes.
- 1.65 The Management Plan scored '+/-' against this objective in relation to 'likely significant effects of implementing the AONB Management Plan as a whole, taking into account mitigation'. The justification for this score was that whilst policy explicitly supports the objective of meeting local, affordable housing need; policy requiring affordable housing and other necessary development to respect the landscape, historic environment and distinctive building materials of the AONB may restrict housing supply by reducing the number of potential development sites and increasing the cost of provision with negative effects on this objective.

### **Healthy lifestyles and recreation**

- 1.66 In relation to healthy lifestyles and recreation, the SA appraised the sustainability performance of the AONB Management Plan against:
- Objective 15:** To improve health through the promotion of healthier lifestyles, improving access to open space and health, recreation and sports facilities.

- 1.67 Set against this appraisal were numerous international, national, regional and local policies which provided a framework of targets and goals. These include: PPG13: Transport; PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation; and the Consultation Draft PPS: 'Planning for a Natural and Healthy Environment.
- 1.68 The Management Plan scored '+' against this objective in relation to 'likely significant effects of implementing the AONB Management Plan as a whole, taking into account mitigation'. The justification for this score was that the Management Plan includes policies which encourage healthy recreational activity within the AONB, and those which promote local provision of services based on community ownership.
- 1.69 In relation to this objective, the SA Report makes the following recommendations: the green infrastructure policy should highlight the health benefits of green infrastructure; the community and economy policy which encourages communities to be self-sustaining in food production could refer more explicitly to how this might happen, e.g. local community food schemes and encouraging people to grow their own, as a contribution to improving diets and related health issues; and the plan could go further in promoting recreation and physical activity amongst residents, for example through working with local schools and community groups.

### **Low carbon economy**

- 1.70 In relation to low carbon economy, the SA appraised the sustainability performance of the AONB Management Plan against:
- Objective 16:** To support a balanced, low carbon economy that meets the needs of the area and promotes a diverse range of quality employment opportunities and provides substantial benefits to local communities.
- 1.71 Set against this appraisal were numerous international, national, regional and local policies which provided a framework of targets and goals. These include: the Climate Change Act 2008; the UK Low Carbon Transition Plan; PPS1: Delivering Sustainable Development; PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth; and National guidance on tourism
- 1.72 The Management Plan scored '+' against this objective in relation to 'likely significant effects of implementing the AONB Management Plan as a whole, taking into account mitigation'. The justification for this score was the Management Plan positively addresses the sensitivity of the AONB landscape; as well as the need to support rural and low carbon industries.
- 1.73 In relation to this objective, the SA Report recommends that direct reference should be made to the need to train local residents to provide skills to support rural and low carbon industries.

### **Energy**

- 1.74 In relation to energy, the SA appraised the sustainability performance of the AONB Management Plan against:
- Objective 18:** To encourage the use of renewable energy appropriate to the special qualities of the AONB, increase energy efficiency and security and reduce fuel poverty.

- 1.75 Set against this appraisal were numerous international, national, regional and local policies which provided a framework of targets and goals. These include: the EU Renewable Energy Directive; the UK Low Carbon Transition Plan; the Climate Change Supplement to PPS1; PPS22: Renewable Energy; and the Code for Sustainable Homes.
- 1.76 The Management Plan scored '+/-' against this objective in relation to 'likely significant effects of implementing the AONB Management Plan as a whole, taking into account mitigation'. The justification for this score was that whilst positive support is provided for small scale renewable technologies and for energy efficiency measures in the AONB's buildings, the requirement for both of these to respect the AONB's landscape character and the lack of active support for larger scale renewable facilities are likely to have negative effects on this objective.
- 1.77 In relation to this objective, the SA Report recommends the development of guidelines on the types of renewable energy technology likely to be appropriate within the AONB, both in terms of resource opportunities (e.g. areas with adequate wind speeds for win turbines) and environmental constraints (e.g. technologies likely to have a significant adverse impact on the statutory purpose of the AONB and/or its distinctive features).

### DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED DURING THE APPRAISAL

- 1.78 There were no significant technical difficulties encountered during the preparation of this SA of the Management Plan. Certain data issues did arise during the course of the SA, notably: a lack of data to underpin predictions of the likely future baseline without the Management Plan; the fact that the boundaries of the AONB do not follow local authority, ward or super output area administrative boundaries meaning that a number of the data sets normally available for the SA of local authority spatial plans did not exist; and that the actual impacts of policies will depend very much upon how they are applied in specific locations.
- 1.79 Inevitably assumptions have had to be made during the appraisal work and in identifying the likely significant effects of the Management Plan. The need to make a range of assumptions is an inherent challenge in undertaking SA and where possible these assumptions have been identified in the descriptions of Assessments of the Management Plan against each of the SA objectives.

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 1.80 **Table 3** summarises the performance of the AONB Management Plan against the framework of sustainability objectives. Shaded cells indicate significant or uncertain (and therefore potentially significant) effects.

**Table 3: Summary of SA scores**

	SA objective	SA score
1	To reduce our contribution to <b>climate change</b> through a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. To increase resilience to climate change, and reduce vulnerability.	+
2	To minimise the generation of <b>waste</b> and encourage greater re-use	0

	SA objective	SA score
	and recycling of materials in accordance with the waste hierarchy.	
3	To minimise the consumption of <b>mineral resources</b> and ensure the sustainable management of these resources. To conserve, enhance and restore the condition of <b>geodiversity</b> in the AONB.	+
4	To minimise the use of undeveloped land and protect and enhance <b>soil</b> quality.	+/?
5	To improve access to key services, facilities and the countryside by reducing the need to travel and by providing safe <b>sustainable travel</b> choices, including green transport infrastructure. To reduce traffic congestion, especially seasonal congestion and minimise transport related greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution	+
6	To reduce and manage the risk of <b>flooding</b> and reduce vulnerability to flooding, sea level rise and <b>coastal erosion</b> . To maintain and enhance <b>water quality</b> and reduce consumption and increase efficiency of <b>water use</b> .	++/?
7	To conserve, enhance and restore the condition and extent and interconnectivity of <b>biodiversity</b> in the AONB and allow its adaptation to climate change.	+
8	To protect and enhance the quality of the natural, historic and cultural <b>landscape</b> , including local distinctiveness, and seascape, and promote its positive contribution to the AONB's present and future wellbeing.	++
9	To encourage clean, healthy, productive and diverse waters. To protect coastal areas and ensure <b>sustainable maritime environments</b> .	+/?
10	To protect and enhance the quality and local distinctiveness of the <b>historic environment</b> , reinforcing and celebrating the distinctive character and culture of the AONB.	++
11	To promote and achieve <b>high quality design</b> in development, sustainable land use and sustainable built development, maintaining local distinctiveness and encouraging a good quality of life.	++
12	To reduce poverty, social exclusion and fragmentation and provide opportunities for all to participate fully in society, decision making and the development of <b>sustainable communities</b> .	+
13	To reduce <b>crime</b> , anti-social behaviour and fear of crime.	0
14	To meet the needs of the local community as a whole in terms of general market, affordable, adaptable and decent <b>housing</b> .	+/-
15	To improve <b>health</b> through the promotion of healthier lifestyles and improving access to open space and health, recreation and sports facilities.	+
16	To support a balanced and <b>low carbon economy</b> that meets the needs of the area and promotes a diverse range of quality employment opportunities and provides substantial benefit to local communities.	+
17	To maximise accessibility for all to the necessary <b>education, skills, training and knowledge</b> to play a full role in society, support the local economy and protect and enhance the special qualities of the AONB.	0
18	To encourage the use of <b>renewable energy</b> appropriate to the special qualities of the AONB, increase <b>energy efficiency</b> and	+/-

	SA objective	SA score
	security and reduce fuel poverty.	
19	To protect and enhance the relationship between the AONB, the <b>surrounding countryside</b> and strategic <b>towns</b> on the edge of the AONB.	+

1.81 Unsurprisingly for a plan intended to conserve and enhance the natural environment, the Management Plan was found to have broadly positive sustainability effects. In addition, no significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the Management Plan were identified. Whilst positive effects were identified for almost all sustainability objectives, the areas of greatest likely positive impact resulted from the following policies:

- SO4 To minimise the use of undeveloped land and protect soil quality
- SO6 Flooding, coastal erosion, water resources and water quality
- SO8 Landscape
- SO10 Historic environment
- SO11 High quality design

1.82 Tensions between policies and sustainability objectives have also been identified:

- Policies and SA objectives designed to conserve and enhance the natural environment may conflict with SO14 Housing and SO16 Low carbon economy, and their development implications.
- Policies seeking to promote tourism and outdoor recreation visits to the AONB risk adverse impacts on SO5 Sustainable travel (increased car journeys and associated road congestion, disturbance and air pollution), SO7 Biodiversity (species sensitive to disturbance; habitat damage), and SO8 Landscape (physical damage; loss of tranquillity).
- Whilst policy supports small scale renewable technologies which respect the AONB's landscape and biodiversity, it also restricts the development of larger scale facilities with potential negative impacts on SO1 Climate change mitigation and SO18 Renewable energy. Restrictions on the growth of biofuel crops may also have negative effects on this objective.
- Coastal management policy favours managed realignment which although likely to be the most efficient and effective way of managing coastal erosion over the long term will also mean that some areas of coastal land are abandoned to the sea, with potential loss of agricultural land (SO4 adverse); wildlife habitat (SO7 adverse), historic features (SO10 adverse) and community/housing (SO12 adverse) facilities.