

**NORTH WESSEX DOWNS AONB
DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN CONSULTATION: FEEDBACK FORM**

ABOUT YOU

Supplying these details is optional but will enable us to correspond with you about the work of the North Wessex Downs AONB Partnership. Your details will be stored securely, not shared and details of how we manage your details can be found in our Privacy Policy at: www.northwessexdowns.org.uk.

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Name | Michelle Wells |
| Organisation (if applicable) | South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils |
| Email address | Michelle.wells@southandvale.gov.uk |

Please tick the box which best describes you/your organisation:

| | | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Parish / Town Council | <input type="checkbox"/> | Community partnership | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Local Authority | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Local interest group | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Statutory Agency | <input type="checkbox"/> | Non-Government Organisation | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Local Business | <input type="checkbox"/> | Landowner / farmer | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Local Resident | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (Details Below: | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | | |

YOUR THOUGHTS ON THE PLAN

OUR VISION

To what extent do you agree with the vision?

| | | | | |
|----------------|-------|----------|-------------------|------------|
| Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
| | X | | | |

Do you have any comments or suggested amendments?

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION AND VISION

Do you have any comments or suggested amendments?

None

CHAPTER 2. LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Do you have any comments or suggested amendments?

None

CHAPTER 3. THEME 1 : THE LANDSCAPE

Do you have any comments or suggested amendments?

None

CHAPTER 4. THEME 2 : RURAL LAND MANAGEMENT

Do you have any comments or suggested amendments?

Chapter and Page ref: Ch 4, p. 22, 4.10

Comment

The establishment of new woodland areas should be an important aspect of this management plan in appropriate circumstances.

New woodlands can act as ecological links between a variety of semi-natural habitats other than other woodlands. The mosaic of species rich grassland, woodlands and other semi-natural habitats is vital in the landscape to facilitate the movement of species and as components of ecological networks.

Recommendation

Consider revising the text of 4.10 to the following:

*The priority is to maintain and improve management of existing woodlands **and to plant new woodlands in appropriate areas.** Any new woodland should meet the objectives of the North Wessex Downs AONB Woodland Strategy. This values woodland designated for their nature conservation interest, and all ancient and semi-natural woodland. New woodlands can act as a buffer to protect **important semi-natural habitats** and create wildlife corridors **which***

in turn may benefit natural flood management and water quality.

Chapter and Page ref: Ch 4, p.29, Generic Aims, Bullet point 4

Comment

The section on habitat corridors (roads) should be widened to include the habitat corridors associated with rights of way and national trails such as the Ridgeway which are equally if not far more important than many road verges.

Recommendation

Consider revising text to the following:

Restore and maintain a coherent network of habitat corridors through sympathetic management of, in particular, the huge ecological resource represented by road verges, public rights of way and national trails across the AONB, harnessing their potential to form links between wildlife sites and other important habitat patches.

CHAPTER 5. THEME 3 : BIODIVERSITY

Do you have any comments or suggested amendments?

Chapter and Page ref: Ch 5, p.38 4th bullet point

Comment

It is not clear what this means. How do access restrictions affect ground nesting birds? The **lack of** access restrictions is more likely to be an issue for ground nesting birds. Perhaps this point should be re-worded to be clearer.

Recommendation

Re-word bullet point to make it clear.

Chapter and Page ref: Ch 5, p.38, 5.23 Policy B 05

Comment

It is not clear that this policy relates to Biodiversity. If it does then it should be explained, if not then this policy is more appropriate to Ch 9.

Recommendation

Clarify how policy relates to biodiversity or move policy to more relevant chapter.

Chapter and Page ref: Ch 5, p.38&39, 5.23 Policies

Comment

One of the specific aims identified in chapter 4 on p.29 was the potential of road verges as an ecological resource (see above comment) but this is not captured in any of the policies on biodiversity.

Recommendation

Formulate a biodiversity policy on road verges (and RoW, National Trails etc)

CHAPTER 6. THEME 4 : HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

Do you have any comments or suggested amendments?

Chapter and Page ref: Ch 6, p.44, 6.22

Comment

The list of sites is not comprehensive it should either say “..*settlements, including examples such as....*” or list all important examples. Sites missing include Segsbury Camp in the Vale of White Horse and Castle Hill at Little Wittenham in South Oxfordshire.

Recommendation

Revise wording to make it clear these are only examples or, include all relevant sites.

CHAPTER 7. THEME 5 : NATURAL RESOURCES

Do you have any comments or suggested amendments?

None

CHAPTER 8. THEME 6 : DEVELOPMENT

Do you have any comments or suggested amendments?

Chapter and Page ref: Ch 8.10, p.58

Comment

We support the inclusion of this statement.

Chapter and Page ref: Ch 8.39, p.64

Comment

The term ‘Development Policies’ is the same as policies used in planning, whilst the ‘policies’ would be material considerations in planning terms they would not carry the same weight as a Local Plan policy.

Recommendation

Consider re-wording title.

Chapter and Page ref: Ch 8.13, p.59

Comment

It is recognised that new development brings increased value (as described) and if appropriate infrastructure can be secured, however the financial contributions will not actually:

- 'highlight the increase in value for new houses being located in the area,'
- Nor
- 'reflect the likely lower numbers of new houses due to local constraints and more expensive supply of key services to more dispersed rural areas'

Therefore, we advise that the wording of 8.13 is revised and the above bullet points are deleted.

Recommendation

Suggest re-wording as follows:

8.13 Where there is identifiable harm to the AONB we will seek financial contributions from new development through Section 106 for mitigation. We will also seek to access Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) from Local Authority partners to support identified landscape, ecological, community, green infrastructure and environmental projects.

Chapter and Page ref: 8.25, p.60

Comment

We accept this chapter but request a minor change to the wording.

Recommendation

*Only where it is necessary to meet appropriate local needs will new housing be supported. This should be within existing settlements, preferably on previously developed sites **where there are no other overriding constraints.***

CHAPTER 9. THEME 7 : COMMUNITIES

Do you have any comments or suggested amendments?

None

CHAPTER 10. THEME 8 : TOURISM, LEISURE AND ACCESS

Do you have any comments or suggested amendments?

South Oxfordshire District Councils and Vale of White Horse District Council acknowledge that there is a need to enhance our offer in promoting tourism and leisure opportunities in the North Wessex Downs AONB. Within the current arrangements there are no active promotion or economic initiatives, the reason for this is that visitor economy is not currently a corporate priority for our Councils, so for the life of the corporate plan, promotion has been reduced to a static signposting website: <http://www.southandvale.gov.uk/tourism/> We recognise that our future proposal could be enhanced.

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

We will be particularly interested to learn your views on how you, your community, your organisation, your business or any groups with which you are involved (public authorities, commercial organisations, NGOs, etc) could contribute to achieving any of the Strategic Objectives and or AONB Policies set out in the Plan. This would help us to build up the ‘Stakeholder Engagement’ chapter to be added to the next draft of the plan:

South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council supports a renewed approach to partnership working as set out in the Management Plan. It is clear that the aspirations & ambitions detailed in the management plan will require a different level of partnership working to ensure cohesion & that outcomes are delivered. Additionally, it would be helpful to understand your prioritisation of objectives to target our influence as effectively as possible.

Given the scale & ambition of the Management Plan it is unclear how will you ensure success & measure delivery of outcomes. Monitoring is a challenge for the Natural Environment sector experienced nationally, data is in short supply and evaluating success is difficult, often benefits may not be realized for considerable lengths of time but further information on this in the next draft would be useful.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Do you have any more general comments or suggested amendments?

How to submit this form

Please save this document into your own files for reference, then email to info@northwessexdowns.org.uk by 5pm on Friday 16th November 2018. Alternatively, you can post or drop it in to:

North Wessex Downs AONB, Units 3-4, Denford Manor, Lower Denford, RG17 0UN

If you would like to receive updates from us relating to the management plan, please let us know below, and ensure that your contact details (including email address) are given on the first page.

Yes, I would like to receive updates on the AONB Management Plan: YES NO

Thank you for taking part