

**SUMMARY OF CHANGES TO THE COTSWOLDS AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN 2018-2023 SINCE THE CONSULTATIONS IN JULY – AUGUST 2017, FEBRUARY-MARCH 2018 AND JULY-AUGUST 2018.**

The Cotswolds Conservation Board adopted the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan 2018-2023 on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2018, following extensive consultation. This document summarises the most significant changes that have been made to the Management Plan in order to address the issues and suggestions raised in consultation responses.

The Management Plan has been subject to three periods of consultation. The first consultation, which took place in summer 2017, targeted the fifteen local authorities, the three statutory environmental bodies (Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency) and the Forestry Commission. The second consultation, which took place in February-March 2018, was opened to a wider range of consultees, including parish councils, business organisations, environmental organisations and other stakeholders. The third, final draft, consultation took place in July-August 2018 and targeted the local authorities and statutory environmental bodies. This third consultation was primarily focussed on the draft Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report and draft Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report, which accompanied the draft plan.

The changes that have been made to the Management Plan are summarised in Annex 1.

## **ANNEX 1. CHANGES TO THE COTSWOLDS AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN 2018-2023 SINCE FEBRUARY 2018**

### **OVER-ARCHING FORMAT AND CONTENT**

**Executive Summary:** The Management Plan now includes an Executive Summary. As well as being part of the main Management Plan document, the Executive Summary is also being made available as a stand-alone document.

**Clarity:** It was identified, during consultations, that the Management Plan should provide greater clarification on the following points: WHAT is the Plan? WHY is it necessary? WHO will execute it? By WHEN? HOW will it be resourced, administered and measured? These points are now explicitly addressed in Chapter 1 (Introduction) and in the Executive Summary.

**Format:** The Management Plan now has a clearer and more logical format than earlier drafts as a result of separating sections of the Management Plan into chapters that have a clear sequential flow.

**Wording of policies:** The wording of all the policies has now been made more consistent, in particular, through the use of modal verbs (must / will / should):

- **'must'** is now used where the relevant stakeholder has a statutory requirement to implement the policy;
- **'will'** is now used where the Board is the stakeholder with primary responsibility for applying and / or delivering the policy (this has had the added benefit of removing inconsistent reference to the Board in the policies);
- **'should'** is now used where a stakeholder other than the Board has primary responsibility for applying and / or delivering the policy.

**Number - and duplication - of policies and key issues:** The number of policies has been reduced from 59 to 24. This has been made possible by: (i) identifying areas of duplication and identifying the most appropriate theme to place it in; and (ii) grouping several policies into one over-arching, themed policy with numbered paragraphs. The number of key issues has been reduced to just three. These key issues are addressed in Chapter 4 of the Management Plan, alongside the four 'ambitions'. Much of the text previously used to describe the key issues has now been incorporated into the supporting text for the policies in Chapter 6.

**Delivery:** The Management Plan now include a chapter which explains how the Management Plan will be delivered by the Conservation Board and other stakeholders (Chapter 7). In addition, Appendix 7 sets out priority actions for relevant stakeholders.

**Appendices:** Appendices have been added to the Management Plan to provide additional supporting information.

### **SPECIFIC TOPICS**

**National Park designation:** Since the Glover Review of protected landscapes<sup>1</sup> was launched in May 2018, the Conservation Board now takes the view that it should promote the case for the Cotswolds to be designated as a National Park. The Board will publish a

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/national-parks-review-launched>

Position Statement on this topic in the near future. This position is reflected in Ambition 4 and Policy CC1 of the Management Plan.

**The ‘duty of regard’ (Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CRoW) Act 2000):** The wording of Policy CC2 has been amended so that it doesn’t directly duplicate the relevant legislation. In addition, an appendix (Appendix 4) has been added to provide further clarity on the requirements of the ‘duty of regard’, based on guidance published by Natural England and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). Additional text and a footnote have been added to Appendix 4 to say that reporting and monitoring requirements and agreed protocols will be developed in partnership between the Board and the relevant authorities.

**Local Distinctiveness / Supply of building stone:** The Management Plan now includes a policy specifically about Local Distinctiveness (Policy CE3). One of the issues that this policy addresses is the need to maintain supplies of building stone to ensure that the distinctive architecture and unifying character of the Cotswolds can be maintained through existing and new buildings.

**Dark Skies / Tranquillity:** The Management Plan now includes a policy specifically about Dark Skies (Policy CE5) and a related policy specifically about Tranquillity (Policy CE4).

**Green Infrastructure:** Reference to green infrastructure has been added to Policy CE7 and to the supporting text for Policy UE3.

**Development and Transport:** Policy CE12 has been amended to bring it in line with the requirements of the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and a footnote has also been added to clarify the circumstances in which the policy should apply.

**A417 missing link:** The A417 Missing Link project now features prominently in Policy CE11 (Major Development) of the Management Plan.

**Sustainable Tourism / Access & Recreation:** Sustainable Tourism and Access & Recreation are now addressed separately in Policy UE1 and Policy UE2, respectively. Additional supporting text has been provided for Policy UE2 to address the strategic nature of recreational pressure from new development outside of the AONB impacting on the AONB.

**Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) issues:** The SEA Environmental Report identified that the Management Plan would have no adverse effects on the SEA Environmental Objectives and that there is no need to consider measures to increase the beneficial effects. However, it did identify that opportunities exist to do so, particularly in relation to climate change, water quality and air quality. The Environment Agency identified flood risk as an additional, SEA-related topic that merited additional coverage in the Management Plan. To address these issues, the following changes have been made:

- **Climate change:** Policies CC7 and CC8 have been amended to include additional statements regarding development and rural land management. Additional information on climate change has been added to the supporting text for Policies CC5, CC6, CE6, CE7, CE8 and extra examples added to the footnotes for Policies CC7 and CC8. The Management Plan is now more closely aligned to the Climate Change Strategy for the Cotswolds AONB, published by the Board in 2012.
- **Water quality:** Additional information on water quality has been added to the supporting text for Policy CC6.

- **Air quality:** Text relating to the two Air Quality Management Areas in the AONB, at Chipping Norton and the Air Balloon junction roundabout, has been added in Chapter 3, and in the supporting text for Policies CC7, CE10 and CE11.
- **Flood risk:** Additional information on flooding in the AONB (and downstream) - and an explanation of natural flood management – has been added to the supporting text for Policy CC6. Reference to sustainable drainage has been added to Policy CC6.

**Fostering social and economic well-being:** The Management Plan now makes greater reference to economic and social well-being, including reference to the duty, under Section 87 of the CRoW Act 2000, for the Board to cooperate with local authorities and public bodies to foster economic and social well-being. Fostering economic and social well-being have been added to Outcomes 1 and 11 and Policies CC3 (para. 1) and CE10 (para. 1). A footnote has also been added to Appendix 3, outlining the Section 87 duty. The text relating to economic and social wellbeing in Chapter 5 has also been updated.

**Evidence / Monitoring:** Additional text in Chapter 1 and Chapter 7 highlights the role of having an up-to-date evidence base.

## **SIGNIFICANT CONCERNS RAISED BUT NO CHANGE MADE**

**Promoting the Cotswolds AONB as the Walking and Exploring Capital of England (Ambition 1 and Policy UE2 (para. 4)):** Some stakeholders questioned the inclusion of this ambition and policy. However, this ambition was developed and promoted during the Cotswolds AONB 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations in 2016 and has been supported by the Board and a number of partner organisations since then. As such, the Board considers that it is appropriate to retain this ambition and policy in the Management Plan.