



<u>Committee and Date</u> Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership  24 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	<u>Item</u>  <b>4</b>
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## SHROPSHIRE LOCAL PLAN AND PLANNING POLICY FOR THE AONB

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### Summary

This paper summarises some of the key issues raised in the AONB Partnership's response to the Shropshire draft Local Plan consultation and considers future approaches to planning policy affecting the AONB.

### Recommendation

The Partnership is recommended to note and comment on the information provided and to support the proposal not to take further at the present time the idea of a Development Plan Document (DPD) for the Shropshire Hills AONB.

### Background

#### Comments on the draft Local Plan

The AONB Partnership's comments were submitted on 9<sup>th</sup> October after a short extension was granted. Comments were made on the following policies:

**Policy DP26 Shropshire Hills AONB.** This is the first specific and distinct policy for the Shropshire Hills AONB, and is welcomed. Detailed suggestions made on improved wording.

**S5 Church Stretton Place Plan Area** Objection to allocation of CST021 Snatchfield Farm site for 70 houses.

#### **'Exceptional circumstances for major development in the AONB' supporting document**

Suggestions made to add information on consideration of alternatives etc in relation to Church Stretton sites, Clee Hill and Clun. Including the alternative of additional hubs and clusters.

Minor comments of wording on:

**SP3. Climate Change**

**SP4. Sustainable Development**

**SP5. High-Quality Design**

**SP10. Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy**

**SP11. Delivering Sustainable Economic Growth and Enterprise**

### **SP7. Managing Development in Community Hubs**

### **SP8. Managing Development in Community Clusters**

Suggestion to review the allocation of Community Hubs and Clusters in order to achieve a landscape-led approach to housing allocation for local need within the AONB.

### **SP9. Managing Development in the Countryside**

Suggestion to add material on large intensive livestock units, which have been the commonest form of major development within the AONB in the last decade. And on large scale renewable energy installations (i.e. those not directly associated with other built development, but sited in the countryside).

### **SP9 Strategic Corridors**

Consider the indirect impacts on the AONB of this policy, especially increase in road traffic on the A49.

### **DP11. Tourism, Culture and Leisure**

Detailed comments for stronger representation of sustainable tourism.

### **DP13. The Natural Environment**

Suggestion to add references to biodiversity loss and the ecological emergency being as significant as climate change, to the fact that the natural environment keeps us alive and is hugely positive to people's health and wellbeing, and to the need for development to support nature recovery. Suggestion also to make reference to how a healthy natural environment underpins both the land sector (farming and forestry) and visitor economy, and the jobs they support.

Minor comments of detail on:

### **DP14. Development in the River Clun Catchment**

### **DP17. Landscaping of New Development**

### **DP18. Landscape and Visual Amenity**

### **DP19. Pollution and Public Amenity**

### **DP20. Water Resources and Water Quality**

### **DP30. Health and Wellbeing**

### **DP 33. Managing Development and Operation of Mineral Sites**

### **S20. Strategic Settlement: Former Ironbridge Power Station**

Comments including the policy should refer to the scale of development reflecting its proximity to the AONB, as well as design and layout.

## Potential for an AONB-specific Development Plan Document (DPD)

This is not a proposal within the Local Plan, but was raised by us in a paper to the AONB Partnership meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> October 2019 (<https://shropshire.gov.uk/committee-services/documents/s23249/7.%20Proposed%20DPD.pdf>). This followed the completion in the Arnside and Silverdale AONB of the first ever AONB-specific DPD, which has been hailed as national good practice. The agreed action for us was to explore the possibility with Shropshire Council of pursuing a DPD for the Shropshire Hills AONB. Having had discussions with the Council, it is apparent that:

- The new Local Plan gives greater recognition to the AONB than previously, and embeds it across many policy areas. Drawing AONB policy out into a separate document might therefore actually be a backward step.
- The five years of considerable work by the AONB team and local planning authorities to produce a DPD for Arnside and Silverdale, a small AONB, might well be exceeded for the Shropshire Hills covering quarter of a county, and capacity does not exist on either side to do this. It is also far from certain how different the outcome would be, in terms specifically of housing allocations, though this is not the only topic.

For these reasons it is felt that, while it was worthy of consideration, the idea of a DPD for the Shropshire Hills AONB is not viable or practical. The recommendation is therefore not to take this further at the current time, but rather to continue to work with the Planning Policy teams of the two Councils in other ways to advance the cause of the AONB.

<b>List of Background Papers</b>
Full Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership response to Local Plan consultation <a href="https://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/our-work/aonb-partnership/Documents/Local%20Plan%20-%20Shropshire%20Hills%20AONB%20Partnership%20comments%209%20Oct%202020.pdf">https://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/our-work/aonb-partnership/Documents/Local%20Plan%20-%20Shropshire%20Hills%20AONB%20Partnership%20comments%209%20Oct%202020.pdf</a>
<b>Human Rights Act Appraisal</b>
The information in this report is compatible with the Human Rights Act 1998.
<b>Environmental Appraisal</b>
The recommendation in this paper will contribute to the conservation of protected landscapes.
<b>Risk Management Appraisal</b>
Risk management has been appraised as part of the considerations of this report.
<b>Community / Consultations Appraisal</b>
The topics raised in this paper have been the subject of earlier consultations with Partnership members.
<b>Appendices</b>
None