



**Sustainability Appraisal Statement
(incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment)
of the
Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Management Plan 2009 - 2014**

June 2009

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INTRODUCTION

This Statement is issued alongside the final adopted AONB Management Plan, and is to meet the requirements of para 16(4) of Statutory Instrument No. 1633 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

These requirements are for a statement to describe:

- (a) how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme;*
- (b) how the environmental report has been taken into account;*
- (c) how opinions expressed in response to -*
 - (i) the invitation referred to in regulation 13(2)(d) (consultation responses on the SEA/SA report and the Plan itself);*
 - (ii) action taken by the responsible authority in accordance with regulation 13(4) (responses where documents have been made available to the public), have been taken into account;*
- (d) how the results of any consultations entered into under regulation 14(4) have been taken into account; (transboundary consultations)*
- (e) the reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and*
- (f) the measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme.*

1. INTEGRATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

The Sustainability Appraisal Report accompanying the draft AONB Management explains that since the natural beauty of the Shropshire Hills is particularly affected by economic and social influences within and beyond the area, a decision was made to go beyond the legal minimum for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), and do a fuller Sustainability Appraisal (SA). This Statement therefore refers to a [Sustainability Appraisal Report](#), which incorporates the statutory requirements of the 'Environmental Report' described in the SEA regulations above.

The AONB Management Plan is primarily focused on environmental considerations, taking into account a wider context where this is relevant. This is best expressed in the purposes of AONB designation, as most recently outlined in Countryside Agency guidance of 2001:

- *The primary purpose of designation is to conserve and enhance natural beauty.*
- *In pursuing the primary purpose of designation, account should be taken of the needs of agriculture, forestry, and other rural industries and of the economic and social needs of local communities. Particular regard should be paid to promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development that in themselves conserve and enhance the environment.*
- *Recreation is not an objective of designation, but the demand for recreation should be met so far as this is consistent with the conservation of natural beauty and the needs of agriculture, forestry and other uses.*

The scope of the environmental SEA objectives is however wider than the primarily landscape-focused environmental remit of the AONB, and the most significant issue addressed in the SA process was the conflict between landscape protection and the ability to reduce CO2 emissions through generation of wind energy. During the Plan Review process the AONB Partnership held a [meeting](#) themed specifically to this topic, including an external speaker, and this was valuable in informing debate and working to Policies and Positions which the Partnership as a whole could endorse. Planning casework during the period also helped a thorough examination of these issues.

The SA process helped to develop the thinking that climate change is the most significant long term issue for the AONB, and although a global issue, a strategic priority of 'Shifting to Low Carbon' is justified as well as a focus on adaptation. This recognises the fact that mitigation and adaptation actions are often linked, and that the scale of the adaptation challenge will be determined by how effectively we meet the mitigation challenge.

2. HOW THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL REPORT HAS BEEN TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT

An initial sustainability appraisal screening of draft policies for the AONB Management Plan was undertaken early in the Plan review process, and likely key issues highlighted in the [SA Scoping Report](#). This, coupled with the existing strong integration of both environmental and sustainability issues within the work of the AONB Partnership, meant that **no significant changes to the published draft Management Plan were made as a result of the Sustainability Appraisal Report.**

The detailed consideration in the SA report of alternative approaches to reduce the conflicts regarding wind energy was nevertheless useful in winning support for the policy approach taken in the Management Plan, and therefore in securing its approval. The detailed wording of Policies 34 and 35 on wind energy were modified as a result of the Plan consultation and SA processes. See Appendix 1 for a list of the final Policies, highlighting changes from those in the draft Plan.

The consideration in the SA report of other topics creating potential conflicts between objectives, has been useful in developing the rationale supporting the Management Plan. These issues included: the effect on the economy of protecting the environment, possible social consequences of seeking to minimise travel, effects on affordability of housing, and the cost implications of higher standards sought. These issues are difficult and not unique to the area, and many organisations consider only a narrow proportion of the environmental, economic and social consequences of these issues. The strong processes supporting the Management Plan Review have enabled the AONB Partnership to make strong and well-argued responses based on the Management Plan e.g. to Shropshire Council's Core Strategy Issues & Options consultation. The AONB Partnership believes that the primary environmental aims of the AONB designation will be best served by close (and well informed) integration with economic and social considerations.

The table below outlines how, for the main issues highlighted in the SA report, preferred alternatives or mitigating measures have been incorporated into the Plan.

Table 1 Integration of findings of the Sustainability Appraisal

Issue of potential conflict identified in SA	Preferred alternative/ mitigating measure identified in SA	Key Policies, Objectives or Actions in Management Plan
Wind energy	Concentrate wind energy development outside protected landscapes.	Position 8, (but mainly addressed by national level policies)
	Vigorously pursue energy conservation measures to reduce demand and the levels of renewable (including wind) energy required.	Policies 28, 29, Action 19.1
	Promote and encourage renewable energy measures which are compatible with the AONB and its landscape.	Policies 31, 32 Actions 16.1, 20.1
	Optimise carbon management and sequestration opportunities.	Policy 15, Actions 16.1, 24.1
Renewable energy generally	Good information and guidance to avoid damage to biodiversity, heritage, landscape and resources.	Policies 30-16 Action 4.2
Climate Change, exacerbating pressure on land	Demonstration to show that food and energy production is compatible in the area with maintaining landscape and nature.	Policy 4, 8, 14, 24, 25, 32, 38,39 Objectives 14-16
The effect on the economy of protecting the environment	Be positive about forms of economic development which are compatible with the AONB.	Policies 5, 10, 24, 25, 27. Position 4, 5. Actions 4.4, 13.4, 18.2, 18.3, 18.6
	Demonstrate and publicise the positive economic effects of the environment.	Policies 4, 5, 8, 14, 20, 26, 32, 37, 40, 41
	Provide guidance and support to help reduce negative impacts of development.	Policies 4, 10, 13, 19,20, 22. Actions 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 3.4, 3.9, 3.10,
Possible social consequences of seeking to minimise travel	Promotion of alternatives such as improved public transport and linking recreation opportunities to public transport.	Policies 4, 10, 13, 26, 27, 37 Action 25.1, 25.2
	Supporting community capacity	Policy 24, 41, 43, Position 8. Actions 0.1, 0.2, 0.5, 7.4 Objectives 28-30
Effects on affordability of housing	Support for high priority to affordable housing	Action 21.1
	High standards of design need to be maintained	Position 7, Action 21.1
The cost implications of higher standards sought	Good guidance and early consideration	Policy 10, 13, 23, Actions 2.2, 21.1

3. CONSULTATION RESPONSES

27 written submissions of comments were made on the draft AONB Management Plan resulting from the consultation period from October to December 2008. A [summary](#) of these and the responses made is available, along with some [key points raised at six public consultation meetings](#) held, attended by around 100 people in total. The full written comments received and replies made to these can be viewed by arrangement at the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership Office, The Old Post Office, Shrewsbury Road, Craven Arms, SY7 9NZ, Tel 10588 674080.

Only one written response of comments was received on the Sustainability Appraisal Report, from the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW). This raised a potential concern that policies in the AONB Management Plan limiting wind energy development in the Shropshire Hills could increase the pressure for such development on adjacent areas in Wales. A detailed reply was sent outlining the view that the wind energy policies in the AONB Management Plan were not likely to increase the pressure for this types of development nearby in Wales. The major considerations were likely to be that Strategic Search Areas had been defined in Wales and that the adjacent land in Wales was not designated as AONB. No reply was received to this response, and a number of attempts to make contact by phone were unsuccessful. No changes to the Plan were made as a result of the comments from CCW.

4. TRANSBOUNDARY CONSULTATIONS

No transboundary consultations (between Member States) were made, though some transboundary issues with the different administration in Wales were highlighted, as described above).

5. REASONS FOR CHOOSING THE PLAN AS ADOPTED

The AONB Partnership endorsed the revised draft Plan on 10 February 2009, with a small number of minor changes. Formal observations were received from Natural England (as statutory consultee) on 4 March 2009. No changes were required from this, and the Plan was formally approved by the Implementation Executive for Shropshire Council on 19 March 2009, and by Telford and Wrekin Council on 11 May 2009.

The Plan was approved with the Policies as they are, because a wide level of support had been reached that the policies were appropriate. Some information on preferred alternatives was given in the SA Report. Some reasons for particular wording changes made to Policies since the draft stage Plan are given in Appendix 1.

6. MONITORING

The AONB Management Plan sets out a series of 'headline indicators' for monitoring the condition of the AONB's special qualities. The SA Report recommended that the following indicators should also be monitored to assess the impact of the Management Plan on other environmental factors and on economic and social objectives:

- Carbon emissions
- Indices of economic prosperity, including GVA, employment levels, etc.
- Indices of deprivation

The effectiveness of particular policies will be monitored largely through the ongoing activity of the AONB Partnership. Some Policies can be monitored in more specific ways, and further information on this is given in Appendix 1.

APPENDIX 1 FINAL POLICIES AND AONB PARTNERSHIP POSITIONS OF THE AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN, HIGHLIGHTING WORDING DIFFERENT FROM DRAFT STAGE, RATIONALE FOR CHANGES AND PROPOSED MONITORING

<p>POLICY/POSITION (Changes from draft highlighted in yellow)</p>	<p>Rationale for change</p>	<p>Proposed monitoring</p>
<p>POLICY 1. Organisations which regulate designated sites and features, environmental quality and amenity should make full use of available measures to ensure the highest standards appropriate to a nationally protected landscape are achieved in the AONB. A supportive and awareness-raising approach should be used with landowners where possible, but mechanisms for legal enforcement should also be used where necessary in more serious cases. Known 'blackspots' and problems should be addressed and tackled, but consideration given to the secondary purposes of AONBs to have regard for the needs of rural industries and local communities, and to promote sustainable development.</p>		<p>Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations</p>
<p>POLICY 2. Consideration of the purposes of designation in all decisions affecting the AONB should reflect sustainability and the full range of special qualities defined in the Management Plan as well as landscape character and visual amenity.</p>		<p>Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations</p>
<p>POLICY 3. Even with small structures not requiring planning permission, care should be taken to avoid loss of wildness. On many hills and in more secluded valleys, especially where there are few man-made objects, this will mean a preference for no structures at all. In cases where structures are essential, their location and design may need to be modified to reduce the impact on wildness.</p>		<p>Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations</p>
<p>POLICY 4. Farm diversification enterprises need to be in harmony with environment and not degrade this resource, which also provides an important economic asset for the future. The impact of business-related traffic to and from the property will be an important consideration, including cumulative effects.</p>		<p>Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organizations, planning monitoring reports</p>
<p>POLICY 5. Small scale quarrying to supply local materials for restoring traditional buildings and structures is supported, subject to careful consideration of environmental factors, including the conservation value of former quarries where these may be reopened.</p>		<p>Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations</p>
<p>POLICY 6. Opportunities created by technological advance should be sought to remove or reduce the prominence of hilltop telecommunications structures.</p>		<p>Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations</p>

POLICY/POSITION (Changes from draft highlighted in yellow)	Rationale for change	Proposed monitoring
POLICY 7. New overhead cables should be avoided where possible, with emphasis given to undergrounding or off-grid options.	Change from 'consideration' – consultee comment.	Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations
POLICY 8. Design of new agricultural buildings including location, structure and materials should be of a high standard appropriate to the AONB. Efforts should be made to improve existing buildings where these are of a poor standard.		Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organizations, planning monitoring reports
POLICY 9. Exceptionally where a significant adverse impact associated with development cannot be avoided, appropriate mitigation measures including habitat creation or community benefits, should be sought.		Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organizations, planning monitoring reports
POLICY 10. The siting, design and specification of new developments for tourism and recreation should be to high standards of environmental sensitivity and sustainability. The following guidelines are recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single developments of more than around ten accommodation units are less likely to be supported in small settlements and open countryside. • Large parks of static caravans, cabins or chalets are likely to be intrusive. Smaller sites with good landscaping are preferable, and facilities for touring caravans and camping generally have a low impact as there are fewer permanent structures. • Built facilities for recreation should only be allowed where their location and the activities they support are compatible with the special qualities of the AONB. 		Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organizations, planning monitoring reports
POLICY 11. Road improvement schemes within and outside the AONB should not increase noise pollution or emissions from traffic. Approaches such as speed management schemes may, for example, be more appropriate than road widening. Potential impacts within the AONB of proposed road improvement schemes beyond the boundary should be considered.		Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations
POLICY 12. Road management and improvement schemes in the AONB should minimise landscape impact and avoid urbanisation of rural roads, e.g. through sensitive and appropriate design and use of materials, and avoiding unnecessary signage clutter.		Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations

POLICY/POSITION (Changes from draft highlighted in yellow)	Rationale for change	Proposed monitoring
POLICY 13. The provision of any new public car parking should be in scale with the setting and capacity of roads used to reach the location. Larger car parks should generally be situated nearer to settlements or larger roads. Where informal roadside parking is improved to alleviate traffic problems on smaller roads, care should be taken to avoid adding to traffic levels. Design should be appropriate to a rural setting, e.g. stone surfacing, use of timber for edging and signs.		Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations
POLICY 14. The Shropshire Hills should remain a priority area for agri-environment funding, and farmers should be actively encouraged to utilise the options that best contribute to the AONB Management Plan's aims.		Agri-environment targeting
POLICY 15. Broadleaved woodland comprising native species should be expanded, and especially restored on Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) and Plantation on Wood Pasture (PWP).		FC statistics on woodland area
POLICY 16. Where woodland and forestry felling is taking place, opportunities should be sought to improve design and landscape sensitivity of plantations. Reversion to open habitat should be targeted to locations where landscape benefits and potential for high value habitat (e.g. heathland) are greatest.	Clarification of wording following Forestry Commission comments. Minimise loss of carbon storage through woodland removal.	Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations
POLICY 17. Any new or replacement coniferous planting should follow the highest standards of design guidelines in relation to landscape and amenity, nature and heritage conservation and resource protection.		Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations
POLICY 18. Tranquillity should be taken fully into account in both strategic and specific decisions. Proposals having a significant impact on tranquillity in the AONB should be prevented where possible.		Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations
POLICY 19. Expansion of airports or alterations to flight path corridors which increase the volume or impacts of air traffic over the AONB should not be allowed.		Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations
POLICY 20. A principle of 'quiet enjoyment' should apply, and activities which are in keeping with this encouraged. Recreation activities which are inherently noisy or intrusive should be discouraged, and where possible prevented, e.g. facilities for such activities not allowed through the planning system.		Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations

POLICY/POSITION (Changes from draft highlighted in yellow)	Rationale for change	Proposed monitoring
<p>POLICY 21. Recreational off-road use of motor vehicles should not be encouraged or promoted within the AONB. Voluntary measures and proactive work with users are recommended to minimise the impact of legal off-road use of motor vehicles on the landscape and on people's quiet enjoyment of the countryside. Where the impact on the AONB is significant however, measures including traffic regulation orders restricting legal use should be used. Illegal motorised activities should as far as possible be prevented, and proactive support given to the Police.</p>	<p>Change from 'discouraged', to reflect local authority duties as Highway Authority.</p> <p>Clarification</p>	<p>Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations</p>
<p>POLICY 22. Events in the AONB such as concerts, festivals, and challenge walks should be planned (e.g. in location, timing and scale) to minimise environmental impact, and regular events should not be allowed or encouraged to grow to a scale where problems arise. Event organisers should seek advice at the planning stages to enable this.</p>		<p>Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations</p>
<p>POLICY 23. Infrastructure associated with countryside access should be sensitively designed, and appropriate materials should be used, e.g. stone for surfacing of a type appropriate to the location, preference for wooden signposts and gates on rights of way, rural character in the specification and signage of cycle routes.</p>		<p>Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations</p>
<p>POLICY 24. Farmers and land managers should be supported as the main stewards of natural beauty, and for their vital role in maintaining the Shropshire Hills landscape. Policies and public funding relating to farming and forestry should recognise this and help to support ways of farming which generate these public environmental benefits.</p>		<p>Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations</p>
<p>POLICY 25. Environmental Stewardship priorities should support a shift back towards more mixed systems of farming especially in the uplands (e.g. by allowing a proportion of arable cropping and hay meadows). Advisory services should make better links with business approaches such as selling direct into local markets, which are also of benefit to the AONB.</p>	<p>Clarification following comments from Natural England</p>	<p>Agri-environment targeting, bilateral meetings with partner organisations</p>
<p>POLICY 26. Countryside attractions and walks should be linked where possible to settlements where services and public transport facilities exist and can be promoted, helping to maximise economic benefits, especially from day visitors.</p>		<p>Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations</p>

POLICY/POSITION (Changes from draft highlighted in yellow)	Rationale for change	Proposed monitoring
POLICY 27. Tourism activities which draw on the special qualities of the area without harming them should be especially encouraged. This may include development of access infrastructure (e.g. off road cycle routes, rights of way), use of public transport, historic and natural sites, interpretation to help aid understanding, enterprises based specifically on the special qualities of the AONB (e.g. wildlife watching, landscape painting, walking festivals) and cultural events.		Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations
POLICY 28. Lowering carbon emissions from the area is an over-riding priority, and should influence all areas of decision making. Energy conservation should be given the highest priority, and should always accompany renewable energy generation. Low carbon community initiatives are supported. In addition to carbon from energy use, the ability of land management to reduce carbon emissions should be optimised.		Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations
POLICY 29. Integration of energy efficiency and renewable energy will be encouraged in all development – new or refurbishment, and of any scale.		Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations
POLICY 30. Renewable energy developments in the AONB should generally be of a small scale appropriate to local use. Larger scale energy developments will be more suitable outside the AONB, e.g. linked to market towns where transport links are better, closer to larger scale demand, etc.		Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organizations, planning monitoring reports
POLICY 31. Small scale domestic renewable installations (e.g. solar panels) are encouraged and AONB designation should not be used as a reason against these. The design and installation of these should take account of visual amenity. Greater sensitivity may be required in Conservation Areas and on Listed Buildings, but even in these circumstances, effort should be made to enable energy benefits to be achieved.		Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organizations, planning monitoring reports
POLICY 32. Biomass energy based on existing resources in the area, such as woodfuel and agricultural by-products, is particularly compatible with the AONB and is strongly supported.	Addition of agricultural by-products, and important existing resource, based on comments from NFU.	Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations

POLICY/POSITION (Changes from draft highlighted in yellow)	Rationale for change	Proposed monitoring
POLICY 33. Establishment of energy crops should avoid harm to biodiversity, water quality and availability, and where larger and longer-lived than normal agricultural crops, should take account of visual amenity (e.g. following forestry design guidelines regarding scale and shape of compartments including in relation to landform, structural diversity and edge treatments).	Clarification of wording	Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations
POLICY 34. There should be no development of wind turbines (other than in accordance with permitted development rights) within the 'High Open Moorland' and High Volcanic Hills and Slopes' Landscape Types in the AONB.	Clarification of wording. Landscape Types are defined and mapped, as opposed to earlier less well defined areas of high visual sensitivity.	Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organizations, planning monitoring reports
POLICY 35. Proposals for wind turbines and associated infrastructure within the AONB should take account of factors including landscape character, visual amenity, biodiversity, heritage and recreation, and the following guidelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within 100m of buildings (excluding Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas), one or two wind turbines of up to 12m to blade tip are likely to be acceptable within the AONB. • Turbines of over 25m to blade tip, or groups of more than two turbines, are not likely to be acceptable within the AONB. • Wind turbine proposals should be linked to local energy needs and energy conservation measures. Community benefits should relate to energy in preference to amenity or other measures. 	Clarification of wording Change from 30m and groups of five. Reflecting views of consultees, similar size threshold adopted in Cumbria, and experience with a number of local cases, showing that turbines of up to 25m can be viable.	Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organizations, planning monitoring reports
POLICY 36. Decisions on proposals for wind turbines and associated infrastructure outside the AONB should take account of the potential impacts within the AONB, especially the extent of visibility and significance of viewpoints affected, and potential cumulative effects with existing structures.	Clarification of wording	Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organizations, planning monitoring reports
POLICY 37. Promotion of the area for tourism should aim to minimise car travel. Towns and locations best served by public transport should receive the main promotion as 'gateways' to the Shropshire Hills, in preference to locations where access is only possible by car.		Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations
POLICY 38. Pro-active adaptation to climate change, focusing on wildlife and natural processes, is essential to retaining the natural beauty of the AONB and must be given a high priority.		Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations

<p style="text-align: center;">POLICY/POSITION (Changes from draft highlighted in yellow)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Rationale for change</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Proposed monitoring</p>
<p>POLICY 39. Existing areas of high quality habitat must be retained, and networks developed of higher quality habitat through targeted improvements on privately owned land.</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">Logging of activity through agri-environment schemes, Biodiversity Action Recording (BARS)</p>
<p>POLICY 40. Opportunities should be should be taken to strengthen the integrity and identity of the Shropshire Hills as an area of exceptional landscape value. Consistent use of the 'Shropshire Hills' identity should be given greater prominence in tourism and other forms of promotion, along with the special qualities of the AONB and opportunities for visitors to adopt a sustainable approach.</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations</p>
<p>POLICY 41. Opportunities and promotion aimed at both visitors and the local community should encourage people to experience the AONB's countryside more fully in ways which are not damaging (e.g. through walks and activities away from cars and roads, through appreciating wildlife and heritage).</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations</p>
<p>POLICY 42. The management of the wider Wrekin Forest area is crucial to the integrity of the Wrekin itself within the AONB. The landscape quality of the wider Wrekin Forest area should be protected as far as possible, and the management of the Wrekin integrated with this surrounding area. The Wrekin Forest Landscape Conservation Management Plan is a locally relevant and detailed framework for the area and is formally endorsed by the AONB Management Plan.</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">Updating/ renewal of the Plan</p>
<p>POLICY 43. The Wrekin Forest Partnership provides a vital local forum for this important area, and should be supported and its links to the AONB Partnership maintained. The Wrekin Forest Partnership needs to develop as a long-term structure linked to permanent funding for a dedicated staff resource to take and co-ordinate action on the ground.</p>		<p style="text-align: center;">Continuation of Partnership structure and funding</p>

<p style="text-align: center;">POLICY/POSITION (Changes from draft highlighted in yellow)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Rationale for change</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Proposed monitoring</p>
<p>AONB PARTNERSHIP POSITION 1 The Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership does not believe that the benefits of formally amending the boundary are justified against the considerable costs and resources this would entail. The Partnership will work, and encourage its partners and others also to work, in ways which will strengthen the integrity and identity of the Shropshire Hills as an area of exceptional landscape value. The Partnership will focus its work strongly on the designated AONB area, but will work in a flexible and pragmatic way in relation to the AONB boundary, to secure the maximum benefit for the Shropshire Hills. (see www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk for full statement approved Feb 2008).</p>		<p>Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations</p>
<p>AONB PARTNERSHIP POSITION 2 An approach of smaller, low-key tourism developments designed in sympathy with local character will blend better into the area and spread economic benefits more widely than larger facilities. Tourism businesses will be supported to take a sustainable approach and encourage their visitors to do likewise.</p>		<p>Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations</p>
<p>AONB PARTNERSHIP POSITION 3 In recognition of its unique character, prominence to visitors and the juxtaposition of residential properties with the highest quality landscape, the AONB Partnership advocates the designation of Cardingmill Valley as a Conservation Area.</p>		<p>Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations</p>
<p>AONB PARTNERSHIP POSITION 4 Because the vitality of the local agricultural economy is so integrally linked with the natural beauty of the Shropshire Hills, the AONB Partnership will actively support appropriate and sustainable forms of farming and diversification enterprises where these are compatible with the AONB designation.</p>		<p>Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations</p>
<p>AONB PARTNERSHIP POSITION 5 The model for the economy of the Shropshire Hills should be of environment-led regeneration, in which a pattern of relatively small-scale dispersed enterprise will be key to maintaining the right balance.</p>		<p>Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations</p>
<p>AONB PARTNERSHIP POSITION 6 Where market priced housing is used to generate finance for affordable housing within the AONB, it is preferable that the market priced housing is outside the AONB.</p>		<p>Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations</p>

POLICY/POSITION (Changes from draft highlighted in yellow)	Rationale for change	Proposed monitoring
AONB PARTNERSHIP POSITION 7 Where affordable housing is allowed when other forms of development would not be, in order to meet social need, the standards of sensitivity to the AONB should not be compromised, and are expected to be higher than outside the AONB.		Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations
AONB PARTNERSHIP POSITION 8 The Partnership supports community low carbon initiatives and will take a view of wind turbine proposals based on a range of sustainability criteria as well as visual aspects.		Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations
AONB PARTNERHIP POSITION 9 Land within 5km of the AONB boundary is unsuitable for large scale windfarm development, and should be excluded from any Search Areas. (The definition of 'large' used in this Position is that used by TAN 8, i.e. developments of 25MW and over).	Clarification of wording	Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations
AONB PARTNERSHIP POSITION 10 The Partnership supports permitted development rights for appropriate microgeneration, but believes the current moves to extend permitted development rights could allow some wind turbine developments which would have an unacceptable impact on the landscape of the AONB. The Partnership does not support permitted development rights in the AONB for multiple micro wind turbines and for those sited away from existing development (e.g. further than 100m from buildings), and if these are introduced, will work with the planning authorities to explore the case for an Article 4 Direction.	Clarification of wording. Proposed changes have been delayed since Plan originally drafted.	Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations
AONB PARTNERSHIP POSITION 11 Strategies for transport affecting the AONB should not be solely informed by a 'predict and provide' model of increasing capacity to deal with increased traffic flow. The need for road upgrades and improvements which could have detrimental effects on the AONB may be avoided by use of other measures.		Casework reported to AONB Partnership, bilateral meetings with partner organisations