

Comments on Telford and Wrekin Development Control DPD

1. Policy DP9, page 18

This policy is unspecific about how the Shropshire Hills AONB will be protected through the development control process. PPS7 provides the framework for the protection of AONBs but does not provide enough detail to inform development control decisions. The policy should be amended along the following lines:

Development will not be permitted if it would have either a direct or indirect adverse effect, on the character or setting of the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Exceptionally, major development proposals affecting the AONB must demonstrate that they are in the public interest. Development proposals affecting the AONB will be expected to take care to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the designated landscape.

Note: Special qualities are listed in the Shropshire Hills AONB Management Plan.

1.1 Reason for proposing changes to Policy DP9, page 18

This Policy does not have regard to section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 which states that “in exercising or performing any functions in relation to, or so as to affect, land” in these areas, (AONBs) relevant authorities “shall have regard” to their purposes. More specifically, section 89 states that the relevant local authority in respect of an area of outstanding natural beauty shall ‘prepare and publish a plan which formulates their policy for the management of the area of outstanding natural beauty and for the carrying out of their functions in relation to it.’

A Management Plan for the Shropshire Hills was published in 2004 by the AONB Partnership - of which the Borough of Telford and Wrekin are members. The Management Plan should form part of the background to the Core Strategy and the Borough should show how the purposes of AONB designation and the Management Plan have been recognised in the formulation of development control policies.

In addition, the Environment Technical Paper (part of the background for the LDF) makes no reference to the Shropshire Hills AONB or the AONB Management Plan. The Core Strategy is thus not founded on a robust and credible evidence base.