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Dear Andy

Site Allocations & Management of Development (SAMDev) draft Development Management Policies consultation

The Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership has considered the Draft Development Management Policies Consultation Document, and at the Partnership meeting on 19 March considered the content of this document and the draft policies in relation to the AONB. We have appreciated the recent dialogue with officers drafting these policies subsequent to the earlier stages of consultation and our meeting of 12 June 2012. As a result of this joint working we are supportive of the wording and content of the policies relating to the AONB and welcome these as the crucial elements of protection for the AONB, along with the National Planning Policy Framework.

We have only two minor comments or suggestions to make:

In the Introduction there is a useful section on the AONB which gives good recognition to the status of the AONB Management Plan. While the Management Plan is indeed 'Local Policy Context' for SAMDev and the section therefore comes under this heading, AONB is of course a national level designation protected by national policies. The crucial over-arching para 14 of NPPF mentions AONBs, in addition to paragraphs 115 and 116. In light of this we would suggest adding to the sentence "To achieve these aims, AONBs rely on planning controls and practical countryside management" the wording "and are protected by national level planning policy."

MD7 Managing Development in the Countryside Explanation para 5 mentions large scale agricultural buildings and why they are not specifically mentioned in this policy. In line with our earlier consultation responses, this is an important topic for the AONB and an area of particular pressure on the Shropshire Hills landscape from built development. It would be a great improvement if this paragraph were to include the sentence "In the AONB, such developments should take account of the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership's Agricultural Buildings Design Guide."

Yours sincerely

Phil Holden
AONB Partnership Manager