

MALVERN HILLS AONB LANDSCAPE-LED DEVELOPMENT POSITION STATEMENT - APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1. LANDSCAPE-LED CASE STUDIES

This appendix provides three case studies of where a landscape-led approach has been developed in protected landscapes:

1. South Downs Local Plan
2. Arnside & Silverdale AONB Development Plan Document
3. A417 'Missing Link' road scheme (Cotswolds National Landscape): Landscape-led vision, design principles, objectives and sub-objectives

LANDSCAPE-LED CASE STUDY 1: SOUTH DOWNS LOCAL PLAN¹

The South Downs Local Plan is explicitly underpinned by a landscape-led approach. Key extracts from the Local Plan that articulate this landscape-led approach, are outlined below.

- **Foreword:** [The Local Plan] looks different from most other local plans, because at its heart is the requirement to conserve and enhance the nationally important landscapes of the South Downs.
- **Key Messages:**
 - This is a landscape led Local Plan ...looking at the South Downs as a whole with National Park purposes and our duty to the fore.
 - Allocations and policies are ... landscape capacity led, not target driven. This complies with the National Planning Policy Framework.
 - We have searched thoroughly and rigorously for suitable development sites; it is just that in carrying out this work landscape conservation takes the primary role.
 - We are ... determined to ensure the quality of new build reflects the landscape within which it sits and is of a standard befitting a National Park as an exemplar of rural planning.
- **Paragraph 1.16 (How have the Local Plan policies been prepared):** All the Local Plan policies have been formulated putting landscape first and then peoples' interaction with it. This is in line with the purposes of national parks ... The Local Plan and its policies require development proposed to conserve and enhance various aspects of natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage.
- **Paragraph 5.22 (A Landscape-Led Approach):** Development should enhance, respect and reinforce the landscape through a landscape-led design approach.
- **Paragraph 7.18 (Housing):** Provision of housing to meet local needs is crucial to ensure the sustainability and vitality of communities within the national Park ... However, the provision of housing should not be at the expense of a nationally protected landscape. The NPPF cites national parks as areas where development should be restricted and objectively assessed need not met.
- **Paragraph 7.121 (Employment):** A Local Plan objective ... is to protect and provide for local businesses that are broadly compatible with and relate to the landscapes and special qualities of the National Park.
- **Paragraph 7.215 (Infrastructure):** All infrastructure development proposals should reflect the nationally protected landscapes, be appropriately designed and consider carefully the impact upon the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area.

¹ South Downs National Park Authority (2019) *South Downs Local Plan 2014-2033*.

- **Paragraphs 7.270 (Climate Change):** The use of renewable energy rather than fossil fuels will help to reduce carbon emissions and this reduce climate change ... However, the landscape character of the National Park is a finite and precious resource that the National Park is charged with conserving and enhancing. Development of renewable energy, therefore needs to be suitably constrained so as not to compromise the special qualities.
- **Paragraph 8.5 (Need for the Development):** There is a need for development to take place to meet growth needs, as far as it is compatible with the National Park purposes and the overarching ecosystem services led approach.

LANDSCAPE-LED CASE STUDY 2: ARNSIDE & SILVERDALE AONB DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT²

The Arnside & Silverdale AONB Development Plan Document (DPD) is the first DPD for an AONB in the country. Like the South Downs Local Plan, it sets out a landscape-led approach to development in the protected landscape. As stated in the DPD itself, *'it is a pioneering and innovative approach and has been followed closely by AONB Partnerships up and down the country as an example of how an AONB Partnership, councils and communities can work together to produce the best outcomes for an AONB'* (paragraph 1.2.6).

- **Foreword:** The AONB DPD complements the Management Plan for the AONB, for which the underlying principle is to work collaboratively to help conserve and enhance the landscape of the area. The AONB DPD places the landscape at the heart of shaping development over the next 15 years.
- **Paragraph 2.1.2 (Vision):** Within the Arnside & Silverdale AONB, housing, employment, services, infrastructure and other development is managed to contribute towards meeting the needs of those who live in, work in and visit the area in a way that:
 - conserves and enhances the landscape, the natural beauty, and the Special Qualities of the AONB; and
 - creates vibrant, diverse and sustainable communities with a strong sense of place; and
 - maintains a thriving local economy.
- **Policy AS01 (Development Strategy):** A landscape capacity-led approach to development will be taken in the AONB ... All development in the ... AONB should be sustainable, consistent with the primary purpose of AONB designation and support the Special Qualities of the AONB as set out in the AONB Management Plan.
- **Paragraph 3.1.2:** The primary purpose of the AONB designation is to conserve and enhance the landscape and natural beauty of the area. It is therefore entirely appropriate that the Development Strategy identifies a landscape-capacity led and criteria-based approach to development, consistent with this primary purpose and the AONB's Special Qualities. A strategy that did not put the conservation and enhancement of the landscape central to the approach to development would compromise the primary purpose and undermine the national designation and the value of the AONB in the national interest. Where a development proposal would create conflict between the primary purpose of the AONB and other uses of the AONB, greater weight will be attached to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the landscape and natural beauty of the AONB.
- **Paragraph 3.1.4:** In the AONB, the priority should be to meet identified affordable and other local housing needs within the capacity of the landscape.

² South Lakeland District Council and Lancaster City Council (2019) *Arnside and Silverdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Development Plan Document (DPD) – Adopted Version, 28 March 2019.* ([Link](#)).

- **Paragraph 3.1.7:** The Development Strategy ensures that only development that can be accommodated without harm to the AONB's primary purpose will be permitted, whilst maintaining a positive approach, recognising that appropriately located and designed development can contribute to conserving and enhancing the landscape and settlement character, including where opportunities for regeneration and redevelopment can be delivered.
- **Policy AS02 (Landscape):** Within the Arnside & Silverdale AONB, development proposals will be required to demonstrate how they conserve and enhance the landscape and natural beauty of the area. Proposals will not be permitted where they would have an adverse effect upon the landscape character or visual amenity of the AONB.
- **Paragraph 3.1.22:** All development within the AONB should conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area and must reflect the capacity of the landscape to accommodate it without harm to key features and characteristics and without compromise to the statutory purpose.

LANDSCAPE-LED CASE STUDY 3: A417 MISSING LINK ROAD SCHEME

The A417 Missing Link road scheme is the most significant infrastructure scheme that is currently being proposed in the Cotswolds National Landscape. In recognition of its location in this sensitive and nationally important landscape, Highways England, the Cotswolds Conservation Board and other stakeholders developed and agreed a landscape-led vision, design principles and objectives for the scheme in 2017. The vision and design principles, together with the objectives and sub-objectives that relate specifically to landscape and / or natural beauty, are outlined below.

- **Vision:** A landscape-led highways improvement scheme that will deliver a safe and resilient free-flowing road whilst conserving and enhancing the special character of the Cotswolds AONB; reconnecting landscape and ecology; bringing about landscape, wildlife and heritage benefits, including enhanced visitors' enjoyment of the area; improving local communities' quality of life; and contributing to the health of the economy and local businesses.
- **Design Principles:**
 - Any solution involving a new road must ensure that the scheme is designed to meet the character of the landscape, not the other way round.
 - Any scheme should bring about substantial benefits for the Cotswolds landscape and environment as well as people's enjoyment of the area.
 - Any scheme must have substantially more benefits than negative impacts for the Cotswolds AONB.
- **Objectives:** Improving the natural environment and heritage; to maximise opportunities for landscape, historic and natural environment enhancement within the Cotswolds AONB and to minimise negative impacts of the scheme on the surrounding environment.
- **Sub-Objectives**
 - The Scheme will have an identity which reflects, conserves and enhances the character of the local landscape.
 - The Scheme will improve landscape and ecological connectivity through landscape and habitat restoration and creation.
 - The horizontal and vertical alignments of the Scheme will pay due regard to the nature of the local landform.
 - The siting and form of structures, cuttings, embankments and landscape mounding will reflect local topography and landform.
 - The design of structures will be of lasting architectural quality.

- The Scheme will avoid significant interruption to groundwater flows or negative impacts on the aquifer, springs and watercourses.
- The Scheme will avoid or, where absolutely necessary, minimise the direct loss of National Trust land, other areas owned and managed for conservation, open access land and country parks and at the same time minimise intrusion upon such land.
- The Scheme will enable enhanced preservation of heritage assets and their settings and adopt designs that reflect and enhance the historic character of the area.
- The Scheme will minimise road noise by applying sensitive noise mitigation measures where required.
- The Scheme will minimise light pollution through sensitive structural, junction, and lighting design and sign illumination.

