

**Modifications Report**  
**on modifications to the Post Consultation draft AONB Management Plan 2009-14 (February 2009)**  
**November 2009**

**Introduction**

The following sections outline the changes made to the Post consultation Draft Management Plan (February 2009) representing the modifications to the Final Draft Management Plan Post HRA & SEA Consultation (October 2009).

Modifications are shown with text additions underlined and where text is removed ~~deleted~~ or in *italics*

**Modifications**

A. In Section 3 Overview of the AONB; TABLE 3 Special Qualities of the Wye Valley AONB, the following minor amendments were made:-

Special Qualities [SQ]	Recognition	Extent	Condition [data / reason]	Changes or threats	Management options	Headline Indicator	Trend
11. Picturesque, extensive & dramatic views.	72 viewpoints identified. 20 included in Overlooking the Wye Landscape Partnership Scheme including 4 SMs at Piercefield.	Throughout AONB but majority overlooking the Wye	Varied; some spectacular, some overgrown, some inaccessible, health & safety poor at some [Assessment of Historic & Picturesque Viewpoints in AONB, 2001]. Overlooking the Wye Landscape Partnership Scheme restoring some.	Changes in ownership &/or land management may degrade or block both physical access to viewpoints and/or the view window  Inappropriate land management may degrade or destroy the landscape viewed from a viewpoint	Liaison with owners and site user & interest groups  Interpretation & education  Liaison with owners	<del>N/a</del> <u>Significance of identified change in view from fixed point photography and map regression (tbc)</u>	~

Special Qualities [SQ]	Recognition	Extent	Condition [data / reason]	Changes or threats	Management options	Headline Indicator	Trend
27. Wye Valley Walk	Regional Route	Through length of AONB [T1.1-76]	Good	Degradation of route due to erosion and excessive usage and/or river flooding and/or landslips	Repair & consolidate route	% of rights of way are classified as 'easy to use'	↗
					Liaison with land owners		
					Promote alternative route(s) to relieve pressure (with or without route closure)		
				Blockage and/or obstruction	interpretation and education liaison with user groups	% Positive feedback from Route Guide	↗
				Some sections still on Permissive Paths	PRoW Enforcement & Development Control Liaison with land owners		
					Upgrade route to Public Right of Way	Average and peak usage from counters	↗

**B.** In Section 3. Overview of the AONB; TABLE 4 ACTIVITIES & PRESSURES in the Wye Valley AONB, the following minor amendments were made:-

Activities in the AONB	Pressures in the AONB	Positive Impacts in the AONB	Negative Impacts in the AONB	AONB Landscape Management Zone (LMZ) and Special Quality [SQ] association
Walking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demand for way-marked, self guided trails</li> <li>High percentage of car use to start walk</li> <li>Honey-pot sites such as Haugh Wood, Symonds Yat and Tintern</li> <li>Access for all enhancements</li> <li>Open Access</li> <li>Limited Rights of Way budgets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local spend of walkers</li> <li>Allows appreciation of special qualities of area</li> <li>Dissipated throughout AONB</li> <li>Health benefits of walking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Informal car parking on verges</li> <li>Potential conflict particularly between dogs and livestock</li> <li>Excessive usage can <del>cause</del> exacerbate erosion to paths and features</li> <li>Confusion over signage &amp; waymarking can lead to confrontation with other users</li> </ul>	All LMZs SQ2      SQ25 SQ3      SQ26 SQ11     SQ27 SQ12     SQ28 SQ17     SQ29

Activities in the AONB	Pressures in the AONB	Positive Impacts in the AONB	Negative Impacts in the AONB	AONB Landscape Management Zone (LMZ) and Special Quality [SQ] association	
4x4 and off road trail bike riding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing legal use of unclassified public roads and lack of clear signage</li> <li>Illegal use of public footpaths and bridleways</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitates appreciation of some special qualities of AONB</li> <li>Provides access for disabled and less abled people into countryside</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confusion over signage &amp; waymarking can lead to confrontation with other users</li> <li>Can exacerbate erosion to path surfaces and features</li> <li>Illegal trails damage habitats and features</li> <li>Adversely affects tranquillity in vicinity</li> <li>Disturbance to other users and wildlife</li> </ul>	All LMZs SQ2 SQ3 SQ4 SQ5 SQ11 SQ12 SQ13 SQ14 SQ15 SQ16 SQ17	SQ19 SQ20 SQ21 SQ22 SQ25 SQ29

**C.** Section 4 of the Management Plan is moved from the end of Part 1 ‘Outline’ to the beginning of Part 2 ‘Strategy’. The original format was as follows:-

	Page
4. Vision for the AONB .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
4.1 Background.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
4.2 Themes and aims.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
4.3 The Vision for the Wye Valley AONB in 2029.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Part 2 Strategy .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Introduction .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
etc.	

This Section is now formatted as follows:-

Part 2 Strategy .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
4. Introduction.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
4.1 Designation .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

4.2 The Vision for the Wye Valley AONB in 2029**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

4.3 Themes and aims ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

4.5 Interpretation of Strategic Objectives ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

**D.** In reformatting Section 4 (B. above) the addition of 4.5 Interpretation of Strategic Objectives inserts a new piece into the Plan as follows:-

4.5.1 All the strategic objectives in the Management Plan must be interpreted in the light of:

- the statutory purpose of the Wye Valley AONB designation, that is to conserve and enhance the area's natural beauty
- the 20 Year Vision for the AONB
- the Aim of the theme's topic
- the accompanying text to the topic
- the texts and tables of Sections 2 and 3 of the Management Plan

4.5.2 Where there are any doubts or conflicts, Strategic Objectives should be interpreted using a 'purposive' approach which returns to the statutory purpose of the AONB designation, 'to conserve and enhance natural beauty'.

4.5.3 In practical terms this means that:

- where there may be more than one possible interpretation of a Strategic Objective, the one which reflects the aim behind the Strategic Objective, (which will always be to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB) must be applied.
- where there appears to be an irreconcilable conflict between two or more Strategic Objectives, or an action under one Strategic Objective conflicts with another, the interpretation which achieves the statutory purpose of the AONB shall be made.
- where any action, plan or project, decision, (& etc.) could be interpreted as being supported by any particular Strategic Objective (or policies), but its exercise would conflict with conserving and enhancing natural beauty, the statutory purpose to conserve and enhance natural beauty shall override any support provided by the Strategic Objective.

**E.** In section 5.3 Biodiversity, the following additions were made:-

5.3.1 The Wye Valley AONB is particularly rich in wildlife and has a high concentration of designated sites covering approximately 10% of the AONB. In the AONB there are 3 sites of international importance designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) under the European Union's Habitats Directive. The 3 SACs are the entire river Wye, over 900 hectares of ancient semi-natural woodland in the heart of the Wye Gorge, and a collection of sites in the lower Wye valley used as roosts by Greater and lesser Horseshoe bats. Within a 5mile/8km radius of the AONB there is also the

River Severn SAC, Special Protection Area (SPA) & Ramsar site downstream from the AONB. Of national importance in the AONB are 45 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) including 4 National Nature Reserves (NNRs).

**F.** In section 5.5 Historic Environment, the following additions were made to penultimate sentence of paragraph 5.5.2:-

The appreciation and preservation of the historic environment is therefore a priority wherever possible, accepting the need for sympathetic management that has regard for other interests such as the SACs. The amounts of public and private finance invested into the management of the historic environment is significant and needs to continue.

**G.** Under section 5.5 Historic Environment, the following Strategic Objective was modified:-

WV-H2	Initiate and encourage schemes and positive action to conserve, enhance and promote the historic environment in conjunction with national (EH & NE and Cadw & CCW) and other relevant agencies
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**H.** Under section 5.7 Woodland, Trees and Forestry the following Strategic Objective was modified:-

WV-W4	Work in partnership to develop tree, woodland and forestry initiatives in line with relevant regional and national strategies <u>and EU Directives</u> , including effective protection for semi-natural woodlands so that none are lost, and encourage bringing woodland back into management through various techniques such as coppicing
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**I.** Under section 6.2 Development the following Strategic Objective was modified:-

WV-D4	Resist inappropriate development which will create a persistent and dominant feature out of keeping with the landscape of the AONB and/or if it damages special qualities in the AONB, including through high levels of noise and/or light pollution <u>or any SAC, SPA or Ramsar site</u>
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**J.** Under section 6.4 Utilities, Public Services and Renewable Energy the following Strategic Objectives were modified:-

WV-U2	Encourage further under-grounding of existing and proposed power and telephone lines, <u>where these do not conflict with any SAC</u> , and resist new overhead lines where skylines or important views are affected
WV-U3	Encourage the highest standards of equipment design and siting for

	telecommunication masts and resist new structures that either do not share masts and / or do not utilise <u>appropriate designs</u> at suitable locations
WV-U4	Encourage the use and supply of resources, including water abstraction and investment in infrastructure, that is consistent with the special qualities, <u>SACs</u> , landscape character and natural beauty of the AONB, and monitor any adverse impacts

**K.** Under section 6.5 Transportation the following Strategic Objective was modified:-

WV-T1	Encourage and promote greater use of more sustainable forms of transport in the AONB and for accessing the area, <u>subject to WV-D4</u>
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**L.** Under section 7.3 Economy and Rural Regeneration the following Strategic Objective was modified:-

WV-E3	Support the delivery of local co-operative schemes, advice and training programmes that support the development and expansion of rural micro-businesses, <u>subject to WV-D2, WV-D3 and WV-D4 above</u>
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**M.** Under section 8.2 Sustainable Tourism the following Strategic Objective was modified:-

WV-S2	Promote the improvement of the visitor experience, particularly at the most heavily visited sites, and facilitate the opportunity for visitors to explore and discover other appropriate but less used locations throughout the AONB, thus spreading demand and balancing pressures across sites <u>where this does not conflict with the special qualities of the AONB and the SACs</u>
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**N.** Under section 8.3 Recreation & Access the following Strategic Objective was modified:-

WV-R4	Assist in identifying gaps in access and recreational provision, including for under-represented and minority groups, and work with appropriate bodies and stakeholders to support and promote least restrictive access, <u>where this does not conflict with the special qualities of the AONB and the SACs</u>
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