



Management Plan 2019-2024



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Ministerial Foreword

I am fortunate that England's Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are part of my Ministerial responsibilities. Whether it be rolling hills, sweeping coastline or a tranquil village, spending time in an AONB can stir the heart and lift the spirit.

This is a pivotal moment for all AONBs. The Government has set its ambition in the 25 Year Environment Plan which states clearly the importance of natural beauty as part of our green future, while AONBs retain the highest status of protection for landscape through national planning policy. Leaving the EU brings with it an opportunity to develop a better system for supporting our farmers and land managers, who play such a vital role as stewards of the landscape. And the Review of National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty led by Julian Glover - the first of its kind for generations - will make recommendations to make sure our designated landscapes can flourish in the years ahead.

In my visits to AONBs around the country, I have been struck by the passion of many people - farmers, volunteers, and hard-working staff - for the beautiful places they live and work. In this spirit I am delighted to welcome publication of this Statutory Management Plan for the Howardian Hills AONB. It is significant that this plan will be delivered in partnership by those who value the Howardian Hills. I would like to thank all those involved in preparation of this document, and wish you the best of success in bringing it to fruition.



Lord Gardiner of Kimble

Parliamentary Under Secretary of State
for Rural Affairs and Biosecurity

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1.1 The Legal and Policy Framework of AONBs

Introduction

The 46 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in England, Wales and Northern Ireland cover approximately 1/8th of the land surface.

The distinctive character and natural beauty of AONBs make them some of the most special and cherished places in England. AONBs are living, working landscapes that contribute approximately £16bn every year to the national economy. Although home to less than half a million people (under 2% of England's population), over two thirds of England's population live within half an hour's drive of an AONB and around 150 million people visit English AONBs every year, spending in excess of £2bn⁽¹⁾.

Together with National Parks, AONBs represent our most outstanding landscapes; unique and irreplaceable national assets. Each one has such distinctive character and natural beauty that they are recognised internationally as part of the global Protected Areas Family to be managed in

⁽¹⁾What Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty can offer the LEPs, National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, NAAONB, 2017. <https://www.lepnetwork.net/news-and-events/2015/may/why-aonbs-are-important-to-the-leps/>

the interest of everyone – local residents, businesses, visitors and the wider public - and protected for future generations

The purpose of designation

Government guidance⁽²⁾ describes the purpose of designation as follows:

- **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 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.**

⁽²⁾Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty: A Policy Statement (CCP352), Countryside Commission, Countryside Commission, 1992

Legal framework

AONBs exist within a legal framework which has been progressively strengthened since the first AONBs came into existence after the Second World War.

The 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act⁽³⁾ established the AONB designation, provided AONBs with protection under planning law against inappropriate development, and gave local authorities permissive powers to take action for 'preserving and enhancing natural beauty' in them.

The Countryside Act 1968⁽⁴⁾ placed a responsibility on local authorities, the statutory conservation bodies and civil servants, in exercising their functions under the 1949 Act (as amended by subsequent legislation), to 'have due regard to the needs of agriculture and forestry and to the economic and social interests of rural areas'. Within AONBs this means a responsibility to acknowledge

⁽³⁾National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, H M Government, HMSO, 1949. www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1949/97/pdfs/ukpga_19490097_en.pdf and www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Geo6/12-13-14/97

⁽⁴⁾Countryside Act, H M Government, HMSO, 1968. www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1968/41

and, where appropriate, to promote farming, forestry and the rural economic and social context wherever this can be done without compromising the primary purpose of conserving natural beauty.

The Environment Act 1995⁽⁵⁾ introduced the phrase 'conserve and enhance' in place of 'protect and enhance' in relation to the duties of local authorities, the Environment Agency and other bodies. No statutory duties were placed on local authorities to actively manage AONBs in any particular way.

The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000⁽⁶⁾ (CRoW) subsumed and strengthened the AONB provisions of the 1949 Act. It confirmed the purpose and significance of AONBs, clarified the procedure for their designation, and created a firm legislative basis for their designation, protection and management. In particular:

- Section 82 reaffirms the primary purpose of AONBs: to conserve and enhance natural beauty.
- Section 83 establishes the procedure for designating or revising the boundaries

of an AONB, including Natural England's duty to consult with local authorities and to facilitate public engagement.

- Section 84 confirms the powers of local authorities to take 'all such action as appears to them expedient' to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of an AONB, and sets consultation and advice on development planning and on public access on the same basis as National Parks in the 1949 Act.
- **Section 85** places a statutory duty on all 'relevant authorities' to **'have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of AONBs when coming to any decisions or carrying out activities relating to or affecting land within these areas.'** 'Relevant authorities' include all public bodies (including county, borough, district, parish and community councils, joint planning boards and other statutory committees); statutory undertakers (such as energy and water utilities, licensed telecommunications companies, nationalised companies such as Network Rail and other bodies established under statute responsible for railways, roads and canals); government ministers and civil servants. Activities and developments outside the boundaries of AONBs that

have an impact within the designated area are also covered by the 'duty of regard'.

- Sections 86 to 88 allow for the establishment in an AONB of a Conservation Board to which the AONB functions of the local authority (including development planning) can be transferred. Conservation Boards have the additional but secondary function of seeking to increase public understanding and enjoyment of the AONB's special qualities. They also have an obligation to 'seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities' in co-operation with local authorities and other public bodies.
- **Sections 89 and 90** create a statutory duty on all AONB partnerships (local authorities and Conservation Boards) to **prepare a Management Plan 'which formulates their policy for the management of their area of outstanding natural beauty and for the carrying out of their functions in relation to it', and thereafter to review adopted and published Plans at intervals of not more than five years.** Where an AONB involves more than one local authority they are required to do this 'acting jointly'.

⁽⁵⁾Environment Act, H M Government, HMSO, 1995.

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1995/25

⁽⁶⁾Countryside and Rights of Way Act, H M Government, HMSO, 2000. www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/37

- Section 92 makes clear that the conservation of natural beauty includes the conservation of ‘flora, fauna and geological and physiographical features’.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006⁽⁷⁾ (NERC):

Section 99 formally clarifies in law that the fact that an area consists of or includes land used for agriculture or woodlands, or as a park, or ‘any other area whose flora, fauna or physiographical features are partly the product of human intervention in the landscape’ does not prevent it from being treated, for legal purposes, ‘as being an area of natural beauty (or of outstanding natural beauty)’.

Schedule 7 asserts that an AONB joint committee of two or more local authorities, or a conservation board, can constitute a ‘designated body’ for the performance of functions allocated to Defra.

Responsibility for AONBs

The formal legal responsibility for both development control and for management of AONBs (including the duty to prepare an AONB Management Plan) lies with the local authorities in whose area(s) the AONB exists, except in two instances (the Chilterns and the Cotswolds AONBs) where this is the responsibility of a statutory Conservation Board.

In addition, the duty of all public bodies and statutory undertakers to ‘have regard’ places an obligation on a wide range of organisations not just to consider any detrimental impacts of their policies and activities outside as well as within the boundaries of any AONB, but to consider positively how they might benefit the AONB’s special qualities.

Statutory guidance for the production of AONB Management Plans is contained in CA23⁽⁸⁾ and CA221⁽⁹⁾. These make it clear that preparation needs to engage actively and gain the support of all key stakeholders, who will assist in its delivery. The AONB Management Plan is a place-based plan derived through local consensus. It seeks to define the approach to conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the AONB through the application of local solutions to local challenges that also respect the national and international importance of the AONB. It is a plan not for the partnership but for the AONB as a whole.

⁽⁷⁾Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act, H M Government, HMSO, 2006.

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16>

⁽⁸⁾Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plans: A Guide (CA23), Countryside Agency, Countryside Agency, 2001.

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140605121241/>

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/40024>

⁽⁹⁾Guidance for the Review of AONB Management Plans (CA221), Countryside Agency, Countryside Agency, 2006. <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140605121642/>

<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/40023>

The meaning of 'natural beauty'

The term 'natural beauty' first gained currency in a legislative context in the 1907 Act which gave legal status to the National Trust ('for Places of Historic Interest and Natural Beauty'). It has been the basis for the designation of both AONBs and National Parks since the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, but the term was not defined in the Act.

In June 2000 the Government confirmed that AONBs and National Parks are of equal status with regard to landscape quality and that they share the same level of protection. In the same year, the CRow Act formally stated that natural beauty includes conservation of 'flora, fauna and geological and physiographical features'⁽⁶⁾.

Natural beauty goes well beyond scenic or aesthetic value. The natural beauty of an AONB is to do with the relationship between people and place. It encompasses everything - 'natural' and human - that makes an area distinctive. It includes the area's geology and landform, its climate and soils, its wildlife and ecology. It includes the rich history of human settlement and land use over the centuries, its archaeology and buildings, its cultural associations, and the people who live in it, past and present^{(8) (10) (11)}.

The history of AONB designation

AONBs emerged from the mood of civic renewal which characterised the decades following the end of the Second World War. The 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act was one amongst many – including health, education, agriculture and development planning – which established the basis for a 'new Britain'.

The need to designate special areas of the countryside against inappropriate development, to celebrate and conserve their distinctive features, encourage sustainable agriculture and foster local economic well-being, was recognised well before the Dower (1945) and Hobhouse (1947) reports which led to the establishment of AONBs and National Parks.

Since their establishment by the 1949 Act there has been continuous development in the policy and legislative context of AONBs, shaped by a number of key policy documents.

The latest of these is the 25 Year Environment Plan⁽¹²⁾, published by Defra in January 2018. It includes an intention to carry out a review of AONBs and National Parks 70 years after the designations were created. The Review was launched in June 2018 and is expected to report to Government in 2019.

⁽¹⁰⁾Origins and intentions of 1949 Act: Natural Beauty, Holdaway, E., Countryside Council for Wales, 2007.

⁽¹¹⁾On the Meaning of Natural Beauty in Landscape Legislation, Selman, P. and C. Swanwick, Landscape Research. 35 (1): p. 3-26, 2010. http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/11121/2/selmanp_natural_beauty_paper.pdf

⁽¹²⁾A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment, Defra, GOV.UK, 2018. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>

The designation process

AONBs are designated in law following a prescribed process which includes an objective appraisal of landscape quality, statutory assessments by the national conservation agencies and wide consultation with stakeholders including local landowners, residents and businesses. Following initial proposals for an AONB there is the opportunity for all stakeholders including visitors and the wider public to make representations, either in regard to the AONB itself or to proposed boundaries.

The basic stages in the current AONB designation process as prescribed by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000⁽¹³⁾ are as follows:

- Identify Candidate Area (for a new AONB or extension to an existing AONB) that meets the criteria for Natural Beauty.
- Ascertain issues relevant to the desirability of designation.
- Undertake required statutory assessments (including any requirement for SEA & EqIA).
- Identify draft detailed boundaries within Candidate Area.

- Undertake statutory and wider consultations.
- Make any required amendments to the proposals and boundaries.
- Submit to Natural England Board for approval.
- If approved, NE produces draft legal Orders.
- Draft Order is put 'on deposit' – opportunity for all to make written representations (objecting, supporting or suggesting amendments).
- NE finalise Orders and submit to the Secretary of State.
- Secretary of State may order a public Inquiry.
- Secretary of State may confirm the Orders, with or without modifications.
- Confirmation Order specifies any modifications and timetable.
- A period of 'Notice' follows, during which the decision is open to challenge.

Planning and AONBs

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty enjoy the same levels of protection from development as UK National Parks. Responsibility for planning policy in AONBs lies with the relevant local authority (in National Parks it lies with the National Park Authority). This means that while AONB Management Plans themselves do not form part of any local development plan they are, nevertheless, vitally important documents in the planning system. They are:

- The basis for identifying those aspects of the AONB which are critical in contributing to its natural beauty and potentially influential in development planning policy.
- A 'material consideration' in the determination of individual planning applications and at appeal.

In particular, following changes in the planning system consequent on the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in 2012, and its updating in 2018, the AONB Management Plan can:

- Propose criteria for judging what might count as sustainable development within the AONB. NPPF paragraph 11 asserts a 'presumption in favour of sustainable

⁽¹³⁾Countryside and Rights of Way Act, H M Government, HMSO, 2000. www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/3

development’, stating that ‘plans should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area’. Footnote 6 refers to ‘specific policies’ which may negate this presumption, where ‘the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development’. The policies referred to are those relating to: ‘habitats sites and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest;...; land designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, ..., a National Park; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets.’

- Identify the particular components of the AONB’s landscape and scenic beauty. NPPF para 172 requires that in any decision ‘great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty’ in AONBs which (together with National Parks) ‘have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.’

The intention is that NPPF should be reflected in local plans, produced in conformity with the Framework’s guidance. However under half the area of England is covered by post-NPPF local plans, as

a consequence of which a number of planning applications in AONBs where there is no recent local plan have been allowed, or refusal overturned on appeal. NPPF Para 172 continues by stating that ‘The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited. Planning permission should be refused for major development other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest’⁽¹⁴⁾. This applies only to developments proposed within an AONB and not to developments proposed in its setting that might impact on the AONB⁽¹⁵⁾. This makes it even more important that AONB management plans should influence new local plans as they are produced.

⁽¹⁴⁾National Planning Policy Framework, MHCLG, GOV.UK, 2018. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/728643/Revised_NPPF_2018.pdf

⁽¹⁵⁾AONBs and development, NT, The National Trust 2015. <https://landscapesforlife.org.uk/about-aonbs/partners-work/aonbs-and-development>

The international context

English AONBs are part of the international Protected Area Family. As cultural landscapes, produced through the interaction of humans with nature over time, they have a special significance (together with UK National Parks) in being recognised by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as ‘Category V - Protected Landscapes’^{(16) (17)}.

Category V protected landscapes are defined by IUCN as: ‘A protected area where the interaction of people and nature over time has produced an area of distinct character with significant ecological, biological, cultural and scenic value; and where safeguarding the integrity of this interaction is vital to protecting and sustaining the area and its associated nature conservation and other values’⁽¹⁸⁾.

⁽¹⁶⁾*Guidelines for applying protected area management categories - 2013 update*, Dudley, N. ed., IUCN, 2013. www.iucn.org/content/guidelines-applying-protected-area-management-categories-0

⁽¹⁷⁾*Putting Nature on the Map: Identifying Protected Areas in the UK - A Handbook to help identify protected areas in the UK and assign the IUCN Management Categories and Governance Types to them*. IUCN NCUK, IUCN National Committee for the United Kingdom, 2012. <https://www.iucn.org/content/putting-nature-map-identifying-protected-areas-uk>

⁽¹⁸⁾*IUCN Protected Area Management Categories (factsheets)*, UN Environment and WCMC, International Union for the Conservation of Nature, 2014. www.biodiversitya-z.org/content/iucn-protected-area-management-categories.pdf

IUCN emphasises their importance as cultural landscapes - in distinction to Category I (Strict Nature Reserves and Wilderness Areas) and Category II (National Parks), which for IUCN are large natural or near-natural areas, unlike UK National Parks.

Until recently, the AONB designation was regarded (together with that of UK National Parks) as an anomaly in the international Protected Area system, which prioritised ‘naturalness’ as a criterion of value. In the last quarter-century, however, they have come to be recognised, particularly within Europe, as leaders in the move towards area-based sustainable development^{(19) (20)}.

AONBs in particular, as ‘working’ landscapes, lead the way in pioneering new approaches to integrated countryside management based on voluntary partnerships engaging and working with local communities to secure common goals.

⁽¹⁹⁾*Turning Ideas On Their Head - The New Paradigm for Protected Areas*, Phillips, A., George Wright Forum - June, 2003. www.jstor.org/stable/43599027

⁽²⁰⁾*Category Number: V. IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas Task Force*, Phillips, A. and J. Brown, IUCN Protected Area Categories, 2007.

The new, multidisciplinary, multifunctional concept of landscape is encapsulated in the European Landscape Convention (ELC). This was Adopted by the Council of Europe in 2000 (it is not an EU Directive and will remain unaffected by Brexit) and has been applicable to the UK since March 2007. ELC promotes a definition of landscape which usefully underpins the rationale for AONBs: ‘An area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors’⁽²¹⁾. It is a rich concept that encompasses but goes beyond sectoral (geomorphological, ecological, archaeological, historical or aesthetic) approaches. ELC makes it clear that people are at the heart of all landscapes (the commonplace and ‘degraded’ as well as the eminent), each of which has its own distinctive character and meaning to those who inhabit or visit it.

⁽²¹⁾*The European Landscape Convention*, CoE, Council of Europe, 2000. www.coe.int/en/web/landscape/home

The ELC places obligations on signatory states to recognise landscape ‘as an essential component of people’s surroundings, an expression of the diversity of their shared cultural and natural heritage, and a foundation of their identity’⁽²²⁾. Obligations include a requirement to identify the diversity and range of landscapes, the important features of each, and to engage with local communities, private bodies and public authorities in their planning and management. This includes raising awareness and understanding of the character, value and functions of landscape and the way these are changing. There is also a requirement to provide training in landscape-related skills.

AONBs and their managing organisations are a very significant contributor to delivering on the UK’s obligations under the ELC.

The NAAONB and the purpose of the AONB Family

The National Association for AONBs (NAAONB) is a charity that provides a strong collective voice for the UK’s 46 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Its objectives are to:

- Promote the conservation and enhancement of AONBs.
- Advance the education, understanding and appreciation by the public of AONBs.
- Promote the efficiency and effectiveness of those promoting or representing AONBs, other protected areas and those areas for which designation might be pursued.

It does this by taking a collaborative and partnership-based approach to working with membership and other organisations at a national level to achieve shared goals⁽²³⁾.

Charity members are involved in the planning and management of around 8,000 square miles of outstanding and cherished landscapes in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. Membership includes nearly all the AONB partnerships, as well as some of those Local Authorities with statutory responsibility for AONBs, together with a number of voluntary bodies, businesses and individuals with an interest in the future of these iconic landscapes.

⁽²²⁾*The European Landscape Convention and its Explanatory Report, CoE/LCN, Council of Europe and the Landscape Character Network, 2008.*
www.gov.uk/government/publications/european-landscape-convention-guidelines-for-managing-landscapes

⁽²³⁾For more information: Web: www.landscapesforlife.org.uk Twitter: @naaonb @AONBFamily

1.2 The Howardian Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Designation of the Howardian Hills as an AONB was confirmed by the Secretary of State for the Environment on 19th October 1987. As one of seven protected landscape areas in North Yorkshire, the Howardian Hills AONB plays an important role in both local and regional landscape and wildlife conservation, as well as in tourism, leisure and the rural economy. Information on the legal basis for the AONB designation, the policies defining its role and status, and its position within the global framework of Protected Landscapes, can be found in Chapter 1.1.

The Howardian Hills AONB

Lying between the Vale of Pickering and the Vale of York, the Howardian Hills AONB forms a clearly defined geographical area of well-wooded rolling countryside (see Figure 1). In the north west the AONB abuts the North York Moors National Park; in the east, along the Derwent Valley, it extends to the rising ground of the Yorkshire Wolds. Roughly rectangular in shape and up to 16 miles (25km) long by 6 miles (10km) wide, it covers 79 square miles (204 sq. km).

The AONB has a complex landform mainly consisting of ridges, plateaux, hills and valleys, with prominent limestone scarps along the outer edges. This mirrors the underlying geology of thinly bedded limestones and sandstones, which have been subject to extensive east-west faulting. Glacial drift deposits form a more undulating landform in the south and west, whilst the glacial meltwater channel of the Kirkham Gorge carves a deep valley through the south eastern corner. The maximum elevation of 174m ASL is at Yearsley village.

The AONB is a mixed agricultural landscape, with arable cropping on the flatter land and permanent pasture on the steeper slopes and in small fields around villages. Approximately 70% of the land area is farmland, with a further 18% being woodland.

Regular rectangular fields from the 17th and 18th century enclosures are a strong landscape feature. These are bounded predominantly by hedges, often with individual boundary trees, but drystone walls can also be found on the higher plateau area.

Apart from a few remnant quarries, the industrial revolution of the 19th century appears to have had little lasting impact on the character of the Howardian Hills landscape. The greatest evidence today of its historic use dates from pre-history to the medieval period, overlain by the later development of grand country houses with their formal designed landscapes.

These country houses with their landscaped parklands, wood pasture and veteran trees are a significant component of the AONB landscape. The Castle Howard, Newburgh Priory, Gilling Castle, Howsham Hall and Nunnington Hall parklands are on Historic England's Register of Parks & Gardens, and other notable examples include Hovingham Hall and Whitwell Hall.

There are no towns within the AONB, which is characterised by scattered settlements and small villages with greens, such as at Hovingham, Low Hutton, Crayke and Terrington. Vernacular buildings consist of local limestone and sandstone with pantile or slate roofs, with the stone varying in colour from iron-red to pale cream and grey. There are also many fine examples of early churches and churchyards.

The AONB is a very rural area, served by a dense network of minor roads. The A64 is a major through-route, with the B1257 and B1363 being the only other significant roads. As a consequence the Howardian Hills is generally a very tranquil area, with low levels of intrusion or disturbance.

Section 2.3 (A Rich Heritage) describes the landscape and its characteristic features in more detail.

Administratively, the AONB falls within the County of North Yorkshire and is divided between the Districts of Ryedale and Hambleton (see Figure 2). Containing all or part of 44 Parishes, which are administered by 29 Parish Councils or Meetings, the designated area has a population of approximately 5,950 people. A further 3,200 live in villages just outside the designated boundary⁽²⁴⁾.

Central to the management of the AONB is the concept of sustainable development, as defined in the Brundtland Report: “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.

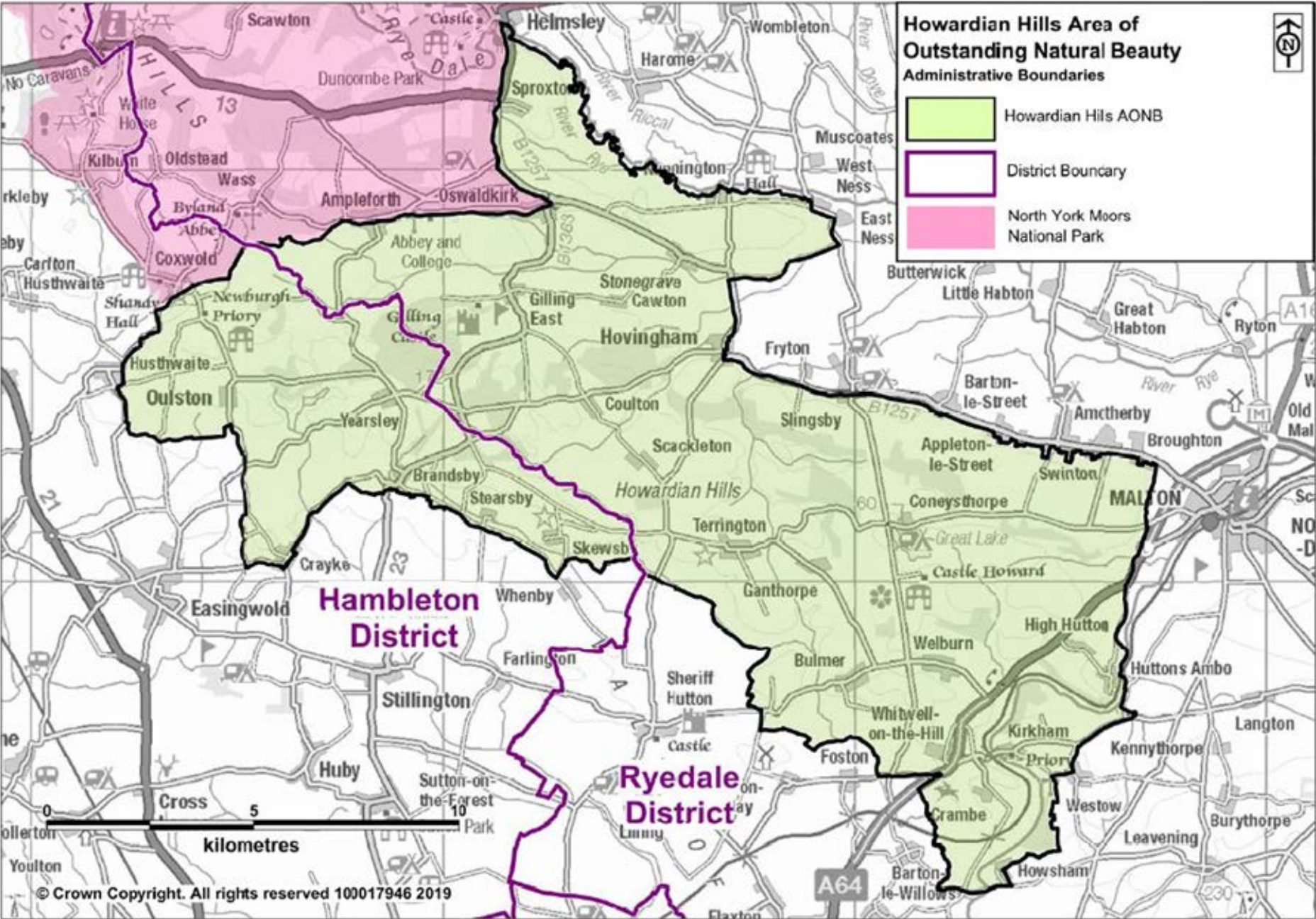
In order to satisfy both the Section 85 CROW Act Duty to have Regard to the purposes of AONB designation, and the principles of sustainable development, all policies within other plans, strategies and programmes should reflect the national importance of the AONB.

⁽²⁴⁾ Mid-2016 Population Estimates,
ONS, Crown Copyright, 2016



Figure 1: The Howardian Hills AONB

Figure 2: Administrative boundaries



1.3 Special Qualities

The primary purpose of AONB designation is “to conserve and enhance natural beauty”. It is therefore essential to define as clearly as possible the character of the landscape, recognising both its Special Qualities and the forces for change that act upon it.

Although the Howardian Hills landscape is heavily wooded it is essentially a farmed landscape, so both agricultural and forestry practices play a dominant role in shaping its appearance.

The evolution of the landscape of the area since prehistoric times, and the forces for change which continue to shape it, are described in detail in *The Howardian Hills Landscape*, a report prepared by consultants in 1995⁽²⁵⁾. The report summarised the Special Qualities of the AONB as follows:

“The Howardian Hills have a strong unity of visual character, not least because they are physically separated from the surrounding countryside, but also because there are a number of common characteristics which bind the landscape together. The strongest of these is the dominance of woodland, which seems to form a green web across the whole area. The open sweeping views from the ridge tops and the quiet intimacy of the enclosed valleys are experiences which constantly recur whilst travelling through the area. The sheer complexity of the land cover, with its rich patchwork of crops, pastures, woods, trees and hedgerows is another consistent quality across most of the area.”

More specifically, the Report identifies the key Special Qualities as being:

An unusual landform

The Howardian Hills is the only area of Jurassic limestone landscape in the north of England to be designated as an AONB. The deeply incised Kirkham Gorge is a unique glacial overflow channel of great scientific importance.

A richly varied landscape

The landform consists of a complex system of ridges, hills and valleys (see Figure 3). These are clothed with a mosaic of woodland, rolling arable fields, small-scale pasture, fens, hedges and walls, formal parkland and scattered settlements.

A landscape of high visual quality

The variety of landform and land use produces a contrast in scale, colour, texture and form. The settings of the historic houses, the extensive woodlands, the broad sweeping views and the unspoilt farming landscapes and traditional building styles have a special aesthetic appeal.

A remarkable heritage

The Howardian Hills has a concentration of archaeological and historic features, ranging from Iron Age earthworks on prominent hilltops to the castles and monasteries of the medieval period. The numerous grand houses and designed landscapes, such as Castle Howard, Newburgh Priory, Hovingham Hall, Gilling Castle and Nunnington Hall, have a dramatic effect upon the landscape.

⁽²⁵⁾ *The Howardian Hills Landscape*, Cobham Resource Consultants, Countryside Commission, 1995

An important wildlife resource

The AONB contains a section of the unique River Derwent, with its outstanding wild plants and animals. Other habitats of national importance include fens and relatively extensive remnants of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland.

Whilst each of these attributes is important in its own right, it is their combination in a relatively small area that has produced a landscape of national significance.

Tranquillity

AONBs and National Parks are seen as calm and tranquil areas, where people can relax and get away from the rush of modern life. This is becoming increasingly important for both physical and mental health and wellbeing.

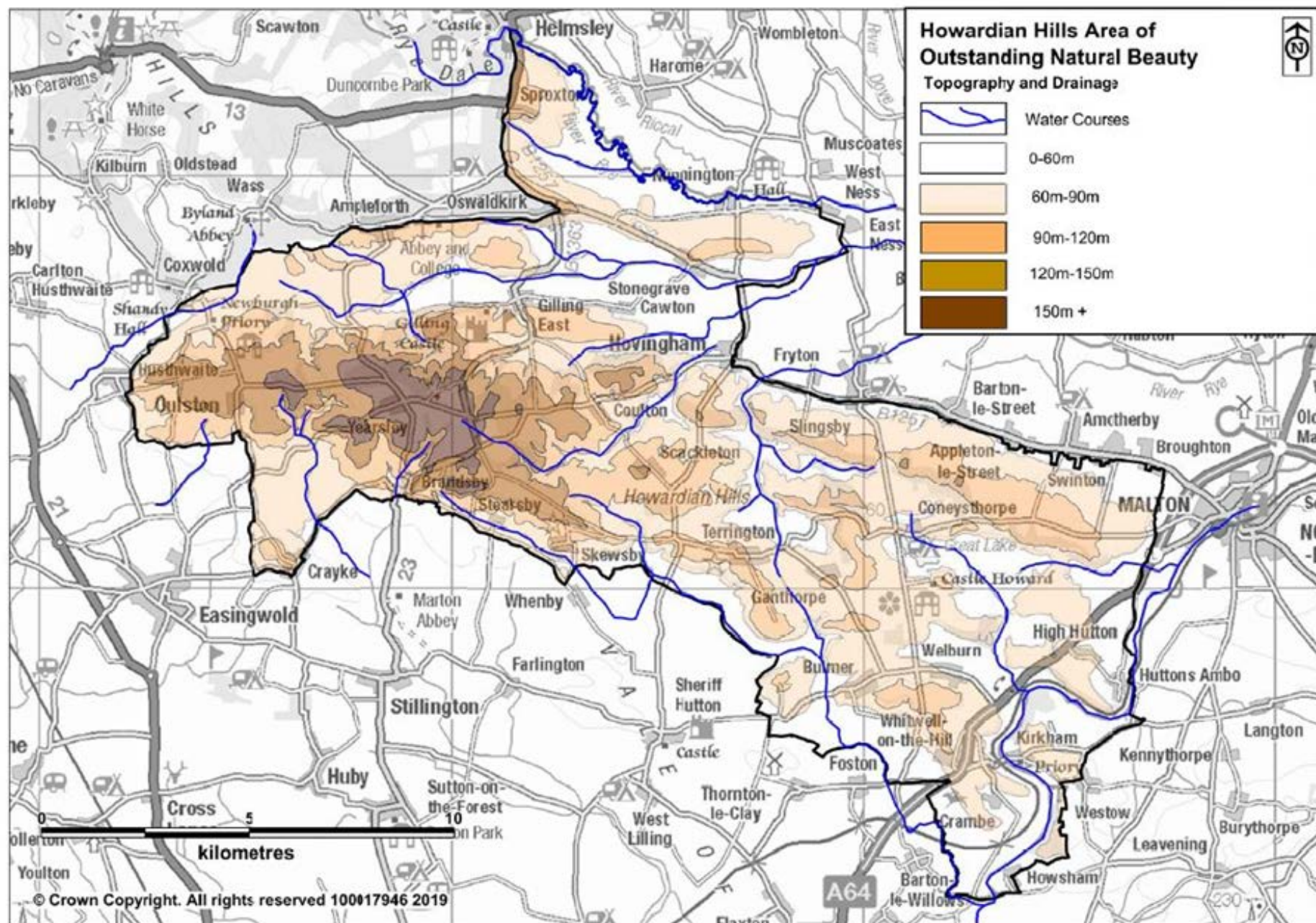
Whilst agricultural and forestry operations are generally seen as being part of rural life, features such as traffic noise, minerals workings, excessive lighting and aircraft noise can all be detrimental to the feeling of tranquillity.

Although the Howardian Hills are not especially tranquil in national terms, this means it is particularly important to protect those parts of the AONB that do still have relatively high levels of tranquillity. In 2006 55% of the AONB was categorised as having a relatively High or Very High level of tranquillity for its area⁽²⁶⁾.

Site Designation	
European significance	
Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	1
National significance	
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	8
Scheduled Monument (SM)	79
Registered Park and Garden (RPG)	5
Listed Building	374
Local significance	
Conservation Area	11
Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)	66
Local Geological Site (LGS)	16

⁽²⁶⁾CPRE/Natural England, 2013

Figure 3: Topography and Drainage



1.4 The AONB Partnership

A Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) was established for the Howardian Hills AONB in 1992 to help agree a co-ordinated approach. Its members include representatives of the following organisations:

North Yorkshire County Council

Ryedale District Council

Hambleton District Council

Ryedale Parish Councils

Hambleton Parish Councils

Natural England

Forestry Commission

National Farmers Union

Country Land and Business Association

The Ramblers

The main work of the JAC is to:

- **Advise and steer** the preparation, review and implementation of a Management Plan;
- **Promote** awareness and understanding of the AONB for the purposes for which it was designated;
- **Advise** local authorities and other bodies on countryside conservation, informal recreation and environmental management issues affecting the AONB;
- **Consider** and advise on development and spatial plan policies, proposals and reviews as they relate to the AONB;
- **Discuss** major issues affecting the character of the AONB and, where appropriate, make recommendations;
- **Act as a forum** where the three local authorities can discuss and co-ordinate their activities;
- **Suggest priorities** for action, **agree and monitor** an annual work programme and **identify** the resources required to carry out the work.

The Joint Advisory Committee normally meets twice a year, in order to make formal policy decisions and monitor the work of the AONB Unit and AONB Partnership.

A small Working Group of officers from the local authorities and Natural England meets regularly with the AONB Unit and also provides the JAC with support. This Core Partners Group considers budget and policy issues on a day-to-day basis, as well as monitoring the allocation of grants and work undertaken.

A variety of mechanisms are used to enable two-way dialogue between the formal AONB management bodies and local residents, community groups and land managers.

1.5 The AONB Management Plan

The basis for the Management Plan

The Howardian Hills contains a wide range of features – woodland, parkland, farmland, rivers and lakes; all of which provide a variety of wildlife habitats.

Changing demands on agricultural land, the economics of agricultural and woodland management and a variety of environmental factors constantly alter the relationship between different land uses, bringing changes to the landscape. A number of tourist attractions lie within the AONB and it also has many villages, large country houses and estates that are popular with visitors. Several tourist routes cross the area, whilst the major attractions of York, the North York Moors National Park and the Yorkshire Coast are also nearby. In the past there have been relatively few threats from major development proposals but with the continuing focus on rural economic development, increased levels of traffic (particularly on the A64), the demand for new housing and the emergence of hydraulic fracturing ('fracking') as a technique to exploit natural gas reserves, the pressures are mounting. Small-scale incremental changes can also have significant effects, as impacts build up over time. The

Management Plan, which helps inform and guide the spatial plans covering the area, provides a useful means for ensuring that the problems and opportunities that these pressures bring are addressed and guided in a way that conserves and enhances the AONB landscape. This will be particularly important during this Management Plan period, given the significant change in rural land management policy and incentives that is likely to result from the Brexit process.

Details of the legal requirement and basis for the AONB Management Plan are contained in Chapter 1.1. The Plan must provide a Vision, together with a set of Objectives and Actions, which formulate the local authority policies for the AONB and help to define their functions in relation to it. It should also raise the profile of AONB management issues and demonstrate the commitment of all public bodies, statutory undertakers and other interested organisations to the management of the area. The constituent local authorities agreed that the Joint Advisory Committee should co-ordinate the preparation and revision of Management Plans on their behalf. The three local authorities must formally Adopt this revised Plan by 1st April 2019. Although the

Management Plan is written specifically for the designated area of the AONB, activities adjacent to the formal boundary can have an impact on the AONB itself or its setting. The work of the Joint Advisory Committee may therefore take it outside the formal boundary when this would benefit AONB objectives, particularly in relation to work with communities, countryside management advice and development control.

The policy and strategy context

There are a large number of plans and strategies that impact on the landscape, economy and communities of the Howardian Hills. They operate at an international level e.g. the European Landscape Convention, national level e.g. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), county level e.g. Minerals and Waste Local Development Frameworks and local level e.g. Local Development Frameworks, Community Strategies.

The important focus of the AONB Management Plan, and what differentiates it from these other plans and strategies, is the primary purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Howardian Hills. The Management Plan is

a statutory document which helps inform and guide other plans, indicating how their policies should be formulated and implemented in relation to the AONB.

In terms of development control, the AONB lies within areas covered by the Ryedale and Hambleton District Councils, who are responsible for local planning matters. The area is also covered by North Yorkshire County Council, which has responsibility for minerals and waste planning. The three principal plans that guide the day-to-day planning decisions taken by these Councils are currently in a state of evolution and review and the most up-to-date documents can be viewed on their websites.

The Howardian Hills AONB Management Plan

As described above, the AONB Management Plan has a clearly defined purpose and role within the suite of other plans and strategies. It provides a framework for partnership, by helping all those who have an interest and involvement in the AONB to see ways in which their individual or collective efforts and decisions can contribute to looking after the area. A primary aim is to gain their support and to this end the Plan provides a focus for:

- Drawing together up-to-date information on the AONB.

- Considering conflicting pressures and issues.
- Establishing clear and practical Objectives and Actions to guide integrated decision-making and progress on the ground.
- Recommending priorities for action.
- Identifying the resources and funding that may be required.

Because many of the activities which can radically alter the character of the landscape do not fall within planning control, the AONB Management Plan provides an essential tool to help guide future land management activity, funding, development and recreational use. It also provides the benchmark against which proposals or activities can be tested for compatibility with AONB Purposes.

Achieving a consensus for this type of approach naturally involves all who own or work the land, as well as the local authorities, Government departments and agencies, voluntary groups, local residents and the many individuals who enjoy the area.

For this review of the Management Plan stakeholders with an interest in each Topic area provided information to update the Key Facts and General Principles contained in the 2014-2019 Plan, and confirmed the issues likely to be encountered over

the next five years. The information was used to revise and update the Objectives and Actions for the 2019-2024 Plan.

A number of technical research reports and statistics were also used – these can be found in the State of the AONB Report under each of the respective chapter headings.

The policies and priorities of other organisations are constantly evolving and the AONB Management Plan doesn't aim to reference or summarise all of them. Likewise, the situation within the AONB is constantly changing and the Management Plan can only be a 'snap-shot' of the time at which it was formally revised.

The Plan will therefore be under constant review to ensure that its overall aims are being achieved, with the next formal review due to take place in 2023/24.

1.6 Landscape Character

Variations in landscape character

By analysing various landscape elements, a number of broad landscape character types have been identified. Each has its own unique combination of characteristics which give it a special sense of place.

A full description of the individual landscape types is contained in The Howardian Hills Landscape report⁽²⁷⁾.

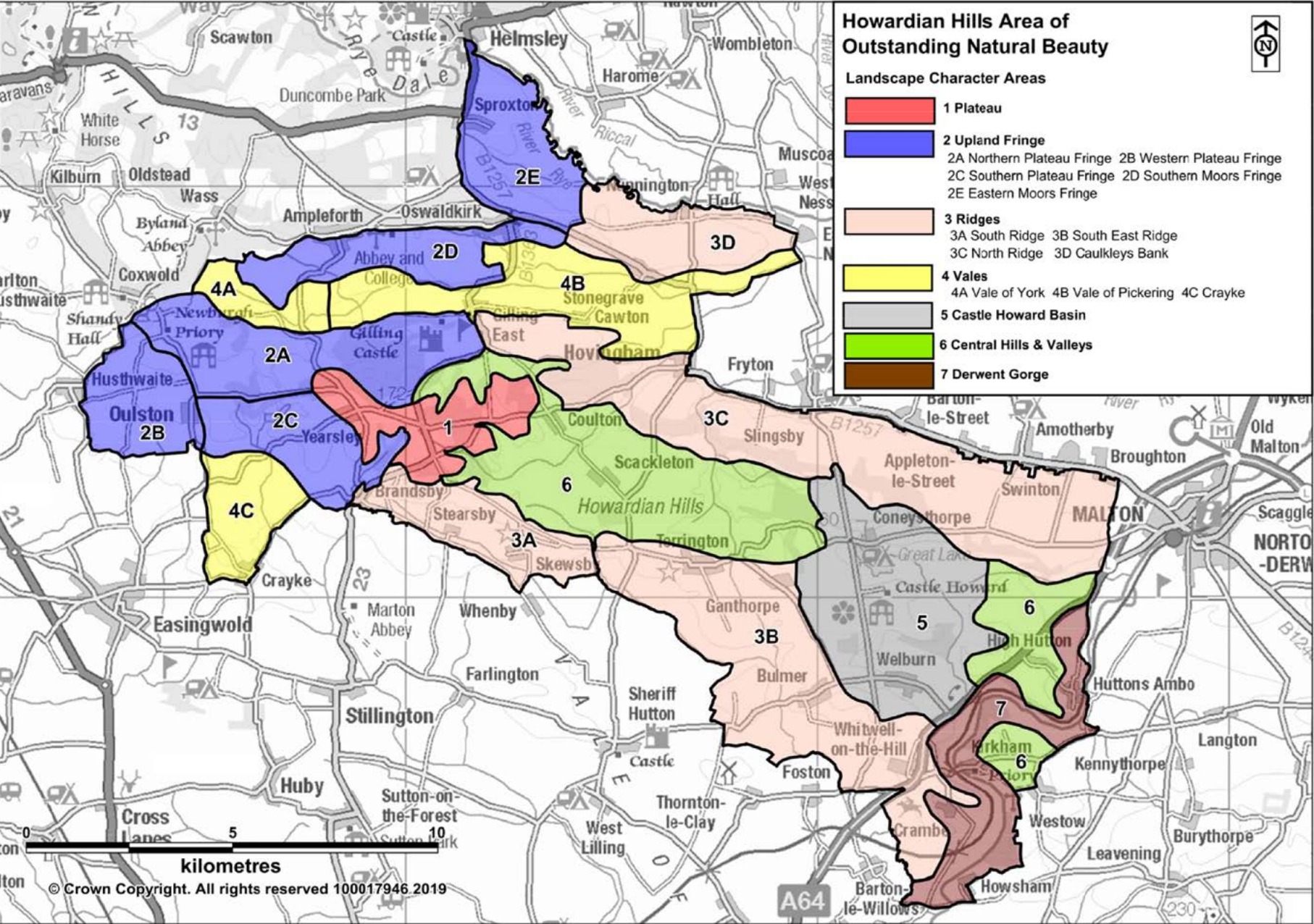
The landscape character types are illustrated in Figure 4. The AONB has seven types with, in places, local sub-divisions:

1. **Plateau**
2. **Upland Fringes**
 - a. Northern Plateau Fringe
 - b. Western Plateau Fringe
 - c. Southern Plateau Fringe
 - d. Southern Moors Fringe
 - e. Eastern Moors Fringe
3. **Ridges**
 - a. South Ridge
 - b. South East Ridge
 - c. North Ridge
 - d. Caulkleys Bank
4. **Vales**
 - a. Vale of York
 - b. Vale of Pickering
 - c. Crayke
5. **Castle Howard Basin**
6. **Central Hills and Valleys**
7. **Derwent Gorge**

As these landscape character types reflect differences in landform, vegetation and land management, they have been used as a basis for dividing the AONB into the Management Zones referred to in the Landscape Management & Priority Sites section of the Plan.

⁽²⁷⁾ *The Howardian Hills Landscape, Cobham Resource Consultants, Countryside Commission, 1995*

Figure 4: Landscape Character Areas



2.1 A Vision for a Living Landscape

Section 2.3 (A Rich Heritage) describes the physical character of the AONB landscape and the detailed elements that contribute to its Special Qualities. Apart from the geology and natural landform of the Howardian Hills, all the other factors that influence the way the AONB looks and feels are largely governed by human activity (past and present). It is the actions of people, acting as both individuals and communities, which shapes the area and gives it its 'sense of place'.

All the issues and factors described in subsequent sections of this Plan combine in a constantly variable pattern to define the character of the Howardian Hills. It is therefore the activities, hopes and aspirations of the people who live and work in the area or enjoy it for leisure and recreation that will ultimately determine its future.

In addition to 'everyday' human factors there are the unpredictable impacts of climate change. Invasive species of plants and animals, new diseases affecting tree species, and the impact of severe/prolonged localised weather conditions are increasingly influencing management

decisions that affect the AONB. For example, since the last revision of the Management Plan in 2014, two of the commonest tree species in the AONB (larch and ash) can no longer be planted due to the spread of tree diseases into the AONB. This is already starting to affect the AONB landscape in a way that wasn't foreseen 5 years ago, and is likely to lead to more profound effects over the next 5-10 years.

Of vital importance are the local communities within the AONB, as only by acting jointly can any significant progress be made on some issues. The work of community development organisations has led to a noticeable increase in community activity in recent years. Affordable/local needs housing for key local workers and providing services to the relatively dispersed communities of the Howardian Hills remain as significant challenges however.

The Vision for the Howardian Hills must therefore recognise that the landscape will change, but it needs to ensure that it does so in a way that conserves and enhances its Special Qualities. This will be a particular challenge over the next 5-year period, given the UK's withdrawal from the EU in March

2019 and the as yet unknown effects this will have on land management and the UK's economic conditions as a whole.

The Vision

The policies in the AONB Management Plan need to be guided by a long-term goal. The Vision for local people and partner organisations to work towards for 2035 is:

The Howardian Hills will continue to be a tranquil and sympathetically managed rural area. It will still be notable for its extensive woodland, rolling farmland, large country houses and designed parklands. The threats to the natural and cultural resources of the AONB will have been mitigated by the adoption of appropriate resilience strategies and these assets will be sympathetically managed within a diverse and prosperous rural economy. Active and resilient communities will have increased opportunities for people of all ages to live and work in the area. Residents and visitors alike will be able to enjoy and appreciate the AONB in an environmentally sustainable way.

Key Vision Aims:

- Farming, forestry and local businesses will be environmentally, socially and economically sustainable, thriving and developing due to the Special Qualities of the AONB and the opportunities they bring.
- All SSSIs will be in Favourable Condition, with the long-standing water quality issues on the River Derwent resolved.
- All conifer plantation areas within Ancient Woodland SINCs will have been restored, or be in the process of restoration, to resilient native broadleaves.
- All grassland SINCs will be in sustainable grazing/cutting regimes.
- Areas of Priority Habitats and populations of Priority Species within the AONB will have been expanded, buffered and linked via a more diverse landscape, to form a coherent network of green infrastructure that is resilient to climate change impacts.
- Designated Heritage Assets (Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Registered Parks & Gardens) will be in sustainable management, in the Low/Not at Risk category as defined by Historic England.
- There will be a more diverse mix of housing units/tenures, and more services will be delivered at community level or remotely e.g. via the internet

or as yet undeveloped technologies, thereby reducing the need to travel.

- A network of public and community transport links will be in place to cater for the majority of travel needs.
- The need for personal and business road transport will be much reduced, and this will be powered by more sustainable fuels as part of a low-Carbon economy.
- All Rights of Way will be easy to use, with the minimum of barriers to all types of user.
- A wide cross-section of society will enjoy and appreciate the Special Qualities of the AONB, for their intrinsic value and for the physical and mental wellbeing that they provide.

The Management Plan contains Objectives and Actions for the period 2019-2024 under three broad themes: A Rich Heritage; Living and Working in the Howardian Hills; and Enjoying the AONB. Achievement of the Objectives and Actions for this 5-year period will contribute to the ultimate achievement of the Vision.

2.2 Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services

One of the key documents that has guided the AONB Management Plan for many years is Biodiversity 2020: a strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services⁽²⁸⁾.

Outcome 1C is of particular relevance to AONBs and sets out the challenge that we have been helping to meet:

Outcome 1C: *By 2020, at least 17% of land and inland water, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, [will be] conserved through effective, integrated and joined up approaches to safeguard biodiversity and ecosystem services including through management of our existing systems of protected areas and the establishment of nature improvement areas.*

In 2010 Defra published six principles which underpin an Ecosystem Approach:

1. Taking a more holistic approach to policy-making and delivery, with the focus on maintaining healthy ecosystems and ecosystem services.

2. Ensuring that the value of ecosystem services is fully reflected in decision-making.
3. Ensuring that environmental limits are respected in the context of sustainable development, taking into account ecosystem functioning.
4. Taking decisions at the appropriate spatial scale, while recognising the cumulative impacts of those decisions.
5. Promoting adaptive management of the natural environment to respond to changing pressures, including climate change.
6. Identifying and involving all relevant stakeholders in the decision and plan-making process.

Defra's major policy document 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment'⁽²⁹⁾ indicates that a new strategy for nature will be developed, building on the Biodiversity 2020 document. One of the key principles of the 25 Year Environment Plan is to adopt a natural capital approach in decision-making. New information and

guidance on this is expected to emerge over the next few years. It will be used to refine our approach to management guidance, as we understand better the extent and roles of the natural capital assets of the AONB, the ecosystem services that they enable and the benefits which are then derived.

The National Character Area (NCA) profile produced by Natural England for NCA 29 (the Howardian Hills) contains a list of the ecosystem services that the NCA provides. 75% of the AONB is within NCA 29, with 10% in the Vale of Pickering NCA, 8% in the Vale of York NCA and 2% in the North York Moors & Cleveland Hills NCA.

⁽²⁸⁾ Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services, Defra, GOV.UK, 2011. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/biodiversity-2020-a-strategy-for-england-s-wildlife-and-ecosystem-services>

⁽²⁹⁾ A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment, Defra, GOV.UK, 2018. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>

The NCA 29 Character Area Profile⁽³⁰⁾ considers the principal ecosystem services and their condition/issues to be:

Provisioning services (food, fibre and water supply)

- **Food provision:** Over 82% of the NCA is cultivated – mostly crops and fallow, with smaller areas of permanent grassland. The fertile soils are mostly Grade 2 or 3 agricultural land. Holdings are largely given over to the production of cereals, mixed and general cropping, lowland sheep and cattle.
- **Timber provision:** The NCA has a high proportion of woodland cover and includes substantial areas of timber production, much of it from conifer plantations.
- **Biomass energy:** Defra maps show a medium potential yield for short rotation coppice and miscanthus.

- **Water availability:** The NCA overlies a minor post-Carboniferous rock aquifer. Land management practices influence the extent to which water at the surface will infiltrate and recharge groundwater supplies. There is no water available for further abstraction from the River Derwent, largely to protect downstream flow levels outside the NCA.

Regulating services (water purification, air quality maintenance and climate regulation)

- **Climate regulation:** The soils tend to have a low carbon content, of between 0 and 5%. There is a higher carbon content in the woodland soils and in semi-natural habitats (particularly wetlands), with opportunities to increase carbon storage/sequestration through enhanced management of these.
- **Regulating soil erosion:** In over 50% of the area the soils are classed as being prone to erosion. The NCA straddles two of Defra's priority catchments (Yorkshire Derwent and Yorkshire Ouse, Nidd & Swale), where the sedimentation of watercourses as a result of soil erosion is an identified problem. The problem can be regulated through appropriate land management practices.

- **Regulating soil quality:** Free-draining soils cover 44% of the NCA and play a valuable role in groundwater recharge. This enhanced infiltration is achieved through good soil management practices to maintain soil structure. The NCA's areas of slowly permeable soils are at risk of suffering compaction and reduced infiltration, which can result in diffuse pollution/sedimentation.
- **Regulating water quality:** The NCA straddles two of Defra's priority catchments (Yorkshire Derwent and Yorkshire Ouse, Nidd & Swale), with only 'moderate' water quality and identified problems of diffuse agricultural pollution from phosphates and nitrates from areas under cultivation. These issues can be addressed through good nutrient and soil management, and through measures to buffer watercourses and trap sediment, including appropriately sited woodland creation.
- **Regulating water flow:** There is some flood risk associated with the River Derwent and its tributaries. Land management within the wider catchment (woodland planting, wetland restoration/creation) can significantly reduce this risk by increasing the land's capacity to hold rainfall and by slowing its flow into watercourses.

⁽³⁰⁾ National Character Area 29 Profile:
Howardian Hills, Natural England, 2012

Cultural services (inspiration, education and wellbeing)

- **Sense of place/inspiration:** The sense of place is framed by the landform – a belt of complex rounded limestone and calcareous sandstone ridges rising above the surrounding vales. The landscape is a diverse mosaic of sheltered valleys, woodland, parkland and villages, with open arable and large-scale plantations on the intervening ridges and plateaux, offering extensive views over the vales. The extent of designed parkland is a defining characteristic.
- **Sense of history:** A sense of history is evident in the remains of Bronze Age burial mounds, Iron Age earthworks and deserted medieval settlements. There is significant evidence of Roman occupation, and a strong pattern of medieval nucleated settlement in the valleys. Historic designed parkland associated with country houses is a strong feature of the landscape.
- **Tranquillity:** The area is an important resource for tranquillity, with 85% of it classed as ‘undisturbed’.

- **Recreation:** Recreation and access are supported by the Ebor and Centenary Way long distance routes, a network of footpaths and bridleways, and a small amount of open access land.
- **Biodiversity:** There is 1 internationally designated site within the NCA – part of the River Derwent Special Area of Conservation (SAC), 75ha of which lies within this NCA. There are 8 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the NCA, making up less than 1% (142ha) of the area. These designated sites, and other areas of priority habitat (such as Ancient woodlands), will be at the core of efforts to increase the resilience of native flora and fauna to future environmental change. There are 66 locally designated Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC).
- **Geodiversity:** There are 3 geological SSSIs within the NCA. Kirkham Gorge is of scientific importance as a renowned example of a glacial overflow channel.

Many of the ecosystem services that the AONB provides are closely linked to the Special Qualities for which the area was originally designated.

Climate Change

One over-arching factor that has the potential to impact heavily on the Special Qualities of the AONB, its natural capital and the ecosystem services it provides, is climate change. The general long-term prediction is for hotter drier summers and warmer wetter winters, with more frequent and extreme weather events. Some of the effects could include more frequent and severe flooding of farmland in winter, reduced grass and cereal yields in summer, damage to archaeological remains by soil erosion and weathering, loss of fertile topsoil from fields, windblow of mature trees, new species moving in, or extinction of existing species unable to move within the landscape. Both research information and practical observations will be important in deciding how to manage these impacts. For the last Management Plan period 2014-2019 patterns of prolonged and extreme weather, e.g. snow/frost, hot dry weather, cold easterly winds and heavy rainfall were experienced.

Improving soil health is felt to be probably the single most significant action that could be taken to mitigate against climate change impacts in the Howardian Hills. Better soil health could bring multiple natural capital and ecosystem services benefits such as improved crop yields, improved water retention in both winter and summer (reducing both flooding and the need for irrigation respectively), increased carbon storage, reduced soil erosion and improved water quality. Similar benefits could also be achieved from increased tree and woodland planting, in targeted locations where this would also conserve and/or enhance landscape character.

Key Issues 2019 – 2024

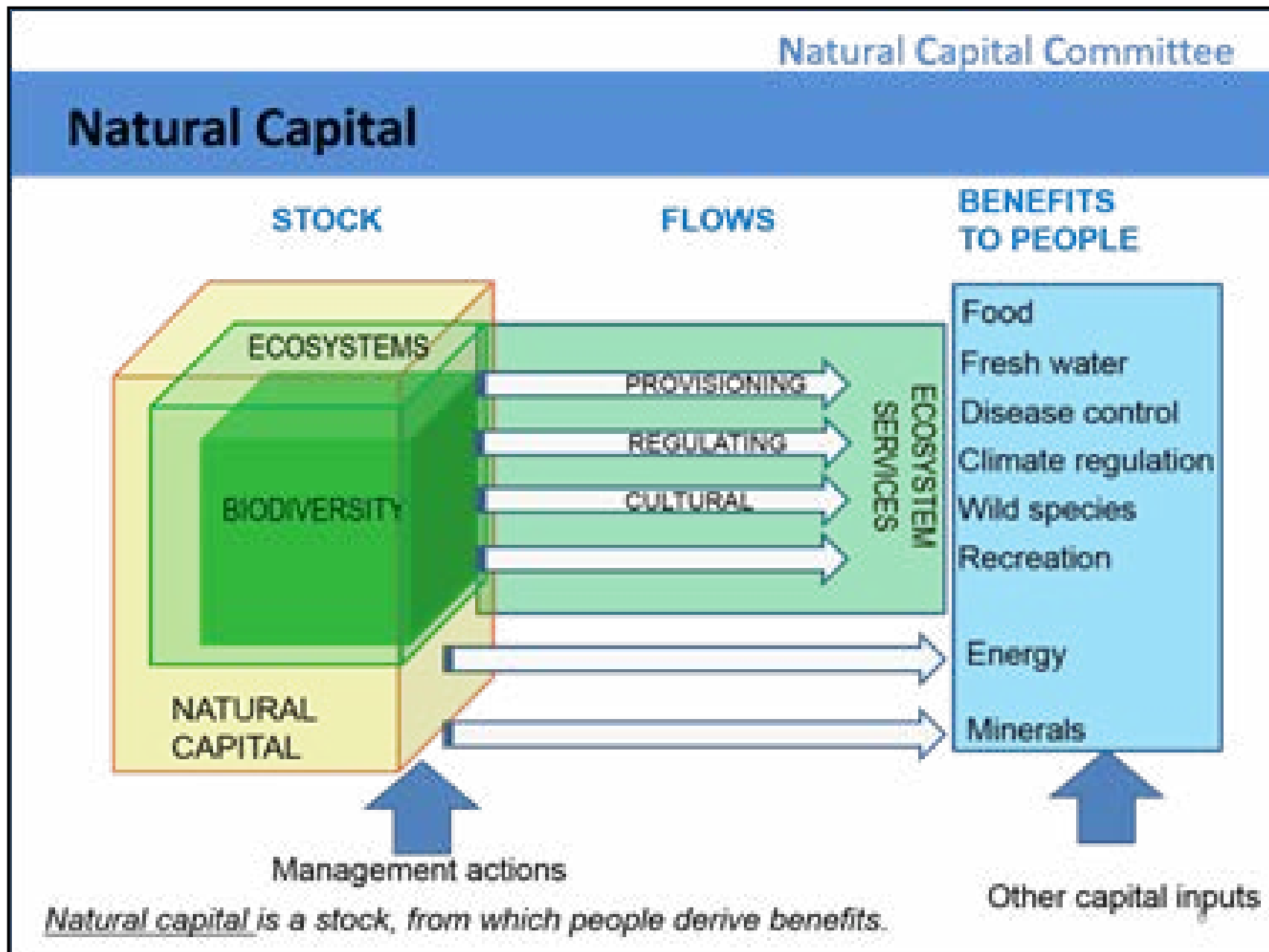
- The need to improve understanding of the AONB's natural capital assets, their quality and the ecosystem services that they provide. This is important for informing management decisions, scheme delivery and monitoring, as well as for starting to understand what a resilient Howardian Hills AONB landscape might look like.
- The need to improve understanding of the impact of management/development decisions on natural capital assets and ecosystem services, and the interactions with the AONB's Special Qualities.
- The continued observation of climate/ weather patterns, to assess possible long-term implications and any changes to the AONB, its natural capital assets and ecosystem services.
- Developing more integrated partnership working with the North York Moors National Park, given the overlap of farmland types and habitats between the two areas, to maximise the area covered by an ecosystem approach.

Objectives – Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services

NCES1	Gain a better understanding of the AONB's natural capital assets, their quality and their relative roles/ significance in the provision of ecosystem services.
NCES2	Promote sustainability and support appropriate projects that benefit the AONB's natural capital, ecosystem services and Special Qualities.
NCES3	Monitor climate change trends/ scenarios and evaluate potential future impacts on the AONB.

Please see the Action Programme for details of specific Actions for each Objective.

The relationship between natural capital, ecosystem services and benefits



Natural capital Assets and Benefits provided within the Howardian Hills AONB

	Benefit									
HHAONB Natural Capital Asset	Food	Fibre	Energy	Clean water	Clean Air	Recreation	Aesthetics	Wildlife	Protection from hazards	Equable climate
Species										
Ecological Communities										
Soils										
Freshwaters										
Land										
Atmosphere										
Minerals										
Sub-soil Assets										

2.3 A Rich Heritage



2.3.1 Natural Environment

Key Facts

- The AONB is a key area for a number of nationally important Natural Environment & Rural Communities (NERC) Act Section 41 Priority Habitats and Species, including lowland broadleaved woodland, wood pasture and veteran trees, limestone and neutral grasslands and fen meadows.
- Characteristic species include brown hare, skylark, yellowhammer, tree sparrow and barn owl, as well as several local rarities such as knapweed broomrape and baneberry.
- Around 80% of the habitats in the AONB are either farmland or are associated with human settlement⁽³¹⁾. Priority Habitats (which show the strongest semi-natural characteristics) represent only 9% of the total area of the AONB⁽³²⁾.
- A comprehensive field survey of habitats in 1992 recorded 362ha of high quality neutral grassland, 11.5ha of unimproved calcareous grassland and 761ha of botanically much poorer semi-improved grassland⁽³³⁾.
- It also recorded 14.5ha of mire. Most of this habitat type is found along streams and rivers, particularly near Coulton and in the Derwent Valley.
- 85ha of open water was recorded, with the largest water bodies being the lakes at Castle Howard, Wiganthorpe, Newburgh Priory and Pond Head (Oulston) Reservoir.
- A survey of road verges in 1997 found nearly 38ha of species-rich grassland habitat on 132 separate stretches of verge⁽³⁴⁾.
- In 2016 there was 3,330ha of woodland in the AONB; 1,569ha was classified as Ancient, with 174ha classified as Ancient Semi-Natural⁽³⁵⁾.
- In 2016 8% of the AONB's rivers and streams and 50% of its groundwater bodies were classified as being of Good Ecological Status⁽³⁶⁾, in comparison to 17% of England's rivers and streams and 53% of its groundwater bodies.
- Both Ryedale and Hambleton Districts have Local Biodiversity Action Plans (LBAPs) in place, although these haven't been formally reviewed for over 5 years. The AONB area is now covered by a more informal and wider Biodiversity Partnership, which also includes Scarborough Borough Council.
- A comprehensive field survey of geodiversity sites in 2018 recorded 16 sites (all in the Ryedale District) that were considered worthy of formal assessment for Local Geological Site status. Following evaluation by the North Yorkshire Local Geological Sites Panel, 16 sites have been notified to Ryedale District Council.
- The AONB contains: 1 Special Area for Conservation (SAC); 8 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (5 Biological, 3 Geological); 66 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC); 16 Local Geological Sites (LGS).
- The AONB is a Priority Area in the North Yorkshire & York Local Nature Partnership (NY&Y LNP) Strategy.
- The natural capital assets associated with the AONB's natural environment include: Species; Ecological Communities; Soils; Freshwaters; Land; Atmosphere; Minerals; Sub-soil Assets.

⁽³¹⁾ Final report for LCM2007 – the new UK land cover map, 2011. CS Technical Report No 11/07 NERC/Centre for Ecology & Hydrology

⁽³²⁾ Natural England, 2017

⁽³³⁾ Southern Ryedale and Howardian Hills AONB Phase I Survey, A Weston, University of York/English Nature, 1992

⁽³⁴⁾ Howardian Hills AONB Roadside Verge and Hedgerow Survey, Bullen Consultants, Howardian Hills AONB Joint Advisory Committee, 1998

⁽³⁵⁾ Forestry Commission, 2016

⁽³⁶⁾ Environment Agency, 2016

- The ecosystem services that these natural capital assets provide include: Provisioning Services (food, timber, biomass energy, water availability); Regulating Services (climate, soil erosion, soil quality, water quality, water flow); Cultural Services (sense of place/ inspiration, sense of history, tranquillity, recreation, biodiversity, geodiversity).
- Benefits accruing to the AONB from the management of these assets and services include: Food; Fibre; Energy; Clean water; Clean air; Recreation; Aesthetics; Wildlife; Protection from hazards; an Equable climate.
- Please refer to the table in Chapter 2.2, which cross-references the AONB's natural capital assets with the benefits they provide.
- Further information and statistics can be found in the State of the AONB Report.

General Principles

- National Character Area (NCA) 29 Statement of Environmental Opportunity: Support sustainable management of the agricultural landscape to retain important rates of food provision, while enhancing the network of semi-natural habitats within pastoral and arable landscapes, protecting the wildlife and

water quality of the River Derwent, optimising carbon storage, soil quality and regulation of peak flow events, and strengthening the sense of place⁽³⁷⁾.

- The Objectives contained in Defra's 25 Year Environment Plan (25YEP) should be promoted and delivered⁽³⁸⁾.
- Biodiversity 2020 (BD2020) objectives for the AONB's SSSIs, Priority Habitats and Species should be promoted and delivered.
- The principle of bigger, better, more and joined-up, as developed in Prof. Sir John Lawton's report⁽³⁹⁾, should be used to guide habitat management action and create a more wildlife-friendly matrix of habitats across the wider countryside, including within villages and gardens.
- A natural capital and ecosystem approach to delivery of projects and consultation responses should be developed, in line with Biodiversity 2020 Outcome 1C (and its successor strategy)⁽⁴⁰⁾.

⁽³⁷⁾National Character Area 29 Profile: Howardian Hills, Natural England, 2012

⁽³⁸⁾A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment, Defra, GOV.UK, 2018. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>

⁽³⁹⁾Making Space for Nature: A review of England's Wildlife Sites and Ecological Network, Prof. Sir John Lawton, Defra, 2010

⁽⁴⁰⁾Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services, Defra, GOV.UK, 2011. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/biodiversity-2020-a-strategy-for-england-s-wildlife-and-ecosystem-services>

- The North Yorkshire & York Local Nature Partnership (NY&Y LNP) should be used as a forum to develop and deliver integrated projects, both within the Howardian Hills and linking to adjoining areas.
- The Catchment Partnerships, in particular the Yorkshire Derwent Catchment Partnership⁽⁴¹⁾, should be supported, to provide a framework for delivery of water-based habitat and ecosystem service enhancements.
- Partnership working with the North York Moors National Park should continue as a fundamental principle, given the overlap of farmland types and habitats between the AONB and National Park.
- Knowledge about habitat and species status within the AONB, particularly for farmland birds, should be improved.
- The status of the AONB's water bodies, as measured by the Environment Agency's Water Framework Directive (WFD) indicators, should be improved.
- The condition of geodiversity assets, and in particular sites designated as Local Geological Sites (LGS), should be improved.

⁽⁴¹⁾<http://www.eastyorkshirerivertrust.org.uk/derwent-catchment-partnership.html>

- Awareness and understanding amongst local people and visitors of how important the AONB is as a biodiversity and geodiversity resource should be increased.
- The occurrence and distribution of invasive non-native species should be monitored and management action taken where appropriate.
- Post-Brexit agricultural policy and the new environmental land management scheme should address the farmland conservation management issues in the AONB, particularly in relation to Priority Habitats and Species, and should promote the benefits that nature can offer to society.
- AONB Partnership advice, assistance and (where appropriate) grant aid should be provided to help land managers conserve, enhance and increase understanding and enjoyment of biodiversity and geodiversity features on their land.

Key Issues 2019 – 2024

- **The unknown outcome of the Brexit process and the potential impacts of future trading arrangements, currency fluctuations and input/output prices on the resilience of farm businesses. These factors could potentially lead to significant changes in both land management practices and land ownership within the AONB.**
- **The Government's future priorities, format and level of funding for farm support/agri-environment measures following the outcome of the Brexit process.**
- The sympathetic management of SSSIs and SINCs, as they form the AONB's principal network of important biodiversity sites.
- The continued development of river catchment-based partnerships, to provide an integrated framework for action in delivering mutual objectives.
- How well the post-Brexit environmental land management scheme can improve the natural capital value and ecosystem services provided by both important wildlife sites and the wider farmed landscape of the AONB.
- The availability of other funding to supplement/fill any gaps within the post-Brexit environmental land management scheme, to maximise action for biodiversity in the AONB.
- The relative scarcity of widespread and up-to-date habitat and species extent, quality and abundance data, to inform management decisions, scheme delivery and monitoring.
- The continued spread, and impact of, infectious plant diseases and both native and non-native plant/animal species, e.g. Chalara Dieback of Ash, Phytophthora ramorum, roe deer, Himalayan balsam, rhododendron, grey squirrel, muntjac deer and signal crayfish. Some of these diseases and species are already present, whilst others are currently found outside the AONB but are threatening to move in. More potential threats are likely to emerge in the future.

Objectives – Natural Environment

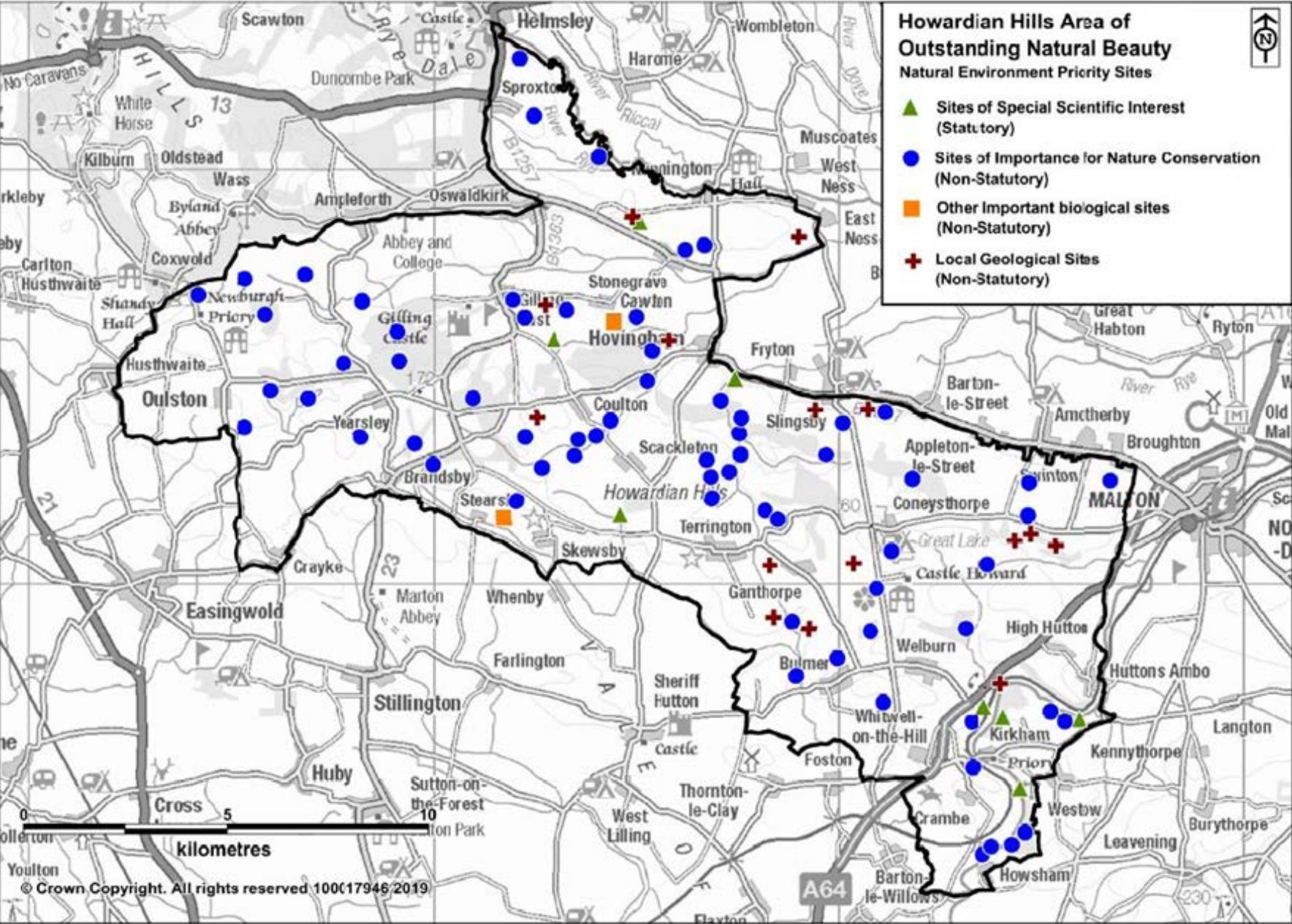
- NE1** Continually improve knowledge of the biodiversity resources in the AONB.
- NE2** Ensure that appropriate protection is given to the best nature conservation sites in the AONB.
- NE3** Assist with the implementation of 25YEP/BD2020/WFD/LBAP targets for Priority Habitats in the AONB (broadleaved woodland; grasslands; wetlands) to improve condition and increase network connectivity.
- NE4** Assist with the implementation of 25YEP/BD2020/WFD/LBAP targets for Priority Species for which the AONB is important.
- NE5** Assist with the implementation of 25YEP/BD2020/WFD/LBAP targets for wildlife within villages.
- NE6** Monitor and where appropriate support control of invasive non-native species in the AONB.
- NE7** Encourage the conservation of important geodiversity sites and features in the AONB.
- NE8** Provide assistance to farmers and land managers, to help them manage their land sympathetically.
- NE9** Ensure continued recognition of the Howardian Hills as a priority area for biodiversity.

Please see the Action Programme for details of specific Actions for each Objective.

For Actions relating to:

- Community involvement → **Objective LC2**
- Hydraulic fracturing ('fracking') → **Objective DRE4**
- Skills training → **Objective DRE6**
- Promotion & awareness → **Objective AP2**

Figure 5: Natural Environment Priority Sites



2.3.2 Historic Environment

Key Facts

- A rich history of human activity is evident in the Howardian Hills, from Mesolithic flint scatters to Roman bath houses to medieval monasteries to railways. The area has good soils for farming, with the geology and extensive woodlands providing stone and timber for building. The area's proximity to Malton with its Roman fort means that there was an extensive supply chain, including villas or farming communities in the surrounding area. These would have provided food and other goods, such as pottery from Crambeck, to the fort.
- A strong theme of the Howardian Hills is the scatter of nucleated medieval villages, which place name evidence shows originated in the Saxon and Scandinavian periods. The Saxon minster at Stonegrave and the open strip fields of ridge-and-furrow still visible at Crambe are some of the best preserved remains.
- Monastic orders were drawn to the area, with monasteries established at Kirkham and Newburgh. The tradition continues today with Ampleforth Abbey.
- The monasteries were important landowners with widespread farms, so at the time of the Dissolution in 1537 land and building materials were sold cheaply. This enabled the rise of landed gentry whose big estates and country houses form arguably the most visible theme of the Howardian Hills today. Estates and grand houses at Castle Howard, Gilling, Newburgh, Nunnington, Hovingham, Howsham, Brandsby, Kirkham, Firby, Whitwell, High Hutton, Ganthorpe, Swinton, Hildenley, Wiganthorpe, Dalby and Sproxton are all still recognisable to a greater or lesser extent today. The remarkable density of such estates is also likely to be due to the good quality soils (for agriculture), the extensive woodland, the scenic landscape and the proximity of the ancient regional capital of York.
- The complex geology allowed only small-scale operations of extractive industries such as stone quarrying, coal mining, lime burning (for building mortar and land improvement), brick and tile making and pottery manufacture. The Derwent is the only navigable river in the AONB and provided only limited use for transport of goods owing to poor access. Three railways served the area, with only the York to Scarborough line now remaining open.
- Although the Industrial Revolution only appears to have had a limited impact, the various Agricultural Revolutions changed the landscape of the Howardian Hills significantly. The old common fields were enclosed and the land improved for the production of sheep and crops. In the latter half of the Twentieth Century, agricultural improvement led to the removal of many miles of hedgerow, the draining of wetter land and the conversion of permanent grassland to arable cropping. Woodland is still extensive, consisting of both broadleaved Ancient Woodland and more recent conifer plantations on former lowland heathland. A wealth of prehistoric burial mounds and other features are now preserved within these plantations, because the unploughed heathland survived agricultural improvement. Fragments of ridge-and-furrow strip field systems can also still be seen in some areas, principally around villages.

- The history of religious and private estates in the Howardian Hills has resulted in a large stock of traditional stone-and-pantile farmhouses, farm buildings, cottages and village houses, many of them in ‘estate villages’. These buildings generally use the local honey-coloured limestone or iron-stained sandstone, with noticeable local distributions of each type of stone.
- As well as the physical remains there are also the cultural traditions that have developed over the centuries. Traditional values associated with a long history of religious activity and farming are still strong.
- An archaeological survey of the AONB was carried out in 1993 and a Historic Landscape Characterisation survey was completed in 2011. The discovery in 2012 of a long-lost corn mill on Yearsley Moor by a community archaeology group demonstrates the wealth of features from all periods that can be found when focus is concentrated on a specific area.
- The AONB contains: 374 Listed Buildings (59 Grade I or Grade II*); 11 Conservation Areas; 79 Scheduled Monuments; 49 non-designated heritage assets that are considered to be particularly important within the AONB context. The 5 Registered Historic Parks and Gardens comprise 11% of all North Yorkshire’s registered parks (outside the two National Parks), demonstrating how important they are to the character of the AONB.
- The 2018 Historic England ‘Heritage at Risk Register’ identified the following nationally significant assets as being At Risk in the AONB: 4 out of 59 Grade I & Grade II* Listed Buildings; 31 out of 79 Scheduled Monuments⁽⁴²⁾. A further 10 out of 315 Grade II Listed Buildings are recorded on District Council At Risk registers.
- The manufactured capital assets associated with the AONB’s historic environment include: earthworks dating from the Bronze and Iron Ages; the stock of both traditional and high-status buildings; the large number of designed parks and landscapes; transport and water infrastructure; industrial production facilities; the consumer goods (such as pottery) produced over the centuries within the AONB.
- The ecosystem services that these manufactured capital assets provide include: Provisioning Services (food, timber, biomass energy, water availability); Regulating Services (soil erosion, soil quality, water quality, water flow); Cultural Services (sense of place/ inspiration, sense of history, tranquillity, recreation, biodiversity, geodiversity).
- Benefits accruing to the AONB from the management of these assets and services include: Food; Fibre; Energy; Clean water; Clean air; Recreation; Aesthetics; Wildlife.
- Further information and statistics can be found in the State of the AONB Report.

⁽⁴²⁾Historic England, 2018

General Principles

- National Character Area (NCA) 29 Statement of Environmental Opportunity: Protect the geological and historic landscape features that are characteristic of the area, including its distinct landform, prehistoric earthworks, medieval monasteries, grand houses with designed parkland, and settlement pattern. Manage these features to provide diverse public benefits, enhancing the sense of place and history, and protecting natural resources⁽⁴³⁾.
- Community groups and other researchers should be supported in discovering and understanding the heritage of the AONB, and feeding the results into the North Yorkshire Historic Environment Record (HER).
- All nationally important heritage assets in the AONB should be appropriately conserved and managed.
- Designated heritage assets on Historic England's 'Heritage at Risk Register'

should be priorities for management action, to ensure ultimately that no assets appear on the Register and that a sustainable future has been secured for all designated and non-designated heritage assets in the AONB. Appropriate proposals for Enabling Development, to address issues affecting primarily Grade I and Grade II* Listed Buildings, should be supported where appropriate.

- Conservation/management plans should be prepared for all designed landscapes, to help develop a better understanding and appreciation of their significance and to guide their future management.
- The significance of all aspects of the historic environment should have a high profile amongst residents, land managers and visitors, to ensure that it is respected.
- Post-Brexit agricultural policy and the new environmental land management scheme should address the historic environment conservation management issues in the AONB, particularly in relation to non-designated heritage assets, and should promote the benefits that the historic environment can offer to society.

- AONB Partnership advice, assistance and (where appropriate) grant aid should be provided to help land managers recognise, conserve, enhance and increase understanding and enjoyment of historic environment features on their land.

⁽⁴³⁾National Character Area 29 Profile:
Howardian Hills, Natural England, 2012

Key Issues 2019 – 2024

- **The unknown outcome of the Brexit process and the potential impacts of future trading arrangements, currency fluctuations and input/output prices on the resilience of farm businesses. These factors could potentially lead to significant changes in both land management practices and land ownership within the AONB.**
- **The Government's future priorities, format and level of funding for farm support/agri-environment measures following the outcome of the Brexit process.**
- Small but incremental changes to heritage assets, due to amendments to Permitted Development Rights, unsympathetic modernisation work and potentially fewer resources for Planning Enforcement work.
- The condition of sites on Historic England's 'Heritage at Risk Register', particularly Scheduled Monuments affected by arable cultivation or damaging plant growth and the Grade I Listed structures at Castle Howard. Proposals for Enabling Development may come forward to address conservation deficit issues at this and other sites.
- The consolidation of work started during the Historic England-funded Monument

Management Scheme, to ensure that Scheduled Monuments remain free of bracken/scrub and that benign vegetation cover becomes established.

- The condition of non-designated heritage assets, particularly designed landscapes not on the Historic England Register.
- The length of time since the last comprehensive survey of archaeology in the AONB in 1993. Current data sources need to be thoroughly assessed, to draw out themes which contribute to the overall understanding of history and significance in the Howardian Hills, but where there is a lack of knowledge.

Objectives – Historic Environment

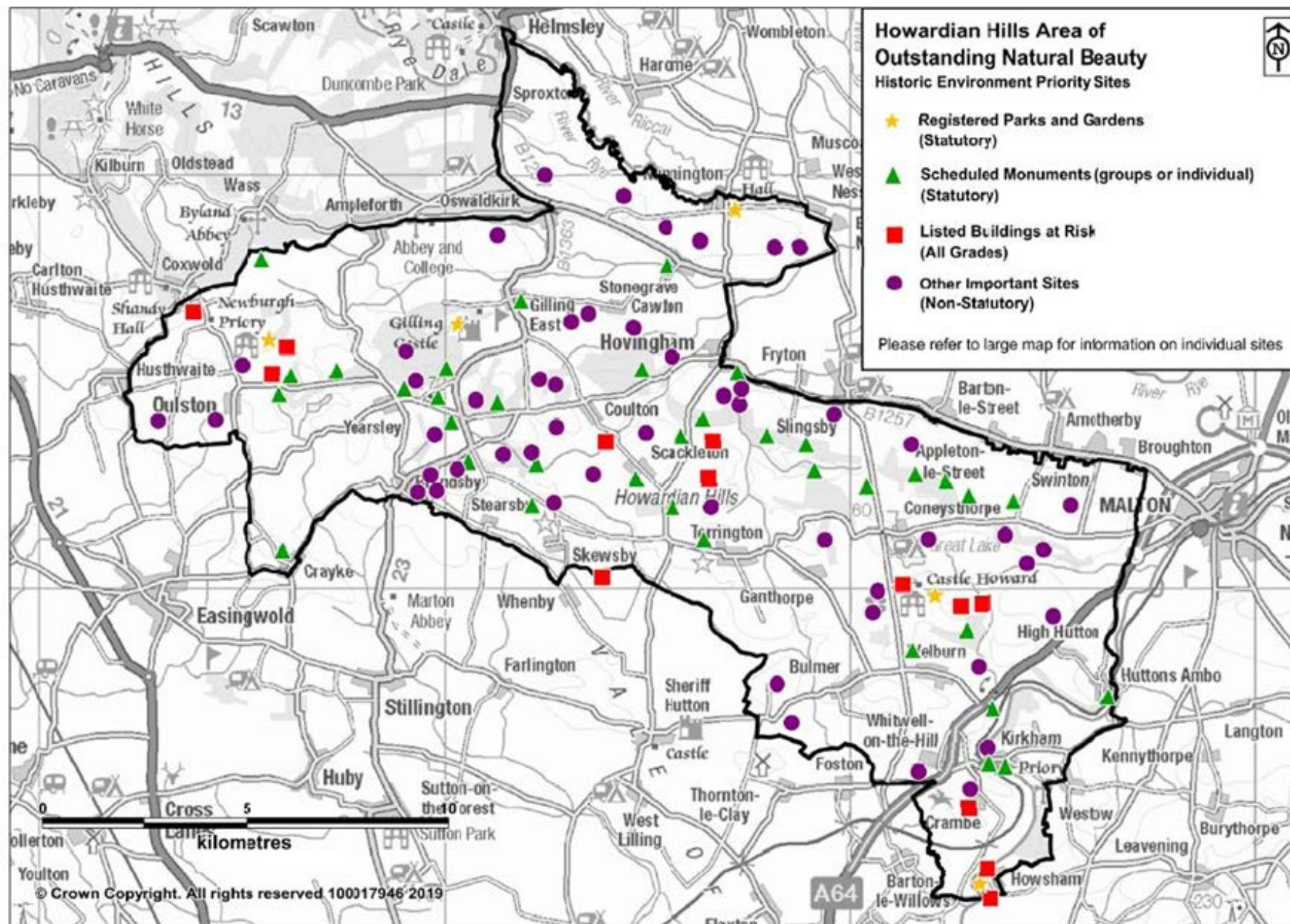
- | | |
|------------|---|
| HE1 | Improve understanding of the AONB's historic environment and its significance. |
| HE2 | Conserve and enhance the significance of the AONB's historic environment. |
| HE3 | Help local people to identify the non-designated heritage assets which contribute to the character of their area and support the development of management strategies for their conservation and enhancement. |

Please see the Action Programme for details of specific Actions for each Objective.

For Actions relating to:

- Community involvement → **Objective LC2**
- Hydraulic fracturing ('fracking') → **Objective DRE4**
- Skills training → **Objective DRE6**
- Promotion & awareness → **Objective AP2**

Figure 6: Historic Environment Priority Sites



2.4 Living and Working in The Howardian Hills



2.4.1 Local Communities

Key Facts

- The Howardian Hills AONB is sparsely populated, with approximately 5,950 people living within the AONB boundary itself. An additional 3,200 people live in the villages within its immediately adjacent 'socio-economic envelope'⁽⁴⁴⁾. This represents a 2% population decline over the last 5-year Management Plan period.
- The majority of the population is concentrated within a number of small villages and hamlets. Ampleforth (including the Abbey and College) is the largest village, with nearly 1,200 residents. Only four other villages contain more than 400 people. The scattering of villages is interspersed with numerous individual farms.
- Many villages are 'estate villages', where the principal estates still own a significant proportion of the properties (e.g. Coneysthorpe, Welburn, Hovingham and Nunnington).

⁽⁴⁴⁾Mid-2016 Population Estimates, ONS, Crown Copyright, 2016

- For North Yorkshire as a whole, the percentage of people aged 20-44 (25%) is significantly lower than for the Yorkshire & Humber region (32%) and England as a whole (33%)⁽⁴⁵⁾.
- The percentage of people aged 65-84 (21%) is higher than for the Yorkshire & Humber region (16%) and England as a whole (16%)⁽⁴⁴⁾.
- The market towns of Easingwold, Malton and Helmsley provide the main focus for local employment, shopping, health facilities and recreational activity, with only limited services available in individual villages.
- The issues raised during community liaison include volume of traffic (particularly HGVs), speeding traffic, the size of HGVs and agricultural machinery using narrow roads, dog fouling, litter, potholes, fracking, poor mobile phone signal, poor broadband connectivity, second homes/holiday cottages, waste reduction, plastic recycling, declining services within villages, housing (lack of affordable housing, and also Local Plan targets for house

⁽⁴⁵⁾Mid-Year Estimates, ONS, Crown Copyright, 2017

building), lack of local employment and lack of public transport. There is also recognition however of the tranquillity and natural beauty of the AONB.

- The AONB is a relatively low-crime area, although the agricultural sector suffers from illegal hare and deer coursing, crop damage and machinery theft, and this organised criminal activity can also spread into local villages as well.
- There is generally a strong voluntary and community sector within the AONB. A variety of groups provide voluntary and contracted services to support people, maintain the AONB landscape, facilitate access to cultural and heritage resources and initiate activities in local parishes and market towns.
- Many of the larger AONB villages have a Parish Plan, and a significant number of community projects have been instigated as a result of them. Most communities however have no kind of Parish or other community plan in place.
- The condition of village halls serving AONB communities has generally remained stable, following substantial programmes of improvement for many halls some 5-10 years ago.

- The LEADER Programme provided significant funding over many years for village hall improvements, community heritage projects, business development and farming/forestry productivity support.
- AONB funding for Sustainable Development projects has continued to assist with community improvements where applicable.
- After the end of the School Twinning Project (an HLF-funded programme which worked with the 11 primary schools in the AONB and 9 in York & Hull) in 2014, work with schools has continued on an ad-hoc basis or been linked to new initiatives such as the Ryevitalise Project.
- The Key Facts on employment and the economy of the AONB are contained in the Development & Rural Economy section of the Management Plan.
- Further information and statistics can also be found in the State of the AONB Report.

General Principles

- The AONB should have flexible and resilient communities that are well placed to adapt to the challenges that they continue to face.
- Knowledge-sharing and collaboration should be encouraged, to help both individuals and communities develop a

range of skills and assets that help them address current and future challenges.

- The loss of services and facilities within villages should be resisted where appropriate, with potential new, innovative and rejuvenated businesses being supported.
- Parish Planning should be supported as a useful process that can benefit all sections of a community.
- The linkages between the local market towns and their hinterland in the AONB should be developed, to maximise the social and economic development opportunities they provide.
- Continued coverage of the AONB by a Rural Development Programme such as LEADER should be a high priority post-Brexit, as programmes such as these can provide significant social and economic benefits for communities.
- AONB Partnership advice, assistance and (where appropriate) grant aid should be provided for appropriate community projects.

Key Issues 2019 – 2024

- An ageing and declining population profile, potentially resulting in fewer economically active people.
- Service provision linked to the ageing

population profile, with potentially greater reliance on services being delivered by communities themselves rather than by the public sector.

- The continued loss/closure of village amenities such as bus services, shops and pubs. Because these amenities are sparse already, the loss of only one of them can have a significant impact on a community.
- The continued development of high-speed broadband and mobile telecommunications coverage, as these are poor in many parts of the AONB and this can hinder access to services.
- The continuing importance of the role of environmental sustainability as a way of reducing living costs, for example via energy conservation and waste reduction.
- The continuing gradual loss of rural skills and local knowledge. This would be accelerated if the Brexit process resulted in significant numbers of family farms becoming unviable and families moving away as a result.
- The possible loss of identity and community cohesion in some rural communities, due to the turnover rate of house occupation and changing working patterns with longer commuting distances.

- Levels of rural crime such as illegal hare and deer coursing and the theft of farm machinery, livestock, heating oil, etc.
- Perceptions of the volume and speed of traffic passing through villages.
- Less public sector support and funding for community projects, with fewer ‘development officers’ and less grant aid.
- The potential loss of a Rural Development Programme such as LEADER, following the change in environmental support mechanisms after Brexit.

For Actions relating to:

- Hydraulic fracturing (‘fracking’) → **Objective DRE4**
- Skills training → **Objective DRE6**
- Mobile phone & broadband infrastructure → **Objective DRE7**
- Speeding traffic & poor driver behaviour → **Objective RTT2**
- Public transport → **Objective RTT3**
- Litter & fly-tipping → **Objective RAT4**
- Promotion & awareness → **Objective AP2**

Objectives – Local Communities

- | | |
|------------|--|
| LC1 | Support the retention of village services and the identification and implementation of projects that maintain and enhance village character, sustainability, economy and sense of community. |
| LC2 | Encourage voluntary and community engagement with the local natural and historic environment of the AONB. |

Please see the Action Programme for details of specific Actions for each Objective.

2.4.2 Agriculture

Key Facts

- Around 70% of the AONB is categorised as farmland and agricultural practices therefore have a major influence on the appearance of the landscape.
- Farming is a major industry and employment sector within the AONB, and many families have been farming their land for several generations.
- Around 30% of the farmed land is rented, principally from the large estates, and in the past this has had a generally stabilising effect on major land use change.
- During the period of agricultural intensification after World War Two a significant proportion of the grassland in the AONB was converted to arable cropping. Hedgerow removal was significant in some parts of the AONB but less marked in others.
- The land is predominantly classed as Grade 3, with some areas of Grade 2 along the limestone ridge between Malton and Hovingham. Permanent pasture is largely confined to the steeper slopes, poorer soils and small fields around villages.
- Farming in the AONB consists overwhelmingly of arable cropping, with associated sheep and cattle enterprises. The area of arable cropping has increased by 12%, and the number of sheep and lambs by 24%, over the last five years. There are a small number of poultry farms, and the number of pigs has decreased significantly over that time. The dairy herd has remained almost constant⁽⁴⁶⁾. The relatively fertile land, low elevation and moderate rainfall levels mean that food production is a significant ecosystem service provided by the AONB's farmland.
- Agri-environment schemes have generally been popular in the AONB, with the first Countryside Stewardship Scheme resulting in significant restoration of hedgerows and the creation of long lengths of grass margin. At its height, approximately 45% of the total AONB area was covered by original Countryside Stewardship Agreements.
- In 2017, 4% of the agricultural land area of the AONB was in Entry Level-type Stewardship, 2% in Mid Tier-type Stewardship and 26% in Higher Tier-type Stewardship. These agreements are worth over £860,000 per year to the land management economy of the AONB⁽⁴⁷⁾.
- Farm diversification enterprises within the AONB include visitor accommodation (B&B and self-catering), farm contracting, development of offices/workshops, specialist cropping/livestock and energy crop production. Commercial game shooting is an important component of the rural economy throughout the AONB.
- The natural capital assets associated with the AONB's agricultural sector include: Species; Ecological Communities; Soils; Freshwaters; Land; Atmosphere; Minerals; Sub-soil assets.

⁽⁴⁶⁾Defra June Census statistics

⁽⁴⁷⁾Natural England, 2018

- The ecosystem services that these natural capital assets provide include: Provisioning Services (food, timber, biomass energy, water availability); Regulating Services (soil erosion, soil quality, water quality, water flow); Cultural Services (sense of place/ inspiration, sense of history, tranquillity, recreation, biodiversity, geodiversity).
- Benefits accruing to the AONB from the management of these assets and services include: Food; Fibre; Energy; Clean water; Clean air; Recreation; Aesthetics; Wildlife; Protection from hazards; an Equable climate.
- Please refer to the table in Chapter 2.2, which cross-references the AONB's natural capital assets with the benefits they provide.
- Further information and statistics can be found in the State of the AONB Report.

General Principles

- National Character Area (NCA) 29 Statement of Environmental Opportunity: Support sustainable management of the agricultural landscape to retain important rates of food provision, while enhancing the network of semi-natural habitats within pastoral and arable landscapes, protecting the wildlife and water quality of the River Derwent, optimising carbon storage, soil quality and regulation of peak flow events, and strengthening the sense of place⁽⁴⁸⁾.
- A profitable and thriving agricultural and land management industry should be encouraged, as this is vital to the economic, environmental and social wellbeing of the Howardian Hills.
- Farm diversification enterprises should be supported where possible, although in general they are likely to remain secondary to the production of livestock, arable crops and (in the future) 'public goods' for many of the AONB's farmers.
- New farm buildings and infrastructure projects should be supported, where they follow the principles of the AONB New Farm Buildings & Infrastructure Design Guidance.

- Partnership working with the North York Moors National Park should continue as a fundamental principle, given the overlap of farmland types and habitats between the AONB and National Park.
- Post-Brexit agricultural policy and the new environmental land management scheme should create/ support resilient farm businesses and address the farmland conservation management issues in the AONB.
- AONB Partnership advice, assistance and (where appropriate) grant aid should be provided to help land managers conserve, enhance and increase understanding and enjoyment of biodiversity, geodiversity, historic environment and landscape features on their land.

⁽⁴⁸⁾National Character Area 29 Profile:
Howardian Hills, Natural England, 2012

Key Issues 2019 – 2024

- The unknown outcome of the Brexit process and the potential impacts of future trading arrangements, currency fluctuations and input/output prices on the resilience of farm businesses. These factors could potentially lead to significant changes in both land management practices and land ownership within the AONB.
- The Government's future priorities, format and level of funding for farm support/agri-environment measures following the outcome of the Brexit process.

Objectives – Agriculture

- | | |
|------------|---|
| AG1 | Encourage the development and uptake of new Government support mechanisms that promote sustainable farm and rural business development. |
| AG2 | Support farm businesses in the AONB by providing advice and appropriate assistance. |
| AG3 | Ensure high standards of design and careful siting of all new farm buildings and infrastructure. |

Please see the Action Programme for details of specific Actions for each Objective.

For Actions relating to:

- Advice and grant aid for biodiversity and geodiversity projects → **Objective NE8**
- Advice and grant aid for historic environment projects → **Objective HE2**
- Community involvement → **Objective LC2**
- Hydraulic fracturing ('fracking') → **Objective DRE4**
- Skills training → **Objective DRE6**
- Promotion & awareness → **Objective AP2**

2.4.3 Forestry and Woodland

Key Facts

- Woodland cover, at approximately 18%, is one of the defining features of the Howardian Hills landscape.
- 47% of the woodland is classified as Ancient Woodland⁽⁴⁹⁾.
- There are also significant numbers of in-field and boundary trees, designed parklands and areas of wood pasture, with many veteran and ancient trees.
- The AONB, together with the adjoining south west corner of the North York Moors National Park, is the most heavily wooded area in the north of England.
- In 2013, it was estimated that the AONB's soils and biomass had a store of approximately 1.3 million tonnes of carbon, and that its land use pattern was sequestering at a rate of approximately 85,000 tonnes of carbon per year. The large majority of this is due to the significant area of woodland.
- 85% of woodland is in private ownership, with the remaining 15% owned/leased by the Forestry Commission.
- Clearfelling rates are approximately 20-30ha per year.
- Approximately 60% of the woodland in the AONB is believed to be certified under the UK Woodland Assurance Scheme (UKWAS). This is principally the Castle Howard and Hovingham estates.
- The management objectives of the majority of woodland owners are principally timber/wood production and game shooting. Forest management is an important component of the rural economy throughout the AONB.
- The local market for broadleaved firewood logs is currently good and this has supported a relatively high level of management activity within woods recently.
- 78% of the woodland in the AONB is in active management, which is the highest rate for any AONB in England⁽⁵⁰⁾.
- Phytophthora ramorum was discovered on larch and rhododendron near Gilling in 2015, although this outbreak currently appears to have been satisfactorily controlled. Chalara Dieback of Ash is now widespread throughout the AONB, although mature trees don't appear to have been affected significantly as yet.
- The natural capital assets associated with the AONB's forestry and woodland management sector include: Species; Ecological Communities; Soils; Freshwaters; Land; Atmosphere.
- The ecosystem services that these natural capital assets provide include: Provisioning Services (food, timber, biomass energy, water availability); Regulating Services (soil erosion, soil quality, water quality, water flow); Cultural Services (sense of place/inspiration, sense of history, tranquillity, recreation, biodiversity, geodiversity).

⁽⁴⁹⁾Forestry Commission, 2016

⁽⁵⁰⁾Forestry Commission, 2016

- Benefits accruing to the AONB from the management of these assets and services include: Food; Fibre; Energy; Clean water; Clean air; Recreation; Aesthetics; Wildlife; Protection from hazards; an Equable climate.
- Please refer to the table in Chapter 2.2, which cross-references the AONB's natural capital assets with the benefits they provide.
- Further information and statistics can be found in the State of the AONB Report.

General Principles

- National Character Area (NCA) 29 Statement of Environmental Opportunity: Manage the wooded character of the NCA and its important historic parklands to optimise carbon storage, water quality and regulation of peak flow events, and to strengthen habitat networks, enhancing the sense of place and history⁽⁵¹⁾.
- Woodland cover should be maintained and, where appropriate, increased so as to retain the well-wooded appearance of the AONB landscape and assist with natural flood management.

- A move towards greater use of continuous cover management systems should be encouraged, where conditions are suitable.
- Multi-objective management of woodland should be encouraged, using site management plans to recognise and incorporate other conservation objectives e.g. historic environment, access, natural flood management, etc.
- The incidence and impact of pests and diseases should be monitored and mitigated as an integral part of woodland management strategies, in accordance with the Government's Tree Health Resilience Strategy⁽⁵²⁾. New plant diseases pose one of the biggest threats to the appearance of the AONB landscape, due to the loss of iconic tree species and restrictions imposed on restock species choice.
- Where appropriate, the restoration of conifer plantation areas within Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) to resilient native broadleaved species should be encouraged and supported.
- Owners and managers should be encouraged to bring under-managed woods back into active management.

- Restocking by natural regeneration should be encouraged, where this would be appropriate and viable.
- Careful selection of planting stock for future climate and pest/disease resilience should be encouraged. The use of climate-appropriate provenance conifer planting stock should be promoted in commercial woodlands, whilst the wider genetic base for broadleaves means that local provenance material should still be encouraged in Ancient Woodlands and for in-field/boundary trees.
- Further development of both local and regional markets for timber and woodland products should be supported.
- Post-Brexit woodland management policy and the new environmental land management scheme should address the management issues found in the AONB, particularly in relation to restoration of Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) and the co-ordinated control of deer and grey squirrel.

⁽⁵¹⁾National Character Area 29 Profile:
Howardian Hills, Natural England, 2012

⁽⁵²⁾https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/710719/tree-health-resilience-strategy.pdf

- Advice should be available to woodland managers on woodland management and sources of funding.
- AONB Partnership advice, assistance and (where appropriate) grant aid should be provided to help woodland managers conserve, enhance and increase understanding and enjoyment of biodiversity, geodiversity, historic environment and landscape features on their land.
- Partnership working with the North York Moors National Park should continue as a fundamental principle, given the national significance of woodland within the AONB/National Park area.

Key Issues 2019 – 2024

- **The unknown outcome of the Brexit process and the potential impacts of future trading arrangements, currency fluctuations and input/output prices on the resilience of farm businesses. These factors could potentially lead to significant changes in both land management practices and land ownership within the AONB.**
- **The Government's future priorities, format and level of funding for farm support/agri-environment measures following the outcome of the Brexit process.**
- The increasing impact of Chalara Dieback of Ash on woodland and individual trees in the AONB, as it continues to spread and affect larger trees.
- The unknown incidence of further outbreaks of *Phytophthora ramorum* within the AONB. One outbreak at Gilling (on rhododendron and larch) appears to be under control, but widespread infection would have significant implications for the AONB's landscape, biodiversity and woodland management economy.
- The impact of other infectious plant diseases and both native and non-native plant/animal species, e.g. Red Band Needle Blight, roe deer, Himalayan balsam, rhododendron, grey squirrel, muntjac deer, etc. Some of these species are already present, whilst others are currently found outside the AONB but are threatening to move in. More potential threats are likely to emerge in the future.

Objectives – Forestry and Woodland

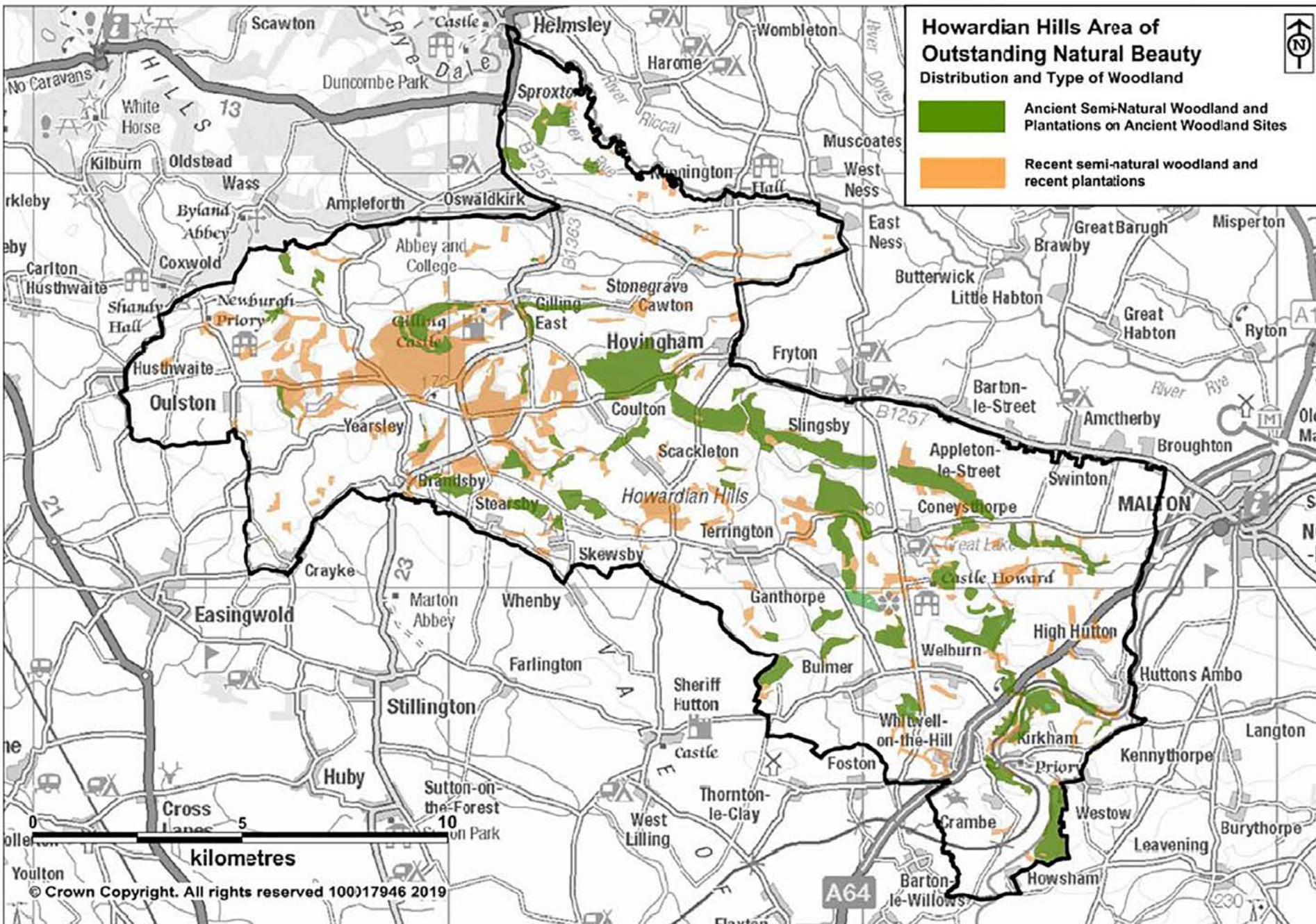
- FW1** Ensure that all woodland felling, management and creation proposals recognise the Special Qualities of the AONB.
- FW2** Encourage a multi-objective approach to woodland management in the AONB.
- FW3** Monitor and mitigate the incidence and impacts of pests and diseases in the AONB.
- FW4** Encourage the use of trees and shrubs of climate-appropriate provenance when planting or restocking, to develop future resilience.
- FW5** Encourage new areas of woodland where these would conserve or enhance the Special Qualities of the AONB, enhance habitat or natural capital networks, or provide ecosystem services benefits.
- FW6** Support the continued development of markets for timber and woodland products.
- FW7** Encourage the development and uptake of new grant and advice mechanisms that achieve AONB Management Plan objectives for woodland management and creation.

Please see the Action Programme for details of specific Actions for each Objective.

For Actions relating to:

- Advice and grant aid for biodiversity and geodiversity projects → **Objective NE8**
- Advice and grant aid for historic environment projects → **Objective HE2**
- Community involvement → **Objective LC2**
- Hydraulic fracturing ('fracking') → **Objective DRE4**
- Skills training → **Objective DRE6**
- Promotion & awareness → **Objective AP2**

Figure 7: Distribution and Type of Woodland



2.4.4 Development and the Rural Economy

Key Facts

- The primary focus of local economic activity is the market towns of Malton, Easingwold and Helmsley, all of which are in close proximity but outside the AONB boundary. They act as the main centres for employment, shopping, leisure and health services.
- The AONB has a 'Sparse' population living in Rural Villages, Hamlets and Isolated Dwellings, as defined by Defra's Rural Definition 2011⁽⁵³⁾.
- There is a low unemployment rate but also a low-wage local economy. Many people work within the general locality, but there is also significant out-commuting to major employment centres such as the York and Leeds areas.
- There are high self-employment and VAT Registration rates, which is typical of sparsely populated rural areas that are dependent upon agriculture, forestry and tourism.
- 42% of the businesses within the AONB are in the category Agriculture/Forestry/

Fishing, and they account for 24% of the employment numbers. This is over twice the proportion for the Rural area of the Yorkshire & Humber region (10%)⁽⁵⁴⁾.

- Tourism businesses account for 8% of the total number of businesses in the AONB, and 22% of the employment numbers. Again, this is nearly twice the proportion for the Rural area of the Yorkshire & Humber region (12%)⁽⁵⁴⁾.
- The economic impact of the visitor economy in the AONB is detailed in the Key Facts section of the Recreation, Access & Tourism chapter.
- Over half of the total employee numbers in the AONB are believed to be associated with a small number of relatively large businesses, including Castle Howard and Ampleforth Abbey & College⁽⁵⁴⁾.
- Household income levels within the AONB are generally higher than the regional average⁽⁵⁴⁾, but this masks low wage levels in the general locality and amongst some sectors of the workforce (notably in the primary industries).

- The housing affordability ratio in the AONB is 8.8, significantly higher than the Yorkshire & Humber regional average of 5.0⁽⁵⁴⁾.
- Accessibility to housing and services is generally very poor, with nearly the whole of the AONB falling into the lowest 20% quintile for that element of the Index of Multiple Deprivation⁽⁵⁵⁾.

⁽⁵³⁾https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/597751/Defining_rural_areas_Mar_2017_.pdf

⁽⁵⁴⁾Howardian Hills AONB Economic Profile – Revised, Defra Rural Statistics Unit, 2012

⁽⁵⁵⁾<https://www.datanorthyorkshire.org/JSNA/articles/indices-of-deprivation-summary/district-level/>

- The AONB in general has not been under as much development pressure as some other AONBs, but existing and emerging issues include large new agricultural buildings, conventional and now unconventional hydrocarbon exploration and production, more extensive housing developments than in the past, upgrading of the A64, new telecommunications infrastructure and recreational developments.
- Further information and statistics can be found in the State of the AONB Report.
- In legal terms, the AONB Management Plan outlines the policies of North Yorkshire, Hambleton and Ryedale Councils as they relate to the AONB. The AONB Partnership is part of North Yorkshire County Council; it works to influence national and local legislation, regulations, planning policy and planning decisions, and has a critical role to play within the planning system.

General Principles

- All new development should be fully sustainable in environmental, economic and social terms, recognising the Special Qualities of the AONB.
- Existing intrusive features should be mitigated where possible, such as by the undergrounding of overhead electricity lines, better screening for other buildings/ installations and the application of proportionate planning controls.
- High levels of tranquillity should be maintained in the AONB, by resisting increases in noise and light pollution.
- Mineral extraction (in particular hydraulic fracturing) within the AONB and its setting should be tightly controlled, in line with Government legislation and local Minerals Planning policy. Policy should support the extraction of local building stone where this is needed to facilitate the repair of vernacular buildings and structures in the local area.
- Enhancements to the A64 to improve road safety and accessibility both locally and regionally should be supported, subject to taking full account of the AONB designation and minimising the environmental impact on the AONB.
- Appropriate renewable energy installations should be supported.
- Appropriate development proposals that benefit the local economy and provide nearby employment (particularly in better paid jobs) should be supported.
- More small-scale rural business space should be provided, either by the re-use of existing buildings or by appropriate new-build.
- The visitor economy of the AONB should be developed in a sustainable and collaborative way, as part of the wider North York Moors area and also as part of the hinterland of the City of York.

- Training programmes in a wide variety of topics including land management, historic buildings conservation, business management and ICT skills, and the means of accessing them, should be supported so as to provide local people with better all-round opportunities for employment.
- The continuing programme to roll-out high-speed broadband will be supported as a vital component of business and community development, where installations follow the agreed industry Code of Practice.
- New telecommunications masts will be supported where they are carefully sited/ designed and offer better coverage or service to the widest number of users.

- Local needs housing (controlled via Local Needs Occupancy Conditions) should be promoted as an important component of sustainable communities. Affordable housing however is only likely to be facilitated through the associated provision of market housing, although community-led housing initiatives could have an important role to play in identifying and bringing forward suitable sites.

Key Issues 2019 – 2024

- The balance between economic/housing growth and conserving and enhancing the AONB's Special Qualities, within the context of the continuously evolving National Planning Policy Framework.
- The exploration for conventional and unconventional hydrocarbons, potentially followed by production facilities using hydraulic or non-hydraulic fracturing.
- The continued development of high-speed broadband and mobile telecommunications coverage, as these are poor in many parts of the AONB and this hinders local businesses and deters new business start-ups.

- Improvements to the A64 to enhance road safety and accessibility.
- The continuing development of a sustainable visitor economy in the Howardian Hills.
- The provision of new rural business space.
- The lack of affordable and local needs housing for local workers.
- The pressure for significant developments of market housing, and the dilemma that affordable housing may only be provided in conjunction with market housing.
- The potential decline of villages as coherent communities in the face of conflicting pressures such as expensive market housing, poorer village and transport services and the lack of local needs housing.

Objectives – Development and the Rural Economy

- DRE1** Ensure that all new development is compatible with the aims of AONB designation and has regard to social, economic and environmental sustainability.
- DRE2** Encourage high standards in both the design of new development within the AONB and the management of existing buildings/features.
- DRE3** Encourage the mitigation of intrusive features, to enhance the local landscape character and tranquillity of the AONB.
- DRE4** Support appropriate minerals-working proposals which conserve and enhance the Special Qualities of the AONB.
- DRE5** Support appropriate renewable energy installations that do not have adverse impacts on the Special Qualities of the AONB.
- DRE6** Support rural business, local employment, training & skills and farm diversification activities that do not have adverse impacts on the Special Qualities of the AONB.
- DRE7** Encourage the expansion of modern telecommunications infrastructure, whilst safeguarding the Special Qualities and tranquillity of the AONB.
- DRE8** Encourage the increased provision of local needs/affordable housing in the AONB.

Please see the Action Programme for details of specific Actions for each Objective.

For Actions relating to:

- Community involvement → **Objective LC2**
- Promotion & awareness → **Objective AP2**

2.4.5 Roads, Transport and Traffic Management

Key Facts

- The network of roads in the Howardian Hills has evolved over many centuries, in line with the distribution of human settlement and the requirements of the population.
- The busy A64 Leeds to Scarborough Trunk Road (managed by Highways England) is the only major arterial route that passes directly through the AONB. It plays a fundamental inter-connecting role linking Malton, Scarborough and the Yorkshire coast with the A1(M). It also services local transport needs, including those of agriculture.
- Two secondary routes cross the area: the B1257 from Malton to the A170 at Sproxton and the section of the B1363 between Oswaldkirk and Brandsby.
- The remainder of the road network consists of minor roads either linking villages or crossing the AONB in a north-south direction. The A170 near Helmsley and all the roads of B Class or lower are managed by North Yorkshire County Council, as the local Highway Authority.
- Local Highway Authority funding is generally concentrated on the maintenance of the highway network rather than on improvements, unless significant road safety issues have been identified. Funding can also be secured from additional or alternative sources such as the Safer Roads Fund, National Productivity Investment Fund, etc for eligible schemes.
- Roadside boundaries are generally well-hedged, with drystone walls on the higher open ground of the Plateau landscape character area.
- Mature trees are features of major significance on many roads, including the sycamore avenue between Caulkleys Bank and Nunnington, the four mile (6.4km) avenue of lime and beech at Castle Howard and the informal oak-lined eastern approaches to Bulmer and Terrington.
- Some routes, particularly the Castle Howard Avenue, have significant heritage assets either within or directly adjacent to the highway boundary.
- The AONB still retains a significant number of highway structures in traditional designs such as stone bridges, direction signs, mileposts and village name signs.
- Road verges within the AONB are an important resource of unimproved grassland, particularly along the B1257 between Malton and Hovingham.
- Traffic levels in North Yorkshire as a whole have increased in recent years following a short period of decline between 2007 and 2012. Traffic levels increased by 9% between 2012 and 2016, to reach 5,177 million vehicle miles⁽⁵⁶⁾.
- The road network could generally be considered quiet in comparison to other parts of the country, but local residents and non-motorised users have strong concerns about HGV delivery and through-traffic, driver behaviour (principally speeding) and the size of farm machinery using narrow country lanes.

⁽⁵⁶⁾ www.gov.uk/government/organisations/departments-for-transport/series/road-traffic-statistics

- Regular daily bus services within the AONB are only found in the Malton – Hovingham corridor, and car ownership levels are significantly higher (over 90%) than the national average (75%)⁽⁵⁷⁾.
- Car parking in the AONB is generally of an informal nature on road verges or gravel lay-bys near to popular walking routes. Hovingham and Coneysthorpe village hall car parks operate an ‘honesty box’ system for visitors, and there are larger car parks at attractions such as Nunnington Hall, Yorkshire Lavender and Castle Howard. Some verge parking areas are suffering from erosion, and can have a significant number of vehicles parked at popular times of the day.
- There is a strong regional desire for improvements to be made to the A64. The single carriageway sections and ‘transition’ points have a poor safety record, and significant variations in road conditions and traffic flows lead to a high unreliability in journey times. The road has a number of sub-standard junctions with a history of fatal accidents, and is also used by agricultural traffic.
- Further information and statistics can be found in the State of the AONB Report.

General Principles

- Inappropriate through-traffic should not be using the AONB as a short-cut.
- Considerate driver behaviour should be encouraged, and backed-up by enforcement, particularly in relation to speeding through villages and when passing non-motorised users such as cyclists, horse riders, etc.
- Public transport provision and usage should be encouraged, but recognising that the AONB is a sparsely populated rural area and that public sector funding for services is generally likely to be severely restricted.
- Other alternatives to the private car such as community transport, and cycling or walking for short journeys, should be encouraged and supported.
- Sustainable linkages should be encouraged both to and within the adjacent market towns, as they are the principal focus for delivering local services.
- The design and implementation of maintenance and improvement works should reflect the character of the rural road network and the special status of the AONB.

- Traditional direction signs, mileposts and other historic structures within and adjacent to the highway should continue to be maintained and restored.
- Special Interest Road Verges should be managed to conserve and enhance their biodiversity value, balanced with the needs of road safety.
- Enhancements to the A64 to improve journey time reliability, road safety and accessibility both locally and regionally should be supported, subject to taking full account of the AONB designation and minimising the environmental impact on the AONB.

Key Issues 2019 – 2024

- Continued funding pressures at North Yorkshire County Council for highways improvements/maintenance and public transport service support.
- Continued funding pressures on community transport initiatives such as minibus brokerage and ‘Wheels to Work’ moped hire schemes.
- Significant new house building outside the AONB in the market towns of Helmsley and Malton is already increasing both commuter and visitor traffic levels, with some country lanes becoming rat-runs to avoid congestion.

⁽⁵⁷⁾Census 2011, ONS, Crown Copyright

- The increasing size of farm machinery and the impact it has on the carriageway surface, verges, road safety and tranquillity of narrow rural roads.
- North Yorkshire and Ryedale Councils are working with other Councils, local businesses and the Local Enterprise Partnership to lobby and support Highways England in their proposals to upgrade the A64 between York and Malton. Highways England is currently consulting on the preparation of its second Roads Investment Strategy (RIS2). RIS1 included proposals for dualling the A64 east of the Hopgrove roundabout. The Delivery Plan for RIS2 is expected to be announced in early 2020 and may potentially include proposals for dualling the Welburn to Musley Bank section of the A64 within the AONB⁽⁵⁸⁾.

Objectives – Roads, Transport and Traffic Management

- RTT1** Develop solutions to specific traffic routing issues in and around the AONB, discourage through-traffic and ensure that other traffic uses the most appropriate route.
- RTT2** Support initiatives to monitor and address traffic and driver behaviour issues in the AONB.
- RTT3** Promote the use of sustainable modes of transport as alternatives to the private car.
- RTT4** Maintain the existing rural character of the road network in the AONB.
- RTT5** Support proposals for improvement of the A64 Trunk Road through the AONB, subject to these being fully justified and sensitive to local characteristics. Proposals should aim to minimise environmental impact, make maximum use of the existing road alignment and utilise new techniques such as 'green bridges' where possible.

Please see the Action Programme for details of specific Actions for each Objective.

For Actions relating to:

- Special Interest Road Verge management → **Objective NE3**
- Community involvement → **Objective LC2**
- Hydraulic fracturing ('fracking') → **Objective DRE4**
- Skills training → **Objective DRE6**
- Promotion & awareness → **Objective AP2**

⁽⁵⁸⁾ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/666965/shaping-the-future-of-englands-strategic-roads.pdf

2.5 Enjoying the AONB



2.5.1 Recreation, Access and Tourism

Key Facts

- A wide range of outdoor recreational activities including walking, horse riding, mountain biking, country sports, road-cycle training/events and touring, canoeing and orienteering are conducted in the AONB. Activity is generally adequately dispersed or at low frequency, so serious or prolonged impact is uncommon.
 - The area is rich in heritage and the five main historic properties open to the public attract large numbers of visitors – Castle Howard, Nunnington Hall, Kirkham Priory, Hovingham Hall and Newburgh Priory.
 - The AONB has an extensive network of Public Rights of Way, with 126 miles (202km) of footpaths and 57 miles (93km) of bridleways. There are also a number of permissive footpaths.
 - The Ebor Way, Centenary Way, Foss Way and unofficial Howardian Way long distance walks cross the area, giving opportunities for longer walking trips.
 - A comprehensive programme of improvements to path furniture throughout the AONB was carried out between 1998 and 2005, with new fingerposts installed showing destination and distance, and many stiles were replaced by gates. Maintenance of this enhanced infrastructure is on-going, to try and maintain the standard.
 - Visitors and Users Surveys indicate that people are attracted by the unspoilt landscape, the peace and tranquillity and the sense of ‘discovery’ of a relatively unknown area of England⁽⁵⁹⁾.
 - STEAM data for 2017 indicates that, for the AONB and a 1km buffer around it (but excluding Malton and Helmsley) there were 791,000 Staying and Day Visitors, accounting for 976,000 Visitor Days. The visitor economy of the area was worth almost £45m and tourism activity supported 589 Full Time Equivalent jobs directly and indirectly. The Tourism Direct Gross Value Added (TD-GVA) of the visitor economy was worth approximately £14 million, rising to approximately £31 million when indirect/induced effects are included. In comparison to 2016, Visitor numbers and Days were 1% higher and Economic Impact 4% higher in 2017⁽⁶⁰⁾.
 - Because the Howardian Hills has not historically been a major visitor destination there is a relative lack of facilities. There are no formal country parks or picnic sites, car parking facilities are limited and toilets are only located at the village pubs/cafes, village halls or larger visitor attractions.
 - Facilities for staying visitors are however diverse and widespread now. Serviced accommodation is available in village hotels/pubs, with bed-and-breakfast in farmhouses and village properties. Self-catering holiday cottages are available in most villages and there are a number of small farm-based caravan and camping sites. There are also several larger sites for camping and both static and touring caravans. More up-market facilities such as camping pods continue to be developed, but at a relatively slow rate.
 - Further information and statistics can be found in the State of the AONB Report.
-
- ⁽⁵⁹⁾Howardian Hills AONB Visitors and Users Surveys, Bowles Green Ltd, Howardian Hills AONB Joint Advisory Committee, 2003 & 2012
- ⁽⁶⁰⁾STEAM Trend Report for 2016-2017, Global Tourism Solutions (UK) Ltd, Howardian Hills AONB Joint Advisory Committee, 2018

General Principles

- National Character Area (NCA) 29 Statement of Environmental Opportunity: Promote enhanced access to and enjoyment of the Howardian Hills in ways that will maintain and enhance the AONB's Special Qualities and character, and its tranquillity, and that will support the essential underpinning ecosystem services, the quality of soils and water, and carbon storage⁽⁶¹⁾.
- The primary Purpose of Designation is the conservation and enhancement of the AONB's Special Qualities, but sustainable access and recreational activities/developments should be supported where appropriate.
- Public Rights of Way should be managed to a high standard, maintaining both path furniture and condition to ensure ease of use.
- Innovative approaches to carrying out path maintenance, e.g. by using volunteers or partnering with other organisations, should be continued and expanded.
- The Public Rights of Way network should be improved where appropriate, using Diversions, Creations/Extinguishments and permissive routes to develop a more coherent and universal network fit for modern purposes.
- Everyone should be able to enjoy the AONB, so constraints preventing Under-Represented Groups from visiting or using the area should be minimised as much as possible.
- Information in a variety of formats should be provided for a wide range of users, to allow them to enjoy and appreciate the AONB.
- Working in partnership to promote the attractions of the wider North York Moors and 'York Hinterland' areas should be strengthened, ensuring however that the Howardian Hills sub-identity is maintained and enhanced.
- Partnerships with local visitor attractions, accommodation providers and other public sector organisations should be further developed, to promote the Howardian Hills identity.
- Management work should be carried out where appropriate to improve the visitor experience and minimise conflict with other Management Plan Objectives or local interests. The Derwent Valley however is a particularly sensitive location due to its international nature conservation designations.
- Access to recreational opportunities using public transport or other low-impact means of travel should be promoted.

⁽⁶¹⁾National Character Area 29 Profile:
Howardian Hills, Natural England, 2012

Key Issues 2019 – 2024

- The continual need for maintenance and improvement of the Public Rights of Way network and path condition, to make the AONB more accessible for a wider range of users.
- The high significance of the next 5 year period in the run-up to the 2026 cut-off deadline for recording all Public Rights of Way on the Definitive Map.
- The continued pressure on resources at North Yorkshire County Council for path maintenance and network development.
- The need to develop better links to the Howardian Hills for visitors staying in the wider local area, and to enhance the identity of the Howardian Hills as part of wider area branding.
- The lack of general facilities such as car parking and public toilets.
- Verge erosion at the entrance to some popular Public Rights of Way, which can be unsightly and damage important road verge flora.
- Localised management issues such as mountain bike trail-building in woodland, which can damage ground flora and historic environment features.

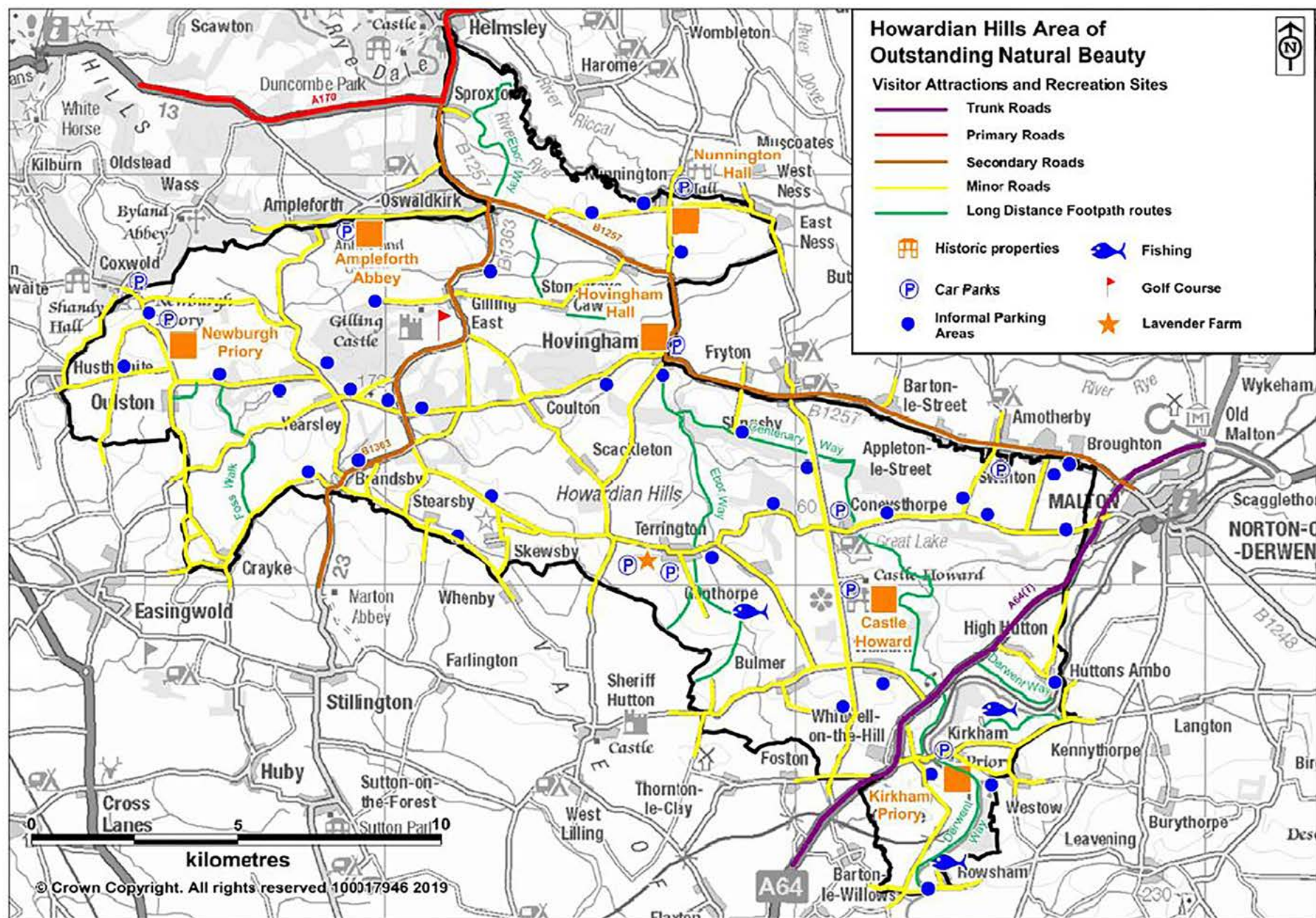
Objectives – Recreation, Access and Tourism

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| RAT1 | Encourage sustainable recreational activities that do not conflict with the Special Qualities of the AONB. |
| RAT2 | Promote the attractions and Special Qualities of the AONB to encourage sustainable use and support the local visitor economy. |
| RAT3 | Maintain and improve both the condition and network of Public Rights of Way in the AONB. |
| RAT4 | Carry out recreational management measures as appropriate, to enhance enjoyment by the public and address local issues. |
| RAT5 | Develop routes within the AONB for different user groups and provide self-guided information. |

Please see the Action Programme for details of specific Actions for each Objective.

- For Actions relating to:
- Community involvement → **Objective LC2**
- Skills training → **Objective DRE6**
- Promotion & awareness → **Objective AP2**

Figure 8: Visitor attractions and Recreation Priority Sites



2.6 Awareness and Promotion

Key Facts

- The Howardian Hills AONB is still a relatively recent designation, having been confirmed in 1987. In comparison the adjacent and better-known North York Moors National Park was designated in 1952.
- The principal audiences for awareness-raising initiatives are local people living and working in the AONB, visitors (and potential visitors) to the AONB and staff in partner organisations.
- In 2003 23% of survey respondents could specifically say that they were in the Howardian Hills AONB; in 2012 this proportion had risen to 68%⁽⁶²⁾.
- Press releases and publications such as the Annual Report and AONB Newsletter (which is delivered to over 10,000 residential and business addresses within the AONB and surrounding area) are the main methods of print publicity used.

- On average the AONB and work within it receives approximately 30-35 press mentions per year.
- The AONB Unit has a Twitter account and uses this daily to respond to queries and gather information on AONB issues/management. It also uses it to promote the Howardian Hills AONB and the work of the AONB Partnership, as well as AONBs nationally.
- The AONB website was re-designed in 2015 and provides the main portal for people to access the guided route leaflets, Management Plan documents, Annual Reports, etc.

General Principles

- The public profile of the Howardian Hills AONB should be maintained and enhanced, using a variety of mechanisms and partnerships.
- New technologies and means of communication should be adopted where feasible, bearing in mind any limitations (e.g. poor mobile telecommunications coverage, target audience, staff resources, etc).
- Efforts should continue to encourage more users from Under-Represented Groups to visit and enjoy the AONB.
- Awareness of the AONB as a venue for quiet enjoyment and outdoor recreation should be promoted.
- Events and activities should be used to make people aware of the AONB's Special Qualities and to promote appropriate management techniques.
- Working with local schools and communities should continue to be a high priority.

⁽⁶²⁾ *The Howardian Hills AONB Visitors and Users Surveys, Bowles Green Ltd, Howardian Hills AONB Joint Advisory Committee, 2003 & 2012*

Key Issues 2019 – 2024

- The continued decline of more traditional forms of promotional material and the need to develop information distribution types and mechanisms for new audiences.
- Reduced resources for ‘promotional’ work, potentially leading to a loss of awareness about the AONB and hence opportunities for recreation and supporting the local economy.

Objectives – Awareness and Promotion

- | | |
|------------|---|
| AP1 | Maintain awareness and understanding of the AONB designation, its importance and the role and work of the Joint Advisory Committee. |
| AP2 | Promote awareness of the Special Qualities of the AONB. |

Please see the Action Programme for details of specific Actions for each Objective.

For Actions relating to:

- Community involvement → **Objective LC2**
- Skills training → **Objective DRE6**

3.1 Putting the Plan into Action

Co-ordination of effort

- The main purpose of the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) is to focus attention on the needs of the AONB and to co-ordinate the efforts of local authorities and organisations representing various interests.
- Although the AONB Unit has a pivotal role to play in co-ordinating the implementation of the Management Plan, it would be inappropriate and impossible for it to directly implement all the Objectives.
- **The co-ordinated delivery of action by partner organisations and individuals is the key to success.**
- The JAC draws up an annual Action Programme each financial year to guide specific actions within that year. Progress against this is reported at the Spring meeting of the JAC, with new actions being set for the following year. This process is always flexible, allowing new initiatives to be pursued if in-year opportunities arise. This responsiveness will be particularly important during this Management Plan period, due to the uncertainties associated with the Brexit process.

Resources

- The majority of the proposals set out in the Management Plan can only be achieved by influencing the efforts and resources of the many organisations, groups and individuals already active in managing the area as part of their day-to-day work.
- Various sources of grant aid and advice are available for countryside management, business development, community planning and action, etc. The AONB Management Plan is the 'ground-level' plan that helps guide implementation of local and national strategies and funding programmes within the Howardian Hills AONB.
- Maintaining an adequately staffed AONB Unit is important in ensuring that this co-ordination of effort takes place and that appropriate partnerships are developed.
- A key task of the AONB Unit is to identify individual or linked programmes of projects and lever-in funding or assistance from the most appropriate source.
- Forms of assistance can include grant funding, staff assistance or 'secondments' for specific projects or

tasks, volunteering mechanisms, technical advice and in-kind contributions.

- The Howardian Hills AONB borders the North York Moors National Park and there are significant opportunities for both joint-working and cross-boundary initiatives.
- Further information and statistics can be found in the State of the AONB Report.

Key Issues 2019 – 2024

- **The unknown outcome of the Brexit process and the potential impacts of future trading arrangements, currency fluctuations and input/output prices on the resilience of farm businesses. These factors could potentially lead to significant changes in both land management practices and land ownership within the AONB.**
- **The Government's future priorities, format and level of funding for farm support/agri-environment measures following the outcome of the Brexit process.**
- Continued pressure on funding from central Government to local authorities, leading to reduced service provision.

- The unknown level of Government funding for AONBs after the end of the Protected Settlement period on 31st March 2020.
- The unknown recommendations that will be contained in the ‘Glover Review’ into the funding and management of AONBs, which was announced in Defra’s 25 year Environment Plan⁽⁶³⁾ and set up in June 2018.
- Continued pressure to deliver a wide variety of outcomes in both ‘traditional’ areas of activity and also in increasingly important new ones e.g. health & wellbeing.

Objectives – Implementation

- | | |
|------------|--|
| IM1 | Consolidate and develop funding and partnership mechanisms to achieve Management Plan objectives. |
| IM2 | Ensure that the AONB Partnership has a robust business model that is resilient to future challenges. |

Please see the Action Programme for details of specific Actions for each Objective.

⁽⁶³⁾A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment, Defra, GOV.UK, 2018. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan>

3.2 Monitoring

The effectiveness of the Action Programme will be carefully monitored. Reliable and accurate performance information is essential to allow proper management of the Action Programme by the AONB Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) and other lead agencies, and to provide key stakeholders and the wider community with the means to evaluate progress. Performance measurement will take place on two levels.

AONB Condition monitoring

- The condition of the AONB's environment (in its broad sense) is the key test of the Action Programme's effectiveness in implementing the Management Plan.
- Condition monitoring will take place on a 5-yearly cycle, linked to Management Plan reviews. This allows progress to be assessed and relevant new targets set.
- The list of Indicators shown in Figure 9 is used to measure the Condition of the

AONB. The data for these Indicators is largely being made available as part of Natural England's Framework for Monitoring Environmental Outcomes in Protected Landscapes. In addition there are several local Indicators for which data is compiled by the AONB Unit and partner organisations.

- The data for the Condition Indicators as assessed at the 2019 Management Plan review is contained in the State of the AONB Report.

Partnership monitoring

- An annual Action Programme is drawn-up in order to guide specific actions against relevant Objectives within each financial year. Progress against the annual Action Programme is reported at the Spring meeting of the JAC and posted on the AONB website. A summary of achievements is also published in documents such as the Annual Report and AONB News.
- The performance of the AONB Partnership as a whole was monitored for many years via the Partnership Indicators that were developed many years ago

by Natural England. These have now been superseded by Key Performance Indicators drawn up by the National Association for AONBs as a mechanism for reporting AONB Family achievements to Defra. These include Indicators on area of land enhanced for biodiversity and historic environment features, number of partnerships influenced, number of planning applications scrutinised and income secured. These Indicators will be used from April 2019 onwards as the measure of AONB Partnership action, and will also feed into Indicators being developed by Defra to monitor progress of the 25 Year Environment Plan.

Management Plan Review

- Section 89(7) of the Countryside & Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000 stipulates that AONB Management Plans must be reviewed every five years.
- The next formal review of the Management Plan will begin in 2023, although the Plan is under constant informal review to ensure that its overall aims are being achieved, and policies are constantly evolving to reflect changing issues and priorities.
- Defra's 25 Year Environment Plan, launched in January 2018, indicated that a new 'Hobhouse Report' into the funding and management of AONBs would be commissioned. The results of the 'Glover Review', which was set up in June 2018, could have significant implications for the next review of the AONB Management Plan.

Objectives – Monitoring

- MN1** Monitor the performance of the AONB Partnership and AONB Unit.
- MN2** Monitor the Condition of the AONB.

Please see the Action Programme for details of specific Actions for each Objective.

Figure 9: AONB Condition Indicators

Attribute	Indicator	Data collection organisation
1. Farmed Landscape	a) % of Agricultural Farmland managed under a Higher Tier-type Stewardship agreement (HLS & HT) b) % of Agricultural Farmland managed under a Mid Tier-type Stewardship agreement (MT) c) % of Agricultural Farmland managed under an Entry Level-type Stewardship agreement (ELS) d) Changes in farmland type (% of permanent pasture/temporary grassland/arable land)	a) Natural England b) Natural England c) Natural England d) Defra
2. Woodland Landscape	a) Condition of SSSIs b) Delivery of LBAP habitat targets for AONB – Condition of SINCs	a) Natural England b) JAC/NYCC
3. Biodiversity	a) Condition of SSSIs b) Delivery of LBAP habitat targets for AONB – Condition of SINCs	a) Natural England b) JAC/NYCC
4. Historic and Built Environment	a) Number of Archaeological features in the At Risk, Vulnerable and Low/Not at Risk categories b) Condition of Registered Parks & Gardens and historic landscapes c) Number of Buildings and Structures on 'At Risk' Registers d) Number of Conservation Areas on the 'At Risk' Register e) Number of Places of Worship on the 'At Risk' Register f) Condition of non-designated Historic Environment Priority Sites	a) Historic England b) Historic England/JAC c) Historic England/District Councils d) Historic England e) Historic England f) JAC/NYCC
5. Water Quality (Rivers)	Length of rivers (%) with 'High' or 'Good' Ecological Status (Water Framework Directive)	Environment Agency
6. Tranquillity	a) Maximum and minimum Tranquillity scores (CPRE/NE study) b) % of AONB in the relative High or Very High categories (CPRE/NE study)	CPRE/NE
7. Enjoying the Countryside	'Ease of Use' (%) of PRoW	JAC/NYCC
8. Village Services/ Amenities	% of AONB villages that have a shop, pub, Post Office service or community building	JAC/District Councils/Local Communities
9. Awareness of the AONB designation	% of survey respondents aware of the Howardian Hills AONB designation	JAC

3.3 Action Programme

The Management Plan contains a large number of Objectives and priority Actions.

A list of recommended Delivery Partner/s has been identified for each Action – if there is a clear ‘Lead’ Partner they have been put in bold. The list is not exhaustive and it is hoped that other groups will wish to join any partnerships that are formed. The table also gives a provisional timescale and priority rating for each Action. Priority 1 Actions are those deemed to be of the highest importance and the ones on which resources should be concentrated. Priority 2 Actions are those that are considered to be less critical, or ones for which significant additional resources are likely to be needed. The table should be read in conjunction with the Landscape Management & Priority Sites section of the Management Plan.

The Action Programme forms the basis for annual work programmes for the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) and partner organisations. The Spring meetings of the JAC consider work completed in the previous year, as well as approving initiatives and tasks for the next year.

Abbreviations for Delivery Partner/s listed in the Action Programme are as follows:

BCU	British Canoe Union	CTC	Cyclists Touring Club
BGS	British Geological Survey	Defra	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs
BHS	British Horse Society	DVRN	Dales to Vale River Network
CFE	Campaign for the Farmed Environment	EA	Environment Agency
CFY	Community First Yorkshire (the local Rural Community Council)	EYRT	East Yorkshire Rivers Trust
CLA	Country Land and Business Association	FC	Forestry Commission
CoYC	City of York Council	H&WB	Health & Wellbeing Board
CPRE	Campaign to Protect Rural England	HDC	Hambleton District Council
CSPs	Community Safety Partnerships	HE	Historic England

HysE	Highways England
IDBs	Internal Drainage Boards
JAC	Joint Advisory Committee
LANTRA	The Rural Skills Training Agency
LEADER	North York Moors, Coast & Hills LEADER Local Action Group
LEP	Local Enterprise Partnership
LNP	Local Nature Partnership
NYLGSP	North Yorkshire Local Geological Sites Panel
NYMNPA	North York Moors National Park Authority
NYNET	The North Yorkshire broadband partnership
NPg	Northern Powergrid (the electricity Distribution Network Operator covering the AONB)
NT	National Trust
NWP	Native Woodland Partnership
NYCC	North Yorkshire County Council
NYP	North Yorkshire Police
PCs	Parish Councils
RA	The Ramblers

RDC	Ryedale District Council
RFS	Royal Forestry Society
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
RVA	Ryedale Voluntary Action
Ryevitalise	HLF-funded Ryevitalise Landscape Partnership project
SBC	Scarborough Borough Council
TCV	The Conservation Volunteers
TFA	Tenant Farmers Association
WtY	Welcome to Yorkshire
WT	Woodland Trust
YAS	Yorkshire Agricultural Society
YDP	Yorkshire Derwent Partnership
YFWP	Yorkshire Farming and Wildlife Partnership
Yorwoods	The Yorkshire Woodlands Initiative
YWT	Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

Although not specifically mentioned in the table, any Objectives relating to land management will rely on the goodwill and co-operation of farmers, landowners and land managers if they are to be achieved.

Objective	Action	Delivery/Partners	Role of JAC	Frequency/Year	Priority
An Ecosystem Approach					
NCES1 Gain a better understanding of the AONB's natural capital assets, their quality and their relative roles/ significance in the provision of ecosystem services	NCES1.1 Monitor and engage in development of the natural capital approach, both nationally and within the AONB.	AONB Unit , Defra, HDC, HE, JAC , NE, NEYEDC, NYCC, NYMNPA, RDC	Lead	On-going	1
	NCES1.2 Develop/adopt condition assessment techniques to gain a better understanding of the quality of the AONB's natural capital assets.	AONB Unit, Defra, EA, FC, HDC, NE, NEYEDC, NYCC, NYMNPA, RDC	Lead/Support	On-going	1
	NCES1.3 Produce a matrix of generic types of 'project' (e.g. hedge planting, agri-environment schemes, land use, in-fill housing development, larger housing developments, habitat management, etc) plotted against the natural capital assets and ecosystem services that the AONB provides.	AONB Unit , EA, HDC, HE, NE, NYCC, RDC	Lead	2	1
	NCES1.4 Produce an 'opportunity map' to illustrate how the Howardian Hills AONB landscape might become more resilient to future challenges.	AONB Unit, EA, FC, HDC, NE, NEYEDC, NYCC, NYMNPA, RDC	Lead	2 onwards	1

Objective	Action	Delivery/Partners	Role of JAC	Frequency/Year	Priority
NCES2 Promote sustainability and support appropriate projects that benefit the AONB's natural capital, ecosystem services and Special Qualities	NCES2.1 Ensure that any Plan, policy or project that could impact on the AONB, whether positively or negatively, is assessed for compliance with the AONB Management Plan.	AONB Unit, EA, FC, HDC, HE, NE, NYCC, RDC	Lead & Advise	On-going	1
	NCES2.2 Use the matrix referred to in NCES1.3 above to guide consultation responses and assess projects that receive assistance from the JAC.	AONB Unit , EA, HDC, HE, NE, NYCC, RDC	Lead	2 onwards	1
	NCES2.3 Ensure that the post-Brexit environmental land management scheme can be used to conserve and enhance the AONB's natural capital assets and ecosystem services.	AONB Unit, CLA, Defra, DVRN, EA, HE, JAC, NFU, NE, YDP	Lead & Support	On-going	1
NCES3 Monitor climate change trends/scenarios and evaluate potential future impacts on the AONB	NCES3.1 Keep up-to-date with climate change information and scenarios.	AONB Unit , EA, FC, HE, HDC, NE, NYCC, RDC	Lead	On-going	1
	NCES3.2 Monitor the potential impacts of climate change on the AONB's natural capital and ecosystem services.	AONB Unit , EA, FC, HE, HDC, NE, NYCC, NYMNPA, RDC	Lead	On-going	1

Objective	Action	Delivery/Partners	Role of JAC	Frequency/Year	Priority
A Rich Heritage					
Natural Environment					
NE1 Continually improve knowledge of the biodiversity resources in the AONB	NE1.1 Carry out monitoring surveys on Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs).	AONB Unit, HDC, NE, NEYEDC, NYCC, RDC	Support	On-going	2
	NE1.2 Carry out detailed surveys of specific Priority Habitats and Priority Species as necessary, to fill identified gaps in knowledge.	AONB Unit, HDC, NE, NEYEDC, NYCC, NYMNPA, RDC	Advise & Encourage	On-going	2
	NE1.3 Encourage farmers, land managers and communities to monitor wildlife and report sightings.	AONB Unit, CFE, CLA, HDC, NE, NFU, NEYEDC, NYCC, PCs, RDC, RSPB, TCV, YFWP, YWT	Support	On-going	1
	NE1.4 Gain a better understanding of the Priority Habitat area and Priority Species populations in the AONB, and their trends.	AONB Unit, NEYEDC, NYCC	Lead	On-going	1
NE2 Ensure that appropriate protection is given to the best nature conservation sites in the AONB	NE2.1 Maintain and regularly update a register of key nature conservation sites.	AONB Unit, HDC, NE, NYCC, NEYEDC, RDC, YWT	Advise & Support	On-going	1
	NE2.2 Ensure effective protection (via designation) for the best nature conservation sites.	HDC, JAC, NE, NYCC, RDC, YWT	Support	On-going	2
	NE2.3 Resist development proposals that may adversely affect key nature conservation sites.	AONB Unit, HDC, NE, NYCC, RDC	Lead & Advise	On-going	1

Objective	Action	Delivery/Partners	Role of JAC	Frequency/Year	Priority
NE3 Assist with the implementation of 25YEP/BD2020/WFD/LBAP targets for Priority Habitats in the AONB (broadleaved woodland; grasslands; wetlands) to improve condition and increase habitat network connectivity	NE3.1 Ensure that all the AONB's Natural Environment Priority Sites and Special Interest Road Verges are in 'favourable' or 'recovering' condition.	AONB Unit , CLA, EA, FC, HDC, NE, NFU, NWDP, NYCC, RDC, Ryevitalise, WT, YWT	Lead & Encourage	On-going	1
	NE3.2 Encourage the buffering and extension of the AONB's Natural Environment Priority Sites.	AONB Unit, CFE, CLA, Defra, EA, FC, NE, NFU, NWDP, Ryevitalise, WT, YWT	Encourage & Support	On-going	1
	NE3.3 Encourage the restoration of habitats that have declined in interest but still retain significant ecological potential, particularly Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites, rivers and water bodies not in Good Ecological Status and some/parts of the AONB's Natural Environment Priority Sites.	AONB Unit, CLA, Defra, DVRN, EA, EYRT, FC, IDBs, NE, NFU, NWDP, RFS, Ryevitalise, WT, YWT/YDP	Encourage & Support	On-going	1
	NE3.4 Encourage the creation of new habitat where appropriate, in particular the less-intensive management of farmland, to create a wider network of complementary semi-natural habitats.	AONB Unit, CFE, CLA, Defra, EA, FC, IDBs, LNP, NE, NFU, NWDP, NYMNPA, Ryevitalise, WT, YWT	Lead & Encourage	On-going	1
	NE3.5 Develop and support the creation of landscape-scale habitat corridors, particularly around the Derwent valley and linking into the NYMNP.	AONB Unit , CFE, CLA, Defra, DVRN, EA, EYRT/YDP, FC, LNP, NE, NFU, NWDP, NYMNPA, Ryevitalise, WT, YWT	Lead, Encourage & Support	On-going	1

Objective	Action	Delivery/Partners	Role of JAC	Frequency/Year	Priority
NE4 Assist with the implementation of 25YEP/BD2020/LBAP targets for Priority Species for which the AONB is important	NE4.1 Ensure that key sites for specific species are in 'favourable' or 'recovering' condition.	AONB Unit, CFE, CLA, DVRN, EA, EYRT/YDP, HDC, NE, NFU, NYCC, PCs, RDC, WT, YWT	Lead & Encourage	On-going	1
	NE4.2 Encourage restoration or creation of sites where significant ecological potential exists.	AONB Unit, CFE, CLA, DVRN, EA, EYRT/YDP, HDC, NE, NFU, NYCC, RDC	Encourage	On-going	1
	NE4.3 Identify local Target Areas and encourage co-ordinated management measures.	AONB Unit , CFE, CLA, DVRN, EA, EYRT/YDP, FC, HDC, LNP, NE, NFU, NYCC, NYMNPA, RDC	Lead & Encourage	On-going	1
NE5 Assist with the implementation of 25YEP/BD2020/LBAP targets for wildlife within villages	NE5.1 Raise awareness of wildlife within villages and assist communities with creating, managing and enhancing biodiversity within and adjacent to settlements.	AONB Unit, HDC, NYCC, RDC, TCV, WT, YWT	Lead & Support	On-going	1
NE6 Monitor and where appropriate support control of invasive non-native species in the AONB	NE6.1 Monitor the location and abundance of invasive non-native species.	AONB Unit , CLA, DVRN, EA, EYRT/YDP, FC, HDC, IDBs, NE, NFU, NYCC, NYMNPA, RDC, Ryevitalise	Lead & Encourage	On-going	1
	NE6.2 Carry out targeted partnership action to manage invasive non-native species where appropriate.	AONB Unit , CLA, Defra, DVRN, EA, EYRT/YDP, FC, HDC, IDBs, NFU, NYCC, NYMNPA, RDC, RFS, Ryevitalise	Lead & Encourage	On-going	1

Objective	Action	Delivery/Partners	Role of JAC	Frequency/Year	Priority
NE7 Encourage the conservation of important geodiversity sites and features in the AONB	NE7.1 Develop a network of Local Geological Sites (LGS).	BGS, HDC, JAC, NEYEDC, NEYGT, NYCC, NYLGSP, RDC	Support & Encourage	On-going	1
	NE7.2 Ensure that sites identified as LGS are in 'favourable' or 'recovering' condition.	AONB Unit, CLA, HDC, NFU, RDC, NEYGT, NYGP	Lead & Encourage	On-going	1
	NE7.3 Resist development proposals that may adversely affect sites designated as LGS.	AONB Unit, HDC, NYCC, RDC	Lead & Advise	On-going	1
NE8 Provide assistance to farmers and land managers, to help them manage their land sympathetically	NE8.1 Assist farmers and land managers to enter key sites (particularly the AONB's Natural Environment Priority Sites) and other farmed land into appropriate options in the current Countryside Stewardship scheme.	AONB Unit , CFE, CLA, Defra, HDC, NE, NFU, NYCC, RDC, TFA	Lead & Support	On-going	1
	NE8.2 Ensure that the post-Brexit environmental land management scheme can be used to conserve and enhance the AONB's habitats and landscape character.	AONB Unit, CLA, Defra, JAC, NFU	Lead & Support	On-going	1
	NE8.3 Provide a flexible package of assistance including advice, grant aid, direct works and management agreements, as appropriate, to assist land managers with identifying, conserving, enhancing and increasing understanding and enjoyment of biodiversity and geodiversity features on their land, particularly the AONB's Natural Environment Priority Sites.	AONB Unit , HDC, JAC , NYCC, RDC	Lead	On-going	1
NE9 Ensure continued recognition of the Howardian Hills as a priority area for biodiversity	NE9.1 Participate in the Local Nature Partnership, to identify and develop opportunities for integrated projects that achieve LNP and AONB Management Plan objectives.	AONB Unit , HDC, LNP, NYCC, NYMNPA, RDC, Ryevitalise	Lead	On-going	1

Objective	Action	Delivery/Partners	Role of JAC	Frequency/Year	Priority
Historic Environment					
HE1 Improve understanding of the AONB's historic environment and its significance	HE1.1 Re-assess the archaeology of the AONB to create an up-to-date evidence base, better understand significant sites and inform a research agenda.	AONB Unit, HE, NYCC	Support & Encourage	2, 3	2
	HE1.2 Consider preparing a Statement of Significance for the AONB.	HE, NYCC	Support & Encourage	3	2
	HE1.3 Carry out research projects to address identified gaps in knowledge, including: rural industries, prehistoric burials, patterns of medieval settlement & farming, historic parklands.	Community groups, HE, NYCC, Universities	Support & Encourage	On-going	2
	HE1.4 Carry out regular surveys of built heritage to identify important or distinctive building groups, individual structures, architectural features and Buildings at Risk.	AONB Unit, HDC, NYCC, RDC	Advise & Support	On-going	2
	HE1.5 Promote the recording of local history and traditions.	AONB Unit, HDC, RDC	Support	On-going	2
	HE1.6 Encourage information to be recorded in the North Yorkshire Historic Environment Record.	AONB Unit, HDC, NYCC, RDC	Support & Encourage	On-going	1

Objective	Action	Delivery/Partners	Role of JAC	Frequency/Year	Priority
HE2 Conserve and enhance the significance of the AONB's historic environment	HE2.1 Resist development proposals that would be likely to harm the significance of the AONB's heritage assets.	AONB Unit, HDC, HE, RDC	Lead & Advise	On-going	1
	HE2.2 Support appropriate Enabling Development where this would conserve and enhance the AONB's most significant heritage assets.	AONB Unit, HDC, HE, NYCC, RDC	Support & Encourage	On-going	1
	HE2.3 Consider introducing Article 4 Directions for Conservation Areas in the AONB, to preserve historic character and prevent incremental damaging change.	HDC, JAC, RDC	Support & Encourage	On-going	2
	HE2.4 Continue the Monument Management Scheme, to consolidate improvements to Scheduled Monument condition and remove Monuments from the Heritage at Risk Register.	AONB Unit , HDC, HE, NYCC, RDC	Lead	1-3	1
	HE2.5 Prepare conservation/management plans for all designed landscapes.	AONB Unit, HE, NYCC	Support & Encourage	On-going	2
	HE2.6 Assist farmers and land managers to enter key archaeological features (particularly the AONB's Historic Environment Priority Sites) and other heritage assets into appropriate options in the current Countryside Stewardship scheme.	AONB Unit , CFE, CLA, Defra, HDC, HE, NE, NFU, NYCC, RDC, TFA	Lead & Support	On-going	1
	HE2.7 Ensure that the post-Brexit environmental land management scheme can be used to conserve and enhance the AONB's historic environment features and landscapes.	AONB Unit, CLA, Defra, HE, JAC, NFU	Lead & Support	On-going	1

Objective	Action	Delivery/Partners	Role of JAC	Frequency/Year	Priority
HE2 Continued...	HE2.8 Provide a flexible package of assistance including advice, grant aid, direct works and management agreements, as appropriate, to assist land managers with identifying, conserving, enhancing and increasing understanding and enjoyment of historic environment features on their land, particularly the AONB's Historic Environment Priority Sites.	AONB Unit , HDC, HE, JAC , NYCC, RDC	Lead	On-going	1
	HE2.9 Monitor developments in the understanding of potential climate change impacts on historic environment features.	AONB Unit , HDC, HE, NYCC, RDC	Lead	On-going	2
HE3 Help local people to identify the non-designated heritage assets which contribute to the character of their area and support the development of management strategies for their conservation and enhancement	HE3.1 Publish criteria and provide assistance to enable local communities to identify the non-designated heritage assets which contribute to the character of their area.	HDC, HE, JAC, RDC	Support & Encourage	2, 3	2
	HE3.2 Support the development of site-based management strategies to conserve and enhance important non-designated heritage assets identified by local communities.	AONB Unit, HDC, HE, RDC	Support & Encourage	3 onwards	2

Objective	Action	Delivery/Partners	Role of JAC	Frequency/Year	Priority
Living and Working in The Howardian Hills					
Local Communities					
LC1 Support the retention of village services and the identification and implementation of projects that maintain and enhance village character, sustainability, economy and sense of community	LC1.1 Make representations to Government on relevant national rural issues, via the NAAONB.	NAAONB, JAC , NYCC	Lead	On-going	1
	LC1.2 Resist policy or development proposals that may adversely affect key village services.	AONB Unit, CFY, HDC, NYCC, RDC	Lead	On-going	1
	LC1.3 Work as appropriate with partner organisations to develop innovative projects for delivering services to local communities.	AONB Unit, CFY, CSPs, HDC, H&WB, NYCC, RDC, RVA	Lead & Advise	On-going	1
	LC1.4 Support communities in developing beneficial projects e.g. via new or reviewed Parish Plans.	CFY, HDC, JAC, NYCC, RDC, RVA	Encourage & Support	On-going	1
	LC1.5 Implement projects that support the character, sustainability, economy or sense of community of villages.	AONB Unit, CFY, HDC, NYCC, NYP, RDC	Encourage & Support	On-going	1
LC2 Encourage voluntary and community engagement with the local natural and historic environment of the AONB	LC2.1 Work with communities, local groups, businesses and land managers to encourage partnership action for identifying, monitoring, managing, raising awareness of, accessing and enjoying the natural and historic environment.	AONB Unit, CLA, HDC, NEYEDC, NFU, NYCC, PCs, RDC, Schools, TCV, Volunteers, YWT	Lead & Encourage	On-going	2

Objective	Action	Delivery/Partners	Role of JAC	Frequency/Year	Priority
Agriculture					
AG1 Encourage the development and uptake of Government support mechanisms that promote sustainable farm and rural business development	AG1.1 Assist farmers and land managers to enter key sites (particularly the AONB's Natural and Historic Environment Priority Sites) and other farmed land into appropriate options in the current Countryside Stewardship scheme.	AONB Unit , CFE, CLA, Defra, HDC, HE, NE, NFU, NYCC, RDC, Ryevitalise, TFA	Lead & Support	On-going	1
	AG1.2 Make representations to Government, either individually and/or via the NAAONB, to ensure that a far-sighted and integrated rural support mechanism and environmental land management scheme emerges from the Brexit process.	CLA, JAC , LEP, NAAONB, NFU, NYCC, TFA	Lead	1	1
	AG1.3 Make representations to ensure that the Howardian Hills AONB remains a priority area for funding from Government agencies.	CLA, HDC, JAC , NFU, NYCC, RDC, TFA	Lead	On-going	1
	AG1.4 Consider bidding for a Pilot of the new environmental land management scheme to run in the AONB, possibly in partnership with the North York Moors National Park.	AONB Unit, CLA, EA, JAC , NE, NFU, NYMNPA, TFA	Lead	1-4	1
AG2 Support farm businesses in the AONB by providing advice and appropriate assistance	AG2.1 Provide specialist advice and 'sign-posting' on conservation grants and countryside management within the AONB.	AONB Unit , HDC, NYMNPA, RDC, YFWP	Lead	On-going	1
	AG2.2 Provide a flexible package of assistance including advice, grant aid, direct works and management agreements, as appropriate, to assist land managers with identifying, conserving, enhancing and increasing understanding and enjoyment of landscape features on their land.	AONB Unit , HDC, JAC , NYCC, RDC	Lead	On-going	1

Objective	Action	Delivery/Partners	Role of JAC	Frequency/Year	Priority
AG3 Ensure high standards of design and careful siting of all new farm buildings and infrastructure	AG3.1 Support the construction of new farm buildings and infrastructure where these follow the principles set out in the AONB New Farm Buildings & Infrastructure Design Guidance.	AONB Unit , CLA, CPRE, HDC, NFU, RDC	Lead & Advise	On-going	1
Forestry and Woodland					
FW1 Ensure that all woodland felling, management and creation proposals recognise the Special Qualities of the AONB	FW1.1 Ensure that all proposals take account of the Special Qualities of the AONB.	FC	Support & Encourage	On-going	1
	FW1.2 Use consultation procedures to ensure that all proposals are in accordance with Management Plan Objectives.	AONB Unit	Lead	On-going	1
FW2 Encourage a multi-objective approach to woodland management in the AONB	FW2.1 Encourage owners and managers to prepare FC-approved Woodland Management Plans for their woodlands.	AONB Unit, FC , NWP, RFS	Support & Encourage	On-going	2
FW3 Monitor and mitigate the incidence and impacts of pests and diseases in the AONB	FW3.1 Keep up-to-date with information on invasive woodland pests and diseases, in particular <i>H. fraxineus</i> , <i>P. ramorum</i> and muntjac deer.	AONB Unit , FC, HDC, NYCC, RDC, NWP	Lead	On-going	1
	FW3.2 Encourage vigilance and reporting of suspected sightings.	AONB Unit, CLA, FC, HDC, NEYEDC, NFU, NYCC, RDC, RFS, WT	Lead & Encourage	On-going	1
	FW3.3 Deliver appropriate mitigation strategies to manage the impacts of pests and diseases.	AONB Unit, CLA, FC, HDC, NFU, NYCC, RDC, RFS, WT	Support	On-going	1

Objective	Action	Delivery/Partners	Role of JAC	Frequency/Year	Priority
FW4 Encourage the use of trees and shrubs of climate-appropriate provenance when planting or restocking, to develop future resilience	FW4.1 Promote the incorporation of natural regeneration of appropriate native tree and shrub species into restocking plans.	AONB Unit, FC, HDC, NYCC, NWP, RDC	Advise & Encourage	On-going	2
	FW4.2 Promote the use of climate-appropriate provenance nursery plants when restocking.	AONB Unit, FC , HDC, NYCC, NWP, RDC	Advise & Encourage	On-going	1
	FW4.3 Encourage local forest nurseries to make adequate quantities of local provenance material available.	AONB Unit, Castle Howard, NWP, RDC	Support & Encourage	On-going	2
FW5 Encourage new areas of woodland where these would conserve or enhance the Special Qualities of the AONB, enhance habitat or natural capital networks, or provide ecosystem services benefits	FW5.1 Use consultation procedures to advise on the siting and design of new areas of woodland, within the guidance provided by the Landscape Management & Priority Sites section of the AONB Management Plan.	AONB Unit , FC, HDC, NWP, RDC	Advise	On-going	1
FW6 Support the continued development of local and regional markets for timber and woodland products	FW6.1 Encourage the use of timber from the AONB in local industries e.g. furniture making, traditional building restoration, etc.	AONB Unit, LEP, RFS, Yorwoods	Support & Encourage	On-going	2

Objective	Action	Delivery/Partners	Role of JAC	Frequency/Year	Priority
FW7 Encourage the development and uptake of grant and advice mechanisms that achieve AONB Management Plan objectives for woodland management and creation	FW7.1 Assist owners and managers to enter their woodlands into appropriate options in the current Countryside Stewardship scheme.	AONB Unit, CLA, FC, NE, NFU, NWP, RFS, WT	Support & Encourage	On-going	1
	FW7.2 Ensure that the post-Brexit environmental land management scheme can be used to assist with priority woodland management work within the AONB.	AONB Unit, CLA, Defra, HE, JAC, NFU	Lead & Support	On-going	1
	FW7.3 Provide a flexible package of assistance including advice, grant aid, direct works and management agreements, as appropriate, to assist land managers with identifying, conserving, enhancing and increasing understanding and enjoyment of landscape features on their land.	AONB Unit, HDC, JAC, NYCC, RDC	Lead	On-going	1
	FW7.4 Support the continuation of the Native Woodland Project.	FC, JAC , NE, NYMNPA , RFS, WT, YWT	Support & Encourage	On-going	1
Development and Rural Economy					
DRE1 Ensure that all new development is compatible with the aims of AONB designation and has regard to social, economic and environmental sustainability	DRE1.1 Ensure that all relevant Plans, Strategies and Policies recognise, protect and, where appropriate, enhance the Special Qualities of the AONB and its setting.	AONB Unit, Defra, HDC, HM Government, NE, NYCC, RDC	Lead & Advise	On-going	1
	DRE1.2 Maintain effective consultation arrangements between the Local Planning Authorities and the Joint Advisory Committee.	AONB Unit, HDC, JAC, NYCC, RDC	Lead & Advise	On-going	1

Objective	Action	Delivery/Partners	Role of JAC	Frequency/Year	Priority
DRE2 Encourage high standards in both the design of new development within the AONB and the management of existing buildings/features	DRE2.1 Ensure consistent high-quality rural design standards covering the whole AONB, including building design, materials and green infrastructure.	AONB Unit, HDC, NYCC, RDC	Advise	On-going	1
	DRE2.2 Encourage communities to prepare Village Design Statements, to guide the design of future development.	AONB Unit, HDC, PCs, CFY, RDC	Encourage & Support	On-going	2
	DRE2.3 Provide guidance on sustainable building restoration techniques, including energy conservation measures.	AONB Unit, HDC, RDC	Support	On-going	2
	DRE2.4 Consider undertaking appraisals to enable the designation of new Conservation Areas and the enhancement of existing ones.	Community groups, HDC, PCs, RDC	Encourage & Support	On-going	2
DRE3 Encourage the mitigation of intrusive features, to enhance the local landscape character and tranquillity of the AONB	DRE3.1 Encourage local enhancement works to mitigate the impact of existing visually intrusive developments.	AONB Unit , HDC, RDC	Lead & Encourage	On-going	2
	DRE3.2 Continue liaison arrangements with Northern Powergrid, to prioritise and implement the undergrounding of electricity cables in prominent locations.	AONB Unit , HDC, NPg, NYCC, RDC	Lead & Advise	On-going	1
	DRE3.3 Encourage Openreach to underground telephone cables in prominent locations, primarily in conjunction with electricity cable undergrounding.	AONB Unit , NAAONB, NPg, Openreach	Lead & Encourage	On-going	1
	DRE3.4 Resist developments that increase the impact of light or noise pollution on the AONB or its setting.	AONB Unit, CPRE, HDC, NYCC, NYMNPA, RDC	Lead & Advise	On-going	1

Objective	Action	Delivery/Partners	Role of JAC	Frequency/Year	Priority
DRE4 Support appropriate minerals-working proposals which conserve and enhance the Special Qualities of the AONB	DRE4.1 Resist any minerals exploration or production proposals which are not compatible with AONB Purposes of Designation or Management Plan Objectives.	CPRE, HDC, JAC , NYCC, RDC	Lead & Advise	On-going	1
	DRE4.2 Support appropriate proposals for small-scale quarrying of stone for local uses and to assist with repairs to heritage assets.	AONB Unit, BGS, HE, HDC, NYCC, RDC	Advise & Support	On-going	1
	DRE4.3 Safeguard/obtain supplies of suitable local stone for drystone wall restoration.	AONB Unit , NYCC	Lead	On-going	2
DRE5 Support appropriate renewable energy installations that do not have adverse impacts on the Special Qualities of the AONB	DRE5.1 Provide advice and guidance on the type of renewable energy technologies and installations likely to be appropriate in the AONB.	AONB Unit, HDC, RDC	Lead & Support	On-going	1
	DRE5.2 Support appropriate proposals that follow the 'Four Rights' – Technology, Scale, Place and Design.	AONB Unit, CPRE, HDC, NYCC, RDC	Advise & Support	On-going	1
	DRE5.3 Promote the benefits of appropriate renewable energy developments and demonstrate examples of 'best practice' projects.	AONB Unit, HDC, RDC	Lead	On-going	2

Objective	Action	Delivery/Partners	Role of JAC	Frequency/Year	Priority
DRE6 Support rural business, local employment, training & skills and farm diversification activities that do not have adverse impacts on the Special Qualities of the AONB	DRE6.1 Promote the provision of accessible ICT, business and rural skills advice, training, courses, demonstrations, etc.	AONB Unit, HDC, LANTRA, LEP, NYCC, RDC, YAS	Support	On-going	1
	DRE6.2 Encourage businesses to develop appropriate new enterprises within or close to the AONB.	AONB Unit, LEP, HDC, RDC	Encourage & Support	On-going	1
	DRE6.3 Maintain a positive approach to planning control for appropriate farm diversification and rural employment projects.	AONB Unit, HDC, NYCC, RDC	Lead & Advise	On-going	1
	DRE6.4 Support appropriate proposals to re-use traditional and modern farm buildings, where their historic and wildlife value can be safeguarded or the AONB landscape enhanced.	AONB Unit, HDC, NYCC, RDC	Advise & Support	On-going	1
	DRE6.5 Support appropriate proposals for developing new workspace within the AONB.	AONB Unit, HDC, NYCC, RDC	Advise & Support	On-going	1
DRE7 Encourage the expansion of modern telecommunications infrastructure, whilst safeguarding the Special Qualities and tranquillity of the AONB	DRE7.1 Support the provision of high-speed broadband and mobile phone infrastructure that does not have adverse impacts on the Special Qualities of the AONB.	AONB Unit, CPRE, HDC, LEP, NYCC, NYNET, RDC	Advise & Support	On-going	1
DRE8 Encourage the increased provision of local needs/ affordable housing in the AONB	DRE8.1 Maintain up-to-date information on housing needs within the AONB.	HDC, RDC	Support	On-going	1
	DRE8.2 Promote the potential benefits of local needs housing to AONB farmers, landowners and local communities.	AONB Unit, HDC, RDC	Lead & Support	On-going	2

Objective	Action	Delivery/Partners	Role of JAC	Frequency/Year	Priority
Roads, Transport and Traffic Management					
RTT1 Encourage solutions to specific traffic routing issues in and around the AONB, discourage through-traffic and ensure that other traffic uses the most appropriate route	RTT1.1 Support appropriate proposals for full-movement interchange arrangements at the A64/B1257 junction.	AONB Unit, HysE, LEP, NYCC, RDC	Encourage & Support	On-going	2
	RTT1.2 Monitor freight movement issues in the AONB, to identify any patterns in HGV usage.	AONB Unit, Communities, HDC, NYCC, RDC	Support & Encourage	On-going	2
	RTT1.3 Encourage measures to address any issues raised during freight monitoring.	AONB Unit, HDC, NYCC, RDC	Advise & Support	On-going	2
RTT2 Support initiatives to monitor and address traffic and driver behaviour issues in the AONB	RTT2.1 In line with the Road Safety Partnership speed management protocol, carry out speed-checks in identified locations to investigate reported issues.	CSPs, NYCC, NYP	Encourage	On-going	1
	RTT2.2 Support local events that examine and address traffic and driver behaviour issues, in identified problem locations.	AONB Unit, CFY, HDC, NYCC, NYP, RDC	Encourage & Support	On-going	2

Objective	Action	Delivery/Partners	Role of JAC	Frequency/Year	Priority
RTT3 Promote the use of sustainable modes of transport as alternatives to the private car	RTT3.1 Identify transport service, infrastructure and accessibility improvements.	AONB Unit, Communities, CFY, HDC, NYCC, RDC	Encourage & Support	On-going	1
	RTT3.2 Develop and implement identified measures as appropriate.	Communities, CFY, HDC, NYCC, RDC	Encourage	On-going	1
	RTT3.3 Promote the availability of alternative transport services in AONB literature, in local villages and at visitor attractions.	AONB Unit, HDC, NYCC, NYMNPA, RDC	Lead & Support	On-going	2
	RTT3.4 Ensure that implementation of the Local Transport Plan 4 for North Yorkshire contributes to the implementation of AONB Management Plan Objectives, where appropriate.	AONB Unit, NYCC	Advise	On-going	1
RTT4 Maintain the existing rural character of the road network in the AONB	RTT4.1 Continue liaison arrangements between the Joint Advisory Committee and local highway authority (and its agents) for all proposals in the AONB.	AONB Unit, NYCC	Lead & Encourage	On-going	1
	RTT4.2 Promote the usage of the Howardian Hills Area Profile by relevant teams within the local highway authority.	AONB Unit , NYCC	Lead	On-going	1
	RTT4.3 Identify examples of road sign clutter and seek improvements.	AONB Unit , HysE, NYCC	Lead & Encourage	On-going	2
	RTT4.4 Ensure that the specific locations of historic roadside furniture are recorded on the NYCC Highway Asset Management System.	AONB Unit , HDC, NYCC, RDC	Lead & Support	1	1
	RTT4.5 Ensure that traditional direction signs, mileposts and other historic structures within and adjacent to the highway are appropriately maintained and managed.	AONB Unit, HDC, HE, HysE, NYCC, RDC	Lead & Support	On-going	1

Objective	Action	Delivery/Partners	Role of JAC	Frequency/Year	Priority
RTT5 Support proposals for improvement of the A64 Trunk Road through the AONB, subject to these being fully justified and sensitive to local characteristics. Proposals should aim to minimise environmental impact, make maximum use of the existing road alignment and utilise new techniques such as 'green bridges' where possible.	RTT5.1 Ensure that improvements to the A64 (to enhance road safety, accessibility and journey-time reliability) have regard to the Purposes of Designation and Special Qualities of the AONB.	CoYC, JAC, HysE, LEP, NYCC, RDC, SBC	Support	On-going	1
	RTT5.2 Monitor future proposals and provide comments to Highways England, North Yorkshire County Council and Ryedale District Council.	AONB Unit	Advise	On-going	1

Objective	Action	Delivery/Partners	Role of JAC	Frequency/Year	Priority
Enjoying the AONB					
Recreation, Access and Tourism					
RAT1 Encourage sustainable recreational activities that do not conflict with the Special Qualities of the AONB	RAT1.1 Use planning policies to support appropriate recreational business developments.	AONB Unit, HDC, RDC	Advise & Support	On-going	1
	RAT1.2 Monitor the levels and sustainability of recreational activities within the AONB.	AONB Unit , HDC, NYCC, RDC	Lead & Encourage	On-going	2
RAT2 Promote the attractions and Special Qualities of the AONB to encourage sustainable use and support the local visitor economy	RAT2.1 Work with local partner organisations to promote sustainable tourism and recreational activities in the Howardian Hills.	AONB Unit, CoYC, HDC, LEP, NYCC, NYMNPA, RDC	Lead & Support	On-going	1
	RAT2.2 Develop and implement initiatives to encourage Under-Represented Groups to enjoy the AONB.	AONB Unit , HDC, H&WB, NYCC, RA, RDC	Lead & Support	On-going	1
RAT3 Maintain and improve both the condition and network of Public Rights of Way in the AONB	RAT3.1 Ensure that path furniture in the AONB is appropriately maintained and improved.	AONB Unit, CLA, NFU, NYCC	Encourage & Support	On-going	1
	RAT3.2 Liaise with local landowners to quickly rectify identified path condition problems, including seasonal overgrowth and ploughing/cropping.	AONB Unit, CLA, NFU, NYCC	Encourage & Support	On-going	1
	RAT3.3 Implement path improvements, particularly via management measures such as ride-widening and the use of alternative routes.	AONB Unit, FC, HDC, NYCC, RDC	Advise & Support	On-going	2

Objective	Action	Delivery/Partners	Role of JAC	Frequency/Year	Priority
RAT3 Continued...	RAT3.4 Ensure the correct identification of all Public Rights of Way routes in the AONB on the Definitive Map by 2026.	BHS, NYCC, RA	Encourage & Support	On-going	1
	RAT3.5 Bring 'missing routes' and 'route status inconsistencies' to the attention of the local highway authority and lobby for action.	AONB Unit, BHS, HDC, NYCC, RA, RDC	Lead & Support	On-going	1
	RAT3.6 Support appropriate Public Rights of Way diversion, creation and extinguishment orders/agreements in response to particular local issues or to improve the local network.	AONB Unit, BHS, NYCC, RA	Advise & Support	On-going	2
	RAT3.7 Encourage the creation of new access routes/areas where the Public Rights of Way network is less developed.	AONB Unit, BHS, HDC, NYCC, RA, RDC	Advise & Support	On-going	1
RAT4 Carry out recreational management measures as appropriate, to enhance enjoyment by the public and address local issues	RAT4.1 Carry out small-scale management works as necessary, particularly on sites used for car parking and at the AONB's Recreation Priority Sites.	AONB Unit , HDC, NYCC, RDC	Lead	On-going	1
	RAT4.2 Use planning and other policy controls to discourage unsustainable recreational use of the Derwent valley.	AONB Unit, BCU, RDC	Advise & Support	On-going	1
	RAT4.3 Support low-key countryside management works to improve recreation management on Forestry Commission land.	AONB Unit, FC	Advise & Support	On-going	2
	RAT4.4 Encourage the development/ use of designated village parking areas and toilet facilities by recreational visitors.	AONB Unit , HDC, NYP, PCs, RDC, Village Halls	Lead	On-going	1
	RAT4.5 Monitor the levels of litter and fly-tipping within the AONB and take action as appropriate.	AONB Unit, HDC, RDC	Advise & Support	On-going	1

Objective	Action	Delivery/Partners	Role of JAC	Frequency/Year	Priority
RAT5 Develop routes within the AONB for different user groups and provide self-guided information	RAT5.1 Identify appropriate routes, linked to public transport where possible.	AONB Unit, BHS, HDC, NYCC, RA, RDC	Lead & Support	On-going	2
	RAT5.2 Publish guide leaflets and information in a variety of formats as appropriate, to encourage usage.	AONB Unit , BHS, HDC, H&WB, NYCC, RA, RDC	Lead & Support	On-going	1
Awareness and Promotion					
AP1 Maintain awareness and understanding of the AONB designation, its importance and the role and work of the Joint Advisory Committee	AP1.1 Maintain the existing 'gateway signs' on roads entering the AONB and seek to install signs on the A64.	AONB Unit , HysE, LEP, NYCC	Lead	On-going	1
	AP1.2 Provide information on the work of the JAC via various publicity mechanisms, as appropriate.	AONB Unit , HDC, NYCC, RDC	Lead	On-going	1
	AP1.3 Maintain a public profile in the local media and at appropriate local events/shows.	AONB Unit , HDC, NYCC, RDC	Lead	On-going	1
AP2 Promote awareness of the Special Qualities of the AONB	AP2.1 Publish and distribute information about the AONB and its Special Qualities, for example at popular visitor destinations, in community buildings, in visitor accommodation and on the AONB website.	AONB Unit , Communities, HDC, Local businesses, RDC, WtY	Lead	On-going	1
	AP2.2 Deliver guided walks, talks and demonstrations as appropriate to explain the Special Qualities of the AONB and promote sustainable management techniques.	AONB Unit , CLA, EA, FC, HE, LEP, LNP, NE, NFU, NYMNPA, RFS, TFA, YAS	Lead & Support	On-going	1
	AP2.3 Continue a programme of activities with local schools, young people and communities.	AONB Unit , NYCC, NYMNPA, Ryevitalise, YAS, YWT	Lead & Support	On-going	1

Objective	Action	Delivery/Partners	Role of JAC	Frequency/Year	Priority
Putting the Plan into Action					
Implementation					
IM1 Consolidate and develop funding and partnership mechanisms to achieve Management Plan objectives	IM1.1 Seek appropriate sources of funding and assistance to implement Management Plan Objectives.	AONB Unit, JAC , HDC, NYCC, RDC	Lead	On-going	1
	IM1.2 Continue and expand partnership arrangements with the North York Moors National Park Authority, as appropriate.	JAC , HDC, NYCC, NYMNPA , RDC	Lead	On-going	1
	IM1.3 Involve volunteers wherever possible, to assist with the delivery of appropriate tasks and activities.	AONB Unit , Community Groups, HDC, H&WB, NT, NYCC, PCs, RDC, YWT	Lead	On-going	1
IM2 Ensure that the AONB Partnership has a robust business model that is resilient to future challenges	IM2.1 Monitor the business requirements and model of the AONB partnership and identify improvements as appropriate.	AONB Unit, HDC, JAC , NYCC, RDC	Lead	On-going	1
	IM2.2 Incorporate suggested improvements into the annual Action Programme and Budget approval processes.	JAC	Lead	Annual	1
Monitoring					
MN1 Monitor the performance of the AONB partnership and AONB unit	MN1.1 Report annual progress on achievement of Management Plan Objectives to the JAC, AONB Partnership and public.	AONB Unit , EA, FC, HDC, HE, NE, NYCC, RDC	Lead	Annual	1
	MN1.2 Monitor the performance of the AONB Partnership using the Defra/ NAAONB Key Performance Indicators.	JAC	Lead	Annual	1

Objective	Action	Delivery/Partners	Role of JAC	Frequency/Year	Priority
MN2 Monitor the condition of the AONB	MN2.1 Develop a robust mechanism for assessing the Condition of the locally designated and non-designated Priority Sites identified in the Management Plan.	AONB Unit , HDC, HE, NEYEDC, NYCC, RDC	Lead	1-3	1
	MN2.2 Update the data for the AONB Condition Indicators during Management Plan review in 2023.	AONB Unit , HDC, NYCC, RDC	Lead	4	1
	MN2.3 Update the 'State of the AONB' Report during Management Plan review in 2023.	AONB Unit , Communities, HDC, NYCC, PCs, RDC	Lead	4	1
	MN2.4 Repeat the 'fixed-point photography' monitoring of visual landscape change.	AONB Unit, Volunteers	Lead	3, 4	1

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Glossary

Term used	Definition / Explanation
Affordable housing	Low-cost housing for sale or rent, often from a housing association, provided to meet the needs of local people who cannot afford accommodation through the open market.
Agri-environment schemes	A generic term for schemes operated by Defra, designed to encourage environmentally friendly farming and public understanding and enjoyment of the countryside.
Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)	An ancient woodland site, believed to have had continuous woodland cover since 1600AD, composed principally of native tree species that have not obviously been planted.
Ancient tree	An 'ancient' tree will display many of the wildlife and habitat features of a 'veteran' tree but is in the third and final stage of its life. It will have passed beyond full maturity and the crown will be reducing in size, shedding redundant parts and accumulating dead wood.
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	An area designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 where the primary purpose is the conservation and enhancement of natural beauty including flora, fauna, geology and landscape.
Biodiversity	The common term for "biological diversity", the variety of life and the natural processes of which living things are a part. The term includes living organisms, the genetic differences between them and the communities in which they occur.
(Local) Biodiversity Action Plans ((L)BAPs)	A plan, programme or strategy for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Biodiversity Action Plans are a key means by which the UK Government commitment to the Convention on Biological Diversity at Rio de Janeiro (1992) is to be met.
Brexit	The colloquial term for the withdrawal of the UK from the European Union on 29th March 2019.
Climate change	The anticipated impact of modern human activity on the global environment, leading to a potential rise in temperatures in the UK, with additional environmental consequences.
Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)	European Union-wide policy that supports agriculture through price support, market management and measures to improve the agriculture industry. The UK will no longer be part of the CAP following the end of the Brexit EU Implementation Period, scheduled at the time of writing (January 2019) as December 2020.
Condition monitoring	Monitoring the condition of the AONB to assess changes over time. Differs from performance monitoring that monitors completion of actions, etc within the Plan.
Conservation Area	Defined by Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 as an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which is desirable to preserve or enhance.
Conventional hydrocarbons	Oil and gas where the reservoir is in porous rock such as sandstone or limestone and can be extracted using traditional drilling techniques.

Term used	Definition / Explanation
Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act (2000)	Contains measures to improve public access to the open countryside and registered common land while recognising the legitimate interests of those who own and manage the land concerned; it amends the law relating to rights of way; it amends the law relating to nature conservation by strengthening protection for Sites of Special Scientific Interest including tougher penalties and by providing extra powers for the prosecution of wildlife crime; it provides a basis for the conservation of biological diversity; and it provides for better management of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, including the requirement for local authorities to produce AONB management plans every five years and places a duty on public bodies to have regard to the purposes of AONB designation.
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)	Central government body with the aim of sustainable development, which means a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come, including: a better environment at home and internationally, and sustainable use of natural resources; economic prosperity through sustainable farming, fishing, food, water and other industries that meet consumers' requirements; thriving economies and communities in rural areas and a countryside for all to enjoy.
Ecosystem services	Can be simply described as the benefits people obtain from ecosystems. These include: provisioning services (e.g. food and water); regulating services (e.g. flood and disease control); cultural services (e.g. spiritual and cultural benefits); and supporting services (e.g. nutrient cycling that maintains conditions for life on Earth).
Environmental land management scheme	The generic term for a scheme operated by Defra, designed to encourage environmentally friendly farming and public understanding and enjoyment of the countryside. Often used to refer to the anticipated 'next-generation' of agri-environment scheme operating in the UK.
Geomorphology	The branch of physical geography which deals with the form of the Earth, the general configuration of its surface and the distribution of land and water, etc. together with the natural processes that contribute to the evolution of landscapes.
Geodiversity	The variety of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils, landforms and natural processes.
Green infrastructure	A network of multi-functional green space, both new and existing, both rural and urban, which supports the natural and ecological processes and is integral to the health and quality of life of sustainable communities. Green Infrastructure includes parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, allotments and private gardens.
Habitat	A place in which a particular plant or animal lives, or the wider interaction of plants and animals that are found together.
Heritage asset	A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage assets include both designated heritage assets and also assets identified by the local planning authority (including via local listing).
Historic environment	All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.

Term used	Definition / Explanation
Historic Parks and Gardens	Parks and Gardens containing historic features dating from 1939 or earlier and Registered by Historic England in three Grades, as with historic buildings.
Invasive non-native species	Plant or animal species that have either been transported accidentally through human activity, or purposefully introduced, from their historically known native ranges into new ecosystems where they did not evolve, and which subsequently have adverse impacts on native flora and fauna.
Landscape	An area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.
Landscape assessment	Non-statutory document setting out the special qualities of the landscape, tracing its evolution and forces for change.
Landscape character	A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.
Landscape character area	A unique individual geographical area in which landscape types occur, which share generic characteristics with other areas of the same type but have their own particular identity.
Landscape character assessment (LCA)	The process of identifying and describing variation in the character of the landscape, and using this information to assist in managing change. The assessment seeks to identify and explain the unique combination of elements and features that make landscapes distinctive. The process results in the production of a Landscape Character Assessment (also shortened to LCA).
Landscape feature	A prominent eye-catching element e.g. a wooded hill top or church spire.
Listed Building	A building of architectural or historical importance, graded according to its merit (I, II*, II) and subject to special controls.
Local Authority	An administrative unit of local government, specifically any body listed in Section 270 of the Local Government Act 1972 or Section 21(1) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989.
Local distinctiveness	Essentially the sum of points of connection between the place and the person. It is an expression of how landscapes are valued as places which have a distinctiveness and significance that communities cherish as their own and seek to find alternatives to the spread of uniformity in the countryside.
Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP)	Partnerships between local authorities and businesses. They aim to determine local economic priorities and undertake activities to drive economic growth and create jobs.
Local Geological Site (LGS)	A site which is important due to notable geodiversity. LGS' form part of a wider national network of non-statutory locally valued sites and are generally administered by local authorities in partnership with conservation organisations.
Local Highway Authority	The Highways Act 1980 defines a Highway Authority as the body responsible for maintaining all highways maintainable at public expense and keeping them free of obstruction, including responsibility for public rights of way. The Local Highway Authority in the Howardian Hills AONB is North Yorkshire County Council.
Local Nature Partnership (LNP)	A partnership of a broad range of local organisations, businesses and people who aim to manage and bring about improvements in their local natural environment.

Term used	Definition / Explanation
Local Planning Authority (LPA)	The Local Authority, normally the local borough or district council, which is empowered by law to exercise planning functions.
Local Transport Plan	A plan produced by the Local Highway Authority setting out future proposals for transport infrastructure over the following 5 years and attracting possible Government funding.
Manufactured capital	The entire physical man-made stock, produced and reproduced by society. It comprises buildings; transport, energy, water and waste infrastructure; industrial production facilities; and all durable production and consumer goods such as machinery, cars, aeroplanes and computers.
National Character Area (NCA)	Developed by Natural England, these divide England into 159 distinct natural areas. Each is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity and cultural and economic activity. Their boundaries follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries, making them a good decision-making framework for the natural environment.
Natural capital	The elements of nature that directly or indirectly produce value to people, including ecosystems, species, freshwater, land, minerals, the air and oceans, as well as natural processes and functions. Natural capital is referred to in terms of assets, and any capital asset has the capacity to produce various goods and services. Natural capital is those assets provided by nature, which have the capacity to generate goods and services. Natural capital can be regarded as the source of all other types of capital: whether manufactured, financial, human or social.
Natural England	The non-departmental public body of the UK government responsible for ensuring that England's natural environment, including its land, flora and fauna, freshwater and marine environments, geology and soils, are protected and improved. It also has a responsibility to help people enjoy, understand and access the natural environment.
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	Published by the Department of Communities and Local Government in March 2012 and updated in July 2018, for use in England. The first NPPF replaced nearly thirty Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG) running to over 1,300 pages.
Parkland	A large piece of ground usually comprising woodland, pasture and formal gardens, currently or once attached to a country house or mansion.
Permanent pasture	Any pasture composed of perennial or self-seeding annual plants kept indefinitely for grazing.
Permissive path	A route where the landowner has granted permission for public use, usually for foot access but occasionally for horse riders, but which is not dedicated as a public right of way.
Planted (or Plantations on) Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS)	Ancient woodland sites in which the former tree cover has been replaced, often with non-native trees. PAWS often retain important ancient woodland features including characteristic flora, fauna and archaeology.
Priority Habitats and Species	Habitats and species recognised as being of Principal Importance for the conservation of biodiversity under Section 41 of the Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006.

Term used	Definition / Explanation
Public Right of Way (PRoW)	A route where the public has a right to walk, and in some cases ride horses, bicycles, motorcycles, wheeled carriages or drive motor vehicles, which is designated either a footpath, a bridleway, Restricted Byway, Carriage or Cart Road used mainly as a Footpath or Bridleway or a byway open to all traffic (BOAT). These are shown on the 'Definitive Map' held by the Local Highway Authority. A route may also have higher rights e.g. be a County Road or other Highway; or simply be incorrectly signed or waymarked and/or have private rights of access.
Public transport	Methods of transporting passengers including buses, trains and taxis but not cars.
Renewable energy	Energy generated from resources that are non-fossil fuels, and are unlimited, rapidly replenished or naturally renewable such as wind, water, sun, wave and refuse. Thus the technology includes wind turbines, wave generators, biofuels, solar power, wood fuel burners and boilers, etc.
Scheduled Monument (SM)	A structure identified by Historic England for protection under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.
Setting	The surroundings in which a valued area, site, building or feature is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve.
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	Area identified by Natural England under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 for protection by reason of the rarity of its nature conservation, wildlife features or geological interest.
Sites and Monument Record (SMR)	A database of sites of archaeological interest and potential within a particular area, usually a county.
Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	Site designated according to the Habitats Directive 93/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora. SAC defines a site of Community Importance designated by member states through a statutory, administrative and/or contractual act, where the necessary conservation measures are applied for the maintenance or restoration, at a favourable conservation status, of the natural habitats and/or the populations of the species for which the site is designated. All SACs in the UK are SSSIs.
Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)	A site which is important due to the presence of notable species or an important habitat. SINCs form part of a wider national network of non-statutory locally valued wildlife sites and are generally administered by local authorities in partnership with conservation organisations.
Special Qualities	The unique set of characteristic features/landscape character for which an area of countryside is deemed worthy of designation as an AONB or National Park. The Special Qualities of the Howardian Hills AONB are fully described on pp16-17 of the Management Plan.

Term used	Definition / Explanation
Statutory Undertaker	Statutory undertakers are organisations authorised by statute or licensed by central government to perform various public undertakings. Section 98 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 defines a statutory undertaker as any person authorised by any enactment to carry out any railway, light railway, tramway, road transport, canal, inland navigation, dock, harbour or pier undertaking or any relevant airport operator. The New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 defines as Statutory Undertakers all utilities namely electricity, gas, water, telephone, cable telephone, television and other telecommunications companies.
STEAM	A tourism economic impact analysis model owned and operated by Global Tourism Solutions (UK) Ltd (GTS). Using local supply and performance data, in conjunction with a range of multipliers and data from tourism research, STEAM generates estimates of the volume of visitor activity (measured as visitor numbers and visitor days) coupled with direct and indirect/induced economic and employment benefits arising from visitor activity.
Sustainable development	The widely used definition is "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".
Tranquillity	A composite feature which seeks to characterise elements of wildness, solitude, peace and quiet, relating principally to low levels of built development, traffic, noise and artificial lighting.
Unconventional hydrocarbons	Oil or gas which cannot be extracted using traditional drilling techniques, including underground coal gasification, coal bed and coal mine methane and shale gas.
Utilities	Organisations performing a public service e.g. water, gas, electricity, etc.
Veteran tree	A 'veteran' tree is usually in the second or mature stage of its life, generally with a full crown but also having important wildlife and habitat features such as hollowing or associated decay fungi, holes, wounds and large dead branches. The term 'veteran' generally refers to old trees but can also include younger, middle aged trees where premature aging characteristics are present.
Village Design Statement	A document produced by a community to identify local character and set out design guidance for new development.

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**Produced on behalf of North Yorkshire County Council, Ryedale
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