

Cabinet

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North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Building Design Guide And Planning Guidelines

Report of Corporate Management Team

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Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of the report is to consider the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Building Design Guide and Planning Guidelines and to recommend that the Council endorses them as supplementary guidance to be included as part of the County Durham Plan.

Background

2. The North Pennines AONB Partnership is responsible for co-ordinating efforts to conserve and enhance the AONB. The management of AONB's is a statutory function of local authorities under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CRoW) 2000.
3. The North Pennines AONB Planning Guidelines is a high level policy document, which seeks to complement the existing national and local policy framework by providing information, design and conservation advice relevant to conserving the appearance and character of the AONB. It provides a context for the cultural history, appearance and environment of the AONB; discusses the forces for change; and suggests approaches to the design of a range of developments with particular regard to key topics such as cultural heritage, biodiversity and geodiversity, water, energy, telecommunications, minerals and waste.
4. The North Pennines AONB Building Design is also a high level policy document, which seeks to provide helpful information for planners, developers, builders and householders on how to design and implement the appearance and sustainability of the built environment within the AONB to complement the area's special character.
5. Both documents have been prepared by the North Pennines AONB Partnership, in consultation with the five Local Authorities representing the North Pennines AONB area: Durham County Council, Northumberland County Council; Cumbria County Council; Carlisle City Council; and Eden District Council. The documents have undergone a comprehensive process of consultation with Local Authorities, the general public, AONB Partnership

members, Ward Members, statutory organisations and other relevant bodies. The documents also underwent an eight week period of consultation by the AONB partnership. Advertisements were placed in the local press throughout the AONB area as well as the documents being available electronically via the North Pennines AONB website. Both documents have been amended in light of representations received.

Key Issues

6. The North Pennines AONB Building Design Guide updates and replaces two documents, already endorsed by the County Council and the former Derwentside, Teesdale and Wear Valley District Councils; the Guide on Good Practice in the Design, Adaptation and Maintenance of Buildings and the Agricultural Building Design Guide for the North Pennines AONB. The new Building Design Guide is designed to help implement planning, design and conservation policies relating to the AONB that are contained in the three relevant Local Authorities statutory development plans. It seeks to help generate increased consistency of approach towards matters of building design and building conservation across the AONB.
7. The North Pennines AONB Planning Guidelines provides more detailed expression to the broad brush AONB related policies of the three Local Authorities statutory development plans and seeks to help developers and planners facilitate development in the AONB which helps to conserve the area's rural character and special qualities whilst also meeting the needs of local communities.
8. The two documents are intended to provide flexible guidance, rather than being prescriptive in assisting developers, householders and planners in bringing forward developments in the AONB which meet local development need whilst at the same time support the conservation of the local environment. Both documents are considered to be in accordance with and to reflect existing national and local policy on the AONB and to provide useful guidance to all relevant parties without being overly prescriptive or restrictive. They seek to ensure increased consistency of approach towards development in the AONB and are considered as being particularly helpful to developers and homeowners in a similar way to the predecessor building design documents, which have contributed to good development in the AONB area.
9. Both documents have undergone a comprehensive process of consultation by the North Pennines AONB Partnership and Northumberland County Council.
10. Planning Policy Statement 12: creating strong safe and prosperous communities through Local Spatial Planning (PPS12) paragraph 6.3 describes how supplementary guidance to assist the delivery of development may be prepared by other bodies for example AONB Committees where this would provide economies in production and the avoidance of duplication. The North Pennines AONB Building Design Guide and AONB Planning Guidelines are considered to meet the requirements of paragraph 6.3.

Conclusions

11. The production of the North Pennines AONB Building Design Guide and AONB Planning Guidelines are considered to meet the requirements of

paragraph 6.3 of PPS12 in relation consultation and sustainability appraisal. The two documents are also considered to be in accordance with and to reflect existing national and local policy on the AONB and provide useful guidance to all relevant parties without being overly prescriptive or restrictive.

Recommendation

12. It is recommended that:

- The North Pennines AONB Building Design Guide and North Pennines AONB Planning Guidelines are endorsed as supplementary guidance under provisions in paragraph 6.3 of Planning Policy Statement 12 to assist the Local Planning Authority in considering and determining planning applications within the area designated as the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; and

Background papers;

North Pennines AONB, Building Design Guide, April 2011

North Pennines AONB, Planning Guidelines, April 2011

(copies of these documents are available in the Member's Library and electronic copies can be obtained from the Planning Policy Team on request)

PPS 12: Creating strong safe and prosperous communities through Local Spatial Planning

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – The endorsement of the North Pennines AONB Building Design Guide and Planning Guidelines as Supplementary Guidance, which have been prepared and are to be published by a separate body, will help to provide economies in production and the avoidance of duplication while maintaining a satisfactory planning policy framework.

Staffing – None.

Risk – None.

Equality and Diversity – An impact assessment is not considered necessary because the documents contain high level, generic policy guidance in relation to conservation of the natural and built environment and do not for example include proposals that are specifically focused on a protected group or specific design details that that may create particular difficulties for any particular vulnerable individuals or groups..

Accommodation – None.

Crime and Disorder – None.

Human Rights – None.

Consultation – Consultation has taken place with Local Authorities, the general public, AONB Partnership members, Ward Members, statutory organisations and other relevant bodies.

Procurement – None.

Disability Discrimination Act – None.

Legal Implications – None.