



## **QUANTOCK HILLS JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Tuesday 23 July 2024**

**2pm, Kolve Village Hall**

To: The members of the Quantock Hills Joint Advisory Committee

For further information about the meeting, please contact the Quantock Hills Communication and Support Officer Amanda Sampson on email [quantockhills@somerset.gov.uk](mailto:quantockhills@somerset.gov.uk)

Guidance about procedures at the meeting is given on page 2.

This meeting will be open to the public and press, subject to the passing of any resolution under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

<b>Agenda:</b>	
<b>1.</b>	<b>Apologies for absence</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Declarations of interest</b> - Members of the JAC to declare any personal or prejudicial interests in any matter being considered at this meeting (see Sc 5 page 2).
<b>3.</b>	<b>Accuracy of the previous minutes</b> (copy appended) <b>and to consider any matters arising.</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Public question time</b> - The Chair will allow members of the public to ask questions or make statements about any matter on the agenda for this meeting or present a petition on any matter within the Committee's remit.
<b>5.</b>	<b>Presentation – Quantock Common Moorland Implementation Plan</b> (Thomas Mansfield, FWAG-SW)
<b>6.</b>	<b>Paper A – Economic outlets position statement</b> (Iain Porter)
<b>7.</b>	<b>Paper B – Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme Update</b> (Katie Read)
<b>8.</b>	<b>Paper C – Management Plan review progress report</b> (Iain Porter)
<b>9.</b>	<b>Paper D – Quantock Hills Carbon Audit and risk assessment</b> (Iain Porter)
<b>10.</b>	<b>Paper E –Article 4 Direction report</b> (Alex Meletiou)
<b>11.</b>	<b>Paper F – Partnership update</b> (Iain Porter)
<b>12.</b>	<b>AOB</b>
	<p><b>Future JAC meeting dates:</b> (all start at 2.00pm)</p> <p>Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2024  Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2025  Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2025  Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2025</p>
	<p><b>Note:</b>  Further information about any of the reports for this meeting may be obtained from the report authors based at the Quantock Hills AONB Service, The Quantock Office, Fyne Court, Broomfield, Bridgwater, TA5 2EQ.  Tel: 01823 451884 or Email: <a href="mailto:quantockhills@somerset.gov.uk">quantockhills@somerset.gov.uk</a></p>

<b>Meeting Guidance Notes:</b>	
<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Inspection of Papers</b></p> <p>Any person wishing to inspect Minutes, reports, or the background papers for any item on the agenda should contact the Quantock Hills Communication and Support Officer Amanda Sampson at <a href="mailto:quantockhills@somerset.gov.uk">quantockhills@somerset.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>Notes of the Meeting</b></p> <p>Details of the issues discussed, and decisions taken at the meeting will be set out in the Minutes, which the Committee will be asked to approve as a correct record at its next meeting. In the meantime, details of the decisions taken can be obtained from the Quantock Hills AONB Communication and Support Officer Amanda Sampson at <a href="mailto:quantockhills@somerset.gov.uk">quantockhills@somerset.gov.uk</a></p>
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>Public Question Time</b></p> <p>At the Chairperson’s invitation you may ask questions and/or make statements or comments about <b>any matter on the Committee’s agenda</b>. You may also present a petition on any matter within the Committee’s remit. <b>The length of public question time will be no more than 20 minutes in total.</b></p> <p>A slot for Public Question Time is set aside near the beginning of the meeting, after the minutes of the previous meeting have been signed. If you wish to speak, please tell Amanda Sampson, the committee administrator, <b>before the meeting</b>.</p> <p>You must direct your questions and comments through the Chairperson. You may not take direct part in the debate.</p> <p>The Chairperson will decide when public participation is to finish. If there are many people present at the meeting for one particular item, the Chairperson may adjourn the meeting to allow views to be expressed more freely. If an item on the agenda is contentious, with a large number of people attending the meeting, a representative should be nominated to present the views of a group.</p> <p>An issue will not be deferred just because you cannot be present for the meeting. <b>Remember that the amount of time you speak will be restricted, normally to two minutes only.</b></p>
<b>4.</b>	<p><b>Substitutions</b></p> <p>Committee members can appoint substitutes if they are unable to attend the meeting.</p>
<b>5.</b>	<p><b>Declarations of Interest</b></p> <p>It is a member of the JACs responsibility to declare a personal or prejudicial interest at all meetings where matters being discussed or to be discussed affect their interests. Full guidance can be found in appendix 3 of the JAC Constitution.</p>



**Quantock  
Hills  
National  
Landscape**

## **QUANTOCK HILLS JOINT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (JAC)**

Minutes of a meeting of the Quantock Hills Joint Advisory Committee held on:

**Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at 2.00pm, Enmore Village Hall**

### **Present:**

#### **Members:**

Hugh Warmington (HW)	CLA, JAC Chair
Dixie Darch (DD)	Somerset Council, JAC Vice Chair
Mike Caswell (MC)	Somerset Council
Alan Bradford (AB)	Somerset Council
Tim Whittingham (TW)	Friends of the Quantocks
John Ebsary (JE)	Forestry England
Rob White (RW)	Quantock Commoners Association
Tommy Muncie (TM)	National Trust
Julian Taylor (JT)	Parish Representative – North Petherton
Mark Phillipson (MP)	Parish Representative – West Quantoxhead
Mike Copleston (MC)	Parish Representative - Holford

#### **Officers:**

Iain Porter (IP)	Manager
Mark Baker (MB)	Projects Manager
Andy Stevenson (AST)	Ranger
Dan Broadbent (DB)	Historic Heritage Officer, QLPS
Katy Menday (KM)	Somerset Council
Amanda Sampson (AS)	Communications and Support Officer (minutes)

#### **Also present:**

Joshua Schweiso (JS) Spaxton PC.

### **1. Apologies**

David Stripp (Kingston PC), Bill Revans (Somerset Council), Alicia Aras (SLAF), Deborah Prestwich (Commoners Association), Juliette Butler (Historic England), Martin Jones (West Bagborough PC), Alison Kent (British Horse Society), Julie Cooper (Somerset Council), Tom Deakin (Somerset Council) and Sarah Nason (Holford PC).

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

HW declared himself as a Quantock Hills landowner, a member of CLA (Country Land & Business Association), Friends of the Quantocks, Falcon and Rural Housing, Somerset Local Access Forum and the Quantock Deer Management & Conservation Group.

No other declarations were given.

### **3. Accuracy and matters arising from the previous minutes**

The minutes of Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024 were signed off as a true representation of the meeting.

### **4. Public Question Time**

No public questions.

### **5. Presentation - QLPS Archaeological update (Dan Broadbent)**

DB gave an update on the Archaeological work that the QLPS team have delivered over the past 12 months.

HW thanked DB for an interesting presentation.

### **6. Paper A – Economic outlets position statement (Iain Porter)**

IP welcomed KM (Katy Menday) as the link officer for Somerset Council, in place of Jon Doyle. IP informed the Partnership in an increase in requests from economic outlets who were wishing to base themselves in hilltop car parks around the Quantock Hills. IP is aware of positive and negative impacts of this type of activity and would like the input from the partnership in the development of a position statement.

TM his experience is that some people respond well to outlets and pop up coffee shops, and others don't. If lots of people want to start pop up outlets some people might get territorial and competitive over area and location.

MP need to consider access as this has a potential to have a negative impact on the roads and parking and the disturbance of peace and tranquillity of the area.

AB would be good to give the idea a trial. HW we are trying to adopt a policy that we can follow moving forward when approached with enquiries.

FS as a member of Exmoor National Park this was raised a few years ago and they were quite happy to have these outlets in places across the NP. FS supports having a policy that can be amended and reviewed, and ultimately supports the process.

Both The Travellers Rest and Pines Café in the Cothelstone Hill carpark area have gone in recent years so there could be room for replacements there.

JE from a Forestry perspective it comes back to access to the area and FE have had feedback and request in the past for this type of thing and usually give a 3 month trial to assess whether it works or not. JE supports the policy.

DD likes the fact that the Quantock Hills are a place where you can visit without having to purchase things. Managing the frequency and the nature of the vendors and the possible noise creation from generators ect would be a good idea.

IP reminded the partnership that landowners will give permission or not but that a number of landowners have approached the Team seeking their views. A position statement will allow landowners to consider both the negative and positive potential impacts to be able to make an informed decision.

#### **Paper A Recommendation(s):**

**1) The JAC noted the report.**

**2) The JAC provide direction on the drafting of a position statement to be adopted in July 2024.**

### **7. Paper B – Land management & engagement report (Andy Stevenson)**

AST updated the Partnership on the land management and engagement work undertaken the rangers and volunteer rangers over the past 6 months.

HW thanked AST for a very interesting presentation and added how valuable the work is that the volunteers do.

**Paper B Recommendation(s):**

**1) The JAC noted the report.**

**8. Paper C – Management Plan review progress report (Iain Porter)**

IP gave a presentation including an overview and update on the management plan review progress report.

JT – are the targets for the Quantock Hills. HW – The targets are national targets for all protected landscapes (National Parks and National Landscapes).

IP – NE have appointed LUC to work with PLs in the apportionment of targets. Unsure when this is planned.

**Paper C Recommendation(s):**

**1) The JAC noted the report.**

**2) The JAC agreed with the Quantock Hills Management Plan draft principles.**

**Appendix C1 – Quantock Hills Management Plan 2025 Draft Principles.**

**9. Paper D – Quantock Hills Nature Recovery Plan (Mark Baker)**

MB presented the final version of the Nature Recovery Plan. This had been amended and updated after consultation and was now presented for adoption.

DD - congratulated MB for what has been a significant piece of work.

**Recommendation(s)**

**1) The JAC adopted the Quantock Hills Nature Recovery Plan.**

**10. Paper E – Levelling up & Regeneration Act (Iain Porter)**

IP gave a brief update on the Levelling up and Regeneration Act 2023, specifically the new duty on statutory undertakers. The Team are liaising with the Blackdown Hills and Mendip Hills NLs about raising awareness of the new duty with the local councils, especially planning teams, through routes such as to members briefings, and officers workshops.

**Paper E Recommendation(s):**

**1) The JAC noted the report**

**11. Paper F – Partnership update (Iain Porter)**

IP recommended inviting the South West Heritage Trust to join the Partnership as he was aware there was a gap in the heritage interest on the Partnership. All agreed.

MP - are you expecting any financial impact on the situation with Somerset Council or are the QH funds ring fenced. IP not expecting any direct impact from the Council though aware of a number of indirect impacts such as reduction in back office support. KM the Quantock Hills funds are recognised as a statutory payment within the Council to manage and maintain the Quantock Hills.

MP - With recycling sites being closed is there a noticeable impact on fly tipping across the Quantock Hills.

DD - with regards to fly tipping, a consultation will be carried out soon we are aware of the sense of fairness in the community. There is a contingency to cope with the response to fly

tipping. Catching fly tipping being done is very difficult. In the south west we have the best ratio of recycling centres to households in the area. We need to look at what measures there are to be able to catch people in the act.

**Paper F Recommendation(s):**

- 1) **The JAC noted the report.**
- 2) **The JAC approved the South West Heritage Trust being invited to become members of the Partnership**
- 3) **JAC members wishing to attend the site visits to contact the team.**

**12. Paper G – Planning report (Alex Meletiou)**

IP gave a brief update on the planning report in the absence of AM.

JT - often there are planning developments on the edge of the boundary of Quantock Hills how many of those do the Quantock Hills team comment on. IP – data should be available and will liaise with AM to see if we can provide the figures.

(ACTION) IP to get the number of boundary planning application comments figures for JT.

**Paper G Recommendation(s):**

- 1) **The JAC noted the report.**

**13. Paper H – Quantock Landscape Partnership update report (Bill Jenman)**

BJ gave a couple of highlights to the group regarding some of the QLPS report.

Joanna Hicks has started as the new Community Engagement Officer working jointly between the Quantock Hills National Landscape and the Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme. Joanna joins us from Somerset Nature Connections with lots of relevant and useful experience.

There have been numerous ongoing problems with regard to the Job Evaluation process within Somerset Council in relation to the Community Engagement and Volunteering Officer post. Evaluation consultants has recommended uplifting the post to increase the legacy capacity. This approach had been approved by the QLPS Board and NLHF. However Somerset Council JE process had not allowed this to go forward.

FS - commented that Bill Revans needs to be made aware of this if not already.

(ACTION) KM suggested IP to write a statement about the issues and give them to DD to try and take this forward. AB would like to be cc'd in.

**Paper H Recommendation(s):**

- 1) **The JAC noted the report.**

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2024 at 2.00pm

**Meeting was closed at 15.57pm.**

To	Quantock Hills JAC	<b>PAPER A</b>
Subject	Economic Outlets Position Statement	
Author	Iain Porter, Manager	
Date	23/07/2024	

## 1. Introduction

- a. In recent years there has been an increase in enquiries relating to the operation of small-scale economic outlets across the Quantock Hills. These are usually hospitality business such as ice-cream vans or coffee 'shops' / pop up cafes and based out of one of the hilltop car parks such as Cothelstone Hill, Lydeard Hill, Crowcombe Park Gate, Withymans Pool or Staple Plain. Since the covid pandemic the number of frequencies of enquiries has significantly increased.
- b. Permission is granted by the landowner and the business will need to apply for licenses from the relevant local authority (Somerset Council) and in many instances seek consents from other relevant bodies, such as Natural England with respect to SSSI consent.
- c. Many landowners, if approached directly, have sought advice from the National Landscape Team as to whether the partnership is favourable or not towards economic activity such as this.
- d. This type of economic activity is not covered specifically in the current National Landscape Management Plan and guidance is sought from the Partnership on the position that should be taken with regard to this type of activity.

## 2. Economic activity in relation to the purpose and aims of National Landscapes and Management Plan objectivise.

- a. The primary purpose of National Landscape (AONB) designation is 'to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the landscape.' Two secondary aims complement this purpose:
  - i. To meet the need for quiet enjoyment of the countryside.
  - ii. To have regard for the interests of those who live and work there.
- b. Relevant authorities, when considering delivering the aims, need to ensure they will not conflict with the purpose and under the new duty (LuRA 2023) need to further the purposes.
- c. The Quantock Hills Management Plan has the following Objective that is relevant –
  - i. LEV1: To support tourism and economic activity across the Quantock Hills where it is environmentally sustainable and benefits businesses in local communities
  - ii. Management Policy LEVP 1: To work with local businesses and support new markets for farmers that promote sustainable growth and the special qualities of the National Landscape.
- d. There is a role for National Landscape Partnerships / Teams in supporting economic activity where this does not impact on the landscape / special qualities of the National Landscape.
- e. The specific types of economic activity covered by the Positions Statement are shown in Table A1. These types of economic activity have been considered because:



- i. They are the types of economic activity that the National Landscape Team have been approached about most frequently over the past five years.
- ii. They are the types of economic activity that other regulatory agencies such as the local planning authorities will take a light touch approach meaning that potential for local impacts is not assessed.

Table A1: Types of economic activity considered through the Position Statement

<b>Economic Activity</b>	<b>Potential Impacts</b>
Van / trailer food / drink outlets in hilltop car parks e.g. Lydeard Hill.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potential for increased litter</li> <li>• Reduced car parking spaces for users</li> <li>• Change in character of car park by introduction of new activity</li> <li>• Increase noise if generators required</li> <li>• Increase in visual 'clutter' due to signage such as banner flags.</li> </ul>
'Pop up' camping on agricultural land not associated with built structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visual intrusion in 'unspoilt' countryside</li> <li>• Increase noise and light pollution</li> <li>• Change in character of agricultural land by introduction of new activity</li> <li>• Increase in visual 'clutter' due to signage such as advertising hoardings.</li> <li>• Increase in traffic in 'quiet lanes'</li> </ul>

### 3. Recommended approach

- a. Due for the potential of negative impacts on the tranquillity and scenic beauty of the Quantock Hills National Landscape the position statement sets out a cautious approach to allowing small-scale economic activity in the wider countryside. Where landowners are minded to allow this type of activity the position statement highlights points to consider to ensure that impacts are removed or minimised.

### Recommendation(s)

- 1) **The JAC notes the report.**
- 2) **The JAC approves the Quantock Hills National Landscape Partnership: Position Statement – Small scale economic activity in wider countryside (appendix A1).**

## **Appendix A1: Position Statement - Small scale economic activity in wider countryside.**

### Introduction:

The purpose of this Position Statement is to provide a framework to protect and enhance the tranquillity and visual setting of the Quantock Hills National Landscape. Given the area's significant natural, cultural and historic resource, it is crucial to conserve the tranquillity and 'unspoilt' nature and limit the adverse impacts of development and economic activity. Tranquillity and the high scenic value are special qualities of the Quantock Hills National Landscape.

This position statement considers small-scale transient economic activity such as food/drink vans or trailers and 'pop-up' campsites operating in the wider countryside, especially at locations with large visual ranges such as hilltop car parks. These types of activity require less rigorous regulation and consideration by responsible authorities and therefore the potential for negative impacts on the tranquillity and scenic beauty of the Quantock Hills is greater from these activities.

### Primary objectives

- To safeguard the tranquillity and scenic beauty thereby conserving the Special Qualities of the Quantock Hills.
- To give broad guidance to land managers, land owners, local authorities and those wishing to undertake relevant economic activity on potential issues and considerations.

### Background to the Position Statement

Small-scale economic activity on the Quantock Hills is not a new activity. Since the 1970s there have been numerous infrequent ice cream vans, coffee vans and pop up camping sites. These have been seasonal but have included, as you would expect, the popular car parks such as Lydeard Hill, Crowcombe Park Gate, Dead Woman's Ditch and Cothelstone Hill.

Since 2018 the National Landscape Team has seen an increase in people seeking advice and permission to undertake economic activity. It is thought this relates to an advancement in technology making it easier and cheaper to set up and run food / drink outlets and changes in work / life balance as a result of the 2020 pandemic.

While the number and scale of requests and enquiries has varied over the years it is likely that there will be requests into the future, given the increase in recreation activity and potential customers for businesses.

### Position and considerations

The Quantock Hills National Landscape Partnership appreciates that there is a place for small-scale economic activity however businesses, landowners and responsible authorities need to be mindful of the purpose of the Quantock Hills National Landscape and consider –

<b>Consideration</b>	<b>Questions to consider</b>
Location / Siting	Is the location suitable? Consider the activity (scale, appropriateness, frequency, duration etc) Is access to the location already in existence? How will the business access the site, how will its customers. Will there be

	<p>impact from additional car parking or will it displace existing car parking onto road verges causing highway issues?</p> <p>Would it be appropriate for users of the Quantock Hills to expect economic activity to be operating at this location?</p>
Visual impact	<p>Is the site in a prominent location, viewable from a distance? E.g. hilltop car parks such as Crowcombe Park Gate, Withymans Pool, Dead Woman's Ditch, Staple Plain, Lydeard Hill, Site / fields adjacent to the upland commons</p> <p>Within the site will the activity lead to a reduction of scenic beauty? E.g. Signage such as feather flags associated with coffee vans.</p>
Litter	<p>Is the activity likely to increase litter?</p> <p>How will the impact of litter be managed?</p>
Noise	<p>Is the activity going to create noise? E.g. generators</p> <p>Is there a way that the activity can be undertaken to reduce the impact of noise?</p> <p>Will the activity introduce noise to a site where you would not expect it, or will it extend the period of noise beyond that which is already present?</p>
Impact on other users	<p>Will the activity impact other users of the Quantock Hills. E.g. take up space within a car park meaning other users may not be able to park? Decrease the scenic beauty through creating a visual intrusion on the landscape.</p>
Site constraints	<p>Have all site constraints been considered? Where relevant have other aspects / constraints been appropriately and competently assessed? E.g. SSSI / SAC screening assessment</p>

The Quantock Hills National Landscape Partnership will work with landowners and partners to ensure there are no negative impacts from small-scale economic impact within the National Landscape. The Partnership will continue to monitor small-scale economic activity and where appropriate take steps with the relevant authority / body to eliminate negative impacts.

Policy Context:

National Landscapes, the new name for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) are designated by the Government for the purpose of ensuring that the special qualities of the finest landscapes in England and Wales are conserved and enhanced. In policy terms they have the same planning status as National Parks. The Quantock Hills AONB Management Plan 2019-24 statement of significance notes –

*“The hilltop area has a sense of space, wildness and seclusion; it is a place people value for inspiration, spiritual refreshment, exhilarating views, dark skies at night, unpolluted air, tranquillity and quiet enjoyment.”*

The Plan also includes a specific Management Policy, DPI7 – **“Protect the dark skies and tranquilly of the AONB.”**

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (LuRA) became law on 26 October 2023. The Act, Section 245 amends the duty on relevant authorities as follows:

- i) *'In exercising or performing any function to, or so as to affect, land in an area of outstanding natural beauty in England, a relevant authority other than a devolved Welsh authority must seek to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty.'*

The significance of the AONB is set out in the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2023) para 182;

- ii) *'Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues.'*

NPPF (2023) para 191 states;

- iii) *'Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location, taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:*
- a) *mitigate and reduce to a minimum, potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life*
  - b) *identify and protect tranquil area which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason;*
  - c) *Limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.'*

The Government's Rural White Paper published in 2003 observed that: *"It is not just its physical features which give the countryside its unique character; there are also less tangible features such as ... dark skies and remoteness from the visible impact of civilisation."*

DEFRA's 25-year plan (2017) states in respect of AONBs and National Parks that: *"Over the next 25 years we want to make sure they are not only conserved but enhanced. Many of the policies set out in the rest of the Plan will contribute to making all areas more beautiful."*

<sup>1</sup> <https://theilp.org.uk/home/>

To	Quantock Hills JAC	<b>PAPER B</b>
Subject	Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme 2021 - 2024	
Author(s)	Katie Read, Landscape Projects Officer	
Date	23/07/2024	



**£786,383** allocated  
**£336,475** claimed  
**£1,334,212** total project value  
**62** projects supported  
**39** projects completed  
**3,182** ha of land supported



**36** projects delivering for **climate**

- 894 ha managed with regenerative farming techniques
- 8 projects protecting watercourses
- 10 projects helping to reduce flood risk
- 11 projects reducing GhG emissions
- 10 projects reducing reliance on inputs

**41** projects delivering for **nature**

- 2.8km of hedgerows planted or restored
- 1,587 ha of positive management on SSSIs
- 10 projects improving water quality
- 8.8 ha of invasive species management
- 122.6 ha of species-rich grassland created or enhanced

**21** projects delivering for **people**

- 14 projects to support public engagement in land management
- 19 volunteers engaged
- 575m of new permissive paths created
- 13 events improving understanding of sustainable food production.

**46** projects delivering for **place**

- 10 historic structures or features conserved, enhanced or interpreted more effectively
- 31 projects increasing the resilience of nature friendly sustainable farm businesses
- 4 new farm products launched



**Bale unroller: £1,068.10**  
This farm purchased a bale unroller to support overwintering cattle for multiple benefits including reduced poaching, water run-off, and GhG emissions, as well as improved soil structure and pasture productivity.

**Elm trials: £11,707.06**  
A farmer is trialling newly developed varieties of Elm trees purported to be resistant to Dutch Elm Disease within hedgerows, in hopes of promoting White-letter Hairstreak butterflies, as well as returning Elms to the landscape.

**Kingfisher Award: £4,982.16**  
FiPL supported children from primary schools in and around the Quantock Hills to take part in on-farm learning about food production and wildlife. The children also prepared projects afterwards and returned to the farm to celebrate their work.

**Aisholt Limekiln: £31,780.85**  
This project conserved and repaired a historic limekiln in Lower Aisholt. The applicant also created additional public access to the site, and installed interpretation boards to promote public understanding of the kiln and the wider agri-industrial history of the landscape.

To	Quantock Hills JAC	<b>PAPER</b> <b>C</b>
Subject	Management Plan Review progress report	
Author	Iain Porter, Manager	
Date	23/07/2024	

### 1. Overall Progress.

- a. As can be seen in Paper F the additional administrative tasks and requirement through host authority Somerset Council have severely impacted on resource to deliver the Management Plan. This has impacted the setting up and releasing of contracts to deliver distinct elements of the review process and these will be prioritised over the coming quarter.

### 2. Target & Outcome Framework

- a. At the last meeting the national targets were present, having just been released by Government. Natural England has commissioned LUC to work with protected landscapes in the apportionment of the targets and at the National Landscapes Conference in early July LUC produced the some of the baseline data for each protected landscape that they will be using when looking at apportioning targets (table c1)
- b. According to Natural England the process is to be a two-way discussion with LUC supporting the protected landscape body to develop its targets. LUC are initially looking to group protected landscapes together at a series of workshops over the next few months. It is not known whether the grouping is geographically or thematically.
- c. A quick scan of the baseline data being used by LUC has identified a number of discrepancies with data produced locally such as through the Nature Recovery Plan. A number of protected landscapes have requested an online meeting with NE / LUC to raise awareness of these discrepancies.
- d. Where LUC have not identified data for targets the National Landscape Team will be able to provide data for targets 2, 3, 9 and 10 though we need to ensure that the data is derived in a consistent way to national collections. For target 6 (carbon emission reduction) the first piece of work has been undertaken, the assessment of carbon stocks / stores (Paper D).

### 3. Climate Adaptation Plans.

- a. A new requirement from the UK Governments third National Adaptation Programme is the inclusion of Climate Adaptation Plans (CAPs) in National Landscape Management plans. The plans need to be produced by 2028 and can be done independent of the Management Plan review process, though is may be easier and beneficial to produce alongside the Management Plan.
- b. CAGs will be expected to contain action focused policies looking to adapt areas of the landscape where climate change is projected to have an impact. As such their content should include:
  - i. Identification of areas within the landscape that are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change (Climate risk assessment).
  - ii. Evidence of adaptation actions and outcomes and how these interact with socioeconomic drivers and Net Zero.
  - iii. An action plan to implement the adaption measures (SMART)
- c. Paper D is the first stage in the drafting of a CAP with a desk-based carbon assessment and first draft Climate Risk Assessment.

Table c1: National Targets & baseline data for the Quantock Hills National Landscape

National Targets from Target & Outcome Framework	Existing Stock (from LUC data)
<b>Target 1</b> Restore or create more than 250,000 hectares of a range of wildlife-rich habitats within Protected Landscapes, outside protected sites by 2042 (from a 2022 baseline)	3,364Ha
<b>Target 2</b> Bring 80% of Sites of Scientific Interest (SSSIs) within Protected Landscapes into favourable condition by 2042	Not identified. Probably due to change in way of assessing SSSI condition
<b>Target 3</b> 60% of SSSIs within Protected Landscapes assessed as having 'actions on track' to achieve favourable condition by 31 January 2028	As above
<b>Target 4</b> Continuing favourable management of all existing priority habitat already in favourable condition outside of SSSIs (from a 2022 baseline) and increasing to include all newly restored or created habitat through agri-environment schemes by 2042	No metric
<b>Target 5</b> Ensuring at least 65% to 80% of land managers adopt nature friendly farming on at least 10% to 15% of their land by 2030	No metric
<b>Target 6</b> Reduce net greenhouse gas emissions in Protected Landscapes to net zero by at least 2050 relative to 1990 levels	No metric
<b>Target 7</b> Restore approximately 130,000 hectares of peat in Protected Landscapes by 2050	1,161Ha (query)
<b>Target 8</b> Increase tree canopy and woodland cover (combined) by 3% of total land area in Protected Landscapes by 2050 (from 2022 baseline)	2,673Ha (for info 3% increase would require additional 297Ha)
<b>Target 9</b> Improve and promote accessibility to and engagement with Protected Landscapes for all using metrics based on those in our Access for All programme	No metric
<b>Target 10</b> Decrease the number of nationally designated heritage assets at risk in Protected Landscapes.	No metric

**Recommendation(s)**

3) The JAC notes the report.

To	Quantock Hills JAC	<b>PAPER D</b>
Subject	Quantock Hills Carbon Audit and Climate Risk Assessment	
Author	Iain Porter, Manager	
Date	23/07/2024	

## Quantock Hills Carbon Audit.

### 1. Introduction

- a. In 2022, the National Landscape Association, on behalf of the English National Landscapes commissioned Cranfield University to undertake a desk-based study to provide a baseline assessment of organic carbon storage capacity and fluxes from habitats present within all 34 English National Landscapes. The purpose of the study was to provide a common and consistent baseline for carbon assessments for use by each National Landscape Partnership. Copies of the final report from Cranfield University can be provided on request.
- b. The carbon audit focussed on carbon stocks and stores in soils and biomass of priority and non-priority habitats within the National Landscapes. It was based on two main sources – the NATMAP Carbon dataset representing soil carbon stocks at the 1:250,000 mapping scale and the available literature, summarised within the NERR094 report.
- c. The data was also used to estimate the carbon sequestration potential of each habitat, based again on data available in literature. These assessments were based on the natural capacity of habitats to store and sequester carbon in soils and biomass and do not include land management and use impacts on the carbon stores.

### 2. Definitions and assumptions

- a. Assumptions.
  - i. The study concerned the estimation of *organic* carbon stocks and stores as well as fluxes from different habitats. The authors acknowledged that carbon can occur in both organic and mineral forms but for the purposes of the study felt that mineral carbon is a more stable fraction where as soil organic carbon is subject to processes of accumulation, respiration and decomposition, contributing either to increased storage of carbon in the soils, or to emissions of carbon to the atmosphere in the form of greenhouse gases (GHGs).
- b. Definitions.
  - i. **Carbon stocks** [t C ha<sup>-1</sup>]. The amount of carbon contained with soils or biomass at a given time described in terms of mass per standardised unit area (i.e. carbon density)
  - ii. **Carbon store** [t C]. The amount of carbon within a particular area, can be divided up into several pools; soil carbon and biomass carbon, subsequently divided up into above ground, below ground and dead biomass. Carbon stores can be derived from carbon stocks and are expressed in the units of mass.
  - iii. **Carbon fluxes** [t C ha<sup>-1</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup>] [t C yr<sup>-1</sup>]. The overall capacity of a habitat to remove or release carbon from or to the atmosphere, often expressed in the units of mass of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) per area per time [t CO<sub>2</sub> ha<sup>-1</sup> yr<sup>-1</sup>] or as CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents.
    - 1) Carbon sequestration (accumulation) – negative sign = carbon capture from the atmosphere.



- 2) Carbon emissions (release) – positive sign = carbon release to the atmosphere.
- iv. **Carbon sink.** A habitat that sequesters carbon from the atmosphere.
- v. **Carbon source.** A habitat that releases carbon to the atmosphere.

### 3. Materials and methods

- a. The study utilised data from a variety of sources.
- b. Non-priority habitat data was derived from the land cover classes of the CEH Land Cover Map (2019 used a baseline year). The carbon stocks in soils were assessed based on the NATMAP Carbon dataset available from the National Soil survey for England and Wales. The dataset depicts minimum, average and maximum carbon stocks for each soil combined with land use.
- c. Priority habitat data was provided from NE national datasets.
- d. The available data was processed, involving bring the data to the boundary of the National Landscape and overlaying land cover, priority habitat and soil data / landcover. The data had been processed to produce single cell (20x20m or 25x25m) polygons to reduce the complexity of the spatial datasets and allow for stratified analysis.
- e. The study adopted two approaches in estimating the carbon stocks and stores in soil and biomass both in priority and non-priority habitats. The first of these used NATMAP Carbon dataset linking it to the habitat 'patches' from the CEH LCM or NE priority habitat layer. The NATMAP carbon stock were multiplied by the area of the polygon to produce the estimate of carbon stocks.
- f. The second approach involved the attribution of habitat patches with typical values of organic carbon stocks in soils and biomass found in literature, based on the NERR09 report. Values for minimum, medium (representative) and maximum carbon stock estimates were standardised to the 0-30cm depth ensuring comparability to the soil carbon stock values in the NATMAP datasets.
- g. Carbon fluxes were largely derived from the NERR094 report using similar approaches to that in calculating carbon stocks. As part of this the study determined the areas of peat within National Landscapes in order to modify emissions factors associated with various land uses on peat. Given that NATMAP carbon was used to estimate soil carbon stocks, soil associations containing peaty soils (deep peat) were used to determine the distribution of peat.

### 4. Estimates of carbon stores and fluxes across all English National Landscapes.

- a. The study found, the overall, non-priority habitats store a greater amount of carbon in soils than priority habitats, which is largely due to the greater area of non-priority habitats across all National Landscapes for soil depths of 0-30 and 0-100cm. However, priority habitats store more soil carbon than non-priority habitats at 0-150cm depth, which corresponds to high abundance of priority habitats on peat.
- b. Carbon stocks remain higher in priority than non-priority habitats with priority habitats storing 65, 221 and 338 tonnes of carbon more per hectare than non-priority habitats in the top 30cm, 100cm and 150cm of soil respectively.
- c. Table d1 shows the relative estimated stocks and stores of carbon for non-priority and priority habitats for all National Landscapes in England. Taking the medium level figures from the study it can be estimated that 486,283 Kilotons of carbon are currently store in the soil and biomass of England's National Landscapes. In total a further 1,063 kilotons of carbon is sequestered (removed) from the atmosphere each year based on current landcover.

5. Estimates of carbon stores and fluxes for Quantock Hills National Landscape.
- a. When looking at the local level it is possible to breakdown the figures for the habitat type including priority and non-priority habitats. Table d2 shows the carbon stores for the different habitat types for the Quantock Hills. Points to note include:
    - i. The total carbon store in the Quantock Hills National Landscape = **1,850,899 tonnes.**
    - ii. The four main habitats which account for the majority of the carbon store are lowland mixed deciduous woodland, improved grassland, upland heathland and arable.
    - iii. The carbon flux of the National Landscape totals **9,980 tonnes** being sequestered per year.
  - b. Table d3 shows the carbon stocks for the different habitat types for the Quantock Hills. This is a useful dataset to understand potential opportunities for increasing sequestering potential of the National Landscape through changing land use and habitat type. Points to note include:
    - i. The average carbon stock across all habitat types in the Quantock Hills is **187 tonnes per hectare.**
    - ii. The four main habitats which account for the highest levels of carbon stocks are lowland mixed deciduous woodland, Coniferous woodland, deciduous woodland and upland heathland.
    - iii. The habitats that offer the greatest potential per hectare for carbon sequestration include neutral grassland ( $5.2\text{t C ha}^{-1}\text{ yr}^{-1}$ ), lowland meadows ( $5.2\text{t C Ha}^{-1}\text{ yr}^{-1}$ ), coniferous woodland and deciduous woodland (both  $3.5\text{t C ha}^{-1}\text{ yr}^{-1}$ ).
    - iv. The habitat that presents the greatest emissions of carbon include is arable. All other habitats are net sequesters of carbon.
  - c. It needs to be remembered that this baseline audit is deskbased, based on the best information / datasets available at a national level. The National Landscape team is looking to refine the data through undertaking in-field testing of soil carbon which will allow us to assess whether local soils are more akin to the low, medium or high figures allowing greater confidence in habitat planning in future.
  - d. While the study has identified the habitat types that can sequester the higher levels of carbon, e.g. neutral grassland, the relative ease of habitat enhancement or creation also needs to be considered.

**Table d1: Carbon stores [kilotons carbon] (priority & non-priority habitats), carbon stocks [tons carbon per hectare]**

	Habitat type	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Soil			Biomass		
			0-30	0-100	0-150	Low	Med	High
Stores [kt C]	Non-priority	13,855	124,924	190,393	208,213	1,796	10,130	17,613
	Priority	4,916	76,457	176,307	240,167	5,735	27,773	48,879
	<b>All</b>	<b>18,771</b>	<b>201,382</b>	<b>366,700</b>	<b>448,380</b>	<b>7,531</b>	<b>37,903</b>	<b>66,492</b>
Stocks [t C ha <sup>-1</sup> ]	Non-priority	13,855	90	137	150	1.3	7.3	12.7
	Priority	4,916	156	359	489	11.7	56.5	99.4
	<b>All</b>	<b>18,771</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>20.2</b>	<b>35.4</b>

	Habitat type	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Total carbon Soil (0-150cm) + biomass			Carbon fluxes [t C yr <sup>-1</sup> (stores)] or t C ha <sup>-1</sup> yr <sup>-1</sup> (stocks)		
			Low	Med	High	Low	Med	High
Stores [kt C]	Non-priority	13,855	210,009	218,343	225,826	527	-387	-987
	Priority	4,916	245,902	267,940	289,046	28	-676	-1301
	<b>All</b>	<b>18,771</b>	<b>455,911</b>	<b>486,283</b>	<b>514,872</b>	<b>555</b>	<b>-1063</b>	<b>-2288</b>
Stocks [t C ha <sup>-1</sup> ]	Non-priority	13,855	152	158	163	0.38	-0.28	-0.71
	Priority	4,916	500	545	588	0.06	-1.38	-2.65
	<b>All</b>	<b>18,771</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>0.30</b>	<b>-0.57</b>	<b>-1.22</b>

\*Negative values of carbon fluxes indicate carbon sequestration, positive values indicate carbon emissions.

Table d2: Quantock Hills National Landscape Carbon stores [tonnes per habitat area]

Carbon stores (tonnes per habitat area)	C pool	Soil organic carbon [t C]			Biomass carbon [t C]		
	Source	NATMAP			Literature		
	Description	0-150cm			N/a		
Habitat Name	Area [ha]	low	med	high	low	med	high
Acid grassland	1	132	163	203	2	3	5
Arable	1679	103	126	145	0	0	0
Coniferous woodland	817	140	205	259	5	21	69
Deciduous woodland	736	110	152	182	6	62	99
Freshwater	10	116	138	152	0	0	0
Heather	33	136	184	229	2	7	18
Improved grassland	2963	105	132	155	1	3	4
Littoral rock	15	121	142	154	0	0	0
Littoral sediment	3	131	156	178	NA	NA	NA
Neutral grassland	8	112	142	167	1	3	4
Saltmarsh	3	122	153	166	0	1	1
Suburban	235	103	123	143	2	16	26
Urban	4	100	126	151	0	0	0
Freshwater	1	NA	NA	NA	0	0	0
Littoral rock	7	NA	NA	NA	0	0	0
Littoral sediment	116	NA	NA	NA	0	0	0
Saltwater	3	NA	NA	NA	0	0	0
Fragmented heath	12	124	151	188	1	6	13
Good quality semi-improved grassland	71	115	142	164	1	3	4
Grass moorland	88	121	178	202	1	7	12
Lowland calcareous grassland	1	120	152	165	1	3	4
Lowland dry acid grassland	48	111	182	214	2	3	5
Lowland heathland	284	126	151	184	2	7	18
Lowland meadows	3	101	116	122	1	3	4
Lowland mixed deciduous woodland	1353	119	165	201	31	158	274
Maritime cliff and slope	6	117	134	143	0	2	3
Mudflats	0	126	147	175	NA	NA	NA
No main habitat but additional habitats present		117	144	169	1	6	10
Purple moor grass and rush pastures	3	99	108	113	1	2	3
Traditional orchard	15	104	127	147	9	21	230
Upland heathland	1259	138	191	237	2	7	18
Mudflats	35	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
<b>Per AONB area covered by spatial datasets</b>	9909	113	150	180	6	31	56
<b>Per Priority habitats</b>	3276	125	171	209	14	69	123
<b>Per Non-priority habitats</b>	6633	108	139	165	2	11	22
<b>Total AONB area</b>	9917						

Carbon stores (tonnes per habitat area)	C pool	Total carbon [t C]	Carbon flux [t C y <sup>-1</sup> ]		
	Source	NATMAP	Literature		
	Description	0-150cm	C gains(-) / losses(+)		
Habitat Name	Area [ha]	med	low	med	high
Acid grassland	1	175	0.2	0.1	-0.1
Arable	1679	227559	1830.2	436.6	134.3
Coniferous woodland	817	190386	-441.2	-2867.9	-5629.7
Deciduous woodland	736	161939	-397.6	-2584.2	-5072.6
Freshwater	10	1476	61.7	-6.7	-18.6
Heather	33	6392	0.3	0.3	0.3
Improved grassland	2963	418501	NA	NA	NA
Littoral rock	15	2379	0.0	0.0	0.0
Littoral sediment	3	NA	-0.4	-1.8	-3.2
Neutral grassland	8	1220	-24.8	-40.8	-56.9
Saltmarsh	3	570	-2.1	-4.6	-7.1
Suburban	235	35384	NA	NA	NA
Urban	4	595	NA	NA	NA
Freshwater	1	NA	4.2	-0.5	-1.3
Littoral rock	7	NA	0.0	0.0	0.0
Littoral sediment	116	NA	-12.7	-61.3	-107.5
Saltwater	3	NA	-0.1	-0.9	-1.7
Fragmented heath	12	1933	-1.0	-6.5	-12.7
Good quality semi-improved grassland	71	10922	NA	NA	NA
Grass moorland	88	16671	-5.4	-35.1	-68.9
Lowland calcareous grassland	1	97	NA	NA	NA
Lowland dry acid grassland	48	9095	11.0	2.4	-6.7
Lowland heathland	284	45411	2.8	2.8	2.8
Lowland meadows	3	390	-9.2	-15.1	-21.1
Lowland mixed deciduous woodland	1353	445327	-730.6	-4748.7	-9321.6
Maritime cliff and slope	6	851	1.3	-0.6	-1.4
Mudflats	0	NA	0.0	-0.1	-0.1
No main habitat but additional habitats present		15213	-4.6	-30.1	-59.1
Purple moor grass and rush pastures	3	419	0.0	0.0	0.0
Traditional orchard	15	2407	6.9	-12.0	-24.5
Upland heathland	1259	255589	12.6	12.6	12.6
Mudflats	35	NA	-3.8	-18.5	-32.5
<b>Per AONB area covered by spatial datasets</b>	9909	1850899	298.0	-9980.6	-20297.2
<b>Per Priority habitats</b>	3276	804325	-719.9	-4848.9	-9533.1
<b>Per Non-priority habitats</b>	6633	1046575	1017.9	-5131.7	-10764.1
<b>Total AONB area</b>	9917				

Table d3: Quantock Hills National Landscape Carbon stocks [tonnes per hectare of habitat]

Carbon stocks (tonnes per hectare of habitat]	C pool	Soil organic carbon [t C Ha <sup>-1</sup> ]			Biomass carbon [t C ha <sup>-1</sup> ]		
	Source	NATMAP			Literature		
	Description	0-150cm			N/a		
Habitat Name	Area [ha]	low	med	high	low	med	high
Acid grassland	1	136	172	214	2	3	5
Arable	1679	182794	227559	270543	0	0	0
Coniferous woodland	817	114586	173145	220997	3922	17240	56460
Deciduous woodland	736	82452	116366	143272	4196	45572	72813
Freshwater	10	1158	1476	1658	0	0	0
Heather	33	4437	6160	7737	65	232	570
Improved grassland	2963	321945	410206	500491	3852	8296	12740
Littoral rock	15	1893	2379	2616	0	0	0
Littoral sediment	3	474	611	705	NA	NA	NA
Neutral grassland	8	929	1198	1423	10	22	34
Saltmarsh	3	406	568	629	0	2	4
Suburban	235	25982	31588	37137	411	3795	6054
Urban	4	462	595	734	0	0	0
Freshwater	1	NA	NA	NA	0	0	0
Littoral rock	7	NA	NA	NA	0	0	0
Littoral sediment	116	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Saltwater	3	NA	NA	NA	0	0	0
Fragmented heath	12	1510	1857	2320	11	76	161
Good quality semi-improved grassland	71	8516	10723	12811	92	199	306
Grass moorland	88	10665	16022	18419	82	649	1070
Lowland calcareous grassland	1	68	96	106	1	2	2
Lowland dry acid grassland	48	5312	8961	10726	95	133	249
Lowland heathland	284	35876	43390	53073	568	2020	4973
Lowland meadows	3	336	382	403	4	8	13
Lowland mixed deciduous woodland	1353	161783	230890	285124	42617	214437	370699
Maritime cliff and slope	6	700	839	908	1	12	19
Mudflats	0	16	20	24	NA	NA	NA
No main habitat but additional habitats present		11775	14604	17405	87	609	981
Purple moor grass and rush pastures	3	382	412	427	3	7	11
Traditional orchard	15	1677	2078	2490	132	329	3545
Upland heathland	1259	173743	246637	308603	2518	8951	22032
Mudflats	35	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
<b>Per AONB area covered by spatial datasets</b>	9909	1150012	1548935	1901000	58671	302596	552740
<b>Per Priority habitats</b>	3276	412358	576912	712840	46212	227433	404059
<b>Per Non-priority habitats</b>	6633	737654	972023	1188159	12458	75163	148680
<b>Total AONB area</b>	9917						

Carbon stocks (tonnes per hectare of habitat]	C pool	Total carbon [t C ha <sup>-1</sup> ]	Carbon flux [t C ha <sup>-1</sup> y <sup>-1</sup> ]		
	Source	NATMAP	Literature		
	Description	0-150cm	C gains(-) / losses(+)		
Habitat Name	Area [ha]	med	low	med	high
Acid grassland	1	169	0.2	0.0	-0.1
Arable	1679	136	1.1	0.3	0.1
Coniferous woodland	817	233	-0.5	-3.5	-6.9
Deciduous woodland	736	220	-0.5	-3.5	-6.9
Freshwater	10	152	6.4	-0.7	-1.9
Heather	33	196	0.0	0.0	0.0
Improved grassland	2963	141	NA	NA	NA
Littoral rock	15	162	0.0	0.0	0.0
Littoral sediment	3	NA	-0.1	-0.5	-0.9
Neutral grassland	8	155	-3.1	-5.2	-7.2
Saltmarsh	3	175	-0.6	-1.4	-2.2
Suburban	235	151	NA	NA	NA
Urban	4	135	NA	NA	NA
Freshwater	1	NA	6.4	-0.7	-1.9
Littoral rock	7	NA	0.0	0.0	0.0
Littoral sediment	116	NA	-0.1	-0.5	-0.9
Saltwater	3	NA	0.0	-0.3	-0.6
Fragmented heath	12	158	-0.1	-0.5	-1.0
Good quality semi- improved grassland	71	154	NA	NA	NA
Grass moorland	88	190	-0.1	-0.4	-0.8
Lowland calcareous grassland	1	176	NA	NA	NA
Lowland dry acid grassland	48	191	0.2	0.0	-0.1
Lowland heathland	284	160	0.0	0.0	0.0
Lowland meadows	3	134	-3.1	-5.2	-7.2
Lowland mixed deciduous woodland	1353	329	-0.5	-3.5	-6.9
Maritime cliff and slope	6	154	0.2	-0.1	-0.3
Mudflats	0	NA	-0.1	-0.5	-0.9
No main habitat but additional habitats present		154	0.0	-0.3	-0.6
Purple moor grass and rush pastures	3	126	0.0	0.0	0.0
Traditional orchard	15	156	0.4	-0.8	-1.6
Upland heathland	1259	203	0.0	0.0	0.0
Mudflats	35	NA	-0.1	-0.5	-0.9
<b>Per AONB area covered by spatial datasets</b>	9909	187	0.0	-1.0	-2.0
<b>Per Priority habitats</b>	3276	246	-0.2	-1.5	-2.9
<b>Per Non-priority habitats</b>	6633	158	0.2	-0.8	-1.6
<b>Total AONB area</b>	9917				

## Quantock Hills Climate Risk Assessment

### 6. Context

- a. Nature recovery and climate change are the most significant, long-term issues for National Landscapes. Nature recovery is addressed through the Nature Recovery Plan (adopted April 2024). The Partnership are required to produce a Climate Action Plan (CAP) to be embedded or linked to their Management Plans by 2028.
- b. The Government see Protected Landscapes as being some of England's most important areas for delivering national climate goals, including the target to reach net zero emissions by 2050.
- c. A Climate Emergency Strategy was developed jointly by the five former Somerset local authorities in November 2020 - [Somerset's Climate Emergency Strategy](#). It details what climate change is, sources of emissions globally, nationally and locally and potential impacts in Somerset. The strategy has an ambitious goal for Somerset to become a carbon neutral county by 2030.

### 7. Structure of the climate risk assessment.

- a. An integral part of the Climate Action Plan, the climate risk assessment is the first stage identifying the areas within the National Landscape that are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. There are different ways in which you can consider the National Landscape with many adaptation plans looking at risk in terms of built environment, natural environment, people and place. Previous Management Plans have identified and refined the special qualities of the Quantock Hills and the risk assessment identifies the potential impact on these due to the affects of climate change.
- b. Due to the size and structure of the climate risk assessment it is attached as a separate document. Within the document Table d5 lists the special qualities, the climate change projection along with impacts, both direct and indirect, and the risks. There is an assessment of the risk and opportunity which is based on current literature and links to the risk / opportunity matrix (table d4).
- c. Information has been taken from existing climate risk assessments such as the work undertaken locally by the Somerset local authorities and Natural England's climate adaptation for key habitat and species.
- d. The Partnership are invited to consider the draft climate risk assessment and suggest any additions, amendments or areas requiring clarification.

### **Recommendation(s)**

**2) The JAC notes the report.**

**3) The JAC consider the draft climate risk assessment, noting any additions, amendments or areas of clarification.**



To	Quantock Hills JAC	<b>PAPER E</b>
Subject	Article 4 Directive	
Author	Alex Meletiou, Landscape Planning Officer	
Date	23/07/2024	

## 1. Introduction

- a. This report seeks the JAC's approval to request the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to investigate whether an Article 4 Direction could be made within the Quantock Hills National Landscape boundary to remove Class A permitted development rights, as defined within schedule 2 Part 6 of the Town and Country Planning Act (General Permitted Development Order 2015 as amended) (GPDO).
- b. Permitted development rights under Class A refer to the erection of agricultural buildings without the need to obtain planning permission but are subject to a prior approval application. The LPA can determine such applications without consultation. This means that large buildings (up to 1000m<sup>2</sup> or almost 0.25 acres) are being erected in open countryside without the need to carry out any surveys, consider landscape impact, propose any mitigation measures or consider biodiversity net gain.
- c. There have been several agricultural buildings erected under this procedure across the National Landscape. By virtue of their size and location, these inevitably have a high impact on the immediate and wider scenic and landscape value of the National Landscape with no opportunity for comment or consultation.

## 2. Legislation

- a. An extract from the legislation states,

### Permitted development

*A. The carrying out on agricultural land comprised in an agricultural unit of 5 hectares or more in area of—*

*(a) works for the erection, extension or alteration of a building; or*

*(b) any excavation or engineering operations,*

*which are reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within that unit.*

### Conditions

*A.2 (1) Development is permitted by Class A subject to the following conditions—*

*(a) where development is carried out within 400 metres of the curtilage of a protected building, any building, structure, excavation or works resulting from the development are not used for the accommodation of livestock ..... or for the storage of slurry or sewage sludge.....*

## 3. Article 4 Direction.

- a. An Article 4 Direction allows the LPA to remove specified permitted development rights, contained within the GPDO, within a defined area. As stated, permitted development rights allow certain works, subject to conditions and limitations, to take place without a planning application having to be submitted. An Article 4 Direction would result in the removal of these rights and require a planning application to be made to the LPA. The effect of an Article 4 Direction is therefore not to prohibit development but to enable the LPA to have control over the proposed development.

- b. An Article 4 Direction should be made only where it is expedient, and it therefore requires justification. In applying the test of expediency, regard should be had to paragraph 53 of the National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF] and the Planning Practice Guidance [PPG]. The NPPF advises that use of an Article 4 Direction should be limited to situations where it is necessary to protect local amenity or the wellbeing of the area and should apply to the smallest geographical area possible. In addition, the PPG is clear that Article 4 Directions related to agriculture and forestry will need to demonstrate that permitted development rights pose a serious threat to areas or landscapes of exceptional beauty.
- c. There are two types of Article 4 Directions, immediate and non-immediate. Immediate Article 4 Directions will apply immediately as the name suggests. However the LPA must confirm the Direction within 6 months following a public consultation.
- d. Non-immediate Article 4 Directions do not take effect until following local consultation and subsequent confirmation by the Local Planning Authority.
- e. The Secretary of State is notified of all Article 4 Directions made by Local Planning Authorities as soon as practicable after confirmation. The Secretary of State can intervene where there are clear reasons to do so.
- f. Compensation is payable in certain circumstances following the making of an Article 4 Direction. This would be payable where planning permission is applied for and refused for development which would have but for the Article 4 Direction, been able to be carried out under the GPDO, or where such planning permission is granted but subject to more restrictive conditions than those imposed by the GPDO.
- g. To avoid compensation payments the LPA can confirm and publish its intention to make the Direction at least 12 months, and not more than 2 years, ahead of the Article 4 taking effect.
- h. It should be noted that some permitted development rights, such as Class Q\*, are already specifically excluded from Protected Landscapes and therefore any proposal under this use class requires a full planning application to be submitted. This demonstrates that current national policy accepts the need for more control (but not prohibition) over certain types of development within Protected Landscapes. The Article 4 Direction, as proposed, would give the LPA that control.

\*Class Q refers to residential conversions of agricultural buildings.

## **Recommendations**

- 1) The JAC notes the report.**
- 2) The JAC approves and supports a request to Somerset Council (Local Planning Authority).**

To	Quantock Hills JAC	<b>PAPER F</b>
Subject	Partnership Update	
Author	Iain Porter, Manager	
Date	23/07/2024	

## 1. Staffing

- a. Community Engagement & Volunteering Officer (CEVO) recruitment. Joanna Hicks joined the Team on 16<sup>th</sup> April in the Community Engagement and Volunteering Officer role. The post is a shared post between the QHNL and QLPS Teams. Unfortunately due to some of the work elements and personal reasons Joanna left the role in June. In discussion with Bill we have decided not to look to recruit to the post and will delete it from our team structure. The main reason not to recruit is that the post is needed over the busy summer period and current recruitment timelines are 3-6 months due to additional steps required in getting recruitment approved. I am currently seeking approval to take on additional administrative capacity to manage the volunteer administration and communication and contract out the group delivery that the post holder was going to be delivering.
- b. Farming Engagement Support Officer. I am pleased to welcome Sally Pheasant to the team in the Farming Engagement Support Officer role. Sally started at the end of May and has been supporting Katie in the delivery of the Farming in Protected Landscape Programme and HPC Landscape schemes.
- c. Land Management Skills Project Officer. This post is funded by the HPC s106 / DCO and will deliver the Land Management Skills Scheme on behalf of Somerset Council. The post has been graded and approved for recruitment though it has been delayed due to lack of responses from senior managers and the ERCB.
- d. Landscape Projects Officer. As reported last quarter Katie Read reduced her hour to 2-days a week in May. We have recently gone through a recruitment process for a job-share which was unsuccessful. We have sought approval from the ERCB to recruit based on a longer fixed-term contract which will hopefully increase the candidate field.
- e. Project Manager. Mark Baker finished his fixed-term contract post as Project Manager in mid-June. The post was funded through the S106 associated with the HPC development to deliver landscape projects. We wish Mark the best for the future though he is remaining in contact with the team on various elements of volunteering
- f. Recruitment. As reported last time the increased approvals and administrative processes required to recruit or change any aspect of a persons post remains a burden on the team. The amount of resource I have had to commit to recruitment and HR processes is not sustainable in the longer-term.
- g. Somerset Council restructure. At present the National Landscape Team is 'out of scope' for the restructuring process that Somerset Council is currently undertaking. In my view this is appropriate as the National Landscape Team is a hosted team, working to the partnership, rather than a standard team operating for the local authority.

## **2. Protected Landscapes Partnership**

- a. The PLP has been working with all Protected Landscapes to prioritise its workstreams post April 2025. At present its funding ends in March 2025 – it is hard to believe it has been in existence for 2 and a half years – and there is no news on its funding beyond this. However the partnership is keen to understand areas of work that have been most beneficial to the protected landscapes and what would add most value if it is successful in securing another funded period.

## **3. Partnership**

- a. The South West Heritage Trust have accepted the invitation to become members of the Partnership. Bob Croft is the principal contact.

## **4. 2023/24 Budget Outrun (Provisional)**

- a. We finally got the budget overrun figures at the end of June. This was through no fault of individual finance officers at Somerset Council, rather issues to do with reporting structures in the finance system D365. On looking at the reports it was evident that there were still a number of issues such as
  - i. transfer journals – where we make or receive internal payments e.g. recharges for insurance costs – not appearing,
  - ii. end of year charges with no explanation, such as “NCS IAS19” costing nearly £19,000
  - iii. no clear identification of Somerset Councils contribution.
  - iv. Significant number of miscoded finance entries with items coming out of the wrong budget. Some of this is generated by the team when creating purchase orders but most is through Somerset Council purchase order creation.
  - v. Significant number of wrongly allocated main account items (previously called general ledger codes. This was initially due to the fact that the main account codes had not been set up and the procurement team were slow in letting people know when they had been set up. Some issues were due to team members not knowing which main accounts to use.
- b. These queries have been raised with the finance team and when we have resolved them we will produce the finance overrun statement. Due to these issues it has not been possible to finalise the 2024/25 budget.

## **5. 2024/25 Budget**

- a. The 2024/25 budget (appendix F1) is based on our best estimate of the carry forward from 2023/24 due to the issues outlined above.

## **6. Partnership Visit Days**

- a. Due to low numbers the site visit planned for 6<sup>th</sup> June on Quantock Common was postponed. Due to the reduced staff resource at present and other priority work streams I am waiting until September to set new dates for future site visits.

## **Recommendation(s)**

- 1) The JAC notes the report.**

## Appendix F1: Quantock Hills National Landscape Partnership 2024/25 Budget.

### Summary

Opening Balance 01/04/2024 -95,805

	Expenditure	Income	Balance
Core	315,727	-316,082	-354
Projects	71,038	-71,035	3
Landscape Projects	439,234	-438,287	947
QLPS	675,346	-675,346	0
Land Management	13,000	-13,000	0
Reserves account	17,378	0	17,378
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,531,724</b>	<b>-1,609,554</b>	<b>-77,830</b>
	Earmarked reserves (redundancy)		21,000
	Expected balance 31/03/2025		-56,830

### Core

	2024/25	Comments
APT & C-Pay	160,514	Salaries
APT & C-Add Hours	8,911	Additional Payments to Rangers
APT & C-NI	15,703	Based on SC HR advice
APT & C-LG Pen	34,054	Based on SC HR advice
Apprenticeship Levy	1,000	Estimate
Staff Training	2,800	
Electricity	600	Estimate energy charge increases
NNDR - Rates	1,600	As advised by SCC
Rents	10,200	Office rent = £6,4k, depot rent £3,8k
Water Charges	150	Estimate
Car allowance	500	
Travel costs	200	Reduced with new AONB van
Hired vehicle costs	750	minibus for Working well @ £60/mth
Veh Contract Hire	21,000	Estimated - new lease due Sep2024
Direct Transport - Fuel	5,386	Estimated based on increased fuel costs
Direct Transport - tyres	400	Increased with AONB van
Direct Transport - MOT / Service	6000	£1,600 general maintenance. £4,400 for old lease vehicles
Equipment	1,500	
Equipment - Main R&M	500	brushcutters £300 / chainsaws £200
Clothing & Uniform	500	Excludes rebranding costs
Postage	200	Estimated on 2022/23 costs
Stationary	800	Estimated on 2022/23 costs
Printing	300	Estimated on 2022/23 costs
Telephone - calls	1,142	BT landline recharge @ £170/quarter
Telephone - mobiles	900	mobile phones for team
Hospitality (cost of meetings)	1,200	Includes volunteer costs
Subsistence	100	
Subscriptions	2,915	NAAONB £2790 / AI = £125
Fees & Hired	4,000	Events charges for specialist contractors
Internal - Insurance	2,730	Motor (£1,850) / Premise (£70) / Employers (£280)
Publicity & Promotion	5,000	3rd Party (£530)
Fees & Hired - Research & Development	10,000	Coth Hill £100 / QVs £1000
Internal - Cross Service	5,922	earmarked for Man Plan & NR development
Internal - Cross Service	8,250	Cont to CEVO post in QLPS budget (3mths only)
		Management Fee to SCC

Grant - Defra	-33,897	Uplift Defra revenue funding
Grant - Defra	-190,604	Defra AONB Grant – confirmed CCN
Fees & Charges	-1,000	FoQ Contribution
Fees & Charges	-500	Cost Recovery - swaling
Fees & Charges	-25,910	Recharge - Forestry Commission
Fees & Charges	-300	Income from AONB run events
Cross-Service	-16,771	From HPC mis-coding of HPS Pro Manager post
<b>OUTRUN CORE</b>	<b>46,746</b>	
SCC core cont	-46,200	<i>As agreed under Statement of Intent</i>
SCC pension + Apprentice	-900	
<b>SCC Contribution</b>	<b>-47,100</b>	
<i>Balance Core</i>		<b>-354</b> <i>Any overspend to come out of RIA</i>

## Projects

	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Clothing, uniform	3,500	Vol Uniform (Defra capital)
Fees & Hired	10,000	publications
Fees & Hired	20,400	NR Projects
Sup & Ser other - Contractor Costs	37,138	Defra - Capital Access Grant contractor costs
Grant - Defra	-33,897	Uplift Defra Capital funding
Grant - Defra	-37,138	Defra - Capital Access Grant
<b>OUTRUN PROJECTS</b>	<b>3</b>	

## Landscape Projects

	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>Comments</b>
APT & C-Pay	76,760	FiPL & HPC funded posts
APT & C-NI	6,956	FiPL & HPC funded posts
APT & C-LG Pen	15,429	FiPL & HPC funded posts
Apprenticeship Levy	150	FiPL & HPC funded posts
Staff Training	1,000	
Car allowance	600	hire of minibuses (LMSS)
vehicle contract hire	5,000	
Equipment	1,060	
Printing	100	
Telephone - mobiles	280	
Grants - Grants Project Work	5,000	GQLDF Grants (HPC)
Grants - Grants Project Work	190,179	Landowner grants (FiPL)
Supplies & Services	5,200	LMSS - training for participants
Sup & Ser other - Contractors Costs	131,520	LIS - contractor costs
Grant - Defra	-254,153	Defra FiPL allocation
Contributions - OLA	-32,536	Income from SC (HPC) - LMSS
Internal - Cross Service	-131,520	Income from SC (HPC) - LIS
Internal - Cross Service	-5,000	Income from SC (HPC) - GQLDF
Internal - Cross Service	-15,078	income brought forward - LMSS
<b>OUTRUN LANDSCAPE PROJECTS</b>	<b>947</b>	Overspend to come from reserves

## Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme

	2024/25	Comments	
APT & C-Pay	204,609	Includes redundancy costs	
APT & C-NI	14,718		
APT & C-LG Pen	33,138		
Apprenticeship Levy	741		
Staff Training	2,600		
Rents	3,000		
Travel costs	2,450		
Equipment	33,512	@ £150/Qu	
Equipment R&M	1,000		
Publicity & Promotion	13,000		
Postage	50		
Telephone - mobiles	750		
Hospitality (cost of meetings)	100		
Fees & Hired	148,338		
F&H - Prof/Tech Serv	73,050		
Sup & Ser other - Contractor Costs	123,857		
Grants - Grants Project Work	19,933		Grants paid out
Internal - Insurance	500		Est PLI - £200 / ELI - £240 / Property - £40
Other income	-25,000	Friends of the Quantocks	
Fees & Charges	-553,264	NLHF	
Fees & Charges	-1,000	events	
Internal - Cross Service	-14,323		
<i>Internal - Cross Service</i>	<i>-81,759</i>	<i>NLHF grant accrual to zero balance</i>	
<b>OUTRUN QLPS</b>	<b>0</b>		

## Land Management

	2024/25	Comments
Equipment, materials	3,000	Materials used for sites Coth Hill, New Stowey Farm
Su & Ser other - Contractor Costs	10,000	
GrantGovtOutsideAEF	-3,400	CS / ES income
Grant - Defra	-2,600	Basic Payment Scheme
Cross-Service	-7,000	Other grants
<b>OUTRUN LAND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>0</b>	

## Reserves Account

	2024/25	Comments
Cross Service Recharges	15,078	LMSS income brought forward
Cross Service Recharges	2,300	Land Management income brought forward
Grant - Defra (carry forward)	-95,805	Funds brought forward 2023/24
<b>OUTRUN RESERVES ACCOUNT</b>	<b>-78,427</b>	