

11 January 2019

Our ref: 20122018

Your ref:



Paul Esrich  
Manager  
Malvern Hills AONB Partnership

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**By email only - [pesrich@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:pesrich@worcestershire.gov.uk)**

Dear Paul,

**Malvern Hills AONB Management Plan Section 90 Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 consultation with Natural England**

Thank you for sending me the Malvern Hills AONB Management Plan for formal consultation under Section 90 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act).

Natural England is a non-departmental public body established under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. It is charged with the responsibility to ensure that England's unique natural environment, including its flora and fauna, land and seascapes, geology and soils are protected and improved. Natural England's purpose as outlined in the Act is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Natural England's statutory purpose of conserving and enhancing the [English] landscape includes aesthetic, cultural and historic interests as well as habitat protection, and our role in nature conservation includes floral, geological and physiographical features which also encompass sites of historic environment interest.

Natural England is a statutory consultee for AONB management plans. Our observations on the Malvern Hills AONB draft management plan focus on three areas:

1. The statutory requirements for AONB management plans as identified in the CRoW Act 2000 and associated guidance;
2. Natural England guidance (CA23: Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plans: a guide and CA221: Guide to the review of AONB Management Plans) and;
3. Any outstanding concerns of Natural England in its capacity as a statutory consultee for the management plan.

Natural England also has responsibilities as a statutory consultee in Strategic Environmental Assessment. This formal response has been undertaken separately but complementary to the Management Plan Consultation.

### **1. Meeting the statutory requirements of Part IV CRoW Act 2000**

Natural England considers that the plan meets the statutory requirement that the constituent local authorities for the Malvern Hills AONB and wider project area have, acting jointly, produced a plan that formulates their policy for their AONB and for the carrying out of their functions in relation to it.

### **2. Following the guidance for AONB Management Plans (CA23 and CA221)**

We consider that the Plan has broadly followed the guidance contained in CA23 and CA221 and the updated advice from the National Association for AONBs (prepared by Steve Preston Associates, 2017) and therefore presents a comprehensive strategy for the management of the AONB.

### **3. Outstanding concerns**

We are pleased that at all stages of the development and consultation process our comments have been carefully considered and that the majority have been accepted and incorporated.

In conclusion, Natural England recognises that the production of this final draft represents the culmination of many months of intensive work on the part of Malvern Hills AONB Partnership and particularly the Malvern Hills AONB staff unit. We congratulate you on this huge effort.

We hope you will find these observations useful in the finalisation and implementation of the Management Plan. We look forward to working with you and the AONB partnership during its delivery and monitoring.

Please do not hesitate to contact Hazel McDowall if there are any points you wish to discuss further.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emma Johnson', written over a light grey rectangular background.

Emma Johnson  
Area Manager West Midlands

CC. David Henshilwood – NE  
Daniel Jones - Defra