

Appendix 1.

Summary & extracts of Government Response to the Glover Review

For full document in HTML see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/landscapes-review-national-parks-and-aonbs-government-response/landscapes-review-national-parks-and-aonbs-government-response>

and/or for the PDF document see:

https://consult.defra.gov.uk/future-landscapes-strategy/government-response-to-the-landscapes-review/supporting_documents/Consultation%20on%20the%20Government%20response%20to%20the%20Landscapes%20Review.pdf

The following are the principle extracts relating to AONBs, with the majority of text removed. The relevant consultation questions are included below.

New Name

Testing the proposal to rename AONBs as 'National Landscapes'

New National Landscapes Partnership

Will establish a new 'national landscapes partnership' to build on the existing collaboration between National Parks England and the National Association for AONBs, complemented by roles for the National Trails and National Parks Partnerships.

New National Landscape Strategy

Defra will provide clearer strategic direction for protected landscapes through a new national landscape strategy. This will set out a clear national framework to guide the development of plans and programmes by the national landscapes partnership and help to inform the development of local management plans.

Changed Statutory Purpose

- Create a single set of statutory purposes for AONB teams and National Park Authorities
- Propose to amend the current statutory purpose so that:
 - a core function of protected landscapes should be to drive nature recovery
 - a revised purpose should be more specific with regards to nature outcomes and explicitly mention biodiversity
 - the principle of natural capital should also be included to capture the societal value of nature in our protected landscapes and encompass a broader range of ecosystem services.
- Propose to amend the current statutory purpose to:
 - highlight the need to improve opportunities and remove barriers to access for all parts of society
 - clearly reference public health and wellbeing as an outcome
 - take a more active role in supporting access than just promoting opportunities

Monitoring

- By January 2023, new ambitious outcomes will be agreed for the role of protected landscapes in delivering on the government's goals for nature recovery and climate, aligned with the revised 25 Year Environment Plan and interim environmental targets under the Environment Act 2021 and the Net Zero Strategy.
- Natural England will monitor and evaluate progress against the key indicators and outcomes and will also support individual protected landscapes to translate these targets into their management plans.
- Developing the Natural Capital and Ecosystem Assessment (NCEA), which will provide data on habitats, natural capital, and ecosystem function. This will help to monitor progress against agreed outcomes.
- Natural England will produce an outcomes framework, provide annual reporting to track progress against the outcomes, and advise on where further action is needed.

Management Plans

- Ambitious goals to increase carbon sequestration, together with improved natural capital reporting, should be embedded in all protected landscapes' management plans.
- Management plans should also set out their local response to climate adaptation, managing long-term landscape change to increase the resilience of local communities and ecosystems.
- Natural England will review all revised management plans, ensuring that these make fair and ambitious contributions. To facilitate this new process, Natural England will also update their guidance on management plans for protected landscapes.
- We will also ensure clear alignment with Local Nature Recovery Strategies, to facilitate delivery of priority nature recovery actions without duplication.
- Look to strengthen management plans, and consider how best to ensure a smooth transition so that valuable work is not lost.

Planning reform

- Recognise the special role that protected landscapes hold within the planning system and will continue to explore opportunities for how this role could be developed further.
- An integral part of reviewing the planning reforms is considering how they align with and support our wider mission to level up the country and regenerate left-behind places.
- Intend to review the NPPF, and we will further consider how policy for protected landscapes is set out.
- Recognise that AONB teams can bring substantial evidence and expertise to the planning process, and wish to seek views on how the AONB teams can achieve better outcomes through the plan-making process.
- The review also identified strong support for AONB teams to be granted statutory consultee status for planning applications. Whilst we acknowledge the resource

implications this would place on AONB teams, we recognise the benefit of further strengthening their role and are seeking views on this potential change.

Permitted development

- will continue to monitor the use of permitted development rights in protected landscapes, and identify future opportunities to review their use.

AONB Partnerships

- Natural England will replace the former Countryside Agency guidance for AONB Partnerships, to set out clear governance principles, processes, and structures that local authorities would be expected to follow. This guidance will be flexible enough to be adapted to local circumstances but would aim to improve consistency, performance, and transparency.
- To ensure a high level of uptake and incentivise positive reforms, we could include conditions in our grant agreements, requiring evidence that this guidance has been applied to local governance structures and processes.

Duty of Regard

- The vagueness of the duties can lead to disagreements about their interpretation and allow damaging practices to occur. Propose strengthening the wording of these statutory duties so that they are given greater weight when exercising public functions.
- The current duties are also not clear that public bodies are expected to contribute to the delivery of management plans, which can lead to the underperformance of key partners and under-delivery of management plan objectives. The wording should also be made clearer with regards to the role of public bodies in preparing and implementing management plans.
- The government will produce guidance for public bodies on the application of the strengthened duties, making it clearer when and how it should be discharged in respect of public functions. These changes would help avoid disputes, reduce damaging practices, and lead to much more effective management of our protected landscapes.

Finances

- Relatively limited scope to increase the core grant by the scale suggested in the review, or to provide longer funding settlements that extend beyond a spending review period. Therefore, the core grant does not provide the opportunity to increase funding to the scale needed to deliver our vision.
- There has been increasing interest in private and blended financing models for nature recovery and nature-based solutions, and we believe that this area provides significant opportunities to lever more investment into protected landscapes.

Consultation Questions

Q1-5 personal details

Qs 6, 7 - Purposes

Qs 8, 9 - Farming

Qs 10, 11, 12 - AONBs

Qs 13, 14, 15, 24 - National Parks

Qs 16, 17 - Highways

Qs 18, 19, 20 - Planning

Qs 21, 22, 23 - Statutory Duties

Qs 6, 7 - Purposes

6. Should a strengthened first purpose of protected landscapes follow the proposals set out in Chapter 2?

7. Which other priorities should be reflected in a strengthened first purpose e.g. climate, cultural heritage?

Qs 8, 9 – Farming

8. Do you support any of the following options as we develop the role of protected landscapes in the new environmental land management schemes? Tick all that apply.

- Designing the environmental land management schemes in a way that works for all farmers and land managers, including the specific circumstances for those in protected landscapes, recognising that farmers in these areas are well-placed to deliver on our environmental priorities.
- Using Local Nature Recovery Strategies to identify projects or habitats within protected landscapes.
- Monitoring the effectiveness and uptake of the new environmental land management schemes in protected landscapes. Using this to inform whether further interventions are needed to ensure we are on track for wider nature recovery ambitions.
- Creating a clear role for protected landscape organisations in the preparation of Local Nature Recovery Strategies. Our recent LNRS consultation specifically asks for views on the role of different organisations in the preparation of LNRSs, including protected landscapes.
- Building on FiPL, empowering protected landscapes to support decision-making and delivery against agreed priorities, including through dedicated project coordinators and advisers.

9. Do you have any views or supporting evidence you would like to input as we develop the role of protected landscapes in the new environmental land management schemes?

Qs 10, 11, 12 - AONBs

10. Should AONBs have a second purpose relating to connecting people and places, equivalent to that of National Parks?

11. Should a strengthened second purpose of protected landscapes follow the proposals set out in Chapter 3 to improve connections to all parts of society with our protected landscapes?

12. Are there any other priorities that should be reflected in a strengthened second purpose?

Qs 13, 14, 15, 24 - National Parks

13-15 only relevant to National Parks and the Broads

Qs 16, 17 - Highways

16. Should we legislate to restrict the use of motor vehicles on unsealed unclassified roads for recreational use, subject to appropriate exemptions?

- Yes – everywhere
- Yes – in National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty only
- Yes – in National Parks only
- No
- Unsure

17. What exemptions do you think would be required to protect the rights and enjoyment of other users e.g., residents, businesses etc?

Qs 18, 19, 20 - Planning

18. What roles should AONBs teams play in the plan-making process to achieve better outcomes?

19. Should AONB teams be made statutory consultees for development management?

20. If yes, what type of planning applications should AONB teams be consulted on?

- AONB teams should formally agree with local planning authorities which planning applications should be consulted on.
- AONB teams should be consulted on all planning applications that require an Environmental Impact Assessment and are categorised as 'major development' as well as Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects.

Qs 21, 22, 23 - Statutory Duties

21. Which of the following measures would you support to improve local governance? Tick all that apply.

- Improved training and materials
- Streamlined process for removing underperforming members
- Greater use of advisory panels
- Greater flexibility over the proportion of national, parish and local appointments
- Merit-based criteria for local authority appointments
- Reduced board size
- Secretary of State appointed chair
- Other (please state)

22. Should statutory duties be strengthened so that they are given greater weight when exercising public functions?

23. Should statutory duties be made clearer with regards to the role of public bodies in preparing and implementing management plans?

24. National Parks and the Broads only

25. If you have any further comments on any of the proposals in this document, please include them here.