



North York Moors Local Plan

Our Approach to Plan-Making

The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report

This document is the initial stage in deciding on the priorities and issues to be addressed in our new Local Plan. It includes an analysis of what we know about the North York Moors National Park now, and what some of the influences on it that may require a response in the Local Plan. It incorporates what's known as our Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report. Sustainability Appraisal aims to promote sustainable development through better integration of sustainability considerations in the preparation and adoption of plans.

Appendices are available in a separate document.

September 2016

Contents

1. A short (non-technical) summary	5
Why have we prepared this document?.....	5
What are the main conclusions of this report?	5
What happens next?	7
2. About this document.....	8
Guidance.....	9
Consultation	11
3. Portrait of the North York Moors National Park.....	12
About the North York Moors	12
4. Where are we now? Influences on our plan.....	14
5. Where are we now? The baseline.	18
Environmental Issues	18
Social Issues.....	20
Economic Issues	20
Sustainability Issues.....	21
6. Where are we going? Appraising our plan.....	22
7. Monitoring	24
8. Next Steps.....	25

1. A short (non-technical) summary

Why have we prepared this document?

- 1.1 The North York Moors National Park Authority is preparing a new Local Plan. This plan will look to identify areas of land for particular uses, for example open space, housing and employment. It will also set out the framework of rules we will use to help decide planning applications. It will be a long term plan covering the period from 2016 to 2035.
- 1.2 Every good plan should tell a story – about where we are, where we are going and why we need the plan to steer us into that future. This initial ‘scoping’ document has been prepared to investigate the ‘*where we are?*’ part of this story. It is an inception document and brings together some of the information we know about the National Park so we can review what the issues we may need to address in the plan. It also contains a review of other plans and programmes that may have an influence on the future of the North York Moors National Park.
- 1.3 This scoping report forms the first formal stage in one of the required building blocks we produce as we take the plan through to final adoption – our **sustainability appraisal**. We use the sustainability appraisal to evaluate options for policies and sites against a range of economic, social and environmental criteria, to see which options deliver us the best results in terms of promoting more sustainable development.
- 1.4 Specifically, this document:
 - Reviews other relevant policies, plans, programmes to establish whether their contents will need to inform the North York Moors National Park Local Plan;
 - Looks at what we know about the North York Moors National Park at the moment to see what issues need to be addressed. In sustainability appraisal terms this is known as ‘baseline information’.
 - Identifies any particular issues and problems, using the information we have collected, as well as any difficulties encountered, including lack of information;
 - Sets out the objectives we will be using to carry out the sustainability appraisal and how the appraisal will be carried out;
 - Sets out how we will start to monitor our eventual plan to see if it is working.

What are the main conclusions of this report?

Where are we? What are the influences on our plan?

- 1.5 The first step was to review what other policies, plans or programmes may have a possible bearing on the contents of our plan. These can operate at international, European, national, regional and local levels. Appendix B of this report provides a comprehensive listing of the objectives of the relevant plans and programmes so far identified. A summary is included in the main body of this report.

1.6 The plans and programmes which we think will have the greatest influence on our forthcoming plan (and which it will need to be in line with to be considered 'sound') are:

- **The North York Moors Management Plan.** This is an overarching document setting out a clear plan of action for all activities related to the National Park.
- **The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** and accompanying guidance. The NPPF is the main expression of Central Government's planning policies and what it expects local planning authorities to include in their plans.
- **European directives on habitats and sustainable development**, as translated into national legislation.
- **English National Parks and the Broads – UK Government Vision and Circular** (DEFRA, 2010). The Circular is the main government policy document specifically relating to National Parks;
- **'Fixing the Foundations- Creating a More Prosperous Nation'**, HM Treasury, July 2015 and **'Towards a one nation economy: A 10-point plan for boosting productivity in rural areas'**, DEFRA 2015.
- **The North Yorkshire and East Riding Spatial Plan** (and Strategic Economic Plan). The Plan is a non-statutory planning framework which seeks to co-ordinate plans and planning/investment decision in the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding area.
- **Local Plans in adjoining areas.** We are also legally required under a 'duty to Co-operate' to make sure we look at how the effects of our plan will relate to neighbouring areas.

Where are we? The baseline position

1.7 We then looked at current issues within the North York Moors National Park. This is known as the 'baseline' position. A full report on the baseline position, include a brief commentary on what it may mean for our plan along with any difficulties we've had collecting any data is at Appendix C. A summary is included in Section 5 of this document.

Where are we going?

1.8 The last step in this scoping stage is to assemble what is known as our appraisal framework. We start by establishing a set of objectives based around environmental, social and economic criteria, against which we will assess all our options for policies and site allocations in the forthcoming plan. Sites and policies will be marked against whether they will have positive, negative, uncertain or no effects on that objective once implemented. Part of this process will be to see which of our options performs the best, and where any negative impacts are identified whether any safeguards or 'mitigation measures' can be built into the plan to reduce their effect or avoid them altogether. We also start to establish a monitoring framework which is a set of indicators of change based on published information. Through monitoring we can work out whether things are improving or worsening when our plan takes effect and in doing so whether our plan is working as intended.

What happens next?

- 1.9 In accordance with the statutory requirements the three Strategic Environmental Assessment bodies (Historic England, Environment Agency and Natural England) are being asked for their views. Any comments received by them will be incorporated in the next version of this document which will be available to other consultees as part of the consultation on the Issues and Options consultation document. Any other views will also be considered and incorporated as necessary.
- 1.10 All comments should be received by **5 p.m. on the 18th November 2016.**

2. About this document

- 2.1 This document has been prepared to support work on the new North York Moors Local Plan. This will guide new development across the National Park over the next twenty or so years, by identifying land for particular uses and setting out a suite of policies to help decide planning applications. Its ‘guiding light’ will be that it must deliver nationally agreed National Park purposes:
- ‘To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Parks’ and
 - ‘To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Parks by the public.’
- 2.2 In addition there is a further duty in pursuing these two purposes - *‘to seek to foster the economic and social wellbeing of local communities.’*
- 2.3 This document is what’s known as the ‘scoping’ stage of the sustainability appraisal. The sustainability appraisal is a tool to test different approaches to guiding development we can take in the Local Plan and assesses various options against a set of criteria aimed at informing the most sustainable way forward. The Authority is required, under the terms of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive¹, to undertake an assessment of the environmental effects of a plan. A wider ‘Sustainability Appraisal’ covering non-environmental issues is also required through Government planning guidance². Our appraisal process therefore considers the social and economic effects of the Local Plan in addition to environmental matters.
- 2.4 Sustainability Appraisal is what is known as an ‘iterative’ process, in other words it is reapplied at each stage of plan-making to make sure that our plans are heading in the right direction. Consequently we will produce a fresh version of the appraisal when consulting on options. When we finally adopt the plan we will also produce a sustainability statement setting out how we have used the appraisal to inform it.
- 2.5 Specifically, this document (and the full sustainability appraisal once completed):
- Reviews other relevant policies, plans, programmes with a view to establishing whether their contents will need to inform the contents North York Moors National Park Local Plan (Task A1 in Figure 1 below), and detailed in Appendix B;
 - Looks at what we know about the North York Moors National Park at the moment so we can know which issues need to be addressed. In sustainability appraisal terms. This is known as ‘baseline information’ (Task A2), and is set out at Appendix C;
 - Identifies any particular issues and problems, using the information we have collected (Task A3). Issues are identified within commentary on Task A2 at Appendix C;

¹ European Union, Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment, 2001.

² Department of Communities and Local Government, Online National Planning Policy Practice Guidance Paragraph: 005 Reference ID: 11-005-20140306, 2012.

- Sets out the objectives we will be using to carry out the sustainability appraisal and how the appraisal will be carried out (Task A4);
- Sets out how we will start to monitor the plan to see if it is working (Task A5).

2.6 Appendix A also sets out how this initial scoping report meets the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive.

2.7 Assessment is also required under the Habitats Directive³. Habitats Regulations Assessment however follows different principles to Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment and therefore should be undertaken separately, although certain elements such as information gathering and developing options can be undertaken simultaneously. A separate Habitats Regulations Report will be published alongside the Sustainability Appraisal Report at a further consultation stage.

Guidance

2.8 This report has been drafted in accordance with guidance contained in

- The Planning Advisory Services ‘Good Plan Making’ Guidance available on their website;
- Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks (ODPM, 2005);
- A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (ODPM, 2005).

2.9 The following diagram, (taken from Planning Advisory Service advice on good plan-making) shows how sustainability appraisal and plan-making should ideally fit together. This document represents ‘Stage A’ of sustainability assessment within this diagram:

³ European Union, the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (Habitats Directive) (Directive 92/43/EEC), 1992.

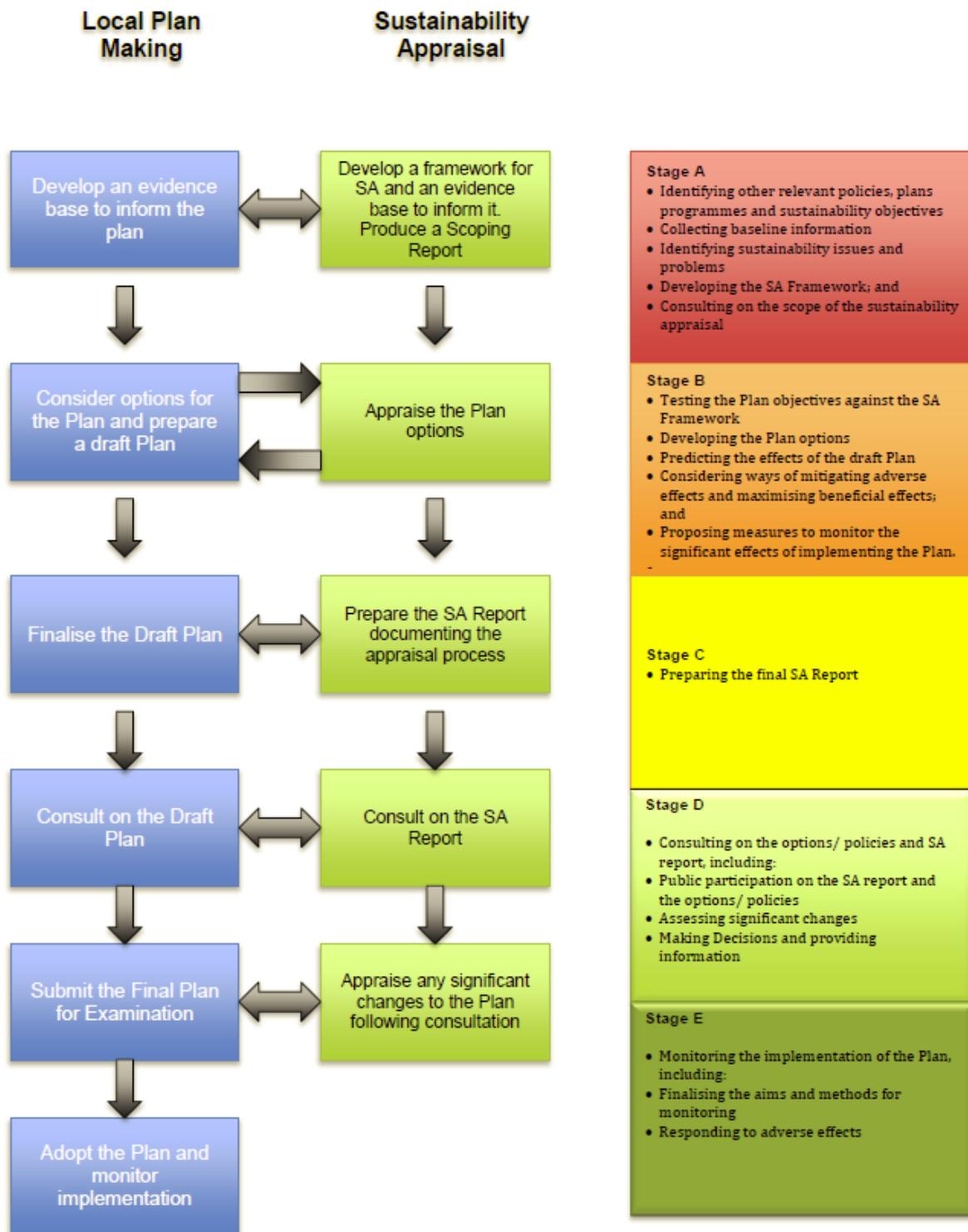


Figure 1 – The Sustainability Appraisal Process

Consultation

- 2.10 Consultation will be undertaken on this Scoping Report for 8 weeks during September/October with the three Statutory Consultees (Heritage England, the Environment Agency and Natural England) and other relevant organisations. As this is an early technical report it will not be directly sent to others for comments, however it will be made available on our website and any comments are gratefully received and will be taken into account in finalising the report.

3. Portrait of the North York Moors National Park

“The sea breeze and heather; the curlew’s rallying call above yellow daffodils; the smell of damp leaves underfoot upon the earth in autumn. A place where, after 60 years as a National Park, the ethos of harvesting the wonders, enjoying the productivity, and planning for the needs of future generations whilst still respecting the limits and rhythm of nature, has become a culture and a special quality in itself.”

- Jim Bailey, North York Moors National Park Authority Chair in the ‘Welcome’ section of the 2012 Management Plan.

About the North York Moors

- 3.1 The North York Moors National Park is one of England’s greatest assets. It is a park for the nation - a place for everyone to ease the stresses and strains of daily life, and a place where the natural world can be enjoyed and appreciated.
- 3.2 Designated as a National Park in 1952, it is enormously valued for its peace, tranquillity, space and natural beauty. Its rich mix of landscapes, habitats, settlements and buildings range from heather moorland to spectacular coastline, historic villages and large expanses of woodland. The Moors offer a heightened sense of remoteness and wilderness, a sense reinforced by its few roads and settlements within the boundary of the National Park.
- 3.3 The North York Moors are best known for large tracts of unbroken open moorland which cover 35% of the National Park area. Around 70 percent of the world’s heather moorland is in the UK and the largest continuous expanse of moorland in England and Wales is here in the North York Moors. The upland moor plateau is separated by deep narrow dales which form the heartland of the area. To the north is the edge of the Cleveland Hills which drop down to Tees lowlands. To the east, dramatic scenery including the tall sea cliffs in at Boulby dominate, with tight-knit historic fishing villages nestled into the coastline. To the south the Tabular Hills punctuate the landscape and offer views over the Vale of Pickering. To the west, steep scarp slopes some 300 metres high afford a vantage point to enjoy spectacular and expansive views over the Hambleton Hills and Vale of Mowbray, including a view from Sutton Bank once described by author James Herriot as the best in England.
- 3.4 Its character is not just formed by its landscapes - successive generations of herdsmen, farmers, monks and miners have left their mark, contributing to distinct local variations in landscape character and a treasure trove of ancient structures, buildings and monuments. Although the moors seem wild and natural, their appearance is largely the result of human activity. The North York Moors have long been farmed or actively managed – the famous purple heather on its northern slopes is carefully managed to this day. The Moors are home to what is also probably England’s largest collection of ancient monuments, including Ralph’s Cross on Blakey Ridge (our National Park emblem) and what is thought to be one the oldest religious relics in England, Lilla Cross. They can also stake claim to being the birth place of the industrial revolution as the discovery of huge quantities of ironstone led to the beginnings of the ironstone mining industry at Grosmont and Rosedale. These exports stimulated the growing iron industry of north-east England and wider development of Teesside as a world centre for shipbuilding, heavy engineering and bridge building. Remnants of this heritage, including the development of one of the world’s earliest railways help form the character of the North York Moors National Park today.

- 3.5 The North York Moors is also one of nature's hotspots. As well as an abundance of natural diversity it is also home to some very rare flora and fauna, including the Curlew and Plover birds and the last few hundred Pearl Water Mussels in the Country in the River Esk. Although England's National Parks cover less than 10% of England's area they contain much higher proportions of the most wildlife-rich habitats such as heaths, fens and ancient woodlands, including 80% of some habitats that have been identified as national priorities for conservation⁴. Around a third of the North York Moors National Park is nationally recognised as Sites of Special Scientific interest and most of it is also home to areas of land subject to nature conservation designations of international importance such as Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas. The coastline has been also designated as Heritage Coast.

The geography of the North York Moors

- 3.6 The North York Moors National Park is situated largely within the County of North Yorkshire with a small part to the north lying within the unitary authority of Redcar and Cleveland. It covers parts of Scarborough, Ryedale and Hambleton Districts and a very small part of Redcar and Cleveland. It has a total area of 1,436 square kilometres or 143,608 hectares, 17% of the land area of North Yorkshire. It is home to around 24,000 residents who continue to contribute to the culture, communities, upkeep and evolution of the National Park.
- 3.7 The North York Moors is remarkable for how little development it contains. Its single town is Helmsley (around half of which lies outside the National Park boundary in Ryedale) which lies at the south west edge and is home to around 1,515 people. Many of the bigger villages such as Sleights, Swainby, Osmotherley, Thornton-le Dale, West and East Ayton and Ampleforth are located on its edges. There are only three main 'A' roads, two of which run along edges - the A170 runs along the southern boundary linking Helmsley and the villages at the foot of the Tabular Hills and the A171 is the main coastal route through the east side of the Park linking Scarborough, Whitby and Guisborough. The A169 then links Whitby and Pickering through the east of the Park. There are only two other through roads used to travel across the North York Moors - the B1257 links Helmsley and Stokesley over Bilsdale and Chop Gate and the Blakey Ridge road runs north to south through the heart of the Park from Castleton to Hutton-le-Hole. It is however, highly accessible from elsewhere - the A19 Trunk Road skirts the western boundary of the Park providing easy access to the western part of the Park, with the main A1(M) motorway lying only a little further to the west. A Middlesbrough to Whitby train also links villages through the Esk Valley including Castleton, Grosmont and Sleights, and links up with the North Yorkshire Moors steam railway which runs through the Park from Pickering to Whitby.
- 3.8 The map below shows the layout of the National Park.

⁴ [National Parks England, National Parks, England's Wildlife Wonders, July 2015.](#)

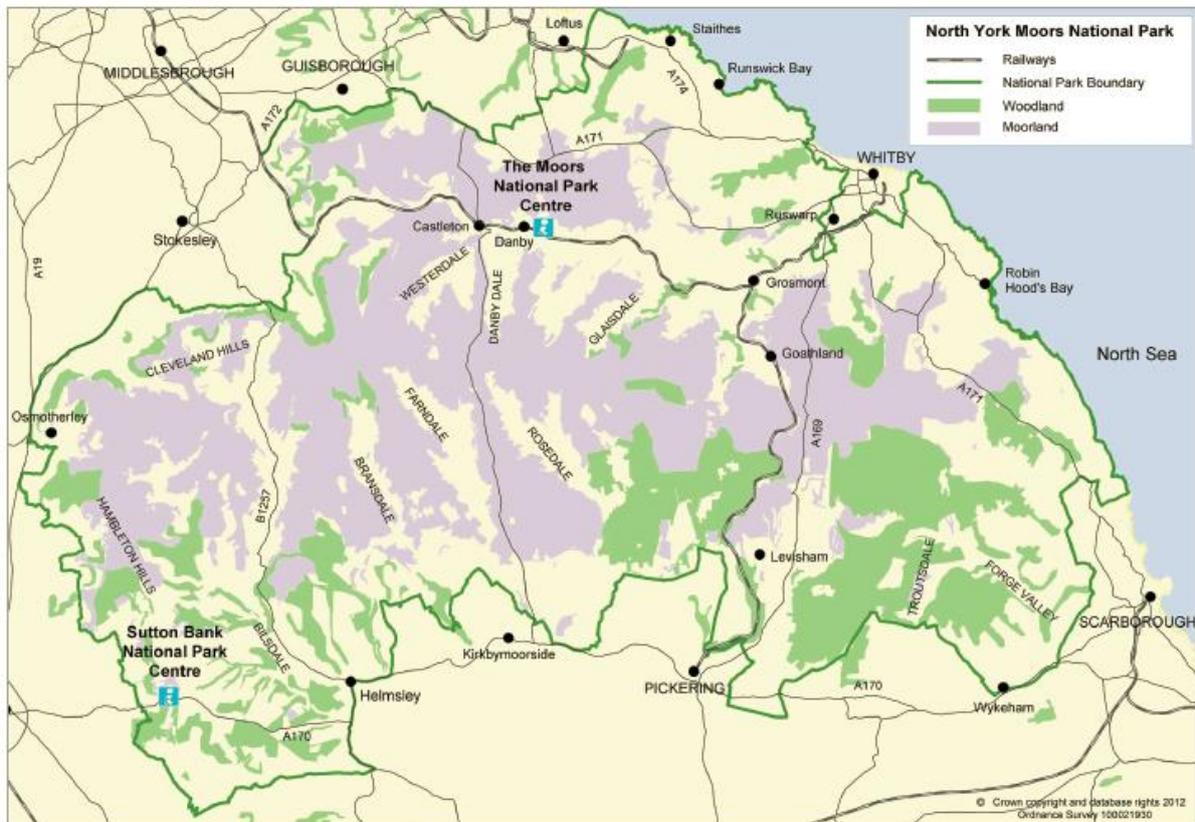


Figure 2 – The North York Moors

4. Where are we now? Influences on our plan

Task A1 - Other Plans and Programmes

- 4.1 Our first task is to identify the relationship of the new National Park Local Plan to other relevant plans and programmes at international, European, national, regional and local levels. Appendix B of this report provides a comprehensive listing of the objectives of the relevant plans and programmes thus far identified. This remains under review, and will continue to evolve in light of consultation feedback and as the Sustainability Appraisal process progresses. As a starting point, the review of plans and programmes carried out as part of previous Sustainability Appraisals has been used, and these have been updated to ensure that all relevant and up to date plans relating to the National Park are included.
- 4.2 In summary, in our view the policies, plans and programmes which will have the greatest influence on our forthcoming plan (and which it will need to be in line with to be considered 'sound' at independent examination) will be:

Plan, Policy or Programme	Why is it important?
<p>The North York Moors Management Plan</p>	<p>The Management Plan is the overarching plan which drives all activities that have an influence on the future of the National Park. It has been prepared and agreed following extensive consultation and input from residents and stakeholders with an interest in the National Park. It is therefore imperative that the new Local Plan delivers its vision.</p> <p>The new Local Plan will follow the format of the Management Plan as far as possible. The Management Plan also identifies the ‘special qualities’ of the National Park which must be preserved.</p> <p>The Management Plan then specifically identifies twenty six actions for the local development plan to pursue. These are set out in detail at Appendix B.</p>
<p>The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and accompanying guidance</p>	<p>The NPPF is the main expression of Central Government’s planning policies and what it expects local planning authorities to include in their plans. Of particular note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a presumption in favour of sustainable development which must be enshrined within Local Plans. • The expectation is that plans will meet the ‘objectively assessed’ need for new housing, unless restrictions need to be made to protect the National Park. • The NPPF recognises that development may need to be restricted where policies relate to national landscape designations such as National Parks. • It states that an element of market housing may be acceptable on rural ‘exceptions’ sites where it can help cross subsidise affordable housing. • The NPPF seeks the promotion of sustainable transport, the need to grow and diversify the rural economy, the need to address and adapt to climate change, the need to avoid areas of flood risk and the need to protect and enhance important wildlife habitats and the historic environment. • Finally, it set out a number of pieces of evidence that must be collected to support plan-making, including housing and economic need assessments and land availability studies, open space and flood risk assessment and economic viability assessment. <p>Accompanying guidance sets out the requirements for</p>

	production of this evidence.
European Directives on habitats and sustainable development, as translated into national legislation	The new Local Plan carries with it a legal requirement to promote sustainable development and make absolutely sure that it is not proposing anything which may damage internationally important wildlife sites. Two key pieces of evidence will need to be prepared to inform the plan and demonstrate this – a Sustainability Appraisal (part of which includes this document) and a Habitats Regulation Assessment which will review potential impact on wildlife sites.
English National Parks and the Broads – UK Government Vision and Circular (DEFRA, 2010)	<p>The Circular is the main government policy document specifically relating to National Parks. It seeks the following outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A renewed focus on achieving Park Purposes; • Leading the way in adapting and mitigating climate change; • A diverse and healthy natural environment, enhanced cultural heritage and inspiring lifelong behaviour change towards sustainable living and enjoyment of the countryside; • Foster and maintain vibrant, healthy and productive living and working communities; • Working in partnership to maximize the benefits delivered. <p>The Circular also sets out the National Parks will work towards the delivery of affordable housing and that National Parks are not suitable locations for unrestricted market housing development.</p> <p>A new ‘8 Point Plan’ was published by DEFRA in March 2016. Of note, Point 3 is to promote National Parks as world class destinations for visitors. Point 8 is to realise the immense potential for recreation in National Parks.</p>
‘Fixing the Foundations- Creating a More Prosperous Nation’, HM Treasury, July 2015 and ‘Towards a one nation economy: A 10-point plan for boosting productivity in	<p>These two documents are the main expressions of how the current Government intends to boost economic output and productivity in urban and rural areas. Between them the most relevant parts relating to planning are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unneeded commercial land should be released for

<p>rural areas', DEFRA 2015.</p>	<p>housing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automatic 'permission in principle' should be given for brownfield sites identified on a register • Provision of starter homes will be a national housing priority • The Local Plan preparation process will be speeded up. • There should be a review of the current threshold for agricultural buildings to convert to residential buildings.
<p>The Housing and Planning Act 2016.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This received Royal Assent in May 2016. Of note, it introduces a duty to provide for 'Starter Homes' (new homes at 80% market cost) in certain circumstances, introduces the concept of 'permission in principle' for housing led development where sites are allocated in plans, are on brownfield sites or potentially on small rural sites within or next to villages. The Act has yet to be followed up by regulations enabling some of the changes so precise details on how these new requirements will work is not yet available.
<p>North Yorkshire and East Riding Spatial Plan (and Strategic Economic Plan)</p>	<p>The Plan is a non-statutory planning framework which seeks to co-ordinate plans and planning/investment decision in the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding area. The Spatial Plan priorities will need to be considered in the new Local Plan. The Plan recognises the importance of protected landscapes to the economy and the quality of the coastline. It advocates a conservation-led approach to supporting new and existing local businesses, especially in tourism and agriculture.</p>
<p>Local Plans in adjoining areas.</p>	<p>It is good plan making to make sure that any cross boundary issues which require the attention of more than one planning authority are identified early on and addressed. Issues could include accommodating new housing, strategic transport corridors or new employment development. We are also legally required under a 'Duty to Co-operate' to make sure we look at how the effects of our plan will relate to neighbouring areas.</p> <p>We continue to maintain contact with neighbouring authorities. No strategic issues that require a joint approach have yet to be identified.</p>

5. Where are we now? The baseline.

Tasks A2 and A3 – Collection baseline information and identifying sustainability issues and problems

- 5.1 To plan properly we need to fully understand the place which we are planning. The next stage is to look at the 'baseline' information we have that can tell us about the issues currently facing the National Park.
- 5.2 Appendix C sets out a full set of baseline information. It is split into environmental, economic and social sections to reflect the pattern of the objectives we set out later in this report. It also includes commentary on any areas where information was difficult to come by or unclear. All information in this report is taken from the 2011 Census unless indicated otherwise. A summary of the main messages we can draw from our analysis of the baseline information is as follows:

Environmental Issues

- The landscape of the North York Moors is especially valued, and indeed the main reason for its designation as a National Park and significant natural resource available to everyone for recreation and relaxation. It is also vulnerable to change, both from natural process but also from changes to the built environment. We need to continue to ensure that the landscape is maintained and enhanced, in line with our statutory duties set out in the 1995 Environment Act. Character assessment work has been carried out in the past, however it will need updating and sensitivity analysis will need to be carried out on potential new development proposals;
- The special qualities of the National Park also extend way beyond landscape. We also need to continue to ensure tranquillity, including dark skies, can be maintained, or improved if possible. The North York Moors is an especially tranquil place, as measured through analysis carried out in 2007, however this data has not been updated;
- Water quality in the North York Moors National Park is incredibly important as it supports some very rare species. There have been some improvements in terms of the number of water bodies moving up from the poor to moderate quality categories; however the number in the high/good categories is declining. Water quality needs to be improved;
- Information on soil quality is limited. No grade 1 or 2 land (high quality for food/plant production) lies within the North York Moors and due to its upland nature the vast majority of the National Park is Grades 3 to 4. There are therefore no major sustainability issues in terms of its quality as a food production resource within the National Park itself. However, it remains a highly important resource as a carbon sink, meaning peat restoration projects and agri-environment schemes aimed at soil retention will help to benefit a wider population;
- Air quality in the Park is relatively good but is generally influenced by activities occurring outside of the National Park. We need to continue to ensure that air quality is maintained or improved;

- Climate change may bring particular challenges, including flooding of infrastructure (buildings, roads, footpaths) and habitats, drought, affecting flora and fauna and also productivity, changes to the coastline as a result of a combination of sea level rise, increased rainfall and increased storminess, increased risk of fire on the moorland, changes to conditions for biodiversity which may result in loss of some species and an increase or the introduction of other, potentially threatening, species; changes to native woodland, including tree species and ground flora (and economic implications in relation to timber production);
- The National Park is a 'nature hotspot' and contains a wealth of both designated and non-designated habitats and many protected and non-protected species, much of the area is a Special Protection Area or Special Area for Conservation;
- The condition of our Sites of Special Scientific Interest has been improving over the past few years. There has also been a large increase in the amount of land managed in line with conservation objectives since 1992 although this has decreased slightly over the last year or two;
- The North York Moors has a high concentration of ancient woodland;
- There has been an increase in the number of moorland wader birds, however populations fluctuate;
- There are no issues around water supply in the North York Moors;
- There is a reliance on areas outside of the National Park for any aggregates used in the Park, reflecting the importance of National Park designation;
- A significant amount of potash reserves are being exploited or may be exploited;
- Waste is dealt with outside the National Park boundary. Recycling rates are going up;
- Traffic levels in the Park have fluctuated, although could be said to have increased slightly, over the past 10 to 15 years. A recent drop bucks this trend; we will not know if this will continue until monitoring starts again;
- Car ownership levels are above county level and national rates. The car is by far the most used mode of transport by those visiting the Park;
- 34.4% of our housing completions have been in the form of conversions of existing sites. This has fluctuated over the years but the trend largely follows the same trend as greenfield completions;
- The relatively limited number of development opportunities in the National Park may mean that proportions of development on previously-developed sites may vary over time, for example if a large site comes forward on a previously developed site this may skew any trend.

Social Issues

- The population of the National Park is declining (in contrast to most other National Parks). The population has declined around 3% between 2001 and 2014, and within this trend the decline is particularly marked for the years since 2008;
- The population in the NYMNP area is 'older' than other areas - 25% of our population is aged under 30 compared with 37-38% regionally and nationally. 37% of our population is aged 60 or more compared with 23% across England and within the region;
- The largest proportional population gains were from people aged 60 or more, conversely populations under 44 showed a marked decline;
- Around 30% of all households are one person households – this percentage has been rising since 2001. This figure is slightly below the national average;
- Compared to national and regional rates we have more households with no children;
- Despite population decline the number of households has increased – this is because households are getting smaller in size;
- There has been around a 7% increase in housing stock between 2001 and 2011, over this time there also around a 17% increase in second home ownership;
- 48% of households in the North York Moors own their house outright (with no mortgage), compared to around 30% nationally. This may largely reflect an older population;
- House prices remain high -in 2015/16 the average house price in the Park was £253,097, a slight rise of 0.1% over the previous year (£250,879). 279 properties were sold. However, prices have remained stable since 2006;
- There has been a loss of community facilities in villages over many years and a particular decline in the number of villages with a post office;
- There has been an increase in the number of rights of way classed as easy to use since 2004.

Economic Issues

- The best estimate we have is that there were around 12,500 employees employed in the North York Moors National Park at 2013;
- There is a very low unemployment rate, meaning there is virtually no available labour to fill any new jobs in the National Park;
- The most prevalent types of jobs are in retail and accommodation (supporting tourism) and agriculture;

- Tourism is incredibly important to the economy of the North York Moors. In 2014 7.3 million visitors brought £582 million of spending into the National Park, a figure that is rising over time. They also helped support around 10,480 full time equivalent jobs ;
- It has been estimated that around 65% of jobs in the National Park depend directly or indirectly on the quality of the environment in the National Park;
- The population of the National Park is better qualified than other areas; however there is a loss of younger qualified people from the North York Moors.

Sustainability Issues

5.3 A summary of the key sustainability issues arising from Tasks A1 – A3 is set out below:

Environmental

- Ensuring that the natural environment and landscape is conserved and enhanced and that tranquillity, including dark skies is maintained or improved;
- Air, water and soil quality should be maintained and improved, particular where it is needed to support key species;
- There is a need to reduce the causes of climate change and to ensure measures are in place to adapt to its effects;
- Biodiversity assets need to be maintained and enhanced;
- Ensuring that the built and historic environment is conserved and enhanced;
- The need to travel by private car should be reduced;
- The most efficient use of land is required, including the optimum use of brownfield sites;

Social

- People should be able to access services and facilities, including health, education and recreation facilities;
- Housing which is affordable and to meet local needs should be provided;

Economic

- Measures should be in place to support the growth and diversity of the local economy;
- Tourism and recreation should be supported where they lead to the appreciation of the special qualities of the North York Moors National Park.

6. Where are we going? Appraising our plan.

Task A4 – Developing our sustainability appraisal framework

- 6.1 Next, we devise our appraisal framework. This provides the template for describing, analysing and comparing sustainability implications of the Local Plan, and testing policy and site alternatives. Guidance suggests that the framework should consist of objectives, the achievement of which should be measurable using identified indicators. The framework should be informed by the review of plans and programmes and the identification of sustainability issues and problems which was undertaken under Tasks A1, A2 and A3.
- 6.2 Sustainability objectives were initially established as part of the scoping process for the Sustainability Appraisal of the Core Strategy and Development Policies Development Plan Document, but amended slightly for clarification during the production of subsequent documents. They were also established for the sustainability appraisal for the North York Moors Management Plan. We have reviewed and amended these objectives to derive a consolidated and manageable list. In doing so we have also taken account of the objectives set out in the Government's 2010 National Parks Circular.
- 6.3 Our proposed sustainability objectives are set out below:

Environmental Objectives	E1	To maintain and enhance the quality and character of the landscape and cultural heritage of the North York Moors, including the special qualities of remoteness and tranquillity
	E2	To protect and enhance water, soil and air quality, and reduce pollution.
	E3	To ensure future development is resilient to climate change, including avoiding and not contributing to flood risk
	E4	To maintain and enhance conditions for biodiversity and geodiversity and avoid irreversible losses or damage to designated nature conservation sites, protected species and geological assets.
	E5	To preserve and enhance all aspects of the historic environment and to provide opportunities for all residents to access and understand local cultural heritage.
	E6	To re-use brownfield land and empty buildings bearing in mind their potential nature conservation and heritage value.

Social Objectives	S1	To foster and maintain vibrant local communities and encourage a sense of community and belonging.
	S2	To provide decent housing in accessible locations to meet the needs of local people, including the young, and to maximise opportunities for provision of affordable housing.
	S3	To protect and enhance access to community facilities, leisure and recreation opportunities and access to the countryside.
	S4	To make sure new development is easily accessible to essential services, to help reduce the need to travel and minimise the environmental impact of transport.
Economic Objectives	EC1	To strengthen and diversify the local economy by supporting a range of opportunities for employment and training particularly in sustainable locations.
	EC2	To support tourism and recreation industry by ensuring that development contributes to the local economy and provides opportunities for enjoying the Park's special qualities.

- 6.4 These objectives have been generated specifically to allow us to appraise the plan. The new Local Plan will include a separate and distinct set of objectives which will be framed specifically around what that plan is aiming to achieve, and in doing so they are likely to be more 'area specific' than those generated for plan testing purposes.
- 6.5 Appendix A sets how appraisal against these objectives will comply with the range of topics we are expected to appraise against under the SEA Directive and Regulations.
- 6.6 The assessments will be undertaken in terms of the criteria below:

Category	Effect of Approach / Objective / Policy
✓ Positive impact	Consistent with meeting the objective, either by having no negative impact or by positively influencing change in accordance with the objective.
✗ Negative impact	Will hinder achievement of this objective.
● Neutral impact	Will have a neither a positive nor a negative impact upon this objective
? Uncertain Impact	May hinder achievement of this objective, but may have no negative impact, or may have a positive impact. This will depend upon implementation.
□ No direct link	There is no direct link with the objective.

In addition the nature of the effects will be considered in terms of:

- Direct or indirect;
- Long term, short term, temporary or permanent;
- Local or wider in geographical extent.

6.7 Sustainability Appraisal should identify the cumulative and significant effects upon sustainability objectives. The assessment of cumulative effects will involve looking at the effects upon each sustainability objective in turn. This assessment will then assist in determining whether there are likely to be any significant effects. Consideration will then be given to whether any mitigation of effects can be woven into plan policy.

6.8 Appendix E shows an assessment of each objective compared to others using the framework above.

7. Monitoring

Task A5

7.1 As part of the production of the new Local Plan the Authority will also be reviewing the indicators that are monitored to check that they are still relevant and whether new ones need to be included. All new policies in the Plan should be capable of being monitored over time to make sure the Local Plan is working as originally intended. As a starting point Appendix D includes an initial set of monitoring indicators for the objectives we have set out. These will be used as a source of information to help us understand the sustainability effects of the options we consider as we carry out testing on the Local Plan.

- 7.2 Monitoring of the Local Plan will be reported in the State of the Park report and also via the Authority's Annual Monitoring Report or Authority Report.

8. Next Steps

- 8.1 Consultation will be undertaken on this Scoping Report for 8 weeks during September/October 2016 with the three Statutory Consultees (Heritage England, the Environment Agency and Natural England) and other relevant organisations. It is not considered appropriate to undertake a wider consultation due to the technical nature of the Scoping Report. Any comments received will be taken into account in finalising the Scoping Report.
- 8.2 As the Local Plan is drafted, the framework established by this Scoping Report will be used to undertake the Sustainability Appraisal. Initially an assessment will be undertaken of the strategic options which will help to inform the selection of the overall strategy. Following this, an assessment will be carried out on the objectives and policies of the Plan as they are drafted, as per Figure 1 on page 10. The Sustainability Report will be published alongside the draft Local Plan as part of the public consultation.

NYMNPA

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If you would like further information, please contact us:

Planning Policy – policy@northyorkmoors.org.uk

Development Management – planning@northyorkmoors.org.uk



01439 772700



northyorkmoorsnationalpark



@northyorkmoors

The text of this document can be made in large print. Please contact the Planning Policy team using the contact information above.



North York Moors National Park Authority

The Old Vicarage, Bondgate, Helmsley, York YO62 5BP