

Wye Valley AONB

Purpose:

This evidence paper has been developed to provide some context as to the Forest of Dean District Council Allocations Plan (AP) potential for effects in relation to the Wye Valley AONB (WV). Where there is some overlap between the AONB and biodiversity designations/ species, implications of the AP on biodiversity designations and species are addressed elsewhere. The focus of this paper is on the purposes of the AONB designation to '*conserve and enhance natural beauty*'.

The AONB

The 'Special Qualities AONB' are set out in table Annex D¹

Allocations Plan

There are 10 'allocation' policies within 2km of the AONB (Table 1). Following the screening exercise in table 1 and, taking account of the special qualities of the AONB, two allocations have been identified as having potential to have effects on the WV AONB; AP17 Stowfield Lydbrook and AP29 Wye Valley (Cycleway). Descriptions and the local context for these sites is considered further in Annex's A & B.

Representations received from the AONB Unit in regards to AP

"The Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnership largely welcomes the Forest of Dean District Council's Allocations Plan. The Wye Valley AONB is an area designated for its national landscape importance. We are disappointed that the Wye Valley AONB is not referenced more fully in the Plan. However we welcome the recognition in the Plan to protect the environment and enhance the landscape

The AONB Partnership supports the following policies

AP 4 Design of Development

AP 5 Style and Materials

AP 8 Green Infrastructure

AP 17 'Land At Stowfield, Lydbrook

AP 26 'Additional Cycle Connections'

AP 29 'Wye Valley'

And the sites allocated in the Plan that fall within the AONB:

- *Policy AP 61 - Staunton Road, Coleford Employment / Hotel Site*
- *Policy AP 82 - Former Tinplate Works, Lydbrook*

The Partnership supports the above policies in principle as contributing to employment generation and economic growth of the local area. All these locations are on previously development land and should not impose further on the outstanding landscape of the Wye Valley. The Partnership has no objection to development in these locations as long as any future proposals respect the local

¹ Post Consultation Draft of the WV AONB Management Plan 2015-2020 (May 2015)

distinctive landscape character and contribute to the wider objectives set out in the AONB Management Plan.

We welcome that Policies AP61 and AP17 recognise that any future development in these areas should have regard to the Wye Valley AONB landscapes. Furthermore, we welcome that Policy AP17 puts emphasis on the fact that proposals for Land at Stowfield will only be accepted if they deliver clear benefits to the AONB.

Notwithstanding this, we feel that Policy AP82 Former Tinplate Works, Lydbrook should also refer to the Wye Valley AONB and needs to respect its landscapes and contribute to the wider role of the Wye Valley AONB.

In regard to Land at Stowfield, Lydbrook we support the redevelopment/regeneration of the former cable works for mixed uses such as residential, employment, recreation facilities or tourist accommodation as proposed in the Plan. We feel that any works on this site should contribute to the wider landscape, cultural heritage and activities of the Wye Valley AONB. Development proposals should explore the possibility of enhancing access to the River Wye and the restoration of the old railway viaduct adjacent to this site to encourage and enhance land and water based recreation opportunities. Consequently proposals should consider how to increase connectivity to this riverine area and maintain and enhance its attractiveness, for the benefit of future site occupiers and visitors to the Wye Valley“

(20th May 2015).

Conclusions

Annex's A & B set out the particular characteristics of the two AP policies which have been identified as has having potential to have effects on the purposes of the designation of the AONB. Annex's A & B also consider the potential for impacts and the context of the details of policies proposed in the AP. In their representation the AONB Unit supports the inclusion of polices AP17 & 29. With regards to AP82 the AONB office's request for 'AONB' to be included in the policy, is noted. At his time it is considered sufficient that the AONB is shown on the proposals map and CSP1 sets out landscape and design responsibilities.

It has been shown that individual policies in the AP will have a very limited negative effect on the AONB, subject to the appropriate application of the AP policies. Overall the AP provides for improvement of the AONB landscape's and is consistent with the aims of the AONB management plan and Forest of Dean Core Strategy.

Table 1 AP Polices within or close to (2km) the Wye Valley AONB

Policy	Policy Objective	Site/Area Description	Distance from AONB	Potential for effects
AP17 Land at Stowfield Lydbrook	Redevelopment of unused employment site for about 45 dwellings / employment use / tourism and recreation / care home	Former cabling works and cardboard manufacture. Large scale dilapidated buildings across 8ha	Within	YES Direct (visual). Potential for enhance - Large scale derelict buildings not in keeping with the objectives of the AONB. Indirect - Additional recreational activities and population within AONB
AP23 National Diving and Activity Centre	Further development intensification for diving, tourism and recreational activities	Existing leisure and recreation development centred around a flooded former quarry	1km	Direct (visual). None – Distance from AONB and strong intervening visual barriers Indirect. Very limited activities largely self-contained on site. Potential for accommodation to result in additional visitors to AONB, however this would be negligible in the context of the AONB
AP29 Wye Valley	Safeguarding proposed for the establishment of former railway as a Cycle route	Former disused railway with planning permission (lapsed) for use as cycleway	Within	Direct (visual). Limited - Route follows former railway route to Tintern through predominately woodland. Previous planning application was subject to landscape assessment and found acceptable. Indirect – Additional recreational activities within AONB
AP 58 Land at Berry Hill	Provision for up to 80 dwellings, 0.7ha of employment land, education and 7.5ha of recreation land	Existing schools, college, leisure centre and formal recreation activates	0.5km	Direct (visual). None – Distance from AONB and strong intervening visual barriers Indirect. Very limited activities largely self-contained on site. Potential for accommodation site result in additional visitors to AONB, however this would be negligible in the context of the AONB
AP61 Staunton Road Coleford	Policy for redevelopment for employment generating uses and Hotel (1.6ha)	Former Sawmill and brickworks	Within	Direct (visual). Limited - Former industrial site surrounded by existing woodland Indirect - Potential for accommodation site to result in additional visitors to AONB, however this would be negligible in the context of the AONB
AP64	Protection of undeveloped	Policy provides for	Adjacent	Direct (visual). None - Policy supports landscape protection

Coleford Locally Valued Landscape	landscape around Coleford	distinctive and attractive setting to Coleford. Ensures strong visual separation between settlements		of an area adjacent to the AONB Indirect. - None policy supports landscape protection of an area adjacent to the AONB
AP 82 Former Tinplate Works Lydbrook	Allocation for 0.9ha of land for housing(26 dwellings)	Former industrial site in the village of Lydbrook, with existing planning permission for residential development	Within	Direct (visual). Very limited - Within existing village and on former industrial land. Visually enclosed within a valley surrounded by development and established woodland. Indirect - Additional population within AONB, however this would be negligible in the context of the AONB
AP83 Former Severn and Wye Railway	Safeguarding and important green infrastructure and footpath feature	Former railway route now used as a footpath	Within	Direct (visual). None - Policy supports the protection of a landscape feature within the AONB Indirect. - None policy supports the protection of an a landscape feature within the AONB
AP91 Land adjoining the A48 and Bigstone Meadow Tutshill	Allocation of 2.6ha for about 35 new dwellings	Agricultural land between residential area of Tutshill	0.5km	Direct (visual). None – Distance from AONB and strong intervening visual barriers Indirect. Indirect - Additional population within close proximity to AONB, however this would be negligible in the context of the AONB
AP92 Land adjacent to Wyedean school, Sedbury	Allocation of 3.6ha for up to 110 dwellings	Agricultural land with existing planning permission for residential development adjacent to the railway line and existing residential areas of Sedbury	0.6km	Direct (visual). None – Distance from AONB and strong intervening visual barriers Indirect. Indirect - Additional population within close proximity to AONB, however this would be negligible in the context of the AONB

ANNEX A – AP17 Stowfield Lydbrook - Site Characteristics

Background

The site is within the AONB and adjacent to the River Wye. Whilst the site is currently being marketed for lease it is not being used and has not been for some time. The site has previously been used for cable manufacture, cardboard manufacture and general storage / distribution. The site contains large scale industrial buildings many of which are derelict.

Currently key issues are:

- A large scale derelict site within the AONB and located within the central valley floor.
- In planning terms the site has existing large scale employment uses and is redevelopable on that basis
- Contamination from previous uses
- Parts of the sites are within flood zones from the River Wye and a culverted tributary running through the site
- Proximity to Wye Valley Woodlands SAC, River Wye SAC and Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat SAC.

In 2012 an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening request was made to the LPA (P1447/12/EIA). The screening request was for redevelopment of existing industrial buildings to include care home, industrial units and residential development. The proposal was considered EIA development and a screening opinion to that effect was issued by the LPA in October 2012.

To support the development of proposal and allocation in the AP the site own has undertaken:

- Extended Phase1 habitat survey
- Landscape Assessment scoping study
- Phase 1 Geo-environmental Desk study
- Flood Risk Assessment scoping study
- Initial stake holder consultation both statutory and non-statutory

AP Policy (Annex C)

This policy has been developed to enable the continued evolution of the site introducing some diversification in order increase the sites' contribution to the local economy and to take advantage of its location and offer tourism and recreational opportunities. It is intended to promote mixed uses that will be an improvement in respect of the AONB and will be more environmentally acceptable than the past employment uses which could resume.

The policy is one that is intended to promote development in the manner suggested and requires a masterplan to ensure that the various uses proposed are satisfactorily accommodated. The policy itself does not allocate specific uses but supports a mixed redevelopment subject to some important qualifications.

Evaluation

From landscape perspective the site is currently harmful to the special qualities of the AONB. The principle of large scale employment use of the site is established although on the basis of current employment site trends, redevelopment of this nature and scale is unlikely. Redevelopment of the site would be heavily constrained by environmental factors (Landscape, Flood Risk, Contamination,

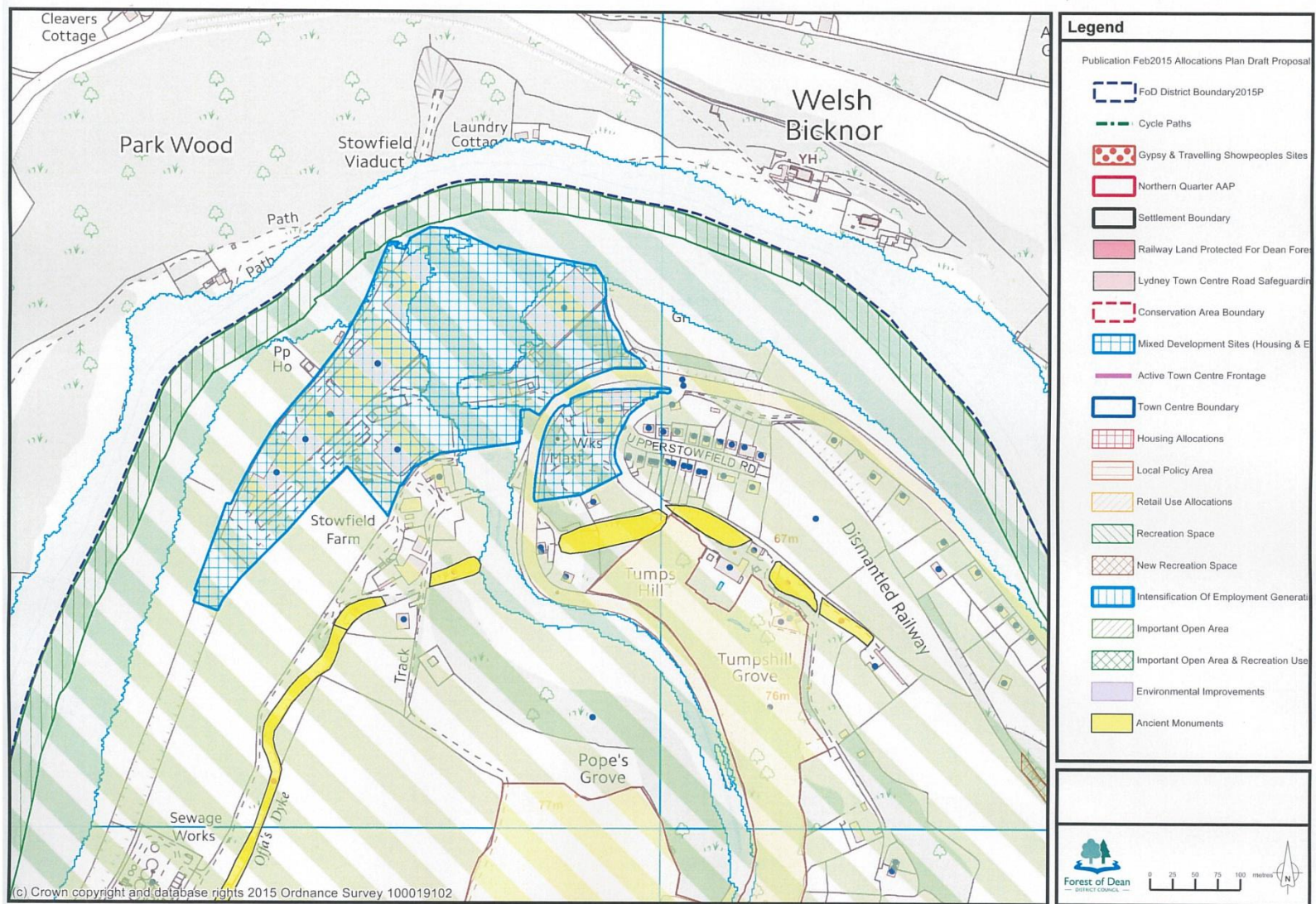
Biodiversity). Based on the LPA's assessment and supported by initial studies undertaken by the site owner, subject to the identified constraints above, it is considered that development of the nature and scale outlined in AP17 could be undertaken. Such development can be expected to have beneficial effects on the Special qualities of the AONB. This position is supported by the AONB unit's representation. AP17 has therefore been clearly drafted to include specific criteria where development would only be supported where the criteria are met.

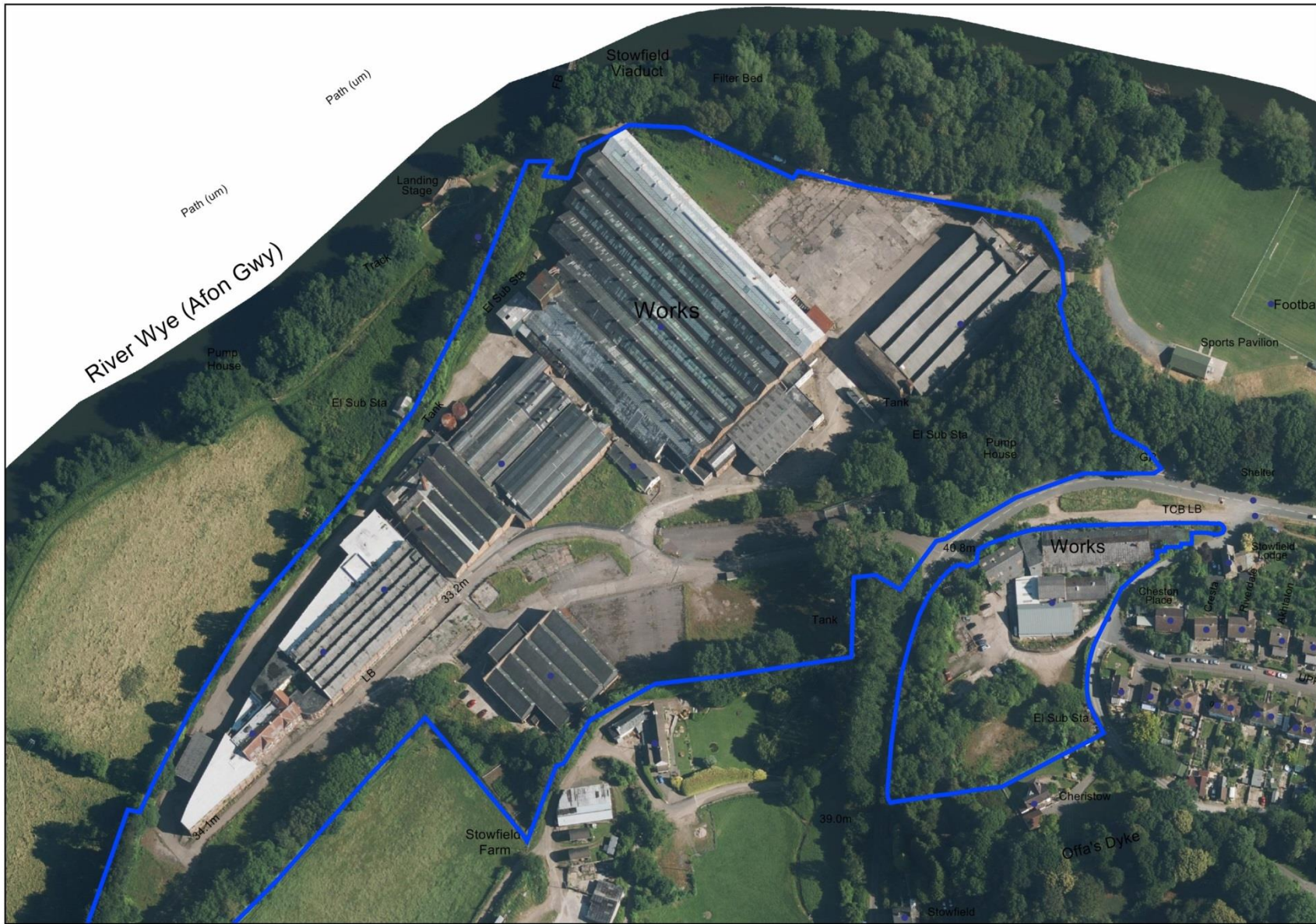
In the context of the AONB overall the policy is considered to provide an opportunity to address existing harmful landscape impacts and contribute to the special qualities of the AONB.

If the policy is not included in the AP (Do nothing option) the site will remain as a large scale employment site due to past uses. The condition of the site would be expected to continue to decline with resultant continued harmful effects on the AONB. Planning applications, not in accordance with the local plan could of course be made at any time. Whilst existing national legislations (NPPF, Habitats Regulations etc) would exist without AP17 there would be no Local Plan redevelopment parameters.

Site Photographs







Background

The allocation is a long linear one along the former Wye Valley Railway between Sedbury and Tintern. The route has been subject to planning approval for a cycleway following a planning application by Sustrans (P1626/10/FUL) in 2010. Development has not commenced and therefore the planning permission is considered to have lapsed. The former trackbed runs through woodland with large sections being overgrown. There are also a number of tunnels along the route.

At the time of the planning application the proposal was not considered to be Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development. The application was subject to Habitats Regulations Assessment and the application was supported with arrange of technical reports in respect of ecology and landscape. Currently key issues are:

- Previously a scheme of similar scale and nature has been found to be acceptable
- Visually much of the route is contained within existing extensive woodland
- Indirect and cumulative impacts as result of increased recreational activity including at 'start and finish' points
- Proximity to Wye Valley Woodlands SAC, River Wye SAC and Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat SAC.

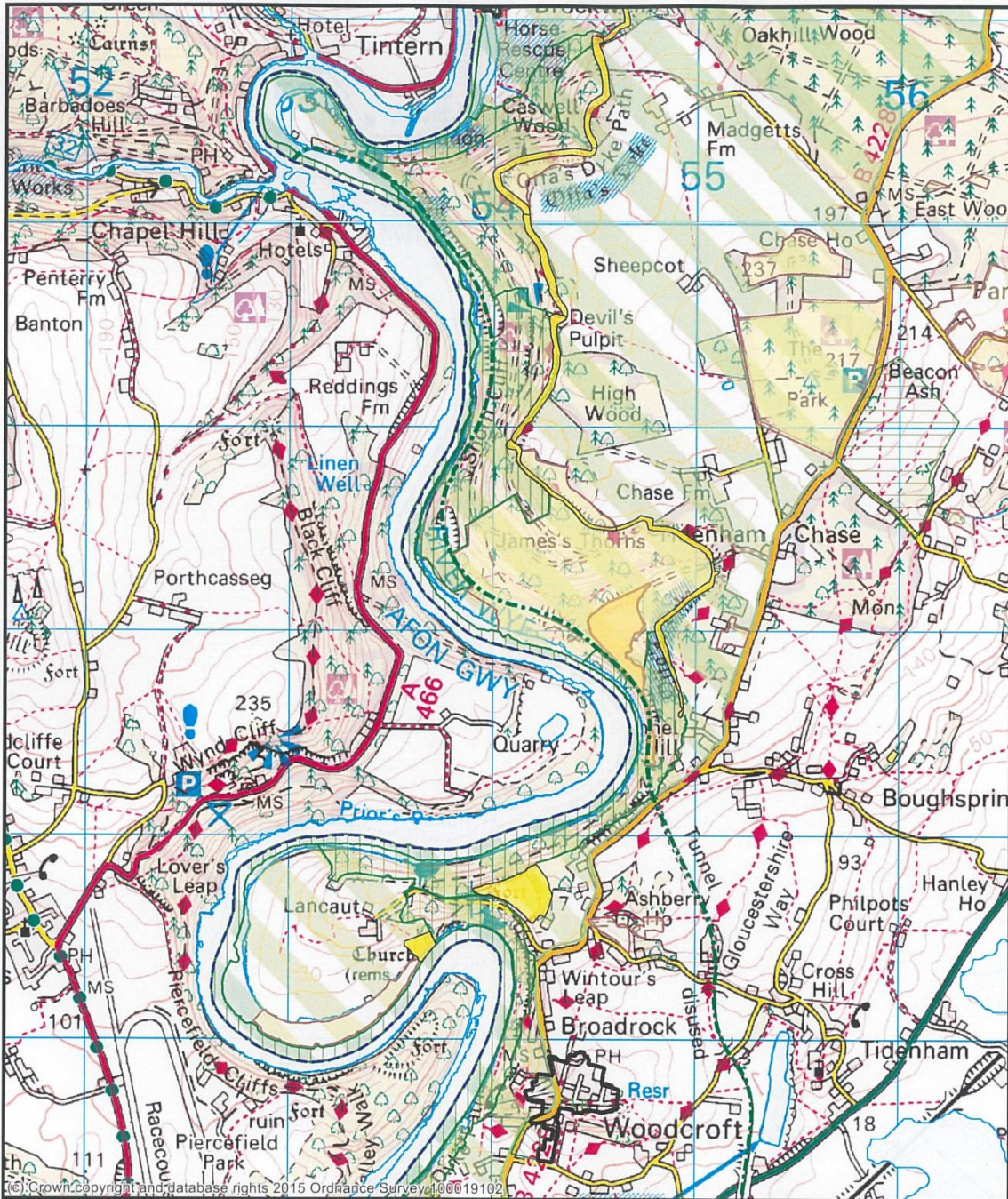
AP Policy (Annex C)

This policy has been developed to safeguard a new cycle route which has been subject to planning approval in the past.

Evaluation



A substantial amount of information was submitted to accompany the 2010 planning application which was subsequently considered acceptable (in consultation with Natural England) and approved. In principle therefore it has been demonstrated that a new cycle route in this location can be acceptable subject to the biodiversity and landscape considerations. From a landscape perspective the allocation has a limited direct impact due to the route through existing woodland. Indirect impacts in relation the associated additional recreational activity could be appropriately managed in accordance with the AONB management plan and the objectives of the Forest of Dean Core Strategy.

If the policy is not included in the AP (Do nothing option) a planning application, not in accordance with the local plan, could of course be made at any time and no doubt based on the previous planning history. By not allocating the site a positive approach to cycle ways, green infrastructure, and tourism development set out in the Core Strategy would be weakened.



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Legend	
Publication Feb2015 Allocations Plan Draft Proposal	
FoD District Boundary 2015P	Settlement Boundary
Cycle Paths	Railway Land Protected For Dean Forest Railway
Gypsy & Travelling Showpeoples Sites	Lydney Town Centre Road Safeguarding
Northern Quarter AAP	Conservation Area Boundary
	Mixed Development Sites (Housing & Employment)

0 100 200 300 400 500 600 700 metres

AP 17

Land At Stowfield, Lydbrook Policy to enable redevelopment for a variety of uses.

Redevelopment of the land at Stowfield will be supported by the Allocations Plan but only where:

- The environmental impacts can be shown to be acceptable and
- The development proposed will not be subject to unacceptable flood risk,
- There will be no adverse effects on European nature conservation designations,
- Development will not be adversely affected by any legacy including contamination from the past uses and
- Clear benefits to the AONB can be demonstrated.

Development may include the following:

North of the Main road within an area of about 8ha:

- About 45 dwellings
- At least 4ha employment land, 3ha of which is industrial commercial and/ or retail. Employment generating uses may include business units, B1, B2 and B8 uses and other employment generating development, also an hotel and pub and retail units which do not compete with town centres (eg garden centre)
- Recreation facilities and tourist accommodation.
- A care home

Tourism related uses may comprise serviced or non serviced accommodation. Recreation uses include leisure and recreation facilities and ancillary retail, offices and other accommodation in connection with the main uses will also be permitted.

The disposition of uses should be agreed on an indicative masterplan to be prepared as part of the planning process. This should include HRA and a plan for the phasing of development.

Subject	Requirements
Access for vehicles	Primary from existing road using present access road, pedestrian/ cycle access where necessary
Access connections	Footpaths along Wye Valley which adjoin the site including the existing footbridge
Open space	According to agreed masterplan
Landscaping	Extensive according to masterplan
Features on site	Retain boardroom and associated structure, retain chimney if possible, provide interpretation regarding history, which may retain other features and or use artifacts relating to the site.
Special requirements	Proposals should be of a high standard providing a unique sense of place. Masterplan and development to be fully compatible with Wye Valley Woodland SAC, River Wye SAC Wye Valley and Forest of Dean bat SACs. Must take full account of and be compatible with AONB designation. Proposals will need to be prepared and considered in relation to the Habitats Regulations
Affordable housing	40% sought in accord with CSP5

South of the main Road an area of about 1ha is allocated for employment generating uses

Subject	Requirements
Access for vehicles	From existing road using present access road, pedestrian/ cycle access where necessary
Access connections	Footpaths if desired

This policy will enable the continued evolution of the above site introducing some diversification in order to increase the sites' contribution to the local economy and to take advantage of its location and offer tourism and recreational opportunities. It is intended to promote mixed uses that will be an improvement in respect of the AONB and will be more environmentally acceptable than the past employment uses which could resume. The policy is one which promotes development in the manner suggested and requires a masterplan to ensure that the various uses proposed are satisfactorily accommodated. The policy itself does not allocate specific uses but supports a mixed redevelopment subject to some important qualifications.

4.24 The above site is divided into two areas both of which have potential for change. The smaller area of just under 1hectare is suitable for a variety of employment generating uses. These may include the simple redevelopment of the present building for business uses or for alternative employment uses. The larger element of the allocation is currently occupied by a largely empty factory complex. The various unused buildings are all unsuited to providing modern floorspace but there are some elements that should be retained in any scheme for redevelopment. The former boardroom, and adjoining hallway should be retained and it is desirable to retain the chimney.

4.25 The site is large enough to be able to offer scope for a number of discrete uses and to be able to be developed in phases. It is however in a very sensitive location and any development will need to be compatible with the landscape, the ecology and the protected status (AONB, SAC etc) of the land concerned. For this reason the AP shows in some detail the intended allocation. Development should either take place in accord with this or be in accord with an alternative indicative agreed masterplan. This plan should enable common themes such as flood risk and ecological impacts to be addressed under a single umbrella and will provide an overview of how the site will eventually be. This policy does not specify in any detail the expected uses except to specify the scale of housing and employment which may be acceptable. It does not prescribe uses because of the need to establish in greater detail the sites capabilities within the range that is considered appropriate.

4.26 The scale of any housing to be provided should not be significantly greater than 45 units. This could however be in addition to any tourism accommodation which may be limited to that use by legal agreement, bona fide live work units and accommodation for staff who may need to live on the premises to look after the property. The reason for this limitation is to enable a genuine mixed use to be established. As far as location is concerned, there will be a need to establish the potential of the various areas of the site as detailed proposals are compiled. A detailed study of flood risk will be necessary and its findings will need to be taken into account especially in respect of the location of the proposed housing and any other residential accommodation such as a care home. For this reason it is not appropriate to make a more precise allocation. Over 25% of the site lies within flood zone 3 as drawn in late 2014. Planned development will need to take account of drainage constraints including capacity at the treatment works.

4.27 Not all of the uses listed in the policy need to be provided, although the site is able to accommodate a range of uses. Employment is an important part of a mixed use proposal and the site should accommodate a variety of employment generating uses. The industrial, commercial and retailing uses should occupy at least 3ha within the main site. The retail element is intended to be for sales of goods not able or expected to be provided in town centres.

AP 29

Wye Valley

The route of the former Wye valley railway between Sedbury Lane (Snipehill Bridge) and Tintern Bridge is safeguarded for the establishment of a cycle route. It will be connected to the National Diving and Activity Centre. Proposals will be required to consider landscape and biodiversity considerations (Protected Species and Habitats Regulations) and the role of the route as green infrastructure.

Development will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that it will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of any designated SAC, SPA or Ramsar sites

This route following one which has previously been granted planning permission provides links to the Wye valley and the wider network.

4.43 The route identified above recognises the previous permission for cycle use of part of the disused Wye Valley Railway. It enables access to be gained to the National Diving and Activity Centre but can also serve wider and locally as a recreational route to and from the Wye Valley.

ANNEX D

Special Qualities [SQ]	Recognition	Extent	Condition [data / reason]	Changes or threats	Ecosystem Goods* & Services† P: Provisioning, R: Regulating C: Cultural	
1	Overall Landscape					
	16 Landscape Management Zones (see Table 1) with key feature	Outstanding (see county Landscape Character Assessments and LandMap)	Whole AONB	CQC headline indicator for both JCAs is Maintaining and Enhancing	Sustainable-land management &/or ownership that conserves or enhances key landscape characteristics and features Inappropriate land management may degrade or destroy landscape features; (including neglect, addition of inappropriate features, ongoing loss & decline of elements that define landscape character resulting in increased uniformity and loss of distinctiveness)	P: Food*, Fibre*, Fresh water*, Biofuels* Genetic resources*, Timber*, Species diversity*, Water*, Navigation*, Health products*, Bioenergy*, Pharmaceutical products* R: Climate regulation†, Water quality regulation†, Erosion control†, Air quality regulation†, Pollution control†, Pollination†, Disease and pest control†, Soil quality regulation†, Noise regulation†, Water regulation†, Fire hazard regulation†, Flood regulation†, Local climate regulation†, Wild species diversity*, Coastal defence† C: Recreation & Tourism*, Aesthetic values*, Cultural heritage*, Spiritual values*, Education*, Sense of place*, Health benefits*, Employment*
	Biodiversity					
2.	Woodlands	Diversity of Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW) and Planted Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) including 35 SSSIs and many ancient / veteran trees (see SQ18). Some plantation and other woodland. 50 SMs and 33 Listed Buildings within woodlands.	25% woodland cover in AONB. 6083 ha of Ancient woodland >2ha covers 18.65% of AONB. SSSIs cover 1679 ha. 5% of AONB. Public Forest Estate (PFE) cover 16% of AONB	Varied; much ASNW under managed, some PAWS being restored [in English part of AONB 67% of SSSIs meet NE PSA targets, sites ranging from 0-100%. 93% PFE SSSIs meet PSA targets]	Changes in land management, including neglect of much private small woodland and road & bank side trees Ongoing degradation of ancient woodland sites by the continuing existence of conifers and other non-native species, including continued replanting of ASNW with conifers Degradation of features of the historic environment Fragmentation of ancient woodland sites by land use changes Climate change Degradation through neglect Degradation by specific alien &/or	P: Timber*, Fuelwood*, Fresh water*, Species diversity* R: Climate regulation†, Erosion control†, Flood regulation†, Pollination†, Disease & pest control†, Air & water quality regulation†, Soil quality regulation†, Noise regulation† C: Recreation & Tourism*, Aesthetic values*, Cultural heritage*, Spiritual values*, Education*, Employment*, Sense of place*, Health benefits*
	Wye Valley Woodlands SAC	913.62ha 3% of AONB	Unfavourable to fair; [woodland			

Special Qualities [SQ]	Recognition	Extent	Condition [data / reason]	Changes or threats	Ecosystem Goods* & Services† P: Provisioning, R: Regulating C: Cultural	
			SAC / SSSI condition; NRW, in English part of AONB 72% of SSSIs meet NE PSA targets, sites ranging from 0-100%;	expanding species (eg. cherry laurel, Himalayan balsam, deer, grey squirrel)		
3.	The river & tributaries	Main river SAC and SSSI, 6 SMs and 70 Listed Buildings within Flood Zone 3. Nationally important for water based recreation and one of the key reasons why people visit the AONB. Wye voted 'best river in England & Wales' 2010 by the Our Rivers Campaign, (run by RSPB, WWF-UK, the Angling Trust and the Salmon and Trout Association)	45 miles (72km) of main river (1.3% of AONB) and a similar length of tributaries and streams ## ha of Flood Zone 3 floodplain	Of 11 SAC features 5 are in unfavourable condition, 36% of SSSI meets NE PSA target [condition of salmon & white clawed crayfish unfavourable, sediment levels & diffuse pollution of concern] (NE, NRW), Water quality is good, although river & many streams suffering from some pollution.	Degradation of natural processes, including constraints on flooding Land use impacts may degrade or destroy features e.g. loss of riverside grassland, siltation from poor soil management, loss of historic environment features, engineering for recreational interests etc. Invasive alien species Diffuse Pollution, including the leaching of chemicals from agricultural land Point source pollution, including increased development overflowing old drainage and sewerage systems Changes through climate change and altered seasonal rainfall. Spread of disease, such as <i>Phytophthora</i> infection of riparian alders	P: Food*, Water*, Fibre*, Navigation*, Bioenergy*, Health products* R: Climate regulation†, Water regulation†, Water quality regulation†, Fire hazard regulation† C: Recreation & Tourism*, Aesthetic values*, Cultural heritage*, Spiritual values*, Education*, Employment*, Health benefits*
4.	Species-rich grassland, including small field pattern of un/semi-	Very few SSSIs, 133 CLWS Target area for HLS	4.4% of AONB inc 250 ha Hewelsfield & St Briavels Common	Prone to neglect [Hewelsfield & St Briavels Common Parish Grassland survey]	Continuing degradation through neglect and/or Change in ownership &/or land management (including overgrazing or incorporation into 'garden')	P: Food*, Biofuels*, Fresh water*, Genetic resources*, Species diversity* R: Climate regulation†, Air & water quality regulation †, Pollution control†, Pollination†, Erosion control†, Soil quality regulation†, Disease

Special Qualities [SQ]	Recognition	Extent	Condition [data / reason]	Changes or threats	Ecosystem Goods* & Services† P: Provisioning, R: Regulating C: Cultural
improved grassland, often bounded by drystone walls or old hedges				Development of land for housing	and pest control†, Wild species diversity* C: Recreation & Tourism*, Aesthetic values*, Cultural heritage*, Spiritual values*, Education*, Employment*, Sense of place*, Health benefits*
5. Boundary habitat diversity & connectivity, e.g. between grassland & woodland, farmland & heathland, tidal river & ASNW, hedges &/or drystone walls, lanes, banks, verges and fields & woods	Varied, locally or regionally important as landscape &/or habitat, heritage &/or socio-economic feature	Throughout AONB	Varied	Damage and degradation through change in ownership &/or land management, including removal, inappropriate activity, road widening	P: Food*, Fibre*, Fresh water*, Biofuels* Genetic resources*, Timber*, Species diversity*, Health products*, Pharmaceutical products* R: Climate regulation†, Water quality regulation†, Erosion control†, Air quality regulation†, Pollution control†, Pollination†, Disease and pest control†, Soil quality regulation†, Noise regulation†, Water regulation†, Fire hazard regulation†, Flood regulation†, Local climate regulation†, Wild species diversity*, Coastal defence† C: Recreation & Tourism*, Aesthetic values*, Cultural heritage*, Spiritual values*, Education*, Sense of place*, Health benefits*, Employment*
Geological					
6. Silurian Rocks	Grey / Brown rocks and soils (series of alternating limestones and shales)	Woolhope Dome	Exposures in small old quarries	Little used as a traditional building material	P: Food*, Fibre*, Biofuels*, Fresh water*, Genetic resources* R: Climate regulation†, Air & water quality regulation †, Pollution control†, Pollination†, Erosion control†, Soil quality regulation†, Disease and pest control† C: Recreation & Tourism*, Aesthetic values*, Cultural heritage*, Spiritual values*, Education*, Employment*, Sense of place*, Health benefits*
7. Devonian - Lower Old Red Sandstone	Good; creates fertile red soils of South Herefordshire (see Soil Quality below)	Underlies about 60% of AONB	Good Outcrops, eg Wilton Road, Ross	Vernacular building material, although rarely used in modern architecture due to softness of rock	P: Food*, Fibre*, Biofuels*, Fresh water*, Genetic resources* R: Climate regulation†, Air & water quality regulation †, Pollution control†, Pollination†, Erosion control†, Soil quality regulation†, Disease and pest control† C: Recreation & Tourism*, Aesthetic values*,

Special Qualities [SQ]	Recognition	Extent	Condition [data / reason]	Changes or threats	Ecosystem Goods* & Services† P: Provisioning, R: Regulating C: Cultural
					Cultural heritage*, Spiritual values*, Education*, Employment*, Sense of place*, Health benefits*
8. Quartz Conglomerate in Upper Old Red Sandstone including	Good, (Quartz Conglomerate overlain by Tintern Sandstone)	Prominent seams between Tintern and Ross	Good Outcrops, eg Coppett Hill & Doward	Traditionally used locally in drystone walls, limited modern use	P: Genetic resources* R: Climate regulation†, Air & water quality regulation †, Erosion control†, Soil quality regulation†, Disease and pest control† C: Recreation & Tourism*, Aesthetic values*, Cultural heritage*, Spiritual values*, Education*, Employment*, Sense of place*
9. Carboniferous Limestone	Good (overlain by Carboniferous Coal Measures)	Underlies about 25% of AONB south of Ross	Good Outcrops, especially cliffs and quarries	Quarrying; two working quarries in, and one bordering, AONB	P: Food*, Fibre*, Biofuels*, Fresh water*, Genetic resources* R: Climate regulation†, Air & water quality regulation †, Pollution control†, Pollination†, Erosion control†, Soil quality regulation†, Disease and pest control† C: Recreation & Tourism*, Aesthetic values*, Cultural heritage*, Spiritual values*, Education*, Employment*, Sense of place*, Health benefits*
				Loss of working small quarries	
10. Riverine geomorphology	Good, incised meanders & superimposed drainage globally important examples for educational purposes	Along length of river	Good	Natural processes, including flooding and movement of meanders	P: Food*, Water*, Navigation* R: Climate regulation†, Water regulation†, Water quality regulation†, Fire hazard regulation† C: Recreation & Tourism*, Aesthetic values*, Cultural heritage*, Spiritual values*, Education*, Employment*, Health benefits*
				Invasive alien species	
				Land use impacts may degrade or destroy features e.g. siltation, engineering for recreational interests or flood defence	
Visual and Sensory					
11. Picturesque, extensive & dramatic views.	72 viewpoints identified. 20 included in Overlooking the Wye Landscape Partnership Scheme including 4 SMs at Piercefield.	Throughout AONB but majority overlooking the Wye	Varied; some spectacular, some overgrown, some inaccessible, health & safety poor at some [Assessment of Historic & Picturesque	Changes in ownership &/or land management may degrade or block both physical access to viewpoints and/or the view window	P: Genetic resources*, Timber*, Species diversity* R: Erosion control†, Wild species diversity* C: Recreation & Tourism*, Aesthetic values*, Cultural heritage*, Spiritual values*, Education*, Sense of place*
				Inappropriate land management may degrade or destroy the landscape viewed from a viewpoint including large single structures	

Special Qualities [SQ]	Recognition	Extent	Condition [data / reason]	Changes or threats	Ecosystem Goods* & Services† P: Provisioning, R: Regulating C: Cultural
			Viewpoints in AONB, 2001]. Overlooking the Wye Landscape Partnership Scheme restored ##.		
12. Overall sense of tranquillity, sense of remoteness and naturalness / wildness	Varied	Much of AONB	Poor to good, with localised disturbance from heavy traffic and individual vehicles and military aircraft [CPRE & CCW maps]	Changes in land management including new or expanding development and intensification of use (i.e. inappropriate tourism and recreation or increasing road or air traffic) Change driven by new standards and legislation e.g. street lighting, highway construction may lead to loss of tranquillity and sense of remoteness	C: Recreation & Tourism*, Aesthetic values*, Cultural heritage*, Spiritual values*, Education*, Sense of place*
Historic Environment					
13. Prehistoric sites from Palaeolithic to Iron Age	Palaeolithic occupation at Arthur's Cave 18 SMs	Standing stones at 3 sites. 11 Iron Age hillforts spread through -out AONB	Varied	Neglect or continuing unsympathetic management may degrade or destroy archaeological features eg. damage to archaeological horizons through deep ploughing, irresponsible treasure hunting or continued neglect which may lead to tree and shrub root damage	P: Food*, Fibre*, Genetic resources*, Timber*, Species diversity* R: Erosion control†, Wild species diversity* C: Recreation & Tourism*, Aesthetic values*, Cultural heritage*, Spiritual values*, Education*, Sense of place*
14. Roman and early Medieval sites including	Romano-British settlements and industry, Offa's	Throughout AONB, Offa's Dyke on eastern	Varied, Offa's Dyke very well	Inappropriate land management may degrade or destroy archaeological features	P: Food*, Fibre*, Genetic resources*, Timber*, Species diversity* R: Erosion control†, Wild species diversity*

Special Qualities [SQ]	Recognition	Extent	Condition [data / reason]	Changes or threats	Ecosystem Goods* & Services† P: Provisioning, R: Regulating C: Cultural
Offa's Dyke	Dyke early medieval boundary of unique cultural and historical importance	crest of Lower Wye Valley	preserved in some places but 4 sections of Dyke on English Heritage's Register of Heritage at Risk	visitor access, Offa's Dyke Path National Trail erosion	C: Recreation & Tourism*, Aesthetic values*, Cultural heritage*, Spiritual values*, Education*, Sense of place*
15. Mediaeval Defensive and Ecclesiastical sites and associated landscapes	Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest in Cadw Register of Historic Landscapes. Goodrich & Chepstow Castles and Tintern Abbey in state ownership.	Lower Wye Valley from Ross to Chepstow	Fair to good 6 churches on English Heritage's Register of Heritage at Risk	Changes in the visiting regime and increases in popularity of various sites. Inappropriate land management may degrade or destroy archaeological features	P: Genetic resources*, Species diversity* R: Erosion control†, Wild species diversity* C: Recreation & Tourism*, Aesthetic values*, Cultural heritage*, Spiritual values*, Education*, Employment*, Sense of place*
16. Post-medieval industrial sites and associated landscapes	Landscape of Outstanding Historic Interest in Cadw Register of Historic Landscapes	Throughout AONB.	Some sites under management, others suffering from neglect	Inappropriate land management may degrade or destroy archaeological features Changes in the visiting regime and increases in popularity of various sites.	P: Genetic resources*, Species diversity* R: Erosion control†, Wild species diversity* C: Recreation & Tourism*, Aesthetic values*, Cultural heritage*, Spiritual values*, Education*, Sense of place*
17. Railway heritage	Line closed 1958	Disused line through length of AONB	Redundant track bed with decaying infrastructure	Further neglect of structures	P: Genetic resources*, Species diversity* R: Erosion control†, Wild species diversity* C: Recreation & Tourism*, Aesthetic values*, Cultural heritage*, Spiritual values*, Education*, Employment*, Sense of place*
18. Ancient trees	Significant numbers of ancient pollards and mature trees in hedges, woods and parkland 2,347 in total (av	Through-out AONB	Poor	Neglect or Inappropriate management may damage or destroy trees	P: Timber*, Fuelwood*, Species diversity* R: Climate regulation†, Erosion control†, Flood regulation†, Disease & pest control†, Air & water quality regulation†, Soil quality regulation†, Noise regulation† C: Recreation & Tourism*, Aesthetic values*, Cultural heritage*, Spiritual values*, Education*,

Special Qualities [SQ]	Recognition	Extent	Condition [data / reason]	Changes or threats	Ecosystem Goods* & Services† P: Provisioning, R: Regulating C: Cultural
		7/km ²)			Employment*, Sense of place*, Health benefits*
19. Historic parks and gardens	10 registered parks and gardens; Sufton Court, Hill Court, The Kymin, Troy House, High Glanau, The Argoed, Wyncliffe Court, Piercefield, Itton Court, Mounon House, plus 48 of local significance in AONB	Through-out AONB	Fair to good none on EH 'risk register'	Inappropriate land management may degrade or destroy historic features (including the degradation of identified designed landscape)	P: Food*, Fibre*, Fresh water*, Biofuels* Genetic resources*, Timber*, Species diversity*, Water*, Health products*, Bioenergy* R: Climate regulation†, Water quality regulation†, Erosion control†, Air quality regulation†, Pollution control†, Pollination†, Disease and pest control†, Soil quality regulation†, Noise regulation†, Water regulation†, Fire hazard regulation†, Flood regulation†, Local climate regulation†, Wild species diversity*, Coastal defence† C: Recreation & Tourism*, Aesthetic values*, Cultural heritage*, Spiritual values*, Education*, Sense of place*, Health benefits*, Employment*
20. Vernacular architecture: Farmsteads Commoners cottages, Estate houses	Varied – no one dominant style due to varying geology	Through-out AONB, dependant on geology	Varied, dependant on geology & building materials	Inappropriate management may degrade or destroy historic features	P: Genetic resources*, Species diversity* R: Climate regulation†, Water quality regulation†, Erosion control†, Air quality regulation†, Pollution control†, Noise regulation†, Water regulation†, Wild species diversity* C: Recreation & Tourism*, Aesthetic values*, Cultural heritage*, Spiritual values*, Education*, Sense of place*, Employment*
Language					
21. Welsh language & accent; Forest of Dean & South Herefordshire dialects &	Usage diminishing. Welsh taught in schools in Monmouthshire.	Varied through-out AONB	Welsh usage consolidating in Monmouthshire [2011 Census].	Loss of local identity can further erode traditional usages Influences of universal education and media	C: Recreation & Tourism*, Aesthetic values*, Cultural heritage*, Spiritual values*, Education*, Sense of place*, Employment*

Special Qualities [SQ]	Recognition	Extent	Condition [data / reason]	Changes or threats	Ecosystem Goods* & Services† P: Provisioning, R: Regulating C: Cultural	
accents						
Access and Recreation						
22.	Old tracks: often in sunken ways &/or bounded by drystone walls	Some in Rights of Way network, some County Road (Highways), some other highways, remainder private. No formal cataloguing and assessment	Through-out AONB	Variable	Degradation of surface and/or boundary features due to changes in levels of usage &/or ownership or management, eg. deep rutting and waterlogging, hard surfacing, widening, etc. Blockage and/or obstruction Unclear classification	P: Genetic resources*, Species diversity* R: Water quality regulation†, Erosion control†, Air quality regulation†, Pollution control†, Noise regulation†, Water regulation†, Fire hazard regulation†, Flood regulation†, Local climate regulation†, Wild species diversity* C: Recreation & Tourism*, Aesthetic values*, Cultural heritage*, Spiritual values*, Education*, Sense of place*
23.	Offa's Dyke Path	National Trail	Monmouth to Chepstow (35km)	Premier national walking route	Erosion due to excessive usage leading to damage to Offa's Dyke earthwork Blockage and/or obstruction	C: Recreation & Tourism*, Aesthetic values*, Cultural heritage*, Spiritual values*, Education*, Sense of place*, Employment*
24.	Wye Valley Walk	Regional Route	Through length of AONB (70km / 45miles) [T1.1-76]	Good	Degradation of route due to erosion and excessive usage and/or river flooding and/or landslips Blockage and/or obstruction Some sections still on Permissive Paths	C: Recreation & Tourism*, Aesthetic values*, Cultural heritage*, Spiritual values*, Sense of place*, Employment*
25.	Access land	Good	Forestry Commission woodland and Woodland Trust holdings eg. Haugh Wood, Chase Wood & lower Wye Valley woods	Good	Changes in legislation or sale removing access rights	P: Food*, Fibre*, Fresh water*, Biofuels* Genetic resources*, Timber*, Species diversity*, Water*, R: Climate regulation†, Water quality regulation†, Erosion control†, Air quality regulation†, Pollution control†, Pollination†, Disease and pest control†, Soil quality regulation†, Water regulation†, Fire hazard regulation†, Local climate regulation†, Wild species diversity* C: Recreation & Tourism*, Aesthetic values*, Cultural heritage*, Spiritual values*, Education*, Sense of place*, Health benefits*, Employment*

Special Qualities [SQ]	Recognition	Extent	Condition [data / reason]	Changes or threats	Ecosystem Goods* & Services† P: Provisioning, R: Regulating C: Cultural
26. Small commons; largest are Coppet Hill, Broadmoor, Staunton Meend, Whitelye, The Hudnalls	Generally good	12 scattered through -out AONB (260ha in England)	Generally good	Obstruction to access	P: Food*, Fibre*, Fresh water*, Biofuels* Genetic resources*, Species diversity*, Water*, Health products* R: Climate regulation†, Water quality regulation†, Erosion control†, Air quality regulation†, Pollution control†, Pollination†, Disease and pest control†, Soil quality regulation†, Water regulation†, Fire hazard regulation†, Flood regulation†, Local climate regulation†, Wild species diversity* C: Recreation & Tourism*, Aesthetic values*, Cultural heritage*, Spiritual values*, Education*, Sense of place*, Health benefits*
Other					
27. Orchards	Traditional orchards mostly cider apples and perry pear also commercial standard apple and bush orchards	Throughout AONB, dependant on geology and topography. New commercial orchards being planted.	Many traditional orchards redundant or underused. New commercial planting of bush orchards	Lack of, or inappropriate, management practices, may damage or destroy trees, including weather damage or harmful grazing by stock, particularly horses Development of land for housing	P: Food*, Fresh water*, Biofuels*, Genetic resources*, Timber*, Species diversity*, Health products*, Pharmaceutical products* R: Climate regulation†, Water quality regulation†, Erosion control†, Air quality regulation†, Pollution control†, Pollination†, Disease and pest control†, Soil quality regulation†, Noise regulation†, Water regulation†, Fire hazard regulation†, Flood regulation†, Local climate regulation†, Wild species diversity* C: Recreation & Tourism*, Aesthetic values*, Cultural heritage*, Spiritual values*, Education*, Sense of place*, Health benefits*, Employment*

