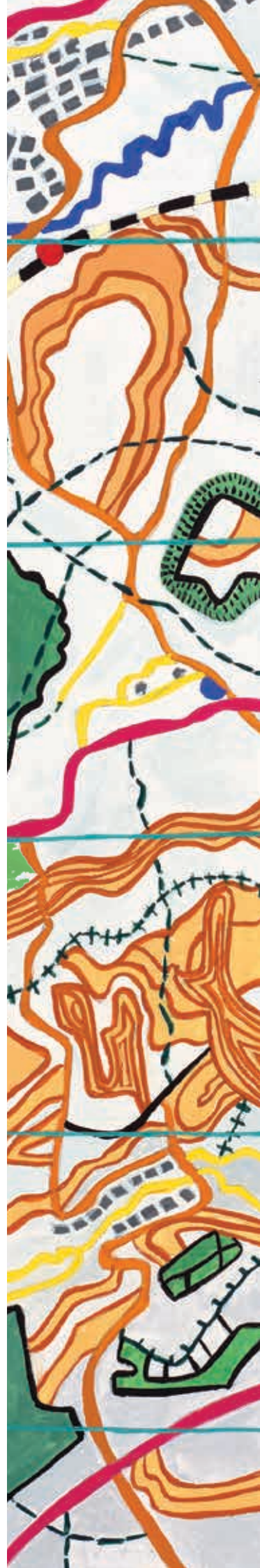


Planning and Transport

'Here and Back Again'



Here and Back Again

We study the map
Divided into three
Roads run East, West
Nothing much in between,

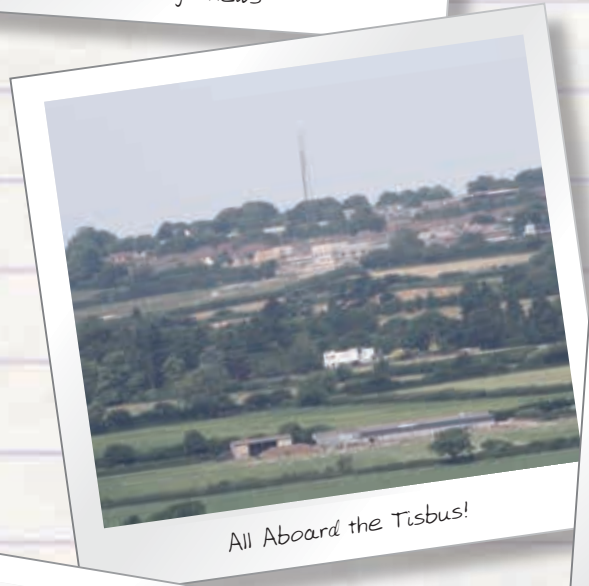
Take the Train to Tisbury
If you've got a car
Parking's free in town
Or call Brian,

All Aboard the Tisbus!
Through the little villages
Exchange news
On and off, chit, chat,

I heard a whisper
Afternoon cricket, tea and cake
All Aboard the Tisbus!
On the road to Fonthill.



Exchange news



All Aboard the Tisbus!



... and old buildings



Roads run East, West



New building....



13. Planning and Transport

The planning functions of the AONB Partnership, including transport matters, naturally interlink very closely with landscape and rural economy issues. Land use and development topics are inherently central to 'conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the landscape'.

13.1. Special characteristics and qualities that make this AONB special, as a whole, with regards to planning and transport:

- Organisationally complex; nine Local Planning Authorities, four Highways Authorities together with The Highways Agency, Network Rail.
- A largely rural, open, and undeveloped landscape sensitive to change.
- Distinctive settlement patterns with historic elements readily visible and central to the character of settlements.
- Architectural styles vary considerably throughout the AONB, dependent on availability of building materials.
- The built environment forms an integral part of local character and distinctiveness and adds to the diversity of the AONB landscape as a whole.
- Large historic country houses at the centre of historic parklands and gardens and other characteristic buildings.
- A minor road network that reflects the deeply rural, tranquil character of the AONB, with few realignments and improvements.

Aim

13.2. We want planning and transportation strategies, policies and decisions that affect this nationally important AONB to conserve and enhance its special qualities. Where development is necessary, we want it located and designed to integrate fully with the landscape character and natural beauty.

13.3. We want all management of, and improvements to, roads to enhance the distinctive character of the area. We want a range of more sustainable options for transport that reduce the effects of transport on tranquillity and the natural environment of the AONB.

Achievements to date

- **Planning Protocol** - All local planning authorities signed the planning protocol in 2005 (Appendix 19). It was refined in September 2006. All applications over a certain size, or any applications that may have an adverse impact on the AONB, are sent to the Partnership for comment.
- **Guidance Documents** - There are five AONB Position Statements, and six Fact Sheets and Good Practice Notes (See Appendix 20). They provide information on topics of relevance to the landscape and planning within and around the AONB for the guidance of applicants and planning officers.
- **Planning policy and applications** - Since 2006, relevant AONB information has been made available to Local Planning Authorities in response to 132 policy documents and 967 planning applications. This input enabled them to take proper account of the AONB and its setting.
- **Appeals and Inquiries** - The Partnership has provided 26 planning appeal responses to the Inspectorate since 2006, given evidence at major appeal Inquiries securing successful



outcomes for the AONB and its setting, and contributed to future strategies at two Plan Examinations in Public.

- **Planning and Transportation Seminars** - There have been eight annual seminars since 2005 with, on average, over thirty delegates at each. Focusing on a topic relevant to the time, these seminars are highly valued as continuing professional development.
- **Section 85 leaflet** - This guidance on the 'duty of regard' for the purposes of AONB designation for public bodies, organisations, and persons in public office was included as an example of good practice in Natural England's advice publication on the topic.
- **Landscape Sensitivity** - This study was completed in 2007 and assessed the inherent sensitivity and robustness of the landscapes of the AONB
- **Tranquillity** - The team has worked with the CPRE data to relate the findings more precisely to the landscape character areas of this AONB. Our work has been presented as good practice internationally as well as to two National Parks.
- **A Guide to Conserving and Enhancing the Setting of the Rural Road Network of the AONB** - This document provides guidance on the management of the highway network across the AONB after extensive consultation. It will be taken to the Highways Departments of the four County Councils for endorsement.

Key issues

1. **Development pressures** - Proposals for renewable energy generation, waste treatment, and large-scale agricultural storage, along with general warehousing and distribution, have been rising. There is a shortage of affordable housing for local people and the annual invitation by Local Planning Authorities to identify housing sites, along with the current round of Core Strategy / Local Plan consultations, can encourage speculative market housing proposals from landowners or developers.
2. **Sustainability** - The exception to the presumption in favour of sustainable development in the National Planning Policy Framework in relation to AONBs is not fully understood. At a more detailed level, developers appear reluctant to provide appropriate renewable energy generation and adequate storage space for recycling in domestic and commercial, new build and extension situations.
3. **Diversification** - Whilst appropriate diversification, particularly regarding redundant farm buildings, can be very beneficial to the local rural economy, a rising number of applications are being received that are not appropriate in a nationally designated area. This can relate to form, scale and appearance that affects the special qualities of the AONB or an increase in traffic and loss of tranquillity.
4. **Transport** - Effective and frequent public transport for an extensive area with a low population is prohibitively expensive so buses are few and private vehicle ownership is high. There is a shortage of affordable parking at transport nodes to facilitate greater use of public transport. A lack of stopping points on the two railways through the AONB means they are an underutilised resource.
5. **Roads** - Highway management and maintenance does not always reflect the special characteristics of the AONB. The routing of freight traffic through the AONB impacts adversely on tranquillity.

The Issues Explained

- 13.4. Nine local authorities are responsible for planning policy, transport policy and development management within the AONB. Neighbourhood Plans, explained in paragraph 5.5, can refine the policy details for a parish or group of parishes. All public bodies have a statutory duty to 'have regard' to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the



AONB³¹. In terms of land-use planning this requires two principal actions. Firstly, there must be consistent and coherent policies in place to achieve the purpose. Secondly, there must be understanding and timely use of these policies. One role of the AONB Partnership is to ensure that these happen.

- 13.5. Applications for planning permission are determined in accordance with the Local Planning Authority's Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework (*Appendix 7*) does not change the legal status of the Development Plan as the starting point for decision-making. At the heart of the framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development although restrictive policies apply to AONBs, Green Belts, SSSIs, and similar designations.
- 13.6. The National Planning Policy Framework instructs local planning authorities to make a distinction between Protected Areas and 'other' countryside³². In an AONB, great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty (*Appendix 21*). Planning permission should be refused for 'major developments' (*Appendix 22*), except in exceptional circumstances; and only where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest. All relevant local planning policy must distinguish between this AONB and non-designated countryside.

Development Pressures

- 13.7. Development proposals need to be of an appropriate form, scale, and materials and in appropriate locations. This will enable them to integrate with landscape character both within and adjacent to the AONB. All Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (SHLAAs) should include Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments (LVIAs) to demonstrate that potential landscape impacts, including both location and integration within the landscape, have been taken into account.
- 13.8. The sense of place is easily lost. Suburbanisation and the cumulative effect of 'permitted development' can break down local distinctiveness. Replacing small-scale, locally distinct features with ones of a standard design erodes local character.
- 13.9. There are new (2013), and temporary, changes to the General Development Order (*Appendix 23*) extending Permitted Development Rights. This could potentially lead to increases in traffic and changes to the appearance of buildings and land.
- 13.10. The four County Councils produce Minerals and Waste Local Plans. Whilst there is generally minimal mineral extraction from the AONB, there is a long history of providing locally distinctive building materials, mainly from greensand and sandy limestone (Chilmark stone). The need to safeguard local identity and distinctiveness through the use of local materials to strengthen the local vernacular needs to be balanced against the potential disruption, visual and other impacts resulting from the extraction of materials to achieve this. An AONB Position Statement regarding minerals and waste could be prepared with constituent Local Planning Authorities should this be helpful to them.
- 13.11. Developments in the setting of the AONB can also have significant impacts on the area and need to be considered in relation to the purposes of designation. Construction of high or expansive structures; development or change generating movement, noise, odour, vibration or dust over a wide area will affect the setting. As our appreciation of the relationships between neighbouring landscapes grows, so our understanding of what constitutes the setting continues to evolve.

Sustainability

- 13.12. There is increasing pressure for the AONB to accommodate within its boundary or its setting or impairing significant views to or from it, very tall or substantial structures such as wind

³¹ Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000: Section 85

³² National Planning Framework: Paragraphs 14 (and footnote 9), 17, 109, 110, 113, 115 & 116, Department for Communities and Local Government, ISBN: 978-1-4098-3413-7 (March 2012)



turbines and telecommunication masts. Similarly, extensive farm scale photo-voltaic arrays also seek to occupy productive farmland. These types of developments can introduce a sense of 'industrialisation' into an otherwise unspoilt or tranquil landscape. They are frequently visually intrusive and fail to harmonise with the scale and character of the area.

13.13. Recycling storage space, composting areas, and roof based PV installations should be integral to the design of all new build, extensions and conversions.

13.14. This AONB appears, from house price surveys³³, to add a premium to property prices. It therefore seems appropriate that such properties when constructed or extended should contribute to the management of the high quality landscapes this is enhancing the property price and profit. The Community Infrastructure Levy (Appendix 24) is a mechanism whereby a contribution could be made towards AONB management.

Farm diversification

13.15. Some farm diversification proposals risk industrialisation of the countryside and a loss of tranquillity. There is potential for AONB locations to be viewed as cheap options for activities that should be located in a business park outside the AONB e.g. waste processing or treatment. The AONB broadly supports farm based diversification activities such as 'from the farm, on the farm, for the farm'.

13.16. Diversification and re-use of redundant rural buildings for economic activities that sustain the local economy are supported, providing it benefits the communities of the AONB whilst conserving and enhancing natural beauty.

Roads and Transport

13.17. Most people see and appreciate the landscape from roads. The highway estate often echoes the adjacent landscapes. Both of these factors are particularly important in AONBs. Therefore, the highway environment warrants special attention to reflect and sustain the special qualities and characteristics of the AONB. The effect of transport in the AONB is managed through the policies and programmes in the Local Transport Plans of the highway authorities. These plans aim to:

- improve access to key services;
- integrate transport provision and infrastructure improvements; and
- promote sustainable forms of transport.

13.18. The AONB has four A-roads running east to west (A354, A30, A303, A36) and one (A350) running north to south on its western edge. On B and C roads, 'rat runs' develop avoiding the busy A roads. Heavy traffic flows on these more rural roads, especially through daily commuting, can cause congestion, pollution and loss of tranquillity; and damage to verges, minor roads and buildings.

13.19. Road design that does not consider the special qualities of the landscape can harm the character of the AONB. Road safety will always be a prime concern but that does not preclude sensitive design of schemes and street furniture. Traffic management schemes, usually involving reduced speed limits, have not reduced the daily 'rat runs' caused by those avoiding A-road congestion. The safety of vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders remains an issue in the AONB.

13.20. There is little incentive to use public transport. There are infrequent bus services and just one rail station in the AONB, with parking limited and costly. The use of public transport would increase if there were better and affordable parking facilities near-by. Village 'hubs' could be created to provide parking, easy access to public transport and village facilities. This merits further research.



Objectives and Policies

OBJECTIVE	POLICIES
<p>PT A <i>The AONB inputs effectively to national, regional and local strategies, policies and plans</i></p>	<p>PT1 Ensure the purposes and objectives of AONB designation are fully recognised in the development and implementation of Core Strategies/Local Plans, Local Development Frameworks, Local Transport Plans, Neighbourhood Plans, Green Infrastructure Plans and other public policies, strategies and programmes.</p>
	<p>PT2 Encourage and contribute to coherent and consistent formulation and implementation of planning policies, including across Local Authority boundaries, to ensure they take full account of the local distinctiveness, character and quality of the AONB and its setting.</p>
	<p>PT3 Encourage, support and inspire local communities to prepare and develop Neighbourhood and Parish Plans, Village Design Statements, and other similar initiatives that respect the special landscapes of the AONB and the objectives of this Management Plan.</p>
	<p>PT4 Encourage and assist local communities to identify local needs / environmental projects that help offset impacts of development and conserves and enhances local character and distinctiveness.</p>
<p>PT B <i>Strategic and local decisions are formulated taking full account of the purposes of designation and are implemented in a comprehensive, coherent and consistent way with regard to the character and quality of the area and its setting, together with views into and out of the AONB such that these decisions result in no net detriment to the special qualities of the AONB</i></p>	<p>PT5 Work with local planning authorities to identify and remove any barriers to agreeing appropriate and costed projects / activities that help achieve Management Plan objectives or projects, as set out in NPPF 157³³, to be then included in their Infrastructure Delivery Plans (IDPs).</p>
	<p>PT6 Strongly encourage Local Planning Authorities to direct Community Infrastructure Levies (Developer Contributions) towards agreed and appropriate AONB Management Plan objectives, projects or activities, as set out in their IDPs</p>
	<p>PT7 Encourage and seek to assist with Biodiversity Mitigation Strategies where and when appropriate.</p>



OBJECTIVE	POLICIES
<p>PT B <i>Strategic and local decisions are formulated taking full account of the purposes of designation and are implemented in a comprehensive, coherent and consistent way with regard to the character and quality of the area and its setting, together with views into and out of the AONB such that these decisions result in no net detriment to the special qualities of the AONB</i></p>	<p>PT8 The Partnership will positively promote AONB purposes, aims and objectives to relevant policy and decision makers both within and outside the AONB through provision of regular information, training sessions and/or through the Annual Planning and Transportation Seminar.</p>
	<p>PT9 Ensure that all relevant authorities have due regard to the purposes of AONB designation in carrying out their functions and duties as required by Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.</p>
	<p>PT10 The AONB planning protocol continues to be used by local planning authorities to ensure that the AONB Partnership is consulted on all development and land use change proposals that meet the criteria or may have a significant impact and/or effect on the characteristics, special qualities, or setting of the AONB including views into and out of the AONB.</p>
	<p>PT11 Encourage Local Planning Authority partners to adopt Supplementary Planning Documents that ensure the conservation and enhancement of the natural beauty and setting of the AONB.</p>
	<p>PT12 Encourage Local Planning Authority partners to be guided by AONB Position Statements, Fact Sheets and Good Practice Notes, along with other published guidance that reinforces AONB purposes, when preparing and using planning policies.</p>
	<p>PT13 Local Planning Authority partners ensure that where new development is permitted it complements the special qualities of the AONB and takes full account of the area's setting and context through the consideration of appropriate Landscape Character Assessments and sensitivity and design studies.</p>
	<p>PT14 Support renewable energy generation by technologies that integrate with the landscape character, are neither visually intrusive to the AONB or its setting, nor impair significant views to or from it, are not harmful to wildlife, and are of an appropriate scale to their location and siting.</p>
	<p>PT15 Support farm diversification activities that facilitate rural tourism, land based enterprises, and the reuse of rural buildings that do not result in an increase in traffic, or loss of tranquillity, and that help sustain local communities.</p>
<p>PT16 The Partnership will rigorously assess and respond to all planning applications that meet the planning protocol criteria.</p>	



OBJECTIVE		POLICIES	
PT B		PT17	The Partnership will develop further Position Statements, Fact Sheets and Good Practice Notes together with a Development Management 'checklist' to inform decision makers at all levels on issues affecting the AONB.
PT C	<i>Policies and schemes to meet the housing and employment needs of local communities enhance the special qualities and characteristics of the AONB, including its built heritage</i>	PT18	Work with Local Authority partners to establish policies that encourage appropriate use of sustainable technologies, such as solar thermal, photovoltaics and wood fuel (at the appropriate scale) and provide sufficient space for short term handling of waste and recyclable materials, in both domestic and employment situations and, in particular, within all new build.
PT D	<i>Transportation planning and management takes full account of the AONB designation, protects the tranquillity and special qualities of the landscape and reduces transport impacts on the environment and communities of the AONB</i>	PT19	AONB partner organisations utilise a consistent approach to the design, provision and maintenance of highways and associated features through joint implementation of the 'Conserving and Enhancing the setting of the AONB Rural Road Network' highways guidance.
		PT20	Promote and help develop an integrated system, whereby roads, railways, public transport and Rights of Way networks interconnect, minimising the impact of traffic on the AONB and encouraging a safer and more attractive environment for walking, cycling and horse riding.
		PT21	Seek to minimise freight transport through the AONB to help protect tranquillity, the rural nature of settlements and the special qualities of the AONB
		PT22	Promote the provision of affordable parking facilities at public transport nodes, car sharing and community transport initiatives to enable and encourage a reduced reliance on private cars.

(Additional Information: Planning and Transport Appendix 33)



“
If you haven't
got a car
You're lumbered
Brian, Tisbus Driver
”