

High Weald AONB Design Guide Community Involvement Plan

Background

Delivering appropriate new housing development within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is a key part of local planning policy for the local authorities covering the High Weald and for qualifying bodies producing neighbourhood plans. The scale of housing approvals and building in the High Weald AONB is currently at an unprecedented level; the High Weald is experiencing the highest level of housing growth of any AONB in England. Housing development within the High Weald is necessary and desirable in creating a thriving and successful place, but it is also a responsibility and privilege to make long-lasting interventions in such a special and protected landscape.

The High Weald AONB Partnership is made up of the 15 local authorities with land in the AONB, Natural England and other rural bodies. The Partnership has commissioned a Housing Design Guide to help all those involved in managing the built environment within the High Weald AONB, from designers, developers and highways engineers, through to planning decision makers, to achieve high quality housing development that reflects intrinsic High Weald character, to help meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework with regard achieving well-designed places and the conservation and enhancement of the AONB.

Following consultation and approval by the High Weald AONB Partnership, it is intended the Design Guide will be adopted by the individual Local Planning Authorities, and will be a material consideration in their determining of planning applications within the High Weald AONB.

This Design Guide has now been drafted and is to be the subject of public consultation.

Who is to be involved?

The Design Guide will be made publically available on the High Weald AONB Partnership's website www.highweald.org so anyone can comment on it. However, we are particularly keen for input from those involved in the design and planning process for new housing developments in the High Weald AONB such as:

- Urban Designers
- Architects
- Landscape Architects
- Housebuilders / Developers
- Planning Agents / Consultants
- Planning Officers
- Councillors
- Parish and Town Councils

Why people are being involved?

The purpose of the consultation is to get input from all those involved in the design and planning of housing developments in the AONB to ensure that the Design Guide is robust and practical for use.

When people will be involved?

The consultation will take place for 8 weeks 19 June 2019 – 14 August 2019.

How people will be involved?

- The Design Guide will be made publically available on the High Weald AONB Partnership's website www.highweald.org with links to it from the websites of the local authorities.
- An email alert will be sent out to all those on the planning policy consultation lists of the 11 District/Borough Councils, including statutory consultees¹
- An alert will also be included in the High Weald enews. and the consultation will be publicised on social media.
- Posters will be displayed at the local authority offices and the High Weald AONB Unit advertising the consultation.
- Paper copies of the Design Guide and Consultation Form will be available at the local authority offices and the High Weald AONB Unit.
- An email will be sent by the High Weald AONB Unit to developers and their advisors who work in the area alerting them to the consultation and inviting them to a workshop during the consultation period.
- The Design Guide will be part of a general event for Parish Councils on the work of the High Weald AONB Unit in July 2019.

How can people submit their comments?

- Alongside the Design Guide on the www.highweald.org website will be an online consultation form. This form will also be available as a downloadable pdf for those who prefer to complete it and email it in.
- Responses to the consultation can be submitted via the online form, by email to info@highweald.org or by post to The High Weald AONB Partnership, Woodland Enterprise Centre, Hastings Road, Flimwell, TN57PR

What will happen then?

- The High Weald AONB Unit will collate all the comments and draft responses to them including any recommended amendments to the Design Guide.
- These recommendations will be discussed by the Officer Steering Group for the High Weald AONB Partnership and any changes agreed.
- The Design Guide will be amended and reported back to the High Weald Joint Advisory Committee in Autumn 2019. This report will include the collated comments and the agreed responses to them.
- Once approved by the JAC, individual local authorities will decide whether to adopt the Design Guide as either a material planning consideration or as a formal Supplementary Planning Document.

¹ Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended)