

# EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

## 1. Topic of assessment

<b>EIA title:</b>	Surrey Hills AONB Management Plan (2014-2019)
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<b>EIA author:</b>	Rob Fairbanks Director Surrey Hills AONB
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## 2. Approval

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date approved</b>
<b>Approved by<sup>1</sup></b>	Dominic Forbes	16 <sup>th</sup> September 2014

## 3. Quality control

<b>Version number</b>	4	<b>EIA completed</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> September 2014
<b>Date saved</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> September 2014	<b>EIA published</b>	

## 4. EIA team

<b>Name</b>	<b>Job title (if applicable)</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Role</b>
Rob Fairbanks	Director	Surrey Hills AONB	Director of AONB Unit
Charmaine Smith	Senior Countryside Officer (Landscape)	Surrey County Council	AONB Working Group Officer
Les Andrews	Principal Planning Policy Officer	Surrey County Council	Planning Directorate Equality Officer

<sup>1</sup> Refer to earlier guidance for details on getting approval for your EIA.

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## 5. Explaining the matter being assessed

<p><b>What policy, function or service is being introduced or reviewed?</b></p>	<p>Under section 89 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act), the County Council along with the other local authorities administering the area of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) have a duty to produce an AONB Management Plan.</p> <p>The statutory purpose of the Plan is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area, comprising the area's distinctive landscape character, biodiversity and geodiversity, historic and cultural environment. Two secondary non-statutory purposes of AONBs are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To take account of the needs of agriculture, forestry, fishing and other local rural industries and of the economic and social needs of local communities, paying particular regard to promoting sustainable forms of social and economic development that in themselves conserve and enhance the area's natural beauty; and</li><li>• To seek to meet the demand for recreation so this is consistent with the statutory purpose of conserving and enhancing the area's natural beauty - and which preferably supports this purpose by increasing understanding, valuation and care for the area – and is also consistent with the needs of rural industries.</li></ul> <p>Surrey County Council have delegated the duty of producing the Surrey Hills AONB Management to the Surrey Hills Partnership, known as the Surrey Hills AONB Board. The Surrey Hills AONB Management Plan for the period 2009-2014 was adopted by Surrey County Council on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2009.</p> <p>Under the CRoW Act there is a requirement to review the Management Plan every 5 years and the current plan has now been reviewed through the Board. The County Council is now being asked to adopt the reviewed plan for the period of 2014 – 2019.</p> <p>In January 2013 the Surrey Hills Board agreed arrangements to review the AONB Management Plan. As a formal review of the AONB boundary and landscape character assessment were being considered in 2013, it was agreed to undertake a 'light touch review.' This has been implemented and a plan produced for the period 2014-2019.</p> <p>As this was a light touch review then there are no major changes in direction. However, the policies have been reviewed and refreshed to be in line with the National Planning Policy Framework, the Lawton Report 'Making Space for Nature and the resulting Natural Environment White Paper which have been published since the last plan.</p> <p>The Surrey Hills Board will take the lead in monitoring the implementation of the Plan, and the Board will publish an annual State of the Surrey Hills AONB Report, which will include monitoring information and a review of the work of the Surrey Hills AONB Unit.</p>
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<p><b>What proposals are you assessing?</b></p>	<p>There are 4 broad areas that reflect the purpose and delivery of the AONB Management Plan.</p> <p><b>Landscape Conservation and Enhancement.</b> To support landowners and managers on achieving practical action to protect and enhance the special features of the Surrey Hills.</p> <p><b>Enjoyment and Understanding.</b> To raise awareness of the Surrey Hills AONB to ensure its special qualities are identified, protected and enhanced, and to provide information on environmentally responsible recreation opportunities for residents and visitors.</p> <p><b>Developing the Surrey Hills Economy.</b> To promote action that supports the economic and social well-being of the area, particularly in relation to supporting land management and visitor based enterprises.</p> <p><b>Partnership and Coordination.</b> To ensure that the Management Plan policies are coherently represented, implemented, monitored and reviewed at an appropriate national, regional, county and local level.</p> <p>In order to implement the management plan, policies have been developed and grouped to support the following aims which cover farming, woodland, biodiversity, historic and cultural heritage, recreation and tourism, land use planning, community development and the local economy, and transport and traffic.</p> <p><b>AIM:</b> Mixed farming is a viable enterprise that plays a positive role in maintaining the outstanding and diverse character of the Surrey Hills</p> <p><b>AIM:</b> Woodlands are sustainably managed and linked to conserve and enhance the landscape, ecological, archaeological and recreational value of the wider Surrey Hills landscape.</p> <p><b>AIM:</b> The biodiversity of the Surrey Hills is conserved and enhanced</p> <p><b>AIM:</b> The historic and cultural heritage that defines the distinctive sense of place within the Surrey Hills is recorded, protected, managed and celebrated</p> <p><b>AIM:</b> The Surrey Hills will be enjoyed and cherished as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty for its own intrinsic qualities and in ways that contribute to the local economy and that are sensitive to the impact on local communities and the environment</p> <p><b>AIM:</b> New development enhances local character and the environmental quality of its nationally important setting.</p> <p><b>AIM:</b> The Surrey Hills should be an attractive, affordable and sustainable place to live, work and enjoy for all members of the local community.</p> <p><b>AIM:</b> Transport measures reinforce the rural character of the area and provide for a range of safe and sustainable travel alternatives.</p>
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**Who is affected by the proposals outlined above?**

The intended beneficiaries are very wide and include the residents of the Surrey Hills AONB, as well as those who work in local industries such as agriculture, forestry, and tourism. There are other beneficiaries outside the Surrey Hills who live in the wider area of Surrey and South London, who visit the AONB for recreation and leisure.

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## 6. Sources of information

<b>Engagement carried out</b>
<p>The Consultation Draft AONB Management Plan 2014 – 2019 was agreed by the AONB Board on the 16<sup>th</sup> October 2013, and launched at the Surrey Hills Partnership meeting on the 6<sup>th</sup> November 2014. The consultation period ran until 14<sup>th</sup> February 2014.</p> <p>The Consultation Draft Management Plan 2014-2019 was informed by reviewing the existing AONB Management Plan (2009-2014) which was the subject of wide consultation. It was produced by the Surrey Hills AONB Board, which is a Joint Committee, on behalf of the six local authorities that have a statutory duty to adopt the AONB Management Plan. The draft report was put together by the AONB Unit which is employed by the Board to do the day to day work around the implementation of the plan and hosted by Surrey County Council. The Unit was supported in this work by members of the AONB's officers Working Group, Partnership Members and people from a wide range of conservation, land management, tourism, and other organisations, including a Strategic Environmental Assessment.</p> <p>Copies of the full document were sent to all 52 parish councils in the Surrey Hills. There was also an on-line survey launched on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2013 through the AONB web site and promoted by press release. This received coverage in local papers including the Surrey Advertiser and the Surrey Mirror. There was also radio coverage including Eagle Radio.</p> <p>All local authorities including Surrey County Council, the five boroughs and districts, and all the parish councils had the opportunity to respond to the consultation in terms of accountable bodies representing their respective communities. The parish council clerks were requested to cascade or forward the AONB Management Plan survey to community groups that they considered may have an interest in the Surrey Hills. Interests groups were targeted through the consultation included the British Horse Society, The Surrey Countryside Access Forum, Local Access Forums (representing the interests of people with disabilities interests), cycling clubs and the Ramblers Association, including ramblers with disabilities. These groups were also requested to cascade or forward the survey to their respective memberships.</p>
<b>Data used</b>
<p>There were 590 responses which were generally well informed and supportive. The responses were analysed to identify key themes and concerns and a report was produced Full details have been published on the Surrey Hills AONB website (Report of Consultation April 2014.) The analysis was used to inform this EIA and the revised version of the Management Plan.</p> <p>The analysis revealed some tensions between cyclists and other users, particularly equestrians. Other major concerns expressed were over housing development, and the lack of affordable housing. These reflect wider concerns already highlighted by the Local Plan process and the need expressed by a number of Local Authorities to develop in areas of the AONB.</p> <p>Due to the design of the questionnaire and protecting identities, it was not possible to identify how many people with protected characteristics who responded. This will be reviewed next time.</p>

## 7. Impact of the new/amended policy, service or function

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## 7a. Impact of the proposals on residents and service users with protected characteristics

Protected characteristic <sup>2</sup>	Potential positive impacts	Potential negative impacts	Evidence
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 78</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Age</b></p>	<p>Policies to encourage a healthy and varied working community could provide employment opportunities for a wide range of the community. Supporting diversity in farming could encourage farmers to stay in the industry and provide opportunities for young farmers to gain experience.</p> <p>Policies to encourage affordable and reliable community transport and affordable housing could improve access for all ages and could particularly benefit both young and older people.</p>	<p>No discernible impact</p>	<p>Analysis of Report of Consultation April 2014.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Disability</b></p>	<p>Policies to encourage farm diversification schemes, increase opportunity for recreation and education in different habitats, historic buildings, parks and gardens, and well designed accessible visitor facilities will provide opportunity for education and leisure for all abilities.</p>	<p>If not managed effectively and sympathetically, an increase in visitor numbers may make it more difficult for users with disabilities to access and enjoy the AONB. The strongest support in the consultation response was around protecting the quiet enjoyment of the Surrey Hills. Responses indicated cycling on road and</p>	<p>Analysis of Report of Consultation April 2014.</p>

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	Policies included to ensure equal opportunities to access Surrey Hills by train, bus, cycle, horse and on foot	mountain biking were a threat to the area, particularly in the case of organised events, which closed access to parts of the AONB to other users.	
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	No discernible impact	No discernible impact	
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	Policy to ensure the visitor facilities are fully accessible will provide opportunity for a wide range of visitors including pregnant women and women with young children.	No discernible impact	Analysis of Report of Consultation April 2014.
<b>Race</b>	A use of a varied range of media will be an opportunity to encourage access to a wide range of communities.	No discernible impact	Analysis of Report of Consultation April 2014.
<b>Religion and belief</b>	No discernible impact	No discernible impact	Analysis of Report of Consultation April 2014.
<b>Sex</b>	No discernible impact	No discernible impact	
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	No discernible impact	No discernible impact	
<b>Marriage and civil partnerships</b>	No discernible impact	No discernible impact	
<b>Carers<sup>3</sup></b>	Policy to ensure the visitor facilities are designed for the needs of all abilities will provide opportunity for a wide	No discernible impact	Analysis of Report of Consultation April 2014.

<sup>3</sup> Carers are not a protected characteristic under the Public Sector Equality Duty, however we need to consider the potential impact on this group to ensure that there is no associative discrimination (i.e. discrimination against them because they are associated with people with protected characteristics). The definition of carers developed by Carers UK is that 'carers look after family, partners or friends in need of help because they are ill, frail or have a disability. The care they provide is unpaid. This includes adults looking after other adults, parent carers looking after disabled children and young carers under 18 years of age.'

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	range of visitors including carers.		
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### 7b. Impact of the proposals on staff with protected characteristics

Protected characteristic	Potential positive impacts	Potential negative impacts	Evidence
<b>Age</b>	Policy to ensure the visitor facilities are fully accessible designed could provide work opportunities for a wide range of staff.	No discernible impact	Analysis of Report of Consultation April 2014.
<b>Disability</b>	Policy to ensure the visitor facilities are fully accessible could provide work opportunities for a wide range of staff.	No discernible impact	Analysis of Report of Consultation April 2014.
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	No discernible impact	No discernible impact	
<b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>	Policy to ensure the visitor facilities are designed for the needs of all abilities will provide work opportunities for a wide range of staff of different age and ability.	No discernible impact	Analysis of Report of Consultation April 2014.
<b>Race</b>	No discernible impact	No discernible impact	
<b>Religion and belief</b>	No discernible impact	No discernible impact	
<b>Sex</b>	No discernible impact	No discernible impact	



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<b>Sexual orientation</b>	No discernible impact	No discernible impact	
<b>Marriage and civil partnerships</b>	No discernible impact	No discernible impact	
<b>Carers</b>	No discernible impact	No discernible impact	

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## 8. Amendments to the proposals

Change	Reason for change
Slight amendment to Vision Statement to include opportunities for rural enterprise	Response from AONB community that the Vision Statement should refer to opportunities for rural business and enterprise which promote wider opportunities to enjoy being in the AONB. .
Promotion of opportunities for education in countryside, heritage and the arts in the landscape, provided it raised aware of the special qualities of the Surrey Hills and supported local communities	Response from AONB community
Policies to protect quiet enjoyment and encourage management measures for recreational activities to minimise danger to other users.	Response from the AONB community which raised concern over the impacts of encouraging too many visitors for organised events which closed facilities for other users.

## 9. Action plan

Potential impact (positive or negative)	Action needed to maximise positive impact or mitigate negative impact	By when	Owner
Wider understanding of the level of engagement of residents, service users and staff with protected characteristics	Review consultation process for next review of Surrey Hills AONB Management Plan from 2019. In particular, consider how we could revise the questionnaire to make it possible to identify how many people with protected characteristics respond.	Commencement of next review process 2018	Surrey Hills AONB Board and Surrey Hills AONB Unit
Diverse rural economy	Encourage co-ordinated action by all organisations, agencies and individuals through the Surrey Hills group of organisations (the Surrey Hills family)	Throughout the duration of the plan up to 2019	Surrey Hills AONB Board and Local Planning Authorities
Access to recreational facilities and rural services to all ages and abilities	Design and development of new visitor facilities and maintenance of existing facilities for the needs of people of all abilities. Support of rural transport initiatives.	Throughout the duration of the plan up to 2019	Surrey Hills AONB Board, and Local Planning Authorities

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<p>Increase in visitor numbers may inhibit the use of facilities for those of less ability. Increased development of recreation and tourism can cause conflict between different user groups if not managed sympathetically.</p> <p>There are key areas of tension between active groups and others wanting quiet enjoyment, such as the controversy over the Leith Hill bike trail.</p>	<p>The quiet enjoyment of the Surrey Hills will need to be protected, and facilities developed to help positively manage increasing numbers of visitors of different abilities and needs.</p> <p>New leisure facilities will need to be constructed in such a way to maximise benefits and minimise conflict between different user groups.</p>	<p>Throughout the duration of the plan up to 2019</p>	<p>Surrey Hills AONB Board and Local Planning Authorities</p>

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## 10. Potential negative impacts that cannot be mitigated

Potential negative impact	Protected characteristic(s) that could be affected
None identified that cannot be mitigated through the application of policies of the Plan.	

## 11. Summary of key impacts and actions

<p><b>Information and engagement underpinning equalities analysis</b></p>	<p>The Consultation Draft Management Plan 2014-2019 was informed by a review of the existing AONB Management Plan (2009-2014) and produced by the Surrey Hills AONB Board, which is a Joint Committee, on behalf of the six component local authorities that have a statutory duty to adopt the AONB Management Plan. The Plan was subject to wide consultation and an analysis of this consultation was carried out in a Report of Consultation April 2014.</p>
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<p><b>Key impacts (positive and/or negative) on people with protected characteristics</b></p>	<p>Policies to ensure a positive rural economy and recreational and the visitor facilities are designed for the needs of all abilities will provide opportunities for the widest range of the AONB community and staff of different ages and ability.</p>
<p><b>Changes you have made to the proposal as a result of the EIA</b></p>	<p>Slight amendment to Vision Statement and policies to include opportunities for rural enterprise, manage visitors and protect quiet enjoyment alongside more active recreational pursuits</p>
<p><b>Key mitigating actions planned to address any outstanding negative impacts</b></p>	<p>The Surrey Hills Board will encourage and manage co-ordinated action by all organisations, agencies and individuals through the Surrey Hills group of organisations (the Surrey Hills family). The Local Planning Authorities that belong to the Surrey Hills AONB will adopt the Management Plan, to inform policy for their organisations.</p>
<p><b>Potential negative impacts that cannot be mitigated</b></p>	<p>None identified that cannot be mitigated through the application of the policies of the Plan.</p>