

High Weald AONB Management Plan Objective Assessment Tables

The possible outcomes are:

- ++ significant positive effect,
- + partial positive effect,
- ? uncertain effect,
- partial negative effect,
- significant negative effect,
- n/a not applicable

Natural Systems

Option A – 2024 consultation Objective G1: To restore the natural function of rivers, water courses and water bodies.

Rationale: To improve water quality, water resource and structural habitats associated with water; to enhance the role of rivers, water courses and water bodies in supporting and increasing biodiversity, cooling the environment, protecting people and communities from flooding, and promoting enjoyment of wetlands.

Option B - No Objective on this subject.

SEA Objective	Option A		Option B	
	Score	Justification	Score	Justification
1) To protect and enhance the landscape	+	Some restoration projects may also enhance the landscape by removing artificial barriers.	-	No objective on this issue could result in retention of artificial barriers that have an adverse impact on the landscape.
2) To protect and maintain cultural heritage (inc. archaeology and architecture)	?	Some restoration projects may restore a historic water body with cultural associations but may also result in the loss of more recent historic features.	-	No objective on this issue could mean that historic routes with cultural associations remain lost but may also retain more recent historic features.

3) To protect and where practical enhance diverse habitats	++	Restoration is likely to be beneficial to habitats by creating or restoring wetlands.	-	No objective on this issue could mean that opportunities to restore wetland habitats are missed.
4) To protect and enhance flora and fauna	++	Restoration is likely to be beneficial to flora and fauna by creating or restoring wetlands.	-	No objective on this issue could mean that opportunities to restore wetland habitats are missed.
5) To protect water systems and promote sustainable flood and drought risk management	++	Restoration is likely to be beneficial to water systems and promote sustainable flood and drought risk management.	-	No objective on this issue could mean that opportunities to protect water systems and promote sustainable flood and drought risk are missed.
6) To safeguard the quality of soil, air, water and maintain appropriate climatic conditions	?	Water quality and climatic conditions may be enhanced through restoration.	-	No objective on this issue could mean that opportunities are missed to safeguard the quality of water and maintain appropriate climatic conditions.
7) To protect natural resources and encourage sustainable energy use and production	n/a		n/a	
8) To safeguard human health, wellbeing and ensure no adverse effects on population	+	Restoration is likely to slow flows and reduce flooding which is a risk to some populations.	-	No objective on this issue could mean that opportunities are missed to slow flows and reduce flooding which is a risk to some populations.
9) To avoid significant adverse effects generated through the interrelationships or cumulative effects of the above criteria.	No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.	
SEA Conclusion	Options A have the most positive environmental effects.			

Option A – 2024 consultation Objective G2: To protect landform and geological features, including sandstone outcrops.

Rationale: To conserve landform and topography on which the High Weald's character depends, and maintain nationally important geological exposures, allowing for erosion where appropriate, conserving the fern, moss and liverwort communities they support and protecting their value as significant sites of prehistoric archaeology in the AONB.

Option B – No objective on this subject.

Option C – Previous Objective G2: To protect and enhance soils, sandstone outcrops, and other important landform and geological features.

Rationale: In order to conserve the soil health and soil carbon, landform and geology on which the High Weald's character depends, and maintain nationally important geological exposures allowing erosion where appropriate, conserving the fern, moss and liverwort communities they support and protecting their value as significant sites of prehistoric archaeology in the AONB.

SEA Objective	Option A		Option B		Option C	
	Score	Justification	Score	Justification	Score	Justification
1) To protect and enhance the landscape	++	Protecting and enhancing sandstone outcrops and landform will have a significant positive effect on the landscape.	--	The loss of these features would have a significant negative impact on the landscape	++	Protecting and enhancing sandstone outcrops and landform will have a significant positive effect on the landscape.
2) To protect and maintain cultural heritage (inc. archaeology and architecture)	+	Some sandstone outcrops are archaeologically important as they were used as prehistoric rock shelters.	-	The loss of these sandstone features would have a partial negative impact on the cultural heritage.	+	Some sandstone outcrops are archaeologically important as they were used as prehistoric rock shelters.
3) To protect and where practical enhance diverse habitats	+	Protect sandstone outcrop habitats which support communities of ferns, liverworts and mosses	n/a		+	Protect sandstone outcrop habitats which support communities of ferns, liverworts and mosses
4) To protect and enhance flora and fauna	++	Protecting important and in some cases rare ferns, liverworts and mosses found on sandstone outcrops	n/a		++	Protecting important and in some cases rare ferns, liverworts and mosses found on sandstone outcrops
5) To protect water systems and promote sustainable flood and drought risk management	n/a		-	No objective on this issue could mean that opportunities are missed to reduce silt run off.	++	Protecting and enhancing soil and landform would help prevent silt runoff into rivers.

6) To safeguard the quality of soil, air, water and maintain appropriate climatic conditions	n/a		-	No objective on this issue could mean that opportunities are missed to reduce silt run off.	++	Protecting and enhancing soil and landform would help prevent silt runoff into rivers.
7) To protect natural resources and encourage sustainable energy use and production	n/a		-	No objective on this issue could mean that opportunities are missed to protect soil.	++	Protecting and enhancing soil would protect a natural resource.
8) To safeguard human health, wellbeing and ensure no adverse effects on population	n/a		n/a		n/a	
9) To avoid significant adverse effects generated through the interrelationships or cumulative effects of the above criteria.	No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts	
SEA Conclusion	Option A and C has the most positive environmental effects.					

Option A – 2024 consultation Objective G3: To pursue net zero across the High Weald without compromising its characteristic landscape beauty.

Rationale: To ensure that transformative mitigation and adaption policies are tailored to the High Weald’s defining landscape character.

Option B - No Objective on this subject.

Option C - Previous Objective G3: To help secure climatic conditions and rate of change which support continued conservation and enhancement of the High Weald’s valued landscape and habitats.

Rationale: In order to reduce locally arising greenhouse gas emissions and allows the High Weald to play its role in mitigating climate change.

SEA Objective	Option A		Option B		Option C	
	Score	Justification	Score	Justification	Score	Justification
1) To protect and enhance the landscape	?		?		?	Depends on the measures chosen.
2) To protect and maintain cultural heritage (inc. archaeology and architecture)	++	Climate change mitigation measures should include water efficiency, SuDs etc	n/a		++	Climate change mitigation measures should include water efficiency, SuDs etc
3) To protect and where practical enhance diverse habitats	++	Climate change mitigation measures should include safeguarding soil, water and air quality.	n/a		++	Climate change mitigation measures should include safeguarding soil, water and air quality.
4) To protect and enhance flora and fauna	++	Climate change mitigation measures should include the protection of natural resources and sustainable energy use and production.	n/a		++	Climate change mitigation measures should include the protection of natural resources and sustainable energy use and production.
5) To protect water systems and promote sustainable flood and drought risk management	+	Climate change mitigation measures will protect human populations from flooding etc.	-	No objective on this issue could result in adverse impacts of climate change on water systems, flooding and water supply.	+	Climate change mitigation measures will protect human populations from flooding etc.
6) To safeguard the quality of soil, air, water and maintain appropriate climatic conditions	++	Work within and to nationally recognised monitoring and targets as set out under the legally defined term 'net zero'	-	No objective on this issue could result in adverse impacts of climate change on soil, water and air quality.	++	Climate change mitigation measures should include water efficiency, SuDs etc
7) To protect natural resources and encourage sustainable energy use and production	++	Work within and to nationally recognised monitoring and targets as set out under the legally defined term 'net zero'	-	No objective on this issue could result in adverse impacts of climate change on natural resources and reduce use of sustainable energy use and production.	++	Climate change mitigation measures should include safeguarding soil, water and air quality.

8) To safeguard human health, wellbeing and ensure no adverse effects on population	++	Work within and to nationally recognised monitoring and targets as set out under the legally defined term 'net zero'	-	No objective on this issue could result in adverse impacts of climate change on the human population from flooding etc.	++	Climate change mitigation measures should include the protection of natural resources and sustainable energy use and production.
9) To avoid significant adverse effects generated through the interrelationships or cumulative effects of the above criteria.	No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.	
SEA Conclusion	Option A has the most positive environmental effects.					

Option A – 2024 consultation Objective G4: To restore soil health across the High Weald.

Rationale: To increase carbon sequestration and storage potential of soils, as well as water holding capacity to reduce flooding following high rainfall. Improve the soil ecosystem which supports above-ground and below-ground biodiversity and habitats across the High Weald. Healthy soil has higher nutrients for plants, which reduces the need for artificial fertilizer use in the long-term.

(Note: this is a brand-new objective to the 2024-2029 Management Plan)

Option B - No Objective on this subject.

SEA Objective	Option A		Option B	
	Score	Justification	Score	Justification
1) To protect and enhance the landscape	?		-	No objective on this issue could mean that opportunities are missed to protect soil.
2) To protect and maintain cultural heritage (inc. archaeology and architecture)	++	Protecting and enhancing soil would through regenerative farming practices which prioritises soils would help to maintain traditional use of farmed land	-	No objective on this issue could mean that opportunities are missed to protect soil.
3) To protect and where practical enhance diverse habitats	+	Undisturbed soils ecosystems support above ground habitats, especially where undisturbed and with no inputs into the soil.	-	No objective on this issue could mean that opportunities are missed to protect soil.

4) To protect and enhance flora and fauna	++	Protecting and enhancing soil would help both below and above ground biodiversity and ecology	-	No objective on this issue could mean that opportunities are missed to protect soil.
5) To protect water systems and promote sustainable flood and drought risk management	++	Protecting and enhancing soil would help prevent silt runoff into rivers, and water holding capacity in soils.	-	No objective on this issue could mean that opportunities are missed to protect soil.
6) To safeguard the quality of soil, air, water and maintain appropriate climatic conditions	++	Protecting and enhancing soil would help prevent silt runoff into rivers, water holding capacity in soils, and water quality.	-	No objective on this issue could mean that opportunities are missed to protect soil.
7) To protect natural resources and encourage sustainable energy use and production	++	Protecting and enhancing soil would protect a natural resource.	-	No objective on this issue could mean that opportunities are missed to protect soil.
8) To safeguard human health, wellbeing and ensure no adverse effects on population	++	Protecting and enhancing soil would protect a natural resource.	-	No objective on this issue could mean that opportunities are missed to protect soil.
9) To avoid significant adverse effects generated through the interrelationships or cumulative effects of the above criteria.	No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.	
SEA Conclusion	Option A has the most positive environmental effects.			

Settlement

Option A – 2024 consultation Objective S1: To protect the historic pattern and character of settlement.

Rationale: To protect the distinctive character and landscape settings of towns, villages, hamlets and farmsteads, remove despoiling influences, and maintain the hinterlands and other relationships (including separation and green infrastructure) between settlements that contribute to local identity.

Option B - No Objective on this subject.

SEA Objective	Option A		Option B	
	Score	Justification	Score	Justification

1) To protect and enhance the landscape	++	The historic pattern and character of settlement is an important component of the landscape.	-	No objective on this subject could result in unsympathetic settlement that would be detrimental to the landscape.
2) To protect and maintain cultural heritage (inc. archaeology and architecture)	++	The historic pattern and character of settlement is an important part of the cultural heritage.	-	No objective on this subject could result in development that is detrimental to cultural heritage.
3) To protect and where practical enhance diverse habitats	n/a		n/a	
4) To protect and enhance flora and fauna	n/a		n/a	
5) To protect water systems and promote sustainable flood and drought risk management	n/a		n/a	
6) To safeguard the quality of soil, air, water and maintain appropriate climatic conditions	n/a		n/a	
7) To protect natural resources and encourage sustainable energy use and production	n/a		n/a	
8) To safeguard human health, wellbeing and ensure no adverse effects on population	n/a		n/a	
9) To avoid significant adverse effects generated through the interrelationships or cumulative effects of the above criteria.	No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.	
SEA Conclusion	Option A has the most positive environmental effects.			

Option A – 2024 consultation Objective S2: To enhance the architectural quality of the High Weald and ensure new development reflects the character of the High Weald in its siting, scale, layout and design.

Rationale: To enhance the beauty and quality of buildings in the High Weald, and ensure new development reflects intrinsic High Weald character and place-making, embedded with a true sense of place, along with re-establishing the use of local materials and rich colour palette as a means of protecting the environment and adding to local distinctiveness.

Option B - No Objective on this subject.

Option C – Previous Objective S3: To enhance the architectural quality of the High Weald and ensure development reflects the character of the High Weald in its scale, layout and design.

Rationale: To protect and enhance the character and quality of buildings in the High Weald, and re-establish the use of local materials as a means of protecting the environment and adding to this distinctiveness.

SEA Objective	Option A now C		Option B		Option C	
	Score	Justification	Score	Justification	Score	Justification
1) To protect and enhance the landscape	++	The architectural quality, character and design of development is an important component of the landscape.	-	No objective on this subject could result in unsympathetic development that would be detrimental to the landscape.	++	The architectural quality, character and design of development is an important component of the landscape.
2) To protect and maintain cultural heritage (inc. archaeology and architecture)	++	The architectural quality, character and design of development is important to protect cultural heritage.	-	No objective on this subject could result in unsympathetic development that would be detrimental to cultural heritage.	++	The architectural quality, character and design of development is important to protect cultural heritage.
3) To protect and where practical enhance diverse habitats	n/a		n/a		n/a	
4) To protect and enhance flora and fauna	n/a		n/a		n/a	
5) To protect water systems and promote sustainable	n/a		n/a		n/a	

flood and drought risk management						
6) To safeguard the quality of soil, air, water and maintain appropriate climatic conditions	n/a		n/a		n/a	
7) To protect natural resources and encourage sustainable energy use and production	n/a		n/a		n/a	
8) To safeguard human health, wellbeing and ensure no adverse effects on population	n/a		n/a		n/a	
9) To avoid significant adverse effects generated through the interrelationships or cumulative effects of the above criteria.	No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.	
SEA Conclusion	Option A and C has the most positive environmental effects.					

Option A – 2024 consultation Objective S3: To conserve the distinct built heritage of the High Weald.

Rationale: To protect and preserve the character and setting of heritage assets (designated and non-designated); historic traditional buildings and built features distinct to the High Weald area, including the historic public realm (e.g., traditional signs, railings, milestones and paving treatments).

Option B - No Objective on this subject.

SEA Objective	Option A		Option B	
	Score	Justification	Score	Justification

1) To protect and enhance the landscape	++	Distinctive build heritage is an important part of the settlement component of the landscape.	-	No objective on this subject could result in unsympathetic development that would be detrimental to the landscape.
2) To protect and maintain cultural heritage (inc. archaeology and architecture)	++	Distinctive build heritage is an important part of the settlement component of the landscape.	-	No objective on this subject could result in unsympathetic development that would be detrimental to cultural heritage.
3) To protect and where practical enhance diverse habitats	n/a		n/a	
4) To protect and enhance flora and fauna	n/a		n/a	
5) To protect water systems and promote sustainable flood and drought risk management	n/a		n/a	
6) To safeguard the quality of soil, air, water and maintain appropriate climatic conditions	n/a		n/a	
7) To protect natural resources and encourage sustainable energy use and production	n/a		n/a	
8) To safeguard human health, wellbeing and ensure no adverse effects on population	n/a		n/a	
9) To avoid significant adverse effects generated through the interrelationships or cumulative effects of the above criteria.	No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.	
SEA Conclusion	Option A has the most positive environmental effects.			

Routeways

Option A – 2024 consultation Objective R1: To maintain the historic pattern, morphology and features of routeways.

Rationale: To maintain and restore a routeway network that has a symbiotic relationship with settlement location, hinterlands and identity, and is a rare UK survival of an essentially medieval landscape; to protect the individual archaeological features of historic routeways such as sunken lanes; and to avoid harming character of routeways with urbanising features.

Option B - No Objective on this subject.

Option C - Previous Objective R1: To maintain the historic pattern and features of routeways.

Rationale: To maintain a routeway network that has a symbiotic relationship with settlement location, hinterlands and identity, and is a rare UK survival of an essentially medieval landscape; and to protect the individual archaeological features of historic routeways.

SEA Objective	Option A		Option B		Option C	
	Score	Justification	Score	Justification	Score	Justification
1) To protect and enhance the landscape	++	Routeways are an important component of the landscape.	-	No objective on this subject could result in the loss of or damage to historic routeways which would be detrimental to the landscape.	+	The omission of reference to 'morphology' may result in reduced effectiveness of this objective.
2) To protect and maintain cultural heritage (inc. archaeology and architecture)	++	Routeways are an important component of cultural heritage.	-	No objective on this subject could result in the loss of or damage to historic routeways which would be detrimental to cultural heritage.	+	The omission of reference to 'morphology' may result in reduced effectiveness of this objective.
3) To protect and where practical enhance diverse habitats	n/a		n/a		n/a	
4) To protect and enhance flora and fauna	n/a		n/a		n/a	

5) To protect water systems and promote sustainable flood and drought risk management	n/a		n/a		n/a	
6) To safeguard the quality of soil, air, water and maintain appropriate climatic conditions	n/a		n/a		n/a	
7) To protect natural resources and encourage sustainable energy use and production	n/a		n/a		n/a	
8) To safeguard human health, wellbeing and ensure no adverse effects on population	n/a		n/a		n/a	
9) To avoid significant adverse effects generated through the interrelationships or cumulative effects of the above criteria.	No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.	
SEA Conclusion	Option A has the most positive environmental effects.					

Option A – 2024 consultation Objective R2: To protect and enhance the ecological function of routeways.

Rationale: To protect, and improve the condition of, the complex mix of small-scale habitats along routeways, including verges, for wildlife and nature recovery, and maintain routeway boundaries as part of a highly interconnected habitat mosaic.

Option B - No Objective on this subject.

Option C – Previous Objective R2: To enhance the ecological function of routeways.

Rationale: To protect and improve the condition of the complex mix of small scale habitats along routeways for wildlife, and maintain routeway boundaries as part of a highly interconnected habitat mosaic.

SEA Objective	Option A	Option B	Option C
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	Score	Justification	Score	Justification	Score	Justification
1) To protect and enhance the landscape	n/a		n/a		n/a	
2) To protect and maintain cultural heritage (inc. archaeology and architecture)	n/a		n/a		n/a	
3) To protect and where practical enhance diverse habitats	++	This option protects and enhances the interconnecting habitats of routeways.	-	No objective on this subject could result in loss or damage to habitats along routeways.	+	This option only enhances the interconnecting habitats of routeways.
4) To protect and enhance flora and fauna	++	This option protects and enhances the interconnecting habitats including flora and fauna along routeways.	-	No objective on this subject could result in loss or damage to flora and fauna along routeways.	+	This option only enhances the interconnecting habitats including flora and fauna along routeways.
5) To protect water systems and promote sustainable flood and drought risk management			n/a		n/a	
6) To safeguard the quality of soil, air, water and maintain appropriate climatic conditions			n/a		n/a	
7) To protect natural resources and encourage sustainable energy use and production			n/a		n/a	
8) To safeguard human health, wellbeing and ensure no adverse effects on population			n/a		n/a	
9) To avoid significant adverse effects generated through the interrelationships or cumulative effects of the above criteria.	No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.	
SEA Conclusion	Option A has the most positive environmental effects.					

Woodland

Option A – 2024 consultation Objective W1: To maintain and restore the existing extent and pattern of woodland cover and particularly ancient woodland.

Rationale: To ensure irreplaceable habitats and biodiversity loss are repaired for the benefit of future generations. To maintain a key component of the cultural landscape, and to preserve the high levels of carbon storage in woodland soils and biomass.

Option B - No Objective on this subject.

Option C - Previous Objective W1: To maintain the existing extent of woodland and particularly ancient woodland.

Rationale: To maintain irreplaceable habitats for biodiversity, to maintain a key component of the cultural landscape, and to maintain contribution to carbon storage.

SEA Objective	Option A		Option B		Option C	
	Score	Justification	Score	Justification	Score	Justification
1) To protect and enhance the landscape	++	Woodland is an important component of the landscape.	-	No objective on this subject could result in loss or damage to woodland which would be detrimental to the landscape.	++	Woodland is an important component of the landscape.
2) To protect and maintain cultural heritage (inc. archaeology and architecture)	++	Woodland and its productive management are an important part of the cultural heritage of the area.	-	No objective on this subject could result in loss or damage to woodland which would be detrimental to the cultural heritage of the area.	++	Woodland and its productive management are an important part of the cultural heritage of the area.
3) To protect and where practical enhance diverse habitats	++	Woodland and especially ancient woodland are an important habitat.	-	No objective on this subject could result in loss or damage to woodland which would be detrimental to habitats.	+	This objective omits restoration of woodland

4) To protect and enhance flora and fauna	++	Woodland and especially ancient woodland are an important habitat for flora and fauna.	-	No objective on this subject could result in loss or damage to woodland which would be detrimental to flora and fauna.	+	This objective omits restoration of woodland
5) To protect water systems and promote sustainable flood and drought risk management	++	Woodland is important for soaking up rainfall and preventing flooding.	-	No objective on this subject could result in loss or damage to woodland which could result in increased flood risk downstream.	++	Woodland is important for soaking up rainfall and preventing flooding.
6) To safeguard the quality of soil, air, water and maintain appropriate climatic conditions	++	Woodland is important for protecting undisturbed soil and improving air and water quality. Its carbon storing abilities also help to maintain climate conditions.	-	No objective on this subject could result in loss or damage to woodland which could result in harm to quality of soil, air, water and climatic conditions.	++	Woodland is important for protecting undisturbed soil and improving air and water quality. Its carbon storing abilities also help to maintain climate conditions.
7) To protect natural resources and encourage sustainable energy use and production	++	Wood is a key natural and renewable resource which can be used to replace less sustainable energy sources.	-	No objective on this subject could result in loss or damage to woodland which would lose a natural resource and source of energy.	+	This objective omits woodland restoration which can play a key part in resource management
8) To safeguard human health, wellbeing and ensure no adverse effects on population	++	Woodland protects human populations against flooding and has beneficial impacts on health and wellbeing.	-	No objective on this subject could result in loss or damage to woodland which would be harmful to human health and populations.	+	The objectives rationale omitted future generations
9) To avoid significant adverse effects generated through the interrelationships or cumulative effects of the above criteria.	No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.	
SEA Conclusion	Option A has the most positive environmental effects.					

Option A – 2024 consultation Objective W2: To protect and restore the ecological quality and functioning of woodland at a landscape scale.

Rationale: To increase the viability of the woodland habitat for wildlife, by identifying and extending the area of appropriately managed woodland (including restoring plantations on ancient woodland) to link and enhance isolated habitats and species populations, providing greater connectivity between woodlands and other important wildlife areas, and helping to facilitate species' response to climate change.

Option B - No Objective on this subject.

Option C – Previous Objective W2: To enhance the ecological quality and functioning of woodland at a landscape scale.

Rationale: To increase the viability of the woodland habitat for wildlife, by identifying and extending the area of appropriately managed woodland (including restoring plantations on ancient woodland) to link and enhance isolated habitats and species populations, providing greater connectivity between woodlands and other important wildlife areas, and helping to facilitate species' response to climate change.

SEA Objective	Option A		Option B		Option C	
	Score	Justification	Score	Justification	Score	Justification
1) To protect and enhance the landscape	++	Woodland is an important landscape character of the High Weald	n/a		+	The objective omitted to mention protection
2) To protect and maintain cultural heritage (inc. archaeology and architecture)	n/a		n/a		n/a	
3) To protect and where practical enhance diverse habitats	++	Woodland and especially ancient woodland is an important habitat.	-	No objective on this subject could result in loss or damage to woodland which would be detrimental to habitats.	+	The objective omitted to mention protection
4) To protect and enhance flora and fauna	++	Woodland and especially ancient woodland is an important habitat.	-	No objective on this subject could result in loss or damage to woodland which would be detrimental to flora and fauna.	+	The objective omitted to mention protection
5) To protect water systems and promote sustainable flood and drought risk management			n/a		n/a	

6) To safeguard the quality of soil, air, water and maintain appropriate climatic conditions	n/a		n/a		n/a	
7) To protect natural resources and encourage sustainable energy use and production	n/a		n/a		n/a	
8) To safeguard human health, wellbeing and ensure no adverse effects on population	n/a		n/a		n/a	
9) To avoid significant adverse effects generated through the interrelationships or cumulative effects of the above criteria.	No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.	
SEA Conclusion	Options A has the most positive environmental effects.					

Option A – 2024 consultation Objective W3: To protect the archaeology and historic assets of AONB woodlands.

Rationale: To protect the historic environment of the AONB woodlands.

Option B - No Objective on this subject.

SEA Objective	Option A		Option B	
	Score	Justification	Score	Justification
1) To protect and enhance the landscape	n/a		n/a	
2) To protect and maintain cultural heritage (inc.	++	Woodlands are relatively undisturbed so can contain significant archaeology.	-	No objective on this subject could result in loss or damage to archaeology in woodlands.

archaeology and architecture)				
3) To protect and where practical enhance diverse habitats	n/a		n/a	
4) To protect and enhance flora and fauna	n/a		n/a	
5) To protect water systems and promote sustainable flood and drought risk management	n/a		n/a	
6) To safeguard the quality of soil, air, water and maintain appropriate climatic conditions	n/a		n/a	
7) To protect natural resources and encourage sustainable energy use and production	n/a		n/a	
8) To safeguard human health, wellbeing and ensure no adverse effects on population	n/a		n/a	
9) To avoid significant adverse effects generated through the interrelationships or cumulative effects of the above criteria.	No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.	
SEA Conclusion	Option A has the most positive environmental effects.			

Option A – 2024 consultation Objective W4: To increase the output of sustainably produced high-quality timber and underwood for local markets.

Rationale: To achieve the most effective management that will deliver the other objectives for woodland, to contribute to sustainable domestic timber production, and to support a working countryside.

Option B - No Objective on this subject.

SEA Objective	Option A		Option B	
	Score	Justification	Score	Justification
1) To protect and enhance the landscape	+	Management of woodlands for timber helps to secure their future as an important part of the landscape.	-	No objective on this subject could result in the loss of or damage to unproductive woodland due to lack of management.
2) To protect and maintain cultural heritage (inc. archaeology and architecture)	?	Some intensive forestry operations could risk damaging archaeological features.	?	No objective on this subject could mean more unmanaged woodlands which may protect archaeological features.
3) To protect and where practical enhance diverse habitats	+	Some intensive forestry operations could risk damaging habitats. However, management methods such as coppicing add biodiversity to woodland.	-	No objective on this subject could mean more unmanaged woodlands with less diverse habitats.
4) To protect and enhance flora and fauna		Some intensive forestry operations could risk damaging flora and fauna. However, management methods such as coppicing add biodiversity to woodland.	-	No objective on this subject could mean more unmanaged woodlands with less diverse flora and fauna.
5) To protect water systems and promote sustainable flood and drought risk management			n/a	
6) To safeguard the quality of soil, air, water and maintain appropriate climatic conditions		Wood can be used to replace less sustainable fuel but may also cause air quality problems if burnt when damp.	?	No objective on this subject could mean less wood used as fuel and more use of non-renewables.
7) To protect natural resources and encourage		Wood and timber can be used to replace less sustainable fuel and building materials.	-	No objective on this subject could mean less wood used as fuel and timber used for construction and more use of non-renewables.

sustainable energy use and production				
8) To safeguard human health, wellbeing and ensure no adverse effects on population	n/a		n/a	
9) To avoid significant adverse effects generated through the interrelationships or cumulative effects of the above criteria.	No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.	
SEA Conclusion	Option A has the most positive environmental effects.			

Fieldscape and Heath

Option A – FH1: To secure agriculturally productive use for the fields of the High Weald, especially for local markets, as part of sustainable land management.

Rationale: To contribute to sustainable domestic food and non-food agricultural production, to support a working countryside, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and to reduce the dependency of the UK on non-sustainably managed agricultural land and the need for long-distance transport that produces air pollutants, causing harm to health and the environment.

(Note: this objective remains unchanged from the 2019-2024 Management Plan)

Option B - No Objective on this subject.

SEA Objective	Option A		Option B	
	Score	Justification	Score	Justification
1) To protect and enhance the landscape	?	The landscape has been formed by agriculture and needs it to continue to retain its character. However, some agricultural uses and buildings can have adverse landscape impacts.	-	No objective on this subject could result in a reduction in agriculture which could adversely impact the landscape.

2) To protect and maintain cultural heritage (inc. archaeology and architecture)	+	Agriculture is part of the cultural heritage of the High Weald, including skills and traditions of farm workers as well as buildings and archaeology.	-	No objective on this subject could result in a reduction in agriculture which could adversely impact on cultural heritage.
3) To protect and where practical enhance diverse habitats	?	Some types of agriculture can protect and enhance habitats, but more intensive forms can destroy habitats.	?	No objective on this subject could result in a reduction in agriculture. This could reduce habitats such as meadows but could also result in a less intensive use of land that would support different habitats.
4) To protect and enhance flora and fauna	?	Some types of agriculture can protect and enhance habitats, but more intensive forms can destroy flora and fauna.	?	No objective on this subject could result in a reduction in agriculture. This could reduce habitats such as meadows but could also result in a less intensive use of land that would support flora and fauna.
5) To protect water systems and promote sustainable flood and drought risk management	?	Impact depends on specific type of agricultural land management.	?	No objective on this subject could result in a reduction in agriculture. If land is managed for other purposes, then it could still protect water systems, but if it is not managed at all then water systems will become ineffective.
6) To safeguard the quality of soil, air, water and maintain appropriate climatic conditions	+	Local food production avoids long-distance transport that produces air pollutants causing harm to health and the environment Some types of agricultural use, such as pasture, are good for storing carbon.	?	No objective on this subject could result in a reduction in agriculture. As with objective 5 above, the impact would depend on the type of use that replaces it.
7) To protect natural resources and encourage sustainable energy use and production	++	The production of food sustainably and locally protects natural resources and reduces food miles.	-	No objective on this subject could result in a reduction in agriculture which would require more food to be imported from elsewhere using more resources.
8) To safeguard human health, wellbeing and ensure no adverse effects on population	++	Local food production can avoid long-distance transport that produces air pollutants causing harm to human health.	-	No objective on this subject could result in a reduction in agriculture which would require more food to be imported from elsewhere producing air pollutants causing harm to human health.
9) To avoid significant adverse effects generated through the interrelationships or cumulative effects of the above criteria.		Mitigation for potential adverse effects provided by guidance from the AONB Unit on agricultural land management practices that protect and enhance habitats, water systems and soils. Colour and design guidance can mitigate impact of new buildings.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.
SEA Conclusion	Option A has the most positive environmental effects.			

Option A – Objective FH2: To maintain the pattern of small irregularly shaped fields bounded by hedgerows and woodlands.

Rationale: To maintain fields and field boundaries that form a part of the habitat mosaic of the High Weald; and to maintain this key component of what is a rare UK survival of an essentially Medieval landscape.

(note: this objective remains the same from the 2019-2024 Management Plan)

Option B - No Objective on this subject.

SEA Objective	Option A		Option B	
	Score	Justification	Score	Justification
1) To protect and enhance the landscape	++	Fields, especially those of medieval origin, are a key component of the landscape.	-	No objective on this subject could result in the loss of these fields which would significantly damage landscape quality.
2) To protect and maintain cultural heritage (inc. archaeology and architecture)	++	The historic nature of many of the fields in the High Weald contributes to the cultural heritage of the area.	-	No objective on this subject could result in a significantly reduction in the cultural heritage of the area.
3) To protect and where practical enhance diverse habitats	++	Fields, especially unimproved grassland, contain diverse habitats.	-	No objective on this subject could result in the loss of these fields which would significantly damage habitat diversity.
4) To protect and enhance flora and fauna	++	Fields, especially unimproved grassland, contain many types of flora and fauna.	-	No objective on this subject could result in the loss of these fields which would significantly damage flora and fauna.
5) To protect water systems and promote sustainable flood and drought risk management	++	Fields can absorb water, slowing flows into watercourses and preventing flooding.	-	No objective on this subject could result in the loss of these fields which, especially when replaced by hard surfaces, could result in flooding.
6) To safeguard the quality of soil, air, water and maintain appropriate climatic conditions	++	Fields store carbon, helping -to slow climate change and absorb water helping to mitigate its effects.	-	No objective on this subject could result in the loss of these fields which, especially when replaced by hard surfaces, could reduce appropriate climate conditions.
7) To protect natural resources and encourage sustainable energy use and production	+	Fields can be used to grow energy crops which can replace other less sustainable sources of energy.	-	No objective on this subject could result in the loss of these fields which would reduce opportunities for alternative energy sources.

8) To safeguard human health, wellbeing and ensure no adverse effects on population	+	Fields are a valued part of the aesthetic enjoyment of the landscape, contributing to the health and wellbeing of the population.	-	No objective on this subject could result in the loss of these fields to the detriment of human health and wellbeing.
9) To avoid significant adverse effects generated through the interrelationships or cumulative effects of the above criteria.	No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.	
SEA Conclusion	Option A has the most positive environmental effects.			

Option A – 2024 consultation Objective FH3: To protect and enhance the ecological function of field and heath as part of the complex mosaic of High Weald habitats.

Rationale: To improve the condition, landscape permeability and connectivity of fields and heaths and their associated and interrelated habitats (such as hedges, trees, woodlands, ditches, ponds and water systems) for wildlife.

Option B - No Objective on this subject.

Option C – Previous Objective FH3: To enhance the ecological function of field and heath as part of the complex mosaic of High Weald habitats.

Rationale: To improve the condition, landscape permeability and connectivity of fields and heaths and their associated and interrelated habitats (such as hedges, woodlands, ditches, ponds and water systems) for wildlife.

SEA Objective	Option A		Option B		Option C	
	Score	Justification	Score	Justification	Score	Justification
1) To protect and enhance the landscape			n/a		n/a	
2) To protect and maintain cultural heritage (inc.			n/a		n/a	

archaeology and architecture)						
3) To protect and where practical enhance diverse habitats	++	Fields, especially unimproved grassland, and heathland are diverse habitats, and their enhancement would support this objective.	-	No objective on this subject could result in the loss of fields and heathland which would significantly damage habitat diversity.	+	Objective omits protection of fields and heath
4) To protect and enhance flora and fauna	++	Fields, especially unimproved grassland, and heathland contain many floras and fauna and their enhancement would support this objective.	-	No objective on this subject could result in the loss of fields and heathland which would significantly damage flora and fauna.	+	This objective omits protection of fields and heath
5) To protect water systems and promote sustainable flood and drought risk management	n/a		n/a		n/a	
6) To safeguard the quality of soil, air, water and maintain appropriate climatic conditions	n/a		n/a		n/a	
7) To protect natural resources and encourage sustainable energy use and production	n/a		n/a		n/a	
8) To safeguard human health, wellbeing and ensure no adverse effects on population	n/a		n/a		n/a	
9) To avoid significant adverse effects generated through the interrelationships or cumulative effects of the above criteria.	No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.	
SEA Conclusion	Option A has the most positive environmental effects.					

Option A – 2024 consultation Objective FH4: To protect individual archaeological features as well as and historic assets and pattern of fields and heath.

Rationale: To protect the historic environment of the AONB that includes the pattern of fields, and individual archaeological features.

Option B - No Objective on this subject.

Option C – Final Objective FH4: To protect the archaeology and historic assets of field and heath.

Rationale: To protect the historic environment of the AONB other than the pattern of fields: i.e., the individual archaeological features.

SEA Objective	Option A		Option B		Option C	
	Score	Justification	Score	Justification	Score	Justification
1) To protect and enhance the landscape			n/a		n/a	
2) To protect and maintain cultural heritage (inc. archaeology and architecture)	++	The archaeological features and historic assets and pattern of field and heath are an important part of the cultural heritage of the area.	-	No objective on this subject could result in the loss of the archaeology and historic assets of field and heath.	+	The objective omits patterns of field and heath and refers to archaeology rather than archaeological features.
3) To protect and where practical enhance diverse habitats	n/a		n/a		n/a	
4) To protect and enhance flora and fauna	n/a		n/a		n/a	
5) To protect water systems and promote sustainable flood and drought risk management	n/a		n/a		n/a	
6) To safeguard the quality of soil, air, water and maintain appropriate climatic conditions	n/a		n/a		n/a	
7) To protect natural resources and encourage sustainable energy use and production	n/a		n/a		n/a	
8) To safeguard human health, wellbeing and	n/a		n/a		n/a	

ensure no adverse effects on population				
9) To avoid significant adverse effects generated through the interrelationships or cumulative effects of the above criteria.	No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.	No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.	No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.	
SEA Conclusion	Option A has the most positive environmental effects.			

Dark Skies

Option A – 2024 consultation Objective DS1: To preserve the dark skies of the High Weald AONB by minimising light pollution, obtrusive external lighting and internal light spill from domestic, commercial, and public premises in both existing and new developments within the High Weald, and from highways lighting.

Rationale: To protect and maintain the existing dark skies within the High Weald for the benefit of all, including future generations for our health and wellbeing, and enjoyment, to increase our understanding and sense of place in the universe; and for the benefit of wildlife and to reduce energy consumption.

Option B - No Objective on this subject.

SEA Objective	Option A		Option B	
	Score	Justification	Score	Justification
1) To protect and enhance the landscape	+	Intrinsically dark skies are a landscape character of the High Weald	-	No objective on dark skies could result in the loss of intrinsically dark skies across the High Weald
2) To protect and maintain cultural heritage (inc. archaeology and architecture)	n/a		n/a	
3) To protect and where practical enhance diverse habitats	n/a		n/a	

4) To protect and enhance flora and fauna	++	Protection of dark skies supports nocturnal species, to feed, breed and migrate, including rare and protected species.	-	No objective on this subject could result in the loss of the species dependent on dark skies such as bats, moths and glowworms from the High Weald.
5) To protect water systems and promote sustainable flood and drought risk management	n/a		n/a	
6) To safeguard the quality of soil, air, water and maintain appropriate climatic conditions	n/a		n/a	
7) To protect natural resources and encourage sustainable energy use and production	n/a		n/a	
8) To safeguard human health, wellbeing and ensure no adverse effects on population	+	Light pollution is detrimental to human health and wellbeing	-	No objective on this subject could be detrimental to human health and wellbeing due to increased levels of light pollution
9) To avoid significant adverse effects generated through the interrelationships or cumulative effects of the above criteria.	No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.	
SEA Conclusion	Option A has the most positive environmental effects.			

Option A – 2024 consultation Objective DS2: To protect wildlife and habitats from light pollution across the High Weald.

Rationale: Light pollution affects a wide range of nocturnal species, and those out during the day, from feeding to finding a mate and the ability to safely migrate. Light pollution is an additional stressor to habitat loss for already declining populations of many species across the High Weald.

Option B - No Objective on this subject.

SEA Objective	Option A		Option B	
	Score	Justification	Score	Justification
1) To protect and enhance the landscape	n/a		n/a	
2) To protect and maintain cultural heritage (inc. archaeology and architecture)	n/a		n/a	
3) To protect and where practical enhance diverse habitats	++	Protection from light pollution of habitats that are used by nocturnal species, such as field margins, hedgerows, woodland, especially ancient woodland	-	No objective on this subject could result in the deterioration of feed and breeding habitat used by species dependent on dark skies such as bats, moths and glowworms from the High Weald.
4) To protect and enhance flora and fauna	++	Protection of nocturnal species, including rare and protected species found across the High Weald such as bats.	-	No objective on this subject could result in the loss of the species dependent on dark skies such as bats, moths and glowworms from the High Weald.
5) To protect water systems and promote sustainable flood and drought risk management	n/a		n/a	
6) To safeguard the quality of soil, air, water and maintain appropriate climatic conditions	n/a		n/a	
7) To protect natural resources and encourage sustainable energy use and production	n/a		n/a	
8) To safeguard human health, wellbeing and ensure no adverse effects on population	n/a		n/a	
9) To avoid significant adverse effects generated through the interrelationships	No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.	

or cumulative effects of the above criteria.		
SEA Conclusion	Option A has the most positive environmental effects.	

Perceptual and Aesthetic Qualities

Option A – 2024 consultation Objective PQ1: To increase opportunities for learning about and celebrating the High Weald's character and aesthetic qualities and to promote and facilitate contributions by communities and individuals to the conservation and enhancement of the High Weald

Rationale: To help develop emotional connection to the landscape encouraging and enabling people to care for the High Weald and support its conservation.

Option B – No Objective on this subject.

Option C – Previous Objective OQ1: To increase opportunities for learning about and celebrating the character of the High Weald.

Rationale: To help develop emotional connection to the landscape encouraging people to care for the High Weald and support its conservation.

SEA Objective	Option A		Option B		Option C	
	Score	Justification	Score	Justification	Score	Justification
1) To protect and enhance the landscape	++	Protecting and enhancing the landscape including aesthetic qualities needs people who understand and care for the High Weald.	-	No objective on this subject could result in less people understanding and caring for the High Weald to the detriment of its landscape.	+	Objective does not mention aesthetic qualities, and does not incorporate conservation and enhancement of character
2) To protect and maintain cultural heritage (inc. archaeology and architecture)	++	Protecting and maintaining cultural heritage needs people who understand and care for the High Weald.	-	No objective on this subject could result in less people understanding and caring for the High Weald to the detriment of its cultural heritage.	+	Objective does not promote conservation and enhancement of character
3) To protect and where practical enhance diverse habitats	++	Protecting and enhancing habitats needs people who understand and care for the High Weald.	-	No objective on this subject could result in less people understanding and caring for the High Weald to the detriment of its habitats.	++	Protecting and enhancing habitats needs people who understand and care for the High Weald.

4) To protect and enhance flora and fauna	++	Protecting and enhancing flora and fauna needs people who understand and care for the High Weald.	-	No objective on this subject could result in less people understanding and caring for the High Weald to the detriment of its flora and fauna.	++	Protecting and enhancing flora and fauna needs people who understand and care for the High Weald.
5) To protect water systems and promote sustainable flood and drought risk management	++	Protecting water systems needs people who understand and care for the High Weald.	-	No objective on this subject could result in less people understanding and caring for the High Weald to the detriment of its water systems.	++	Protecting water systems needs people who understand and care for the High Weald.
6) To safeguard the quality of soil, air, water and maintain appropriate climatic conditions	++	Safeguarding the quality of soil, air, water and maintaining appropriate climatic conditions needs people who understand and care for the High Weald.	-	No objective on this subject could result in less people understanding and caring for the High Weald to the detriment of its soil, air, water and maintaining appropriate climatic conditions.	++	Safeguarding the quality of soil, air, water and maintaining appropriate climatic conditions needs people who understand and care for the High Weald.
7) To protect natural resources and encourage sustainable energy use and production	++	Protecting natural resources and encouraging sustainable energy use and production needs people who understand and care for the High Weald.	-	No objective on this subject could result in less people understanding and caring for the High Weald to the detriment of its natural resources.	++	Protecting natural resources and encouraging sustainable energy use and production needs people who understand and care for the High Weald.
8) To safeguard human health, wellbeing and ensure no adverse effects on population	++	Increasing opportunities for learning about and celebrating the character of the High Weald adds to human health and wellbeing.	-	No objective on this subject could result in less people understanding and caring for the High Weald to the detriment of their health and wellbeing.	+	Objectives does not mention promoting local community and individual contributions to protecting the High Well, which add to human health and wellbeing
9) To avoid significant adverse effects generated through the interrelationships or cumulative effects of the above criteria.	No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.	
SEA Conclusion	Option A has the most positive environmental effects.					

Option A – 2024 consultation Objective PQ2: To protect the unspoilt rural landscape with its intrinsic sense of naturalness, valued views and the extent of green space which foster experiences of rurality and tranquillity.

Rationale: To prevent the loss of contained green space, glimpsed and long views, and tree-canopied skylines, especially with regard to developments that fringe existing settlements in the High Weald, which would impinge on people’s perception of greenness and rurality.

Option B - No Objective on this subject.

Option C - Alternative wording for OQ4: To protect and promote the perceptual qualities that people value.

Rationale: To ensure that the special qualities people value such as tranquillity, dark skies, sense of naturalness and clear air, are recognised and taken account of in AONB management.

SEA Objective	Option A		Option B		Option C	
	Score	Justification	Score	Justification	Score	Justification
1) To protect and enhance the landscape	++	Protection and enhancement of the landscape includes perceptual and aesthetic qualities such as valued views, tranquillity and rurality.	-	No objective on this subject could result in less protection for these perceptual qualities.	++	Lack of clarity in wording reduces the positive impact.
2) To protect and maintain cultural heritage (inc. archaeology and architecture)	++	Perceptual and aesthetic qualities include people’ understanding of the cultural and historic significance of the landscape.	-	No objective on this subject could result in less protection for these perceptual qualities.	++	Lack of clarity in wording reduces the positive impact.
3) To protect and where practical enhance diverse habitats	n/a		n/a		n/a	
4) To protect and enhance flora and fauna	n/a		n/a		n/a	
5) To protect water systems and promote sustainable flood and drought risk management	n/a		n/a		n/a	
6) To safeguard the quality of soil, air, water and maintain appropriate climatic conditions	n/a		n/a		n/a	

7) To protect natural resources and encourage sustainable energy use and production	n/a		n/a		n/a	
8) To safeguard human health, wellbeing and ensure no adverse effects on population	++	The perceptual qualities are as important as physical landscape qualities to human health and wellbeing	-	No objective on this subject could result in less protection for these perceptual qualities.	++	The perceptual qualities are as important as physical landscape qualities to human health and wellbeing
9) To avoid significant adverse effects generated through the interrelationships or cumulative effects of the above criteria.	No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.	
SEA Conclusion	Option A has the most positive environmental effects.					

Option A – 2024 consultation Objective PQ3: To foster and promote equitable access and informal enjoyment of the High Weald landscape and the integrated management of its resources for the enjoyment of natural beauty by all.

Rationale: To meet the demand for informal recreation from residents and those living close to the AONB, whilst ensuring infrastructure, services and activities are consistent with conserving and enhancing natural beauty and its quiet enjoyment for this and future generations.

Option B - No Objective on this subject.

Option C – Final Objective OQ3: To develop and manage access to maximise opportunities for everyone to enjoy, appreciate and understand the character of the AONB while conserving its natural beauty.

Rationale: To meet demand for informal recreation from residents and the nearly one million people living within 5km of the AONB, ensuring infrastructure, services and activities are consistent with conserving and enhancing natural beauty and its quiet enjoyment.

SEA Objective	Option A		Option B		Option C	
	Score	Justification	Score	Justification	Score	Justification
1) To protect and enhance the landscape	++	Protecting and enhancing the landscape needs people who are able to access enjoy, appreciate and	-	No objective on this subject could result in less opportunities for people to access the AONB appropriately, reducing the	+	Lacks clarity around equitable access.

		understand the character of the AONB. Developing equitable access to the AONB will support these opportunities.		chance that they will protect and enhance the landscape.		
2) To protect and maintain cultural heritage (inc. archaeology and architecture)	++	Protecting and maintaining cultural heritage should be available for all who appreciate and understand the character of the AONB. Developing and managing equitable access to the AONB will support these opportunities.	-	No objective on this subject could result in less opportunities for people to access the AONB appropriately, reducing the chance that they will protect and maintain cultural heritage.	+	Lacks clarity around equitable access opportunities to par-take in protecting culture and heritage
3) To protect and where practical enhance diverse habitats	++	Protecting and enhancing diverse habitats needs people who enjoy, appreciate and understand the character of the AONB. Developing and managing their access to the AONB will support these opportunities.	-	No objective on this subject could result in less opportunities for people to access the AONB appropriately, reducing the chance that they will protect and enhance diverse habitats.	++	Protecting and enhancing diverse habitats needs people who enjoy, appreciate and understand the character of the AONB. Developing and managing their access to the AONB will support these opportunities.
4) To protect and enhance flora and fauna	++	Protecting and enhancing flora and fauna needs people who enjoy, appreciate and understand the character of the AONB. Developing and managing their access to the AONB will support these opportunities.	-	No objective on this subject could result in less opportunities for people to access the AONB appropriately, reducing the chance that they will protect and enhance flora and fauna.	++	Protecting and enhancing flora and fauna needs people who enjoy, appreciate and understand the character of the AONB. Developing and managing their access to the AONB will support these opportunities.
5) To protect water systems and promote sustainable	++	Protecting water systems needs people who enjoy, appreciate and understand	-	No objective on this subject could result in less opportunities for people to	++	Protecting water systems needs people who enjoy, appreciate and understand

flood and drought risk management		the character of the AONB. Developing and managing their access to the AONB will support these opportunities.		access the AONB appropriately, reducing the chance that they will protect water systems.		the character of the AONB. Developing and managing their access to the AONB will support these opportunities.
6) To safeguard the quality of soil, air, water and maintain appropriate climatic conditions	++	Safeguarding the quality of soil, air, water and maintaining appropriate climatic conditions needs people who enjoy, appreciate and understand the character of the AONB. Developing and managing their access to the AONB will support these opportunities.	-	No objective on this subject could result in less opportunities for people to access the AONB appropriately, reducing the chance that they will safeguard the quality of soil, air, water and maintain appropriate climatic conditions.	++	Safeguarding the quality of soil, air, water and maintaining appropriate climatic conditions needs people who enjoy, appreciate and understand the character of the AONB. Developing and managing their access to the AONB will support these opportunities.
7) To protect natural resources and encourage sustainable energy use and production	++	Protecting natural resources needs people who enjoy, appreciate and understand the character of the AONB. Developing and managing their access to the AONB will support these opportunities.	-	No objective on this subject could result in less opportunities for people to access the AONB appropriately, reducing the chance that they will protect natural resources.	++	Protecting natural resources needs people who enjoy, appreciate and understand the character of the AONB. Developing and managing their access to the AONB will support these opportunities.
8) To safeguard human health, wellbeing and ensure no adverse effects on population	++	Equitable access to the AONB supports the health and wellbeing of those users.	-	No objective on this subject could result in less people accessing the AONB appropriately, reducing their opportunity to improve their health and wellbeing.	+	Access to the AONB supports the health and wellbeing of those users.
9) To avoid significant adverse effects generated through the interrelationships or cumulative effects of the above criteria.	No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.	
SEA Conclusion	Options A and C have the most positive environmental effects.					

Land-based Economy and Rural Living

Option A – 2024 consultation Objective LBE1: To improve returns from, and thereby increase entry and retention in, farming, forestry, horticulture and other land management activities that conserve and enhance natural beauty.

Rationale: To sustain an economically viable land management sector, with a particular emphasis on sustainable and small-scale farming and forestry.

Option B - No Objective on this subject.

SEA Objective	Option A		Option B	
	Score	Justification	Score	Justification
1) To protect and enhance the landscape	?	The landscape has been formed by farming, forestry, horticulture and other land management activities, and needs it to continue to retain its character. However, some such uses can have adverse landscape impacts.	-	No objective on this subject could result in a reduction in farming, forestry, horticulture and other land management activities which could adversely impact the landscape.
2) To protect and maintain cultural heritage (inc. archaeology and architecture)	++	Farming, forestry, horticulture and other land management activities are part of the cultural heritage of the area, including skills and traditions of land-based workers.	-	No objective on this subject could result in a reduction in farming, forestry, horticulture and other land management activities which could adversely impact cultural heritage.
3) To protect and where practical enhance diverse habitats	?	Some types of farming, forestry, horticulture and other land management activities can protect and enhance habitats, but more intensive forms can destroy habitats.	?	No objective on this subject could result in a reduction in farming, forestry, horticulture and other land management activities. Impact would depend on the type of land use that replaced it.
4) To protect and enhance flora and fauna	?	Some types of farming, forestry, horticulture and other land management activities can protect and enhance flora and fauna, but more intensive forms can destroy them.	?	No objective on this subject could result in a reduction in farming, forestry, horticulture and other land management activities. Impact would depend on the type of land use that replaced it.
5) To protect water systems and promote sustainable flood and drought risk management	?	Impact depends on specific type of land management.	?	No objective on this subject could result in a reduction in farming, forestry, horticulture and other land management activities. Impact would depend on the type of land use that replaced it.

6) To safeguard the quality of soil, air, water and maintain appropriate climatic conditions	?	Impact depends on specific type of land management.	?	No objective on this subject could result in a reduction in traditional land management activities. Impact would depend on the type of land use that replaced it.
7) To protect natural resources and encourage sustainable energy use and production	?	Impact depends on specific type of land management.	?	No objective on this subject could result in a reduction in farming, forestry, horticulture and other land management activities. Impact would depend on the type of land use that replaced it.
8) To safeguard human health, wellbeing and ensure no adverse effects on population	?	Impact depends on specific type of land management.	?	No objective on this subject could result in a reduction in farming, forestry, horticulture and other land management activities. Impact would depend on the type of land use that replaced it.
9) To avoid significant adverse effects generated through the interrelationships or cumulative effects of the above criteria.	No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.	
SEA Conclusion	Option A has the most positive environmental effects.			

Option A – 2024 consultation Objective LBE2: To reconnect settlements and residents with the surrounding countryside, and maintain and improve rural amenities and services that support communities within the context of the rural settlement pattern.

Rationale: To foster community life, and enhance the synergy of the local economy, society and environment, and the relationship with the surrounding countryside and wild species, that defines sustainable rural settlement.

Option B - No Objective on this subject.

Option C - Previous Objective S1: To reconnect settlements, residents and their supporting economic activity with the surrounding countryside.

Rationale: To understand and enhance the synergy of the local economy, society and environment, and the relationship with the surrounding countryside and wild species, that defines sustainable rural settlement. To provide opportunities for economic activity that supports land management objectives and AONB designation.

SEA Objective	Option A		Option B		Option C	
	Score	Justification	Score	Justification	Score	Justification
1) To protect and enhance the landscape	++	Greater connection between residents and the surrounding landscape will help to protect and enhance it.	-	No objective on this subject could lead to less understanding about the countryside which would be harmful to the landscape.	+	No mention of improving rural amenities which contribute to protecting and enhancing the landscape
2) To protect and maintain cultural heritage (inc. archaeology and architecture)	++	Greater connection with the countryside includes understanding the cultural value of the landscape.	-	No objective on this subject could lead to less understanding of the cultural aspects of the countryside.	+	No mention of improving rural amenities allow better connection to the cultural landscape
3) To protect and where practical enhance diverse habitats	++	Greater connection with the countryside includes understanding the diverse habitats and how to protect and enhance them.	-	No objective on this subject could lead to less understanding of the diverse habitats of the countryside	+	No mention of supporting rural communities which contribute to protecting diverse habitats
4) To protect and enhance flora and fauna	++	Greater connection with the countryside includes understanding the flora and fauna and how to protect and enhance them.	-	No objective on this subject could lead to less understanding of the flora and fauna around residents.	+	No mention of supporting rural communities which contribute to protecting species
5) To protect water systems and promote sustainable flood and drought risk management	++	Greater connection with the countryside includes understanding local water systems and how to protect and enhance them.	-	No objective on this subject could lead to less understanding of local water systems.	+	No mention of support to rural communities to help them protect water systems
6) To safeguard the quality of soil, air, water and maintain appropriate climatic conditions	++	Greater connection with the countryside includes how to protect and enhance soil water and air, and mitigate for climate change.	-	No objective on this subject could lead to as to how the rural landscape can mitigate and be resilient to climate change.	+	No mention of support to rural communities to help understand how their landscape and communities can mitigate and be resilient to climate change.

7) To protect natural resources and encourage sustainable energy use and production	n/a		n/a		n/a	
8) To safeguard human health, wellbeing and ensure no adverse effects on population	++	Supporting local communities and allowing access to fair jobs and housing in rural communities supports wellbeing	?	No objective on this subject may be detrimental to health and wellbeing.	++	Supporting local communities and allowing access to fair jobs and housing in rural communities supports wellbeing
9) To avoid significant adverse effects generated through the interrelationships or cumulative effects of the above criteria.	No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.	
SEA Conclusion	Option A has the most positive environmental effects.					

Option A – 2024 consultation Objective LBE3: To improve agricultural and forestry infrastructure (including the provision of appropriate affordable housing and workspaces for land-based workers), along with skills development for rural communities and related sectors that contribute positively to conserving and enhancing natural beauty.

Rationale: To foster land-based economic activities – including heritage conservation, sustainable tourism and outdoor education – that support conservation of the AONB. To provide opportunities for economic activity that supports appropriate land management objectives and AONB designation.

Option B – No Objective on this subject.

SEA Objective	Option A		Option B	
	Score	Justification	Score	Justification
1) To protect and enhance the landscape	++	Better infrastructure connects residents to the surrounding landscape and will help to protect and enhance it.	-	No objective on this subject could result in a reduction in skilled land-based workers to the detriment of the landscape.

2) To protect and maintain cultural heritage (inc. archaeology and architecture)	++	Better infrastructure to the countryside allows understanding the cultural value of the landscape.	-	No objective on this subject could result in a reduction in skilled land-based workers to the detriment of the cultural heritage of the area.
3) To protect and where practical enhance diverse habitats	++	Better infrastructure in the countryside allows understanding of diverse habitats and how to protect and enhance them.	-	No objective on this subject could result in a reduction in skilled land-based workers to the detriment of diverse habitats.
4) To protect and enhance flora and fauna	++	Better infrastructure in the countryside allows understanding of the flora and fauna and how to protect and enhance them.	-	No objective on this subject could result in a reduction in skilled land-based workers to the detriment of flora and fauna.
5) To protect water systems and promote sustainable flood and drought risk management	++	Better infrastructure in the countryside includes protection of local water systems and how to protect and enhance them.	-	No objective on this subject could result in a reduction in skilled land-based workers to the detriment of water systems.
6) To safeguard the quality of soil, air, water and maintain appropriate climatic conditions	++	Better infrastructure in the countryside includes how to protect and enhance soil water and air and mitigate for climate change.	-	No objective on this subject could result in a reduction in skilled land-based workers to the detriment of soil, air, water and maintaining appropriate climatic conditions.
7) To protect natural resources and encourage sustainable energy use and production	n/a		n/a	
8) To safeguard human health, wellbeing and ensure no adverse effects on population	++	Supports current and future generations to have a choice to live and work in diverse rural locations, in supported communities	-	No objective on this subject could result in a reduction in health and well-being of rural populations.
9) To avoid significant adverse effects generated through the interrelationships or cumulative effects of the above criteria.	No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.		No significant adverse effects generated by interrelationships or cumulative impacts.	
SEA Conclusion	Option A has the most positive environmental effects.			