

Notes of SDAONB NPPF CONSULTATION MEETING

2 MAY 2018, 3.30PM AT FOLLATON HOUSE

Present: Roger English, AONB
Carole Box, CPRE Torbay,
Justin Haque, CPRE South Devon,
Georgina Allen, Totnes Town Council,
Peter Stratton, Salcombe Neighbourhood Plan Group,
Robert Brooke, Dartmouth and Kingswear Society,
Vivien Napper, South Hams Society,
Burda Gage, Modbury Society,
John Graham, South Hams Society,
Geoffrey Osborn, Amenity Groups representative, AONB PC

1 RE opened the meeting, stating that the most critical changes in the new draft NPPF related to the **natural environment**, old para 115 and 116, > new 170; and **sustainable development**, old 14, > new 11.

2 Papers circulated: seven page draft submission by National Association of AONBs on both topics; and single page suggested wording for new para 170 from GO.

3 Roger intends to contribute to the NAAONB response, and to submit a separate (more robust) response from South Devon AONB, agreed to be a special case.

4 **New para 170.** Unanimously agreed to add the words: “which have the highest status of protection IN LAW in relation to”

5 **New para 170.** Discussion on whether better to refer to “landscape and scenic beauty” as in NPPF, or to “natural beauty” as in statutory definition of AONB. Decided to include both. Also to say landscape character.

6 **New para 170.** “Conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage” are important criteria in the assessment of AONBs, therefore it is essential that they be stated to be important considerations in decision-making in AONBs and not just in National Parks and The Broads. If accepted, this would be an improvement on the original NPPF.

7 **New para 170.** Discussion on refusing major development except where it is “in the public interest”. Agreed this is too vague and should be re-worded to use a good planning expression: “*imperative reasons of overriding public interest*” (IROPI).

8 **New para 170.** After the three tests, a, b and c, add an extra, d relating to design standards, e.g. “whether the design and materials are in keeping with local style and characteristics.”

9 **New para 60.** This paragraph was unanimously disliked. The meeting questioned whether it should be there at all.

10 **Glossary, Major development.** In order to avoid a site being classed as a major development, applicants are resorting to applying for larger developments piecemeal with 8 or 9 houses at a time. Therefore suggested that such cases should be cumulative within a period of say 5 or evn 10 years.

11 **What is sustainable development?** Suggested that only developments of brownfield sites are truly sustainable. Any other development inevitably uses up some natural capital which cannot be replaced. E. g. it is impossible to replace a 100 year old oak tree.

12 **To sum up:** “It was agreed that the proposed changes would weaken protection of the AONB. It was unanimously agreed that the response from Roger English following this consultation with interested bodies should not tinker with small changes in the wording but put forward our own much stronger wording. Roger has the unenviable task of knitting this with what might actually get accepted.” [Acknowledgements to VN for that one!]

Geoffrey Osborn

04.05.2018