

5 Development management policies

- Extensions to existing dwellings provided they are subsidiary to the building and do not have an adverse impact on the character of the landscape
- A gypsy and traveller site in accordance with Policy H6
- Development in accordance with Policy H1

5.32 The detailed boundaries of the Green Belt around High Peak - as marked on the policies map - were laid down in the North West Derbyshire Green Belt Local Plan, adopted in December 1990. The Green Belt is defined as the area northwards from Whaley Bridge between the boundaries of the Peak District National Park, Cheshire, Stockport and Tameside. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. In order to ensure that the Green Belt will endure for and beyond the plan period, the Green Belt boundary around the towns and the larger villages has been subject to a review as part of the work undertaken to prepare this High Peak Local Plan. This has resulted in the removal of some land at Furness Vale from the Green Belt.

Policy EQ 4

Green Belt Development

The Council will seek to protect the Green Belt and maintain its openness and permanence. The boundaries of the Green Belt are defined on the Policies Map.

Within the Green Belt, planning permission will not be granted for development unless it is in accordance with national planning policy.

Supporting guidance

- National Planning Policy Framework; 2012
- High Peak Local Plan: Landscape Impact Assessment; Wardell Armstrong; January 2014
- The Landscape Character of Derbyshire; Derbyshire County Council; 2003
- Landscape Character Supplementary Planning Document; High Peak Borough Council; adopted March 2006
- Landscape Strategy and Action Plan; Peak District National Park Authority; 2009

Biodiversity

5.33 The Natural Environment White Paper published in June 2011 considers that a healthy, properly functioning natural environment is the foundation of sustained economic growth, prospering communities and personal well-being. The Government is committed to halting the overall loss of England's biodiversity by 2020 and to taking a more integrated, large-scale approach to conservation, including by supporting the creation of Nature Improvement Areas, such as the Dark Peak NIA that borders the north east boundary of the plan area.

5.34 This policy is designed to contribute to the above aims by minimising the potential impacts of development on biodiversity and geodiversity and to provide net gains in biodiversity where possible. By working with partners through the Local Nature Partnership and Dark Peak NIA, the Council will help plan for biodiversity at a landscape scale across local authority boundaries.

5.35 The Plan Area has a rich biodiversity, primarily due to its rural nature. The countryside surrounding the Borough's towns and villages and bordering the Peak District National Park, comprises a patchwork of internationally, nationally, regionally and locally designated sites important for their nature conservation value.

5.36 The High Peak Plan area includes part of three nature conservation sites of international importance - as shown on the policies map - designated either as a Special Protection Area (SPA) under the EC Directive on the conservation of wild birds, or as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under the European Union's Habitats Directive. These together are known as European Sites. There are also eight Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) within the Plan Area - as shown on the policies map - these are nationally recognised for their wildlife and geological interest.

5.37 The Local Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) report, has identified the potential for adverse effects from development on the integrity of the Peak District Moors (South Pennine Moors Phase 1) SPA, the South Pennine Moors SAC, and the Peak District Dales SAC. Such adverse effects could be the result of increased emissions to air from expected traffic increases, presence of dogs, pet predation, fire setting, or disturbance of grazing animals used for site management.

5.38 If a development proposal is capable of affecting one or more of the European sites: South Pennine Moors Phase 2 SPA; Peak District Moors (South Pennine Moors Phase 1) SPA; Peak District Dales SAC and South Pennine Moors SAC, it will be considered on a case-by-case basis as to whether a project-specific Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is required. This requirement is likely to vary, according to the size of development site, the "in-combination" effects and its distance from the SPA and or SAC. Advice on this should be sought from Natural England at the earliest opportunity. The Council's HRA Report includes guidance on the approach to be taken by the Council when assessing those planning applications that could have an Likely Significant Effect on a European site in view of the implications of the designated site's conservation objectives.

5.39 The Local Plan provides an opportunity to deliver some of the targets set out in the local Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP). High Peak Borough Council is a partner organisation helping to deliver the Peak District BAP which includes actions to address the needs of UK priority species and habitats, as well as plans for other habitats of local importance or interest.

5.40 There are a number of locally important wildlife or geological sites and local nature reserves dispersed throughout the plan area that are valued by local communities for their natural beauty and biodiversity value. High Peak has seven sites of importance for their geology and seven statutory Local Nature Reserves - as shown on the proposals map. In addition there are 106 High Peak Local Wildlife Sites included on the Derbyshire Wildlife Sites Register - as shown on the proposals map. Although much of the remaining countryside has no formal designation, the contribution that the wildlife and habitats within it make, to both biodiversity and the quality and distinctiveness of the landscapes of the area, is equally important.

5 Development management policies

5.41 Opportunities for biodiversity to extend into the urban areas will be sought. In particular via parks and gardens where there is space for vegetation and wildlife to thrive, and via river corridors and trails that link habitats together. The continued development of the Green Infrastructure Network will provide opportunities for links between the urban areas and the surrounding countryside to be developed. The impact of climate change on biodiversity will also be addressed by improving connectivity between habitats.

5.42 The Peak District National Park Authority has been awarded Local Nature Partnership (LNP) capacity building funding for the Peak District - including the Borough of High Peak. The Council will support the work of the partnership and assist with the delivery of its goals.

5.43 The Dark Peak Nature Improvement Area (NIA) covers 25,000 hectares of the Peak District National Park around the High Peak Plan Area. The Council will support the work of the NIA partnership, in particular with the development of long-term landscape-scale masterplans and improvements to "people corridors" - better access routes linking High Peak settlements into the surrounding countryside of the Dark Peak.

Policy EQ 5

Biodiversity

The biodiversity and geological resources of the Plan Area and its surroundings will be conserved and where possible enhanced by ensuring that development proposals will not result in significant harm to biodiversity or geodiversity interests.

This will be achieved by:

- Conserving and enhancing sites of international, European, and national importance. On these sites the Council will not permit any development proposal that has an adverse effect on the integrity of a European site (or wildlife site given the same protection as European sites under the NPPF) either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.
- Conserving and enhancing any Sites of Special Scientific Interest. On these sites the Council will not permit any development proposal which would directly or indirectly (either individually or in combination with other developments) have an adverse effect on a Site of Special Scientific Interest
- Conserving and enhancing regionally and locally designated sites. On these sites the Council will not permit any development proposal which would directly or indirectly result in significant harm to geological and biodiversity conservation interests, unless it can be demonstrated that:
 - there is no appropriate alternative site available; and
 - all statutory and regulatory requirements relating to any such proposal have been satisfied; and
 - appropriate conservation and mitigation measures are provided, such mitigation measures should ensure as a minimum no net loss and wherever possible net gain for biodiversity;

- or if it is demonstrated that this is not possible;
 - the need for, and benefit of, the development is demonstrated to clearly outweigh the need to safeguard the intrinsic nature conservation value of the site and compensatory measures are implemented
-
- Encouraging development to include measures to contribute positively to the overall biodiversity of the Plan Area
 - Working with partners to help meet the objectives and targets in the Peak District Biodiversity Action Plan or its successor
 - Working with partners to protect and enhance watercourses
 - Identifying local ecological networks and supporting their establishment and protection in accordance with Local Plan Policy EQ8, preferentially creating biodiversity sites where they have the potential to develop corridors between habitats (both terrestrial and freshwater)
 - Working with partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors to develop and secure the implementation of projects to enhance the landscape and create or restore habitats of nature conservation value, and to secure the more effective management of land in the Plan Area and its surroundings

Supporting Guidance and Evidence

- Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020
- Convention on Biological Diversity strategic plan for 2011 - 2020
- Biodiversity 2020: a strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services; 2011
- Making Space for Nature: A review of England's Wildlife Sites and Ecological Network; 2010
- Natural Environment White Paper: The Natural Choice: Securing the value of nature; 2011
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act; 2006
- National Planning Policy Framework; 2012
- Peak District Biodiversity Action Plan

Design and Place Making

5.44 High Peak is committed to planning positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development. A high quality, well designed, development can enhance the sense of place and identity of an area and can bring significant benefits to the local environment and economy. Through high quality design, new development can have a positive impact on the lives of local people and visitors to the Borough.

5.45 Well-designed buildings respond to the character and setting of their surroundings and make a positive contribution to making places better for people. Towns and villages in the High Peak have a distinct local character which has been defined by their architectural and historic development as well as by the use of natural materials such as stone. The distinct sense of place and high environmental quality of the towns and villages is a major factor in attracting people to