



**DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
MANAGEMENT PLAN 2020-2045**

**SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL (SA)
(integrating Strategic Environmental
Assessment; Health Impact Assessment &
Equality Impact Assessment)**

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

January 2020

enfusion



DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY MANAGEMENT PLAN 2020-2045

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL (SA) [Incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA); Health Impact Assessment (HIA); Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)]

SA Report NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY (NTS) January 2020

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<i>prepared for:</i>	Dartmoor National Park Authority	
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SA NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY (NTS)

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This is the NTS of the Sustainability Appraisal Report

1. This is the Non-Technical Summary of the Sustainability Appraisal Report documenting the processes of Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) within an integrated appraisal for the draft Dartmoor Management Plan. This summary is an integral part of the SA Report that accompanies the draft Management Plan for public consultation during 10 February to 20 April 2020. It provides an outline of the SA process and findings, including how the SA has influenced the development of the draft Plan, and in accordance with the requirements of the European SEA Directive, and UK guidance on SA/SEA.

The Dartmoor Management Plan

2. The Dartmoor National Park Authority is undertaking a review of the Dartmoor Management Plan. The review covers the period 2020-2025 with a long-term Vision through to 2045.
3. Fundamental to the review of the Local Plan are the two statutory purposes of the National Park designation:
 - to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage
 - to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public

Also, the duty of National Park Authorities in pursuing National Park purposes:

- to seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities (within the National Park) by working closely with the agencies and local authorities responsible for these matters

4. The Dartmoor Management Plan 2020-2045 includes a long-term Vision for Dartmoor in 2045 with more detail set out in seven Themes. The draft MP sets the context with an introduction, explains the purpose of the MP the purpose and duty of the National Park and the significance of the Dartmoor Commons Act, and demonstrates the Special Qualities for which the Dartmoor National Park is designated. The MP explains the forces of change, including the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan (2018) and the Glover Report (September 2019) that recommends specific proposals to improve and strengthen Management Plans. The DNPMP has been prepared in the spirit of the Glover Report but it is noted that its' recommendations will require agreement by Government, legislative changes, and new funding.
5. The seven Themes are as follows:
 - Climate Change (Cross-Cutting)
 - Better for the Next Generation (Cross-Cutting & with Next Generation Vision)
 - Better for Nature & Natural Beauty
 - Better for Cultural Heritage
 - Better for Farming & Forestry
 - Better for People
 - Better for Communities & Business

For each specific theme, the DNPMP considers "What are we trying to achieve?" and "How will we achieve this?" The final section of the Plan proposes "How do we measure success?" with indicators to consider progress towards the Vision and outcomes to be monitored through periodic updates to the State of the Park report.

6. In preparing the Management Plan, it was clear that there are a number of conflicting or competing objectives and also 'grit issues' where opinions are divided about how the MP should address them. Whilst the Authority will always refer back to the statutory purposes of the National Park when considering such issues, the draft MP sets out Principles to guide decision-making on such Key Challenges, as follows:
 - Landscape Management & Nature Recovery
 - More Trees
 - Existing Conifer Plantations
 - A Grazed Moorland Landscape
 - More Visitors
 - Changing Demographics
 - Communication Infrastructure
 - Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency
 - Military Training

Sustainability Appraisal: SA, SEA, HIA, EqlA and HRA

7. The purpose of Sustainability Appraisal is to promote sustainable development through the integration of environmental, social and economic considerations in the preparation of Local Plans. Certain Plans, such as Management Plans, must also be subject to Regulations for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Government advises that an integrated approach is taken so that the SA process incorporates the requirements for SEA – and to the same level of detail.
8. For the Sustainability Appraisal, an integrated process has been undertaken that also addresses health and equality issues (to demonstrate compliance with the Equality Act, 2010), alongside the requirements of the Habitats Assessments Regulations. The summary findings of the health, equality, and habitats assessments have been integrated into the Sustainability Appraisal. The Dartmoor National Park Authority commissioned independent specialist consultants Enfusion to progress the appraisal work commencing early October 2019.
9. SA is an iterative and ongoing process that informs plan-making by assessing developing elements of the plan, evaluating and describing the likely significant effects of implementing the plan, and suggesting possibilities for mitigating significant adverse effects and enhancing positive effects. UK Guidance suggests a staged approach to SEA. Initially the scope of the SA is determined by establishing the baseline conditions and context of the area by considering other relevant plans and objectives, and by identifying issues, problems and opportunities. From this the scope of the SA is prepared and includes a SA Framework of objectives for sustainable development relevant to the Dartmoor National Park area and which forms the basis against which the draft Plan is assessed.

Sustainability Characteristics of the Dartmoor National Park area and likely evolution without the Management Plan

10. The National Park is defined by the characteristics that contributed to its designation – special landscape, wildlife and historical features. The extensive upland moorland supports internationally important blanket bogs; deep-cut valleys steeped in woodland with rivers are a notable landscape feature, together with distinct granite tors. A large amount of the land is used for grazing of cattle, sheep and ponies. Dartmoor is considered to have a high level of tranquility and dark night skies. The built environment is largely limited to small settlements and individual dwellings with settlement characters varying between those on the High Moor and those on the periphery.
11. Within the National Park there are three European designated Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) as well as others outside the boundary but within Devon. There is a further rich variety of biodiversity that ranges in designation from nationally to locally important; however, the significance of this may extend far more than the known resource and is important to the wider network of green infrastructure of Devon and the South West. Visitors,

recreational use, and farming practices can all have detrimental effects on key habitats and wildlife.

12. Dartmoor has a very rich variety of designated heritage assets, and the archaeological landscape of Dartmoor is extensive. Dartmoor has more Scheduled Monuments than any other National Park in England. Many of the historical features are integral parts of the landscape and may have local significance to communities and individuals, together with contributing to the character of places.
13. The granite on Dartmoor has been quarried for centuries and mining has also been a feature of Dartmoor landscape. The soils on Dartmoor are peat on the higher moors, and thin soils in the surrounding area. Most of the land is designated as Grade 5, least fertile, and farming is constrained to small areas. However, the soil resources of Dartmoor are still important, for non-intensive grazing and biodiversity.
14. Dartmoor is a major water catchment in the south west, supplying much of the water to Devon and Plymouth and with a surplus of water anticipated until 2040. Most waterbodies in the National Park are good-moderate ecological status; quality is mostly affected by pollution from agricultural run-off. Areas of medium to high flood risk (Zones 2-3) are largely located in steep sided valleys.
15. The population of Dartmoor is considered to be stable with little change since 2001. The National Park has a higher old age dependency ratio than the national average, creating issues for adaptable housing, pressures on local health services, and public transport. Each settlement on Dartmoor has its unique features and identity, and therefore each settlement has its own set of issues that are important to that specific community. Common issues across communities include access to local services/facilities, employment in settlements and rural areas, public transport and traffic. The fewer employment opportunities has resulted in people out-commuting for employment, a lack of opportunity for young people and weaker economies for local settlements.
16. The area is characterised by the vacancy rate, which is higher than both the Devon and England average, and is attributed to the number of second homes and holiday lets within Dartmoor. The ratio between average house prices and average earnings in the National Park is high. Young people, seasonal staff and part time workers, and other key workers are priced out of Dartmoor as they cannot afford accommodation. Enabling people to continue to farm whilst providing the highest status of protection to the landscape remains a key issue for both the review of the Local Plan and the Management Plan.
17. A number of key health statistics in Devon are below or in line with the national averages; Dartmoor also has a lower than average Index of Multiple Deprivation score. Overall, 49% of Dartmoor National Park is designated as Access Land for the public, and therefore all residents and visitors have access to this land to use for recreational purposes.

18. Employment has been growing at around 2.8% per annum and the local economy is remaining resilient and benefitting from a diverse economic base. Many of the jobs in Dartmoor are in agriculture, forestry and fishing. There is net out commuting for work from Dartmoor for about 23% of workers and a key factor is to increase opportunities for home working. In 2015, over 2.3 million tourists visited the National Park, of which 2.05 million were day visitors and 263,000 were staying visitors (a 17% increase on 2009 indicating a growing trend).
19. Dartmoor is bordered to the north by the A30, to the south by the A38 and to the west by the A386. The A30 and A38 to the east provide access to the M5 at Exeter. The main A roads such as the A386 suffer from congestion; and the mode of transport for local people is private vehicles such as cars and vans. The public rights of way network is extensive with footpaths, bridleways and byways located across the National Park.
20. Transport is the highest source of energy consumption due to the rural nature of the area. Overall the climate of Dartmoor is changing, becoming warmer and wetter with a longer growing season – affecting biodiversity and farming. Whilst almost 50% of waste within Dartmoor was sent to reuse, recycling or compost (higher than the national average), rubbish can be an issue as a result of increased visitor numbers.
21. Without the Management Plan, competing requirements for nature, natural beauty, the historic environment, farming and forestry, communities and visitors would not be considered or managed proactively and positively with likely adverse effects. There would be no strategic framework for longer term planning and management to address the predicted effects of climate change, nor to positively address the issues associated with the next generation and the emerging changes in Government policy and funding.

Key Sustainability Issues, Problems and Opportunities

22. Key sustainability issues, problems and opportunities include the following:

Key Sustainability Issues

- National requirements for National Parks to take a lead on natural beauty and improving natural capital – for example, seeking opportunities for nature recovery and improving linkages considering the wider landscape scale for both designated and local landscapes
- Land management changes have the potential for an unacceptable effect on the natural beauty, landscape & settlement characters
- Climate change will threaten Dartmoor's varied habitats and wide range of species; however, nature recovery may allow species to move through the landscape and accepts that species will change
- Encouraging sustainable farming practices, and engaging farmers to ensure agricultural methods & practices do not result in negative effects on biodiversity – seeking to progress a nature recovery approach appropriate with changes in

farming subsidies & emerging funding for “public goods & services” – ecosystems services and including possibilities in the farmed areas through the new Environmental Land Management Schemes

- Light pollution from peripheral towns and cities, and development within the National Park, threatening the dark night skies, should be minimised
- Need to protect the internationally, nationally and locally designated biodiversity and geodiversity that covers much of the area
- Managing access so that designated sites, priority habitat and priority species are not negatively affected by recreational activities, whilst sustaining positive effects for the economy
- Encouraging sustainable farming and forestry practises
- Need to protect the range of extensive historical and archaeological features, both designated and undesignated
- Contributing to water quality improvement & more sustainable management of water; avoiding development in areas of flood risk; Investigating opportunities to manage flood risk in upper catchments through changed habitats and land use practices
- An ageing population & need to engage the next generation
- New development should be focussed in areas that are the most sustainable and have the capacity for change
- Net out-commuting for work, which may increase as peripheral towns and cities grow
- Relatively low wages and high house prices which may deter/prohibit young workers living in the National Park
- Almost half of businesses are small or micro, and there is a high level of self-employment
- Relatively high employment in agriculture, but this is forecast to fall
- 20-30% of employment is in tourism, with large-scale expenditure in the local economy by tourists, dominated by day visitors
- Much of the economy depends on the quality of the natural and built environment, and overall natural capital, through encouraging tourism, visitors, and location of businesses
- High dependence on private vehicle use with poor and infrequent public transport services – a common feature in rural Devon
- Promote sustainable transport in the National Park
- Conflicts between users – for example, horse riders & mountain biking
- Promoting access and use of the National Park for different ethnic groups – (also a national issue)
- Mitigating and adapting to the effects of Climate Change including more natural functioning of systems and through appropriate design and siting of development

How has the Management Plan been assessed?

23. The proposed scope of the Sustainability Appraisal was set out in the SA Scoping Report, including details of how the draft plan would be assessed. An SA Framework was compiled, including SA Objectives that aim to resolve the

issues identified for development planning in the DLP area. This SA Framework, together with the baseline information, comprised the basis for assessment, and is summarised in the following table:

No.	SA Objective
1	To conserve & enhance the special qualities and natural beauty
2	To conserve & enhance Dartmoor's special boundary features, mosaic farmland
3	To protect & enhance sites of special geology, landscape scale geology
4	To preserve the wild, remote & tranquil characteristics
5	To recover and enhance natural and semi natural woodlands
6	To recover and enhance Dartmoor's moorland areas
7	To recover and enhance Dartmoor's wetlands
8	To recover & enhance habitats & networks for net gain with landscape-scale
9	To conserve & enhance the historic environment & its settings
10	To raise the quality of design and construction
11	To support cultural heritage including local traditions
12	To protect and improve air quality
13	To promote efficient water use and improve water quality
14	To protect & conserve soil, land, minerals, reduce soil erosion
15	To minimise Dartmoor's contribution to climate change
16	To reduce the risk of flooding & manage flood risk more sustainably
17	To promote understanding & enjoyment of the National Park's special qualities
18	To improve access to Dartmoor's open countryside
19	To promote and support a sustainable economy, particularly key business sectors
20	To enable all residents to share in growing prosperity
21	To ensure that the needs of all residents are met for affordable housing & access
22	To promote sustainable transport & improve safety, health & air quality
23	To safeguard & improve community health, safety and wellbeing
24	To promote inclusiveness, equality & participation

24. Each developing element of the draft Management Plan, including the Vision and the Themes, was subject to SA. Using the SA Framework of objectives, the baseline information, and professional opinion, the likely effects of the emerging draft DLP were assessed. The SA considered positive/negative, short/long term, and cumulative effects where possible, and according to categories of significance as set out in the following table:

Categories of Significance for SA		
Symbol	Meaning	Sustainability Effect
--	Major Negative	Problematical & improbable because of known issues; mitigation likely to be difficult and/or expensive
-	Minor negative	Potential sustainability issues: mitigation and/or negotiation possible

+	Minor positive	No sustainability constraints and development acceptable
++	Major Positive	Development encouraged as would resolve existing sustainability problem
?	Uncertain	Uncertain or Unknown Effects
0	Neutral	Neutral effect

What reasonable alternatives have been considered and assessed?

25. At the SA scoping stage, it had been considered that 3 strategic approaches for the Management Plan could be investigated through SA. However, as the draft Plan developed and after initial high-level assessments were drafted, it was determined that the 3 approaches (balanced; focus on nature recovery; focus on climate change) were not actually sufficiently distinct to enable meaningful comparative assessments. The Management Plan has developed with a strong recognition of the cross-cutting factors involved – the need for nature recovery at the landscape scale and the need to address the predicted effects of climate change. Therefore, it was determined that there were no suitable or meaningful approach options for the Plan to consider and no meaningful or reasonable alternatives for the SA to consider.

What are the likely significant effects of the draft Management Plan? How has the SA influenced the draft Plan?

26. Overall, the implementation of the Management Plan was found by the SA to have likely positive effects or neutral (insignificant or not directly applicable) effects for the Plan Themes; there were no negative effects identified. Aspirations for Climate Change and the Next Generation are clearly presented as cross-cutting themes that are embedded and integrated throughout the Plan.
27. The SA found major positive effects for the key intentions to manage nature and natural beauty, including progressing naturally functioning systems and dynamic ecosystems a landscape scale, and cultural heritage and the historic environment. Some uncertainty was recorded by the SA for the precise significance of certain positive effects, particularly until the new Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMSs) are developed and implemented.
28. Alongside the positive effects, some potential negative effects were also identified, particularly associated with potential conflicts between other Plan objectives for nature recovery (more trees) and natural beauty, cultural heritage and the historic environment, farming and forestry, changing demographics and predicted increase in visitors, and military training.

How could negative effects be mitigated?

29. Potential negative effects have been mitigated through avoidance measures that have been embedded into the development of the Management Plan with two cross-cutting Themes on Climate Change and the Next Generation, and careful development of intentions for each of the specific Themes. Potential negative effects arising through possible conflicts between Plan objectives have been addressed through considering Key Challenges and providing Principles for guiding decision-making.

EqIA & HRA

30. The equality impact screening assessment has found that the Management Plan is unlikely to have negative effects on protected characteristics or persons identified under the Equality Act 2010 and thus a full EqIA will not be required. Overall, effects were compatible and positive, or not applicable, with regard to protected persons; no negative effects were identified.
31. The HRA screening stage of the process determined that there would be no adverse likely significant effects (LSEs) on the identified European sites – either alone or in-combination with other plans and projects, and no further assessment was required at this time. The HRA screening suggested where consideration of HRA may be needed in the future.

Were there any difficulties encountered?

32. There were no significant technical difficulties encountered during the preparation of this SA. There are inherent difficulties in predicting the likely future baseline and assumptions were made using professional judgment. The SA noted the bold and ambitious Vision for the Management Plan and the key challenges that are likely; also, that the Plan was being developed during a period of uncertainty with changes to Government policy and funding.

Consultation

33. The development of the draft Management Plan has included wide consultation including workshop and web-based documentation. The proposed scope of the SA was consulted formally at the scoping stage in October 2019 with the statutory bodies (Historic England, Environment Agency, and Natural England). Representation was received from Natural England and some minor amendments were made to the baseline information in the SA Scoping Report.

Monitoring Proposals

34. Government advises that existing monitoring arrangements should be used where possible in order to avoid duplication. The Dartmoor National Park Authority has advised that progress towards the Vision in the Management Plan will be measured through a number of 'measures of success'. Outcomes will be monitored through periodic updates to the State of the Park Report. These measures will include consideration of any specific requirements from the SA process.

Next Steps

35. The draft Dartmoor Management Plan 2020 to 2045 and this accompanying Sustainability Appraisal Report will be available for consultation during 10 February to 20 April 2020. Comments received on the SA and the draft Plan will be taken into account in finalising the Management Plan prior to adaptation later in 2020. This will be accompanied by a SA Adoption Statement in line with the requirements of the SEA Regulations.