

‘Planning for Dark Night Skies’ - Supplementary Planning Guidance for lighting in the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB

Well-being Impact Assessment Report


This report summarises the likely impact of the proposal on the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Denbighshire, Wales and the world.

Assessment Number:	917
Brief description:	‘Planning for Dark Night Skies’ - Supplementary Planning Guidance for lighting in the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB
Date Completed:	Version: 0
Completed by:	
Responsible Service:	Planning & Public Protection
Localities affected by the proposal:	Whole County,
Who will be affected by the proposal?	Those seeking to carry out development in and around the AONB, including homeowners and businesses. Local people and visitors to the AONB
Was this impact assessment completed as a group?	No

IMPACT ASSESSMENT SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Before we look in detail at the contribution and impact of the proposal, it is important to consider how the proposal is applying the sustainable development principle. This means that we must act "in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

Score for the sustainability of the approach

 (3 out of 4 stars) Actual score : 27 / 36.

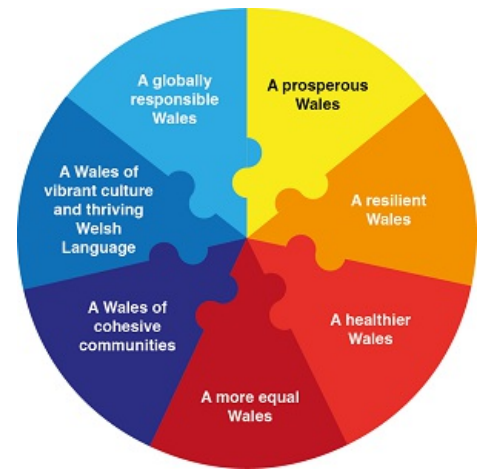
Summary for each Sustainable Development principle

Long term	The management and reduction of excessive and poorly designed external lighting seeks to improve the night-time environment in the long term. The lighting of County sites and buildings will be improved by adopting this policy guidance (e.g. new dark sky friendly lighting scheme at Loggerheads and changes to street lighting specifications). Reducing light pollution will also help reduce carbon emissions, contribute to human health and well-being and reduce the negative effects of excessive light on biodiversity.
Prevention	Better management and design of external lighting will reduce light pollution, help reduce carbon emissions and mitigate the negative effects of excessive light on biodiversity.
Integration	The SPG will contribute to Corporate Priority: Environment – 'attractive and protected, supporting well-being and economic prosperity'. Reducing light pollution will reduce carbon emissions, contribute to human health and well-being and reduce the negative effects of excessive light on biodiversity. It will also assist in conserving the special qualities of the AONB as a nationally protected landscape and enhance its appeal to visitors. There will also be a positive effect on the local economy by enhancing opportunities for astro-tourism during the off-peak autumn/winter months. The document provides additional guidance and interpretation of LDP policies
Collaboration	The AONB covers part of three local planning authority areas – Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham – and the SPG will apply to the relevant area of all three authorities. An Officer Working Group comprising planning officers from the three authorities together with representatives from the AONB and NRW was established to take forward and co-ordinate preparation of the SPG. The council's Strategic Planning Group and AONB Partnership has also had an input to the SPG
Involvement	The draft SPG was put out to public consultation for an 8 week period. Statutory and non statutory stakeholders were notified of the consultation and invited to comment. Measures were taken to raise public awareness of the consultation, including press releases and social media. Copies of the draft SPG were also made available in local libraries. There were 31 respondents to the consultation, the majority of which were supportive of the initiative. The officer working group considered the representations and has suggested changes to the document in the light of comments received. The Strategic Planning Group has also considered the representations and suggested changes to the SPG.

Summary of impact

Well-being Goals

A prosperous Denbighshire	Positive
A resilient Denbighshire	Positive
A healthier Denbighshire	Positive
A more equal Denbighshire	Neutral
A Denbighshire of cohesive communities	Positive
A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language	Neutral
A globally responsible Denbighshire	Neutral



Main conclusions

The SPG seeks to conserve and enhance the tranquillity of the AONB, which is one of the recognised special qualities of the area as a nationally protected landscape. Tranquillity is defined as 'an atmosphere of calm and stillness; peace and quiet; and with dark night skies'. This quality is an important component of the AONB's appeal to local people and visitors and the SPG will therefore have a positive effect on the tourist economy and local prosperity. Reducing excessive lighting and minimising light pollution will also have beneficial effects on the health and emotional wellbeing of both visitors and local people and reduce harmful impacts on nocturnal wildlife and biodiversity. It will also help reduce energy consumption and consequent carbon emissions. Potential negative impacts include those associated with a possible increase in visitor numbers to the AONB and the disturbance this can sometimes cause to local communities if not managed well. In addition, an increase in travel by car to the area will have a negative impact on carbon emissions. To address these issues visitors will be encouraged to visit the area by public transport whenever possible and to behave responsibly and respect local communities.

Evidence to support the Well-being Impact Assessment

- We have consulted published research or guides that inform us about the likely impact of the proposal
- We have involved an expert / consulted a group who represent those who may be affected by the proposal
- We have engaged with people who will be affected by the proposal

THE LIKELY IMPACT ON DENBIGHSHIRE, WALES AND THE WORLD

A prosperous Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Positive
Justification for impact	Will contribute to local economic development
Further actions required	Encourage visitors to use public transport to access the AONB wherever possible

Positive impacts identified:

A low carbon society	A reduction in excessive lighting will help reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions
Quality communications, infrastructure and transport	
Economic development	Conserving and enhancing the dark skies of the AONB will help develop the emerging astro-tourism sector locally.
Quality skills for the long term	
Quality jobs for the long term	Increasing visitor numbers could help safeguard existing jobs in the visitor economy and possibly result in additional jobs, particularly during the off-peak season
Childcare	

Negative impacts identified:

A low carbon society	Attracting additional visitors to the area could result in additional transport emissions
Quality communications, infrastructure and transport	
Economic development	Possible increase in the number of visitors to the area travelling by car.
Quality skills for the long term	
Quality jobs for the long term	
Childcare	

A resilient Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Positive
Justification for impact	Improved lighting design and specification will assist in conserving and enhancing the special character of the AONB and benefit nocturnal wildlife.
Further actions required	

Positive impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment	Reducing and controlling excessive light will benefit nocturnal wildlife and help conserve the tranquil and unspoilt character of the AONB
Biodiversity in the built environment	Better control of excessive light will benefit nocturnal wildlife
Reducing waste, reusing and recycling	Replacing older types of lighting with more modern, energy efficient lighting with a longer life-span could result in less waste.
Reduced energy/fuel consumption	Reduced lighting will reduce energy consumption and consequent carbon emissions. Modern lighting is more energy efficient.
People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity	The SPG will assist in raising awareness of the harmful impact of excessive light on wildlife and emphasises the need to conserve biodiversity when designing a lighting scheme. It will also foster increased awareness of the AONB in general and its special qualities.
Flood risk management	

Negative impacts identified:

Biodiversity and the natural environment	
Biodiversity in the built environment	
Reducing waste, reusing and recycling	
Reduced energy/fuel consumption	
People's awareness of the environment and biodiversity	
Flood risk management	

A healthier Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Positive
Justification for impact	Access to beautiful, tranquil places such as the AONB and the opportunity to experience the wonders of a dark night sky has positive benefits for the physical and emotional health of local people and visitors.
Further actions required	There is little evidence to support the assumption that poor lighting encourages crime and disorder, which is covered in the SPG.

Positive impacts identified:

A social and physical environment that encourage and support health and well-being	Reducing excessive light, light pollution and intrusive light can have a beneficial impact on human health and well-being
Access to good quality, healthy food	
People's emotional and mental well-being	The opportunity to experience and enjoy tranquil places like the AONB contributes to both physical and emotional well-being

Access to healthcare	
Participation in leisure opportunities	The AONB organise a range of Dark sky events each year.

Negative impacts identified:

A social and physical environment that encourage and support health and well-being	Perception that a reduction in lighting will encourage crime and disorder
Access to good quality, healthy food	
People's emotional and mental well-being	Perception that a reduction in lighting will encourage crime and disorder
Access to healthcare	
Participation in leisure opportunities	

A more equal Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Neutral
Justification for impact	There are no direct impacts on people of protected characteristics or disadvantaged people or areas and the overall impact of the SPG on equality in Denbighshire is considered to be neutral
Further actions required	Not applicable

Positive impacts identified:

Improving the well-being of people with protected characteristics. The nine protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage or civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation	
People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage	
People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes	Specifying dark sky friendly lighting will not necessarily be more expensive than conventional lighting. Modern lighting is more energy efficient and will cost less to run.

Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage	
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Negative impacts identified:

Improving the well-being of people with protected characteristics. The nine protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage or civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation	
People who suffer discrimination or disadvantage	
People affected by socio-economic disadvantage and unequal outcomes	
Areas affected by socio-economic disadvantage	

A Denbighshire of cohesive communities

Overall Impact	Positive
Justification for impact	Conserving the special character of the AONB, notably the opportunity to enjoy its tranquillity and dark night skies, contributes positively to the attractiveness of the area. The economic resilience of rural areas such as the AONB will also benefit from increased dark sky tourism opportunities.
Further actions required	The guidance does not seek to ban or eliminate lighting, particularly where there are legitimate health and safety concerns, but will encourage dark sky friendly lighting design. Information and awareness raising campaigns to encourage visitors to the AONB to behave appropriately and to respect the local community

Positive impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals	
Community participation and resilience	The public consultations on the draft SPG has given communities an opportunity to have their say on the proposals
The attractiveness of the area	The SPG will assist in conserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the AONB, notably its tranquil, dark night skies
Connected communities	

Rural resilience	Enhancing opportunities for astro-tourism will benefit rural tourism businesses, particularly during the winter months.
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Negative impacts identified:

Safe communities and individuals	Possible perception that public safety will be compromised by reduced lighting.
Community participation and resilience	The perception of additional restrictions being imposed within the AONB may be resented by some residents/businesses.
The attractiveness of the area	
Connected communities	
Rural resilience	A possible increase in visitor numbers to the AONB causing disturbance to local communities. This may be resented by some residents/businesses and cause ill-feeling in affected communities.

A Denbighshire of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language

Overall Impact	Neutral
Justification for impact	There are some potentially positive and negative impacts but these are not considered to be significant effects. The overall effect of the SPG on Welsh language and culture is therefore considered to be neutral.
Further actions required	Need to carefully manage Dark Sky events and designated Dark Sky Discovery Sites to prevent or mitigate any negative effects arising from excessive visitor pressure. Encourage visitors to act responsibly and to respect local communities.

Positive impacts identified:

People using Welsh	The SPG will be published bilingually
Promoting the Welsh language	Encouraging tourism will expose more visitors to Welsh language and culture
Culture and heritage	Encouraging tourism will expose more visitors to the natural beauty of the AONB as one of Wales' protected landscapes.

Negative impacts identified:

People using Welsh	
Promoting the Welsh language	Perception by some that tourism can undermine Welsh language and culture
Culture and heritage	An excessive and unmanaged increase in visitor numbers could impact negatively on the area.

A globally responsible Denbighshire

Overall Impact	Neutral
Justification for impact	The global impact of the SPG will be slightly positive, but the effects are limited and the overall impact is therefore judged to be neutral.
Further actions required	Encourage local suppliers to stock dark sky friendly lighting

Positive impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains	The SPG may encourage local suppliers to stock dark sky friendly lighting
Human rights	
Broader service provision in the local area or the region	
Reducing climate change	Reducing excessive lighting and encouraging more modern, energy efficient lighting will reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions.

Negative impacts identified:

Local, national, international supply chains	If local suppliers do not stock dark sky friendly lighting this could undermine local businesses.
Human rights	
Broader service provision in the local area or the region	
Reducing climate change	