

## **4.26 Policy ENV3 - The North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**

Development within or affecting the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) will only be permitted where:

1. Individually or cumulatively it will not have a significant or adverse impact on the special qualities or statutory purpose of the AONB.
2. It does not lessen or cause harm to the distinctive character of the area, the historic environment, heritage assets and their setting.
3. It adheres to any formally adopted design guides or planning policies, including the North Pennines AONB Management Plan, the North Pennines AONB Planning Guidelines and the North Pennines AONB Building Design Guide

Major developments will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances, where they are in the long term public interest and where there has been a full consideration of:

1. The need for the development, including in terms of national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;
2. The cost of, and scope for, developing elsewhere outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and
3. Any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.

### **Explanation**

- 4.26.1 The purpose of AONB designation is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area. Unlike national parks, recreation is not a primary reason for designation.
- 4.26.2 Applications for development which can demonstrate adherence to the principles set out in the North Pennines AONB Planning Guidelines and Building Design Guide (adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents in 2011) will have a strong likelihood of being granted permission.

### **Reason for the Policy**

- 4.26.3 The North Pennines AONB, designated in 1988 is the largest area of outstanding natural beauty in England and its long-term preservation and enhancement is of the utmost importance. This policy has therefore been included to afford it the highest degree of protection.