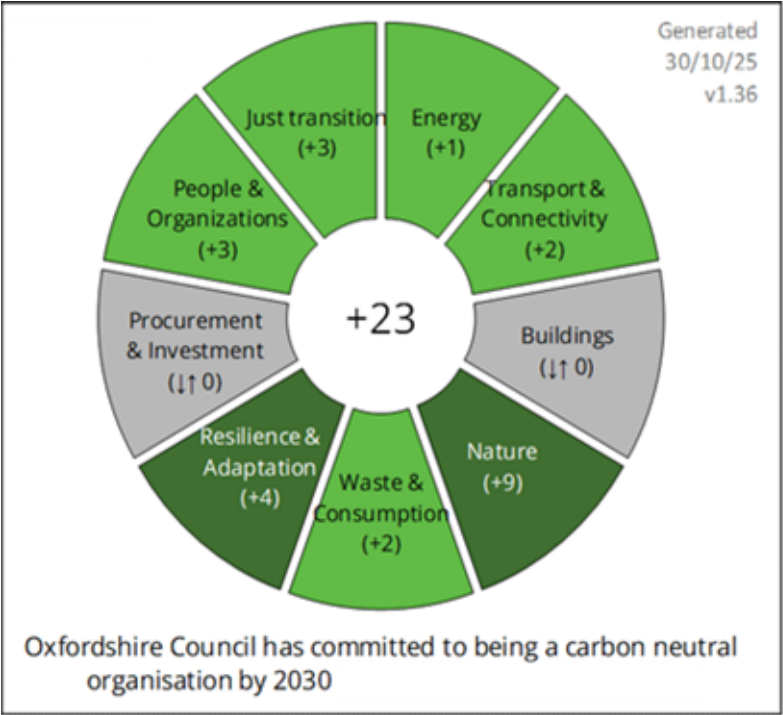


Climate Impact Assessment

Summary

Directorate and Service Area	Environment and Highways, Landscape and Nature Recovery Team
What is being assessed	Oxfordshire County Council are requested by the North Wessex Downs National Landscape (NWDNL) Council of Partners to formally adopt the new North Wessex Downs National Landscape Management Plan 2025-2030.
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	An existing function. The NWDNL Management Plan 2025-2030 is an update to the existing management plan, which was adopted by the council in 2019.
Summary of assessment	With a score of +15 the management plan is considered to have a clear positive climate impact. It delivers particularly well on nature, connectivity & transport, resilience & adaptation and a just transition. The plan is considered to align well with the council's vision for achieving net-zero, adapting to climate change and protecting the natural world.
Completed by	Haidrun Breith
Climate action sign off by	Franco Gonzalez
Director sign off by	
Assessment date	30/10/2025



Detail of proposal

Context / Background	Under s.89 of the Countryside and Right of Way (CRoW) 2000 Act, local authorities have a statutory duty to produce a management plan for the NWDNL every 5 years. Updates reflect legislative changes, changes in terminology and a greater emphasis on nature recovery and addressing climate change and adaptation.
Proposal	The proposal is for the council to adopt the NWDNL Management Plan 2025-2030. Chapter 7 includes objectives and policies that are specifically aimed at delivering action on climate change within the NWD, but climate change adaptation and mitigation is also a common thread running throughout the majority of the plan.
Evidence / Intelligence	The NWDNL Team carried out an extensive consultation with partners including local authorities, the public, external organisations and interest groups when drafting the plan. Within the council, comments from various teams including the climate team were collated and submitted to the NWDNL team for consideration. The climate comments included recommendations of how to further improve action on climate, but were supportive overall.
Alternatives considered / rejected	The alternative would be not to adopt the management plan. This would result in the council not meeting its statutory duty under s.89 of the CRoW Act, which requires local authorities including the council to “prepare and publish a management plan which formulates [their] policy for the management of the AONB and for carrying out of their functions in relation to it”. There would also be a reputational risk if not adopting or unduly delaying the adoption of the NWDNL management plan.

Category	Impact criteria	Score (-3 to +3)	Description of impact	Actions or mitigations to reduce negative impacts	Action owner	Timeline and monitoring arrangements
Energy	Increases energy efficiency	N/A				
Energy	Promotes a switch to low-carbon or renewable energy		1	encourages small-scale solar		
Energy	Promotes resilient, local, smart energy systems	N/A				
Transport & Connectivity	Reduces need to travel and/or the need for private car ownership	N/A				
Transport & Connectivity	Supports active travel		1	encourages sustainable travel options; seeks to increase connectivity encourages public transport		
Transport & Connectivity	Increases use of public transport		1	providers to increase sustainable travel options		
Transport & Connectivity	Accelerates electrification of transport	N/A				
Buildings	Promotes net zero new builds and developments	N/A				
Buildings	Accelerates retrofitting of existing buildings	N/A				
Nature	Protects, restores or enhances biodiversity, landscape and ecosystems		3	sets targets for the protected landscape in line with the governemt Targets Framework; has Nature Recovery Plan; project work		
Nature	Develops blue and green infrastructure		3	includes a policy that encourages green and blue infrastructure improvements and creation		
Nature	Improves access to nature and green spaces		3	improved access to the NWDNL and its nature and greenspaces one of the key aims of the Management Plan		
Waste & Consumption	Reduces overall consumption		1	encourages local businesses to minimise waste and to conserve energy and water		
Waste & Consumption	Supports waste prevention and drive reuse and recycling	N/A				
Resilience & Adaptation	Increases resilience to flooding		1	seeks more natural flood management		
Resilience & Adaptation	Increases resilience to other extreme weather events (e.g., storms, cold snaps, heatwaves, droughts)		3	development of a climate change adaptation strategy for the NWDNL is one of the priorities of the plan		
Resilience & Adaptation	Increases resilience of council services, communities, energy systems, transport infrastructure and/or supply chains	N/A				
Procurement & Investment	Procurement practices prioritise low-carbon options, circular economy and sustainability	N/A				
Procurement & Investment	Investment being considered supports climate action/ is consistent with path to net zero	N/A				

People & Organizations	Drives behavioural change to address the climate and ecological emergency		the plan includes priorities and policies that seek to improve 2 information and education to raise awareness and understanding of nature
People & Organizations	Drives organizational and systemic change to address the climate and ecological emergency	N/A	
Just transition	Promotes green innovation and job creation		1 supports new skills and green jobs
Just transition	Promotes health and wellbeing		2 improving health and wellbeing is a key theme in the plan
Just transition	Reduces poverty and inequality	N/A	