

DESIGNATION HISTORY SERIES

COTSWOLDS AONB

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VOLUME III

Folios 58 – 78

**(from early administration to confirmation of
Cotswolds AONB (Designation) Variation Order 1989,
and later administration to 2004)**

Folios (numbered as the references in the main text of the history in Volume I)

58. Countryside Commission, CP 82/69 "Cotswolds AONB: Proposed Southern Extension" November 1982, with Minute "M6035" of the 150th meeting of the Countryside Commission (M6035) held on 2 December 1982.

59. Countryside Commission, CP 84/21, "AONB Boundary Review" March 1984, with Minute "M84/21" of the 161st meeting of the Countryside Commission held on 5 April 1984.

60. Countryside Commission, CP 85/19, "Cotswolds AONB Review of Boundaries", March 1985, with Minute "M85/38" of the 167th meeting of the Countryside Commission held on 4 April 1985.

61. Countryside Commission, CP 85/46, "Cotswolds AONB Boundary Review", July 1985 with Minute "M85/98" of the 169th meeting of the Countryside Commission (M85/98) held on 1 August 1985".

62. Countryside Commission CP 86/26, "Cotswolds AONB Boundary Review", March 1986, with Minute "M86/44" of the 173rd meeting of the Countryside Commission held on 3 April 1986".

63. Countryside Commission "Cotswolds AONB - Review of Boundaries Consultation Statement" September 1986.

64. Countryside Commission, CP 87/20 "Cotswolds AONB: Boundary Review", March 1987, with two related Minutes numbered "M87/28" from the 180th (2 April 1987) and the 181st (4 June 1987) meetings of the Countryside Commission.

65. Countryside Commission, "Cotswolds AONB Boundary Review - Note of Commission Visit 22 May 1987" Richard Lloyd 22 May 1987. This visit was reported on by the two Countryside Commissioners involved, Mr Schreiber and Mr Quicke at the 181st meeting of the Commission, on 4 June 1987. Minute "M87/28" for the meeting, refers and is found with folio 64.

66. Countryside Commission, CP 87/71, "Cotswolds AONB Boundary Review, Formal Consultation on Proposed Boundary Changes" September 1987, with Minute "M87/96" of the 183rd meeting of the Commission, held on 1 October 1987.

67. The London Gazette 5 January 1988 - "Notice of the proposed Cotswolds AONB (designation) Variation Order, 1988", Adrian Phillips, Director, Countryside Commission 15 December 1987.

68. Countryside Commission CP 88/40, "Cotswolds AONB Boundary Review - Statutory Advertisement of the Commission's Proposals", May, 1988, with "M88/49" of the 187th meeting of the Commission held on 2 June 1988.

FOLIO 59

84/21

AONB BOUNDARY REVIEW

Background

1. In his July 1982 Statement on AONBs the Secretary of State invited the Commission to review the boundaries of some of the 33 AONBs then already designated. In our AONB Policy Statement published in November 1983 we announced that we would undertake such a review and would produce a programme by 1985. For some years previously Commission Staff had been involved in two proposed changes to AONBs, in the Southern Cotswolds where a major extension has been proposed since 1977, and in the Forest of Bowland where a small scale variation order is proposed in the Pendle Hill area. Work on these two proposed changes had been held up pending the Secretary of State's decisions on the outstanding AONB designation orders and the appearance of the AONB Policy Statement. Decisions are now required as to what action to take on these two proposals in the context of the overall AONB boundary review, and on the procedures to be followed for dealing with the other AONB boundaries.

Possible Action

2. The criteria to be used in considering proposals for change are set out in paragraphs 6 and 7 of Annex A. It is suggested that all proposals for change should be covered by one variation order per AONB. Such variation orders will cover both additions and exclusions.
3. There are two distinct categories of boundary change which can readily be identified. On the one hand there are a number of minor amendments required in some AONBs to resolve local anomalies eg caused by split settlements, changes in physical features used as boundaries, or where there are complications caused by changes to local government boundaries. The other type are cases where major extensions or contractions of AONBs are proposed, based on landscape criteria. It is proposed that the Commission's programme for boundary review should recognise these categories. Two lists will be compiled, one showing the order in which the the minor administrative changes will proceed, the other order for dealing with major cases. It is anticipated that in the latter case the complete boundary of the AONB will be re-examined. The review of boundaries in AONBs in the minor programme will be restricted to those specific areas where there is an administrative planning difficulty. In both cases it would be the intention to cover all amendments with a single variation order for each AONB. The time-scale for the programme will depend on whether or not Government is prepared to make extra staff available to the Commission.
4. The Cotswolds would be at the top of the major review programme, and work on the Southern extension will continue as part of the changes proposed for a Cotswolds AONB Variation Order. The informal consultation exercise on the Southern Extension should be completed; but the formal inclusion of this area in the Cotswolds AONB must await the completion of an overall review of the boundaries of the AONB, and the eventual submission of an AONB variation order

covering all proposed changes (hopefully not too many more). The submission of this variation order to the Secretary of State could not take place before the announcement of the AONB boundary variation programme in early 1985.

5. The proposed Forest of Bowland Variation Order follows a review of the whole boundary of the AONB by Lancashire County Council and no other boundary changes are proposed. In effect, therefore, it can be considered as the first of the major reviews to be completed and can be immediately approved by the Commission, and then submitted to the Secretary of State.

6. The processing of the Forest of Bowland AONB Variation Order and the commencement of the informal consultation exercise on the major change proposed in the Southern Cotswolds should therefore be announced concurrently as the first stage of our major AONB boundary review programme. The rest of the programme will be announced by 1985.

7. If the course of action set out above is approved then it will be necessary to write to AONB local authorities at the appropriate time requesting their co-operation in the boundary review. Separate letters relating to the specific courses of action decided for the Cotswolds and for the Forest of Bowland will also need to be sent to the appropriate AONB local authorities. The two local authority associations (the ACC and the ADC) will be informed of the 'staged' approach to the review, and our intention to have the two categories running concurrently, by means of Annex A.

Recommendations

8. The Commission is asked to approve the course of action set out in this paper; and accordingly instruct their officers to:

i. Write to the appropriate local authorities with responsibilities for the Forest of Bowland and Cotswolds AONBs informing them of the action to be taken as the first stage of the review.

ii. Approve Annex A as an information paper for ACC and ADC.

March 1984

M 84/41 AONB BOUNDARY REVIEW (82/21)

The Commission agreed to:

i. instruct their officers to write to the appropriate local authorities with responsibilities for the Forest of Bowland and Cotswolds AONBs informing them of the action to be taken as the first stage of the review; and

ii. approve Annex A as an information paper for the Association of County Councils and the Association of District Councils.

COUNTRYSIDE COMMISSION REVIEW OF AONB BOUNDARIES

Introduction

1. The powers for varying AONB boundaries derive from Sub-Section 7 of Section 87 and Section 110 (2) of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. Both the Secretaries of State for the Environment and Wales and the Countryside Commission have powers to make AONB variation orders; with orders made by the Commission subject to confirmation by the appropriate Secretary of State. It is the Commission's prerogative to initiate and carry through boundary reviews though in practice the Commission will not take any action before consulting the local authorities concerned.

2. In his July 1982 statement on AONBs the Secretary of State for the Environment invited the Commission to review the boundaries of some of the 33 AONBs then already designated. In our AONB Policy Statement published in November 1983 we announced that we would undertake such a boundary review with the aim of producing a programme of boundary changes by 1985. The first stage is the preparation of this advice note setting out the criteria against which all proposals for boundary change will be considered. The programme will also include some of the outstanding amendments to boundaries which local authorities have proposed in recent years, but the consideration of which has been held back until the current designation programme was nearer completion.

AONB Extensions and Variations

3. The two major additions to AONBs, the Camel Estuary extension to the Cornwall AONB, and the Dedham Vale extension, were regarded as designations in their own right. Variation orders can concern either additions, or exclusions, minor or major; and none, as yet, have been made. The programme to be announced in 1985 will be concerned with boundary reviews. Variations resulting from such reviews for each AONB will be covered by one variation order, and could include areas that had previously been proposed for AONB extensions. Only the formal process of public advertisement and consultation as set out in Section 87 of the 1949 Act is necessary with variation orders. However, for major variations that arise from the review, the Commission will adopt a similar degree of informal consultation and publicity to that which it has practised in recent years in respect of new AONB designation orders.

Boundary Reviews

4. AONBs have been designated for their exceptional landscape when judged on a national scale, at the end of a thorough exercise in landscape analysis and public consultation. The Commission will only consider change for very firm reasons. Changes will not be proposed lightly as they could have serious consequences for strategic planning policies. During its consideration of proposals, the Commission will keep in mind its statutory duties, and the statutory purposes of AONBs, as defined in Section 87 of the 1949 Act.

5. The Commission is aware that in some AONBs there is a pressing need to resolve some of the anomalies which have developed over the years due to split settlements, changes in physical features used as boundaries, and local authority boundary reviews. It is proposed therefore that the programme will consist of two lists. List A will contain the AONBs which will be reviewed solely to resolve small-scale administrative boundary amendments and List B which will contain those where a full-scale review of the whole boundary is thought to be necessary. The Commission intends to work through both lists concurrently. The time-scale for the review will be dependent on staff resources but it is likely that List A will take at least 5 years and List B 10-15 years.

6. List A

The criterion for List A AONBs will be that the present boundary raises anomalies for administrative and planning purposes. This can be due to:

- i. Existing boundaries splitting villages or small towns;
- ii. Changes in identifiable physical features used as boundaries;
- iii. Local government boundary changes.

In considering any proposals for exclusion or inclusion the landscape quality (which can include the quality and appearance of the buildings in a village, small town or hamlet) will be an overriding consideration. Variation orders produced under List A will be prepared on large-scale plans, at a scale of at least 1:25,000.

7. List B

The main criterion against which all proposals in the Major Review List for boundary change must be considered is landscape quality ie whether or not the land concerned has sufficient quality for it to be considered of national landscape importance. Notwithstanding this all-important criterion, the Commission has decided to adopt the following additional criteria:-

i. Source of Proposal

The Commission will consider all proposals for change to AONB boundaries.

ii. Major Developments

The Commission will consider proposals which exclude major development just inside or astride AONB boundaries.

iii. Divided Settlements

The Commission favours the total exclusion or tot inclusion of settlements on AONB boundaries on the basis of the architectural character and conservation value of the settlement; and this policy should be reflected in the choice of boundaries. There are, however, some anomalies especially with some of the earlier designations, and the Commission will consider proposals for change where division of a settlement causes planning problems.

iv. Recognition of Boundaries and Problems of Boundary Interpretation

The Commission consider that it is desirable for any new boundaries to relate closely to clearly identifiable features. Problems of boundary interpretation do arise from time to time, especially where the designation maps are at the old 1 inch to the mile scale. Slight changes to the boundary which would resolve any outstanding problems of interpretation by relating the boundary to an appropriate and recognisable physical boundary eg the rear boundary of hereditaments on a small village housing estate, will be considered by the Commission.

v. Areas Subject to Recreational Pressures

The Commission will not consider boundary changes which are proposed solely on recreation grounds.

vi. Divided Administrative Areas

We shall not consider boundary changes which would bring additional counties or districts into AONBs unless there are overriding landscape reasons for such changes.

Variation orders under List B will be prepared at a scale of 1:25,000, and the authorities will be asked to prepared a map of the whole AONB at this scale (if this is not already in existence).