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**Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy**

**Specification of Requirement**

**ISSUE DATE: 18 February 2025**

**CLOSING DATE: 5.00 pm, Friday 21 March 2025**

1. **Purpose and Aims**
	1. This commission is required to support the Peak District National Park Authority’s (‘PDNPA’) (‘the Authority’) Local Plan Review. The Authority’s role is to deliver statutory national park purposes. The aim of the commission is to support us to plan for a prosperous rural economy within this context, having regard the aims and objectives of the *English National Parks and The Broads Vision and Circular* (2010), the Peak District National Park Management Plan, and relevant regional economic priorities.
	2. The Peak District National Park Authority is the planning Authority for the Peak District National Park. The Park is mostly in the county of Derbyshire but also within Staffordshire, Cheshire, Greater Manchester and South and West Yorkshire[[1]](#footnote-1).
	3. The current local plan comprises the Core Strategy (adopted in 2011) and the Development Management Policies Document (adopted in 2019). Both plans are under review. A Regulation 18 Issues and Options consultation was completed in November 2024.
2. **Project Requirements**

**Objectives**

* 1. To research, prepare and present proportionate evidence in a report to support the Authority’s legal obligation to positively prepare a local plan in accordance with the NPPF para 88 ‘Supporting a prosperous rural economy’.
	2. To undertake an economic need/economic land assessment in line with PPG but proportionate to national park purposes, the population forecasts set out in the [Population Projection Update and Housing Needs Assessment](https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0027/502767/66287_01-Peak-District-HNA-011223-FINAL.pdf) and the housing indicative figures set out in Issue 28 (pg 97) of the [Issues and Options Consultation Document](https://peakdistrict-consult.objective.co.uk/kpse/event/6CDFA7AB-E48D-4828-A096-F25F0BC97159)).
	3. To have regard to existing planning policies proposed to be carried forward and the options for new policy as set out in the Reg 18 Issues and Options consultation document.
	4. To demonstrate and evidence:
* compliance with NPPF, PPG (so far as is proportionate for a national park), national park statutory purposes and duty and the English National Parks and the Broads Vision and Circular (2010).
* an understanding of the National Park’s role within the regional economic geography.
* an understanding of cross-boundary local and regional economic strategies and policies and how delivering National Park purposes may also help to deliver these. This will address the duty to co-operate.
* how planning policy in the Peak District National Park can support current and future business needs, including any requirements for innovation and new, emerging, specialist or specific sectors, and in particular:
	+ 1. the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses
		2. tourism and recreation
		3. retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities. Given the changes to the Use Class Order and the introduction of Class E, advice on how to continue to protect these would be welcomed.
* consideration of the issues set out in Section 9.
* a firm understanding of current developments and pressures on employment and other development sites, through close work with the Authority’s Planning Policy Team (including but not limited to Riverside and Deepdale in Bakewell and Marquis in the Hope Valley.)
* a sound understanding that business development and expansion cannot compromise National Park purposes.

**Outputs**

* 1. A report that is structured to align with, and report on the 4 criteria set out in the NPPF paragraph 88 (‘supporting a prosperous rural economy’).
	2. The report will:
1. Show how, through planning policy and site safeguarding/allocation, the National Park Authority can support a prosperous rural economy and thriving and sustainable communities.
2. Describe the Peak District’s economic structure and performance (business, farming, tourism and retail) and set out the economic needs assessment (proportionate to national park purposes.)
3. Include a business survey and liaison with local business groups (including but not limited to Business Peak District) to identify the current and future needs of businesses in the National Park. Scope to be agreed.
4. Establish an employment land requirement and make recommendations regarding how (within a national park context) planning policy can respond positively to this need, including but not limited to:
	* 1. a qualitative review of current safeguarded and non-safeguarded employment sites and their capacity to deliver additional employment space (including extensions) if required.
		2. how to making best use of the existing stock of buildings, including by mixed community/business uses.
		3. the switch to home working and implications for householder and design policies.
		4. the spatial focus of employment growth. (Previous strategies have stated the need to focus on Bakewell and the Hope valley. Is that still a reasonable assumption?)
5. Provide an overview of the changing land economy in the Peak District National Park to identify the current and future needs of land-based businesses (farmers and land mangers/landowners), including recommendations on how they can be supported through planning policy within the context of a protected landscape. This should include, but not be limited to:
	1. Existing and emerging markets for biodiversity, carbon and green energy
	2. Existing and emerging tourism markets
	3. Other forms of farm diversification.
6. **Background: planning in the context of a protected landscape**
	1. The Peak District National Park is a protected landscape. It is an asset of national, regional and local importance whose special qualities are defined as:
* Beautiful views created by contrasting landscapes and dramatic geology
* Internationally important and locally distinctive wildlife and habitats
* Undeveloped places of tranquillity and dark night skies within reach of millions
* Landscapes that tell a story of thousands of years of people, farming and industry
* Characteristic settlements with strong communities and traditions
* Inspiring spaces for escape, adventure, discovery and quiet reflection
* Vital benefits for millions of people that flow beyond the landscape boundary.
	1. The Authority’s role is to deliver the 2 statutory purposes of national parks: to conserve and enhance natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage and to promote opportunities for public enjoyment and understanding of special qualities. In pursuing these purposes, the Authority also has a duty to seek to foster the social and economic well-being of its local communities.
	2. The Environment Act, 1995 Section 62 states:

“A National Park authority…. shall seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the National Park, but without incurring significant expenditure in doing so, and shall for that purpose co-operate with local authorities and public bodies whose functions include the promotion of economic or social development within the area of the National Park.”

* 1. The English National Parks and the Broads Vision and Circular (2010) paragraph 28 states that in delivering statutory purposes we should be ‘exemplars in achieving sustainable development, helping rural communities in particular to thrive.’ It goes on to state that in delivering our purposes we should (para 67):
* foster and maintain thriving rural economies
* support the delivery of affordable housing
* encourage communications infrastructure
* make tourism sustainable
* promote sustainable transport, including navigation.
	1. The Circular identifies tourism as one of the main economic drivers of national park economies. It supports sustainable tourism as it ‘contributes to Park purposes, particularly that of promoting opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of Parks by the public.’ (Para 81). The Authority is advised to ‘help realise the positive contribution that sustainable tourism can make to the environment of the parks and to the wellbeing of park communities.’ (Para 82)
	2. The National Park has an ageing and declining population. The population fell from 37,905 in 2011 to 35,897 in 2021, which equates to a population fall of 5.3% or 2,008 over the 10-year period. There has been a significant drop in the number of young people living in the National Park (17.9%), and people of working age (12%). There has been an increase in the number of older residents (65-84yrs) of 20%.
1. **Economic Profile of the National Park**
	1. The Peak District has a rural economy, heavily influenced by the landscape. Over 87% of the area is farmed.
	2. Bakewell is an important market town. (It is the only town, population approx. 3,700). There is a Monday street market and regular agricultural markets at the Agricultural Business Centre.
	3. Bakewell has a protected primary shopping area. It has two medium sized food stores and a range of independent and national brand stores along with cafes, pubs and charity shops. The shopping area had suffered from a number of empty units (King Street in particular) but has recently recovered. There is one hotel and planning permission for a second.
	4. The larger settlements include Hathersage, Tideswell, Hartington, Longnor and Castleton that have shops serving the community and tourists. Only Bakewell has a protected primary shopping area and advice would be welcomed on similar policy to protect shopping areas in the larger settlements. (See Outputs Section 11.1 g.)
	5. In Bakewell, the largest sector is arts, entertainment and recreation (16% of all employment compared with 5% nationally). Retail, and accommodation/food are second and third largest, each with a quarter (26%) of all jobs.
	6. Across the National Park, the main industries are agriculture and tourism-based employment. At least 1 in 3 businesses are agricultural, forestry or fishing. In 2019, we recorded 3,505 active local business units, which was an increase of 2% on 2016. Most businesses are small to medium sized and many derive direct and indirect economic benefits from their location within the National Park. Sixty-five percent (65%) of businesses surveyed rely on the quality of the landscape and environment and 53% said that National Park designation has a positive impact on their business.[[2]](#footnote-2)
	7. Mineral extraction is a large part of the National Park economy and whilst it continues to provide jobs and revenue for the area, the number of local people working in the industry was less than 2% in 2001. The National Park adopted a gradual reduction approach to mineral extraction through its planning policies. The Local Plan Review states that we will continue with this approach and only consent for development where exceptional circumstances are demonstrated with the exception of underground fluorspar and local small-scale building and roofing stone.
2. **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance**
	1. The NPPF recognises that national parks have the highest status of protection in relation to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty. At para 189 it states that great weight should be given to this and the scale and extent of development should be limited.
	2. The Authority is required to have a clear economic vision and strategy and have regard for economic strategies and other local policies.
	3. The NPPF states in para 85, ‘Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.’
	4. However this positive approach must operate within the context of the statutory purpose and duty of a national park (para 2.2).
	5. To support a prosperous rural economy the NPPF at para 88 states planning policies should enable:

a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed, new buildings.

b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses.

c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside.

d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

* 1. The criteria set out above from the NPPF paragraph 88 will form the structure of the required outputs of this commission and the resulting report.
	2. The National Park has one town centre, Bakewell. It has a defined boundary and primary shopping area. To ensure the vitality and viability of our town centre, the NPPF (paragraph 90) states that we need to plan positively for a suitable mix of uses, reflect the distinctive character, define the extent of the centre and primary shopping area, and make clear the range of uses permitted. We should respond to markets, plan for future needs and meet anticipated needs for retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses over the plan period.
	3. For retail needs outside of town centres, the NPPF paragraph 98 states that an impact assessment should be carried out if the development is above a locally set threshold or a default threshold of 2,500m2 of gross floorspace. The National Park does not have a locally set threshold for retail development.
	4. The NPPF paragraph 97 refers to the need to plan positively for community needs including guarding against their unnecessary loss and enabling them to develop and modernise so they can be retained. The current Local Plan addresses retail provision and community services/facilities together. We would like to continue this holistic approach to supporting our thriving and sustainable communities as we recognise that they are interlinked. Many of our communities have shared spaces for a variety of uses and have had to adapted creatively to economic changes. For example, the village shop and café in Grindleford is located within the church.
	5. Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) sets out:
* the steps required in gathering and maintaining evidence to plan for business (Paragraph: 040 Reference ID: 61-040-20190315 and Paragraph: 026 Reference ID: 2a-026-20190220)
* how to use this evidence to plan for business (Paragraph: 041 Reference ID: 61-041-20190315)
* how to determine the type of employment land that is needed (Paragraph: 025 Reference ID: 2a-025-20190220)
* how market signals can be used to forecast future need (Paragraph: 027 Reference ID: 2a-027-20190220)
* how to identify the existing stock of employment land and the recent pattern of supply and loss (Paragraph: 028 Reference ID: 2a-028-20190220).
1. **The PDNPA Approach to the Rural Economy: PDNPA Management Plan**
	1. The way we support the economy within a protected landscape is set out in the Management Plan (NPMP) objective 11: To promote a flourishing economy in accord with nature recovery and climate change mitigation.
	2. To achieve this objective we seek the following outcomes:
* Have enabled enhanced access to services, jobs and home working increasing premises that can access Superfast (>30Mbps) services from 82% to 84%
* Improving high-speed digital and mobile access to the hardest-to-reach properties through Project Gigabit, Shared Rural Network, voucher schemes and opportunities arising from future initiatives.
* Improving connections to services through the National Park sustainable travel framework.
* Encouraging environmentally and economically sustainable businesses in suitable locations where they can grow.
* Offering housing opportunities that support a diverse workforce with the skills needed for local businesses and services.
* Recognising the local mineral resource by enabling a sustainable level of mineral activity appropriate to our special landscape.
	1. The outcomes are delivered through the following actions:
* TC.7 Grow and enhance environmentally and economically sustainable businesses through Local Plan policies that identify more places in sustainable locations where businesses can grow.
* TC.8 Grow and enhance environmentally and economically sustainable businesses by providing a diverse workforce through a sufficient supply of safe, energy efficient homes in a mixture of tenures.
* TC.9 Grow and enhance environmentally and economically sustainable mineral businesses through enabling a sustainable level of mineral activity appropriate to our special landscape.
	1. In addition to the above, the Authority has adopted [this definition of a thriving and sustainable community](https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0019/404065/%40FINAL-Thriving-and-Sust-Def-JUL21.pdf) to demonstrate its commitment to supporting its communities. It states that the economy can contribute positively to a *thriving* community when:
* businesses respond positively to climate change (the net zero commitment) and the biodiversity crisis in a way that does not harm, and actively promotes the restoration of, functioning ecosystems and natural processes
* there are sufficient resources and infrastructure, including appropriate new development
* there are high quality, long-term employment opportunities so that local people do not have to move away.
	1. The definition states that economy can contribute positively to *sustainable* communities by providing:
* sustainable, innovative workplaces
* access to good-quality apprenticeships and training
* the right conditions and infrastructure for businesses to flourish and innovate so that: the best workers are attracted, local people can stay and compete in the national and global market for jobs, there is a shift away from commuting towards local employment and self-employment
* sustainable products and services
1. **PDNPA Local Plan**
	1. The Local Plan sets out spatial objectives and planning policies for business, farming, recreation and tourism, community services/facilities and minerals development. It is currently under review and we have completed a Regulation 18 Issues and Options consultation. Our Local Development Scheme sets out the timetable and we aim to submit the draft Local Plan to the Secretary of State by December 2026.
	2. ***Most existing policies are proposed to be brought forward into the new local plan. New or changed policy will be considered in light of any evidence emerging from this commission.***

**Business Development Spatial Objectives**

* 1. The current local plan has spatial economic outcomes for the three landscape areas.
* White Peak and Derwent Valley – to support business start-ups, retain and enhance the role of Bakewell, protect employment sites in sustainable locations and consider redevelopment of lower quality employment sites in less sustainable locations.
* South Peak – to retain an appropriate range of employment sites in sustainable locations.
* Dark Peak and Moorland Fringes – no specific outcomes.
	1. The draft rural economy spatial objectives for the new local plan that were consulted on in the Regulation 18 Issues and Options consultation are:
* To support business development that conserves and enhances the Peak District's Special Qualities through:
* farm diversification
* the re-use of traditional buildings (heritage assets)
* new development in or on the edge of key settlements.
* To support businesses that enhance Bakewell's role as an agricultural market town and tourist hub.
* To protect existing employment sites that are well-located, and enable them to expand.

**Business Development Policies**

* 1. Across the National Park the Local Plan supports the following forms of business development:
* Within or on the edge of named settlements at a scale related to local needs (Core Strategy policies DS1 and E1)
* On previously developed land in sustainable locations to deliver enhancement (Core Strategy policy GSP2)
* On existing employment sites and safeguarded employment sites (Core Strategy policy E1)
* In existing traditional, existing modern, or replacement buildings that are in; smaller settlements, farmsteads, groups of existing buildings in sustainable locations (Core Strategy policy DS1 and E2).
	1. Development Management Policy DME3 lists the safeguarded employment sites and uses. These sites are safeguarded for what were B1, B2 and B8 uses but allow for some mixed-use development subject to evidence.
	2. Other employment/business policies focus on:
* change of use of non-safeguarded, unoccupied or under-occupied employment sites in DS1 settlements (DME4)
* Use Class B1 employment in the countryside outside DS1 settlements (DME5)
* Home working (DME6)
* Expansion of existing industrial and business development not involving farm diversification (DME7)
* Design, layout and neighbourliness of employment sites including haulage depots (DME8).
	1. For the new local plan we are exploring the following policy options, as set out in the Regulation 18 consultation document:
* *Clearer limits to piecemeal business development in the open countryside (Issue 37).*
* *Expansion of existing employment sites and existing safeguarded employment sites (para 10.2).*

**Farming Policies**

* 1. Policy supports farming development in the following ways:
* Policy DS1 permits, in all settlements and in the countryside outside the Natural Zone, development for agriculture, forestry, and other rural enterprises requiring a rural location, including farm diversification.
* Policy E2: Business in the countryside. Supports farm diversification on farmsteads, or groups of estate buildings, small scale business development will be permitted provided that it supports an existing agricultural or other primary business responsible for estate or land management.
* Policy HC2: Housing for key workers in agriculture, forestry or other rural enterprises
* Development Management Policies policy DME1: Agricultural or forestry operational development. Focuses on functional need, design and location.
* Policy DME2: Farm diversification. Permits diversification through sensitive redevelopment of vacant traditional buildings for business use ancillary or secondary to the primary business of the farm.
* Policy DMH4 essential workers dwellings. Permits new dwellings for agricultural or land management workers where there is a genuine and essential need.
	1. For the new local plan we are exploring the following policy options, as set out in the Regulation 18 consultation document.
* *Conversion of whole farmsteads to new uses (Issue 38)*
* *Ownership and control of the primary land management business (Issue 39)*

**Recreation and Tourism Spatial Objectives**

* 1. Across the National Park we support recreation and tourism development to promote opportunities for understanding of the National Park’s special qualities[[3]](#footnote-3) that is sensitive to the landscape character and the impact it has on local communities. Recreation and tourism go hand-in-hand in the National Park. For clarity, recreation in the context of the National Park is defined in the Core Strategy as being the act of recreation for example, walking, cycling, climbing, and enjoyment of the National Park’s special qualities, in particular the landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage. Open space sport and recreation facilities are referred to as community recreation sites.
	2. The general spatial approach to recreation and tourism set out in the current Core Strategy is to:
* enable development of appropriate sites and facilities in recognised visitor locations and at key sites
* support the change of use of traditional buildings to visitor accommodation
* in Bakewell, to consolidate the town’s role as a tourist centre and a hub from which to explore other attractions, and to enable a new hotel.
* support diversification of agricultural and land management businesses

* 1. The draft recreation and tourism objectives for the new local plan that were consulted on in the Regulation 18 Issues and Options consultation are:
* To direct recreation development towards settlements and certain existing recreation attractions and hubs. At these places development will be focussed on new or improved facilities that promote understanding and enjoyment of the National Park, sustainable travel and significant enhancement of the National Park's special qualities.
* To support the change of use of traditional buildings (heritage assets) for visitor accommodation, primarily on farmsteads.
* To support temporary overnight tourist accommodation that is well-suited to its location.
* To support work that maintains and enhances the rights of way network.
* To safeguard the multi-user recreational trails, and to expand this network.

**Recreation and Tourism Policies**

* 1. Planning policies for recreation and tourism are set out in:
* Core Strategy RT1: Recreation, environmental education and interpretation.
* Core Strategy RT2: Hotels, bed and breakfast and self-catering.
* Core Strategy RT3: Caravans and camping.
* DMR1: Touring, camping and caravan sites
* DMR2: Holiday occupancy of touring camping and caravan sites.
* DMR3: Holiday occupancy of self-catering accommodation.
	1. For the new local plan we are exploring the following policy options, as set out in the Regulation 18 consultation document:
* *Defining recreation attractions and hubs on a policy map with specific planning policies for these spatial areas (Issue 24)*
* *Whether to remove PD rights for temporary camp sites (Issue 25)*
* *Clearer policy on seasonal and occupancy restrictions for touring camping and caravan sites (Issue 26)*
* *Clearer policy on static caravans, lodges and other permanent structures used as holiday accommodation (Issue 27)*

**Retail and Community Services/Facilities Spatial Objectives**

* 1. The current Core Strategy aims to provide and retain community services and facilities. The draft spatial objectives set out in the Issues and Options consultation documents adds that this should be focussed in locations that support thriving and sustainable communities, reduce the need to travel and enable travel by sustainable means.

**Retail and Community Services/Facilities Policies**

* 1. The following forms of retail and community services/facilities development are supported by the Local Plan. Community facilities are described as those that ‘make a positive social, educational, recreational or health-related contribution’ (DMP para 7.42) and community services are described as those in the former Use Class D1, D2, A1, A2 and A4.
* Core Strategy policy HC4: Provision and retention of community services and facilities.
* Core StrategyHC5: Shops, professional services and related activities. The focus is on the provision of facilities within Bakewell and DS1 settlements by retaining existing infrastructure and supporting new provision where a need can be demonstrated and it can be accommodated sensitively.
* DMS1: shops, professional services and related activities in core Strategy policy DS1 settlements.
* DMS2 change of use of shops, community services and facilities.
* DMS3: retail development outside of DS1 settlements.
* DMS6: safeguarding sites for community facilities.
* DMS7: retention of community recreation sites or sports facilities.
	1. For the new local plan we are exploring the following policy options, as set out in the Issues and Options consultation document:

*Whether new policy should extend the list of safeguarded uses to include all shops, cafes and restaurants and offices and light industry (suitable for residential areas) (Issue 34)*

1. **Employment and Retail Studies**
	1. The delivery of employment land to support the economy of the Park is an outcome of policy rather than a target. Nevertheless, it is important for the Authority to understand this need and how it may be addressed in a the National Park context. The last National Park wide [Employment Land Review](https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0026/57158/peak-sub-region-employment-land-review.pdf) (ELR) was undertaken in 2008 and a [business survey](https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0027/57159/peak-district-business-survey-2005.pdf) was last undertaken in 2005.
	2. The 2008 ELR identified 15.94ha of existing employment land in the National Park with a requirement for a further 5ha (split between 3.5ha of industrial space and 1.5ha of office space) that could be accommodated on existing employment sites or through windfall office development, for example in Bakewell.
	3. In 2016, GL Hearn completed the [Bakewell Employment Land and Retail Review](https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0022/72472/Bakewell-Employment-Land-Review-Final-Report-May-2016-.pdf) on behalf of PDNPA that identified a potential supply of 2.3ha but an identified need for 1.3ha of employment space (0.8ha for industrial and 0.5ha for office) that could be accommodated on existing employment sites. The identified need figure was less than could be accommodated (in response to National Park purposes) and included longer term forecasting.
	4. More recently, Lichfields completed [a Housing and Economic Land Needs assessment](https://www.highpeak.gov.uk/media/7530/High-Peak-HELNA-ISSUE-12.09.22/pdf/7961492_High_Peak_HELNA_ISSUE_120922.PDF?m=1663773285323) for High Peak Borough Council (2022). It identified a need for between 3.4 and 4.5ha (if past take up rates are excluded) of new employment space within the National Park area, which equates to 13.5% of the total amount required in High Peak Borough Council administrative area. However, none of the sites identified through the strategic housing and employment land availability assessment were located within the National Park. Whilst the National Park contributed to this assessment, it has not adopted the recommendations.
	5. Derbyshire Dales District Council commissioned Iceni to complete their Derbyshire Dales Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (2021). It identified Bakewell as one of the three towns within the district, with Riverside Business Park identified as a strategic growth site. It also identified 6 other employment sites within the National Park area of the district that are safeguarded sites within the PDNPA Local Plan. It identified a district wide need for circa 12.7ha of employment land for the plan period 2017-40. This was updated in 2023 with a recommendation the ‘council plan for the completions net of 15-16 ha and up to 18 ha (rounded) based on the ‘new build’ trend’ as it identified a healthy demand in the industrial sector. This figure was district wide and included the National Park area within the administrative boundary.
	6. The conclusions and recommendations of the studies by the two main administrative authorities in the National Park are not constrained by National Park purposes. The successful bidder should consider the economic issues and employment/retail land need of our consistent authorities but national park purposes and duty are the focus of this commission.
	7. Derbyshire Dales District Council commissioned an updated retail study in 2021. It included Bakewell, Tideswell and Hathersage, which are located within the administrative area of Derbyshire Dales but within the Local Planning Authority area of the Peak District. The report concluded that Bakewell is a healthy town centre and that there was no need for additional floorspace in these three locations.
	8. High Peak Borough Council commissioned an updated [retail and leisure study](https://www.highpeak.gov.uk/media/7620/High-Peak-Retail-Leisure-and-Town-Centres-Study-April-2022/pdf/mlHigh_Peak_Retail_Leisure_and_Town_Centres_Study_April_2022_a.pdf?m=1666795513900) in 2022. It included Bakewell, Hathersage, and Castleton as part of the retail study area. It noted that a large percentage of top up shopping was done within Hathersage and Castleton.
	9. As stated in para 2.6 we have an ageing and declining population. To support our ambition to maintain thriving and sustainable communities and support a healthy rural economy we need to address this in a sensitive manner that aligns with National Park purposes and duty. Lichfield’s completed the PDNPA [Population Projection Update and Housing Needs Assessment](https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0027/502767/66287_01-Peak-District-HNA-011223-FINAL.pdf) (December 2023). The report presented a number of population scenarios based on the number of dwellings built per annum that could readdress the declining population. The Authority, in its Local Plan Issues and Options Consultation Report proposes to support the provision of 960-2000 homes up to 2045.
2. **Issues arising from Regulation 18 Issues and Options consultation**
	1. A selection of stakeholder comments from the November 2025 Regulation 18 consultation is set out below to illustrate current issues.
		* + The rural economy is facing labour shortages, increasing regulatory and tax burdens and economic challenges. It is vital that the National Park uses all of its levers to support the rural economy.
			+ The Peak District needs to be a living and sustainable place and that includes a diversity of small businesses rather than focusing entirely on the visitor economy. Support for agricultural businesses, SMEs, artistan producers and digital businesses should be encouraged through planning policy.
			+ Existing landowners should not have a monopoly on developing new, sustainable businesses in the National Park; we need to bring in new ideas and new people.
			+ Support businesses in the Peak District to be innovative, inspiring, inclusive, accessible, sustainable and supportive of the communities and environment within which they operate.
			+ Lobby alongside other organisations to ensure that businesses in the Peak District are in a position to benefit from both transport and digital connectivity.
			+ Promote Peak District businesses and the part they play in creating the identity of the Peak District, whilst promoting the area as a place to establish and grow a business.
			+ Liaise with the public private and third sector to bring forward development sites for both new start and grow-on businesses.
			+ Support the roll-out of effective business support programmes that are needed to help businesses launch and grow within the Peak District.
			+ Support initiatives which encourage the Peak District’s business community to provide employment and career opportunities for the local population and especially young people, including via apprenticeships.
3. **Presentation of Findings**
	1. The report should be available in different formats (including word and pdf) that allow the Authority to publish, consult and share online and in hard copy, complying to current accessibility standards.
	2. The consultant may be required to present the findings of the report to Councillors and senior officers of the Authority. Consultants should indicate in their proposal the cost of making this presentation.
4. **Pricing and timescale**
	1. The estimated value of the work is less than £30,000 inclusive of VAT. (Please note this figure relates to the Authority’s tendering procedures and is not a guide price.)
	2. The report should be submitted in draft by 30 June and in final form by 31 July.
5. **Process**
	1. The main contact at the National Park Authority will be Sarah Welsh (Senior Policy Planner) with input from Adele Metcalfe (Policy and Communities Team Leader). You will be assisted to access planning and other data by the Authority. Any issues and questions regarding the brief can be discussed at an initial client/consultant meeting and update meetings can be scheduled as and when necessary.
6. **Insurance**
	1. You will be required to provide evidence of the following levels of insurance cover if you are successful at contract award stage:
	2. Employer’s Liability Insurance (unless you are a sole trader) in the sum of at least £5,000,000 in respect of any single claim.
	3. Professional Indemnity Insurance in the sum of at least £1,000,000 in respect of any single claim.
7. **Your proposal**
	1. You are invited to submit a proposal that fully meets the brief set out above, on the Form of Quote at Appendix 1, and complies with the following requirements. The proposal should provide information on the following headings:
8. Understanding the brief and context.
9. Proposed approach/methodology to be used to deliver the requirements.
10. Previous relevant experience, qualifications and CVs of personnel who will be directly providing the service.
11. Timescale and availability to deliver on time.
	1. A completed and signed Non-Collusive Tendering Certificate in Appendix 2 must also be submitted.
12. **Evaluation of Quotes**
	1. Quotations will first be evaluated against the requirements contained in Section 3 of the Form of Quote at Appendix 1 which will be scored on a pass/fail basis. Any Quotation that scores “Fail” against any of these requirements may be deemed non-compliant and rejected without further evaluation. This will include:
13. Written technical and financial references (including the bidder’s financial accounts for such period as shall be notified) as may be requested.
14. The bidder’s previous experience of contracts delivered for the Authority or other organisations. The Authority is entitled to take into account any failure to discharge obligations under previous relevant contracts undertaken by the bidder (or any proposed sub-contractor) in assessing whether the required minimum standards for the Services are likely to be met. The Authority may ask the bidder (or any subcontractor) for evidence of performance on previous comparable contracts or consider evidence of performance on previous comparable contracts for the Authority.
15. Whether the bidder is subject to any enforcement or legal action or other pending
investigations by either the Authority or other public agencies.
	1. The successful bidder will then be selected based on an evaluation using the criteria set out below which align to the required headings for the proposal as set out above.
16. Price (40% of the total score value)
17. Quality Criteria (60% of the total score value)
18. Clear understanding of the brief and the context (Quality Question 1)
19. Sufficiency of approach to deliver our detailed requirements (Quality Question 2)
20. Experience and Capability to perform the contract (Quality Question 3)
21. Sufficiency of resources to perform the contract on time (Quality Question 4)

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **Weighting** | **Evaluation Criteria** |
| Price | 40% | 40 x (Lowest Tender Price) ÷ (Tenderer’s Price) |
| QQ1 Understanding of Brief | 15% | 3 x score (see table below) |
| QQ2 Approach/Methodology | 15% | 3 x score (see table below) |
| QQ3 Experience and Capability | 15% | 3 x score (see table below) |
| QQ4 Sufficiency of resources | 15% | 3 x score (see table below) |

* 1. Responses to the quality criteria will each be marked against the following scoring methodology

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 0 | The Bidder has given no response and/or if the response is not acceptable and/or does not cover the relevant criteria. |
| 1 | There are major weaknesses or gaps in the information provided. The Bidder displays poor understanding and there are major doubts about fitness for purpose. |
| 2 | The response will in parts be incomplete or vague with little or no detail given of how the Bidder will meet the criteria. Information provided is considered weak or inappropriate and is unclear on how this relates to our requirements or the outputs/outcomes of the project. Some concerns about understanding of the steps involved to deliver the aspects of the question posed, and/or the Bidder’s experience and capability. |
| 3 | The response has provided suitable evidence to address the majority of our requirements but will lack some clarity or detail in how the proposed solutions will be achieved.  Evidence provided, while giving generic or general statements, is not specifically directed toward the requirements or the outcomes/outputs of this project. The response demonstrates an acceptable approach and clearly demonstrates how the criteria is satisfied, giving a reasonable level of confidence in the Bidder’s experience and capability. |
| 4 | The proposal has addressed, in some detail, all or the majority of our requirements. Evidence will have been provided to demonstrate conformance with the criteria in some detail. It is clear how the response relates directly to the aims of the project and is specific, rather than general, in how the desired outcomes and outputs will be achieved. The response demonstrates a good level of confidence in the Bidder’s experience and capability. |
| 5 | As well as addressing all our requirements the Bidder demonstrates a deep understanding of the project and / or may present innovative ideas (where appropriate). Responses link directly to relevant project requirements, outcomes and outputs (as the case may be). A high level of confidence will be conveyed in the tenderers ability to deliver the desired outcomes and outputs. The response demonstrates little or no risk and fully captures the understanding of the steps involved to deliver the aspects of the project, giving a very high level of confidence in the Bidder’s experience and capability. |

* 1. Bidders’ scores for Quality and Price will then be added together to produce an overall score.
	2. Bids should be submitted by 5.00pm on Friday 21 March 2025.
* By Email to: Tenders@peakdistrict.gov.uk
* The following, and only the following, must be used in the subject line: “REF: SUPPORTING A PROSPEROUS RURAL ECONOMY Quote”.
* All attachments must be in pdf form.
	1. It is the Bidder’s responsibility to ensure that its bid complies with the submission requirements and is received by the Authority by the date and time set out. The Authority accepts no responsibility for any problems arising from the Authority’s or the Bidder’s IT software, infrastructure, input or internet connectivity. Bidders must note that the current maximum size of any email receivable by the Authority is 10mb. It is the responsibility of the Bidder to ensure that its bid is received by the Authority. Bidders are strongly advised not to submit their bid immediately before the tender return deadline.
	2. No bids received after the closing date and time for the receipt of bids shall be considered.
	3. The Authority does not bind itself to accept the whole, the highest scoring or any bid or part of a bid submitted.
	4. Failure to comply with any of the above requirements may render a bid liable to disqualification. Rejected or eliminated bids will not be scored.
1. **Terms and Conditions**
	1. The successful bidder will be required to enter into the Authority’s standard consultant’s contract, a draft of which is in Appendix 3.
1. [Constituent Authorities: Peak District National Park](https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/visiting/planning-your-visit/maps/constituent-authorities) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. State of the Park Report [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The Peak District National Park Special Qualities are set out in the [Management Plan](https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/looking-after/strategies-and-policies/national-park-management-plan). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)