



**A417 MISSING LINK - WRITTEN REPRESENTATION AT DEADLINE 4**  
**(REFERENCE NO. TR010056)**

**Cotswolds Conservation Board (the 'Board')**

14 February 2022

This Written Representation aims to provide the Examining Authority (ExA) with further information on the Board's position on the proposed scheme's approach to the **historic landscape**.

The report "*Crickley Hill, Gloucestershire. Exemplar case study –A holistic evaluation of heritage and natural landscape significance and an assessment of impact, relative to National Highways' A417 Missing Link road scheme proposals*" commissioned by the National Trust, Countryside and Community Research Institute (CCRI), University of Gloucestershire (document REP1-098 in the examination document library <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/ipc/uploads/projects/TR010056/TR010056-000882-National%20Trust%20-%20Written%20Representation.pdf> ), covers most of the points we intended to raise and we support the report's findings and recommendations.

**1. The historic environment as part of AONB designation**

The character of the Cotswolds AONB landscape reflects more than 6,000 years of human activity interacting with the area's natural resources, fauna and flora.

The Cotswolds AONB contains a wealth of archaeological and historical features and associations including neolithic earthworks and barrows, drove roads, Roman villas, ridge and furrow, medieval and post medieval enclosure field patterns, roads and footpaths. The past is ever present as part of the landscape where layers of history, geography and culture co-exist.

Natural beauty is the basis for the designation of AONBs and goes well beyond scenic or aesthetic value. It encompasses everything that makes an area distinctive: geology, climate, soil, plants, animals, communities, archaeology, buildings, the people who live in it, past and present, and the perceptions of those who visit it.

AONB designation recognises the importance of the historic environment and reinforces the need to protect and manage characteristic features and their interaction with the landscape. These features are irreplaceable, fragile and vulnerable to change.

**2. Drystone walls**

When developing the Landscape Character Assessment for the Cotswolds AONB it was realised that a number of key characteristics were common to a high number of Landscape Character Types. These were identified and pulled together as a list of Principle Elements. These are the 'must hold on to'

**Cotswolds Conservation Board**

The Old Prison, Fosse Way, Northleach  
Gloucestershire GL54 3JH



The Cotswolds National Landscape is a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), managed and looked after by the Cotswolds Conservation Board.

[cotswoldsaonb.org.uk](http://cotswoldsaonb.org.uk)

*Chairman:*  
**Brendan McCarthy**

*Vice Chair:*  
**Rebecca Charley**

elements that define the Cotswolds AONB and form the basis of the list of Special Qualities. First on the list are dry stone walls.

Drystone walls are difficult to date, most date from the enclosures but some are much older. They are historic assets, both in the walls themselves and in the field patterns they delineate. The walls across an area of landscape differ slightly bearing the 'fingerprint' of the waller that constructed them as well as differences in stone.

Drystone walls are an undervalued habitat providing homes for a wide variety of invertebrates as well as small mammals and birds. Some walls provide the habitat for rare species of moss, snail and plant. They also provide a network across the landscape, connecting other habitats.

The scheme will result in the loss of drystone walls and severs enclosure patterns

### **3. Recommendation**

To contribute towards mitigating the impact on the historic environment, we add the following to the recommendations in the Crickley Hill report:

- a) Ensure any historic environment assets, such as drystone walls, removed to facilitate construction (e.g. for construction access roads, compounds, etc.) are fully and properly reinstated.
- b) Any historic environment assets not removed to facilitate construction, but within the red line boundary or cross the redline boundary, are conserved, enhanced or restored. This could include removing scrub from features and restoring drystone walls.

**ENDS**