

# SOUTH DOWNS LOCAL PLAN: PRE-SUBMISSION

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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### WHAT IS THE SOUTH DOWNS LOCAL PLAN?

The National Park needs properly managed development that conserves and enhances the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage for which it was designated. The Local Plan is a set of policies which will be used to make decisions on planning applications in the National Park.

### WHAT IS THE POLICIES MAP?

The South Downs Policies Map illustrates how the policies in the adopted development plan will apply. The Policies Map consists of three overview maps covering all of the National Park and about 50 inset maps. Together, these show all the site allocations and designations that are most relevant to the determination of planning applications, including all those contained in made neighbourhood development plans. It also shows, where practicable, planning constraints, for example environmental designations and conservation areas. The published paper and PDF (portable document format) versions of the Policies Map show some but not all the planning constraints. The National Park Authority will also maintain an interactive version of the Policies Map, which will include more features than the paper and PDF versions, and allow a more detailed look at specific localities.

The adopted Policies Map is not itself part of the statutory development plan. It will therefore be updated as required to reflect updated information, for example the making of further NDPs.

### WHAT TIME PERIOD DOES THE LOCAL PLAN COVER?

The Local Plan covers the time period 2014 to 2033. It starts in 2014 when the Issues and Options consultation was published. The plan will be in place for 15 years after its adoption which is scheduled for 2018.

### HOW DOES THIS LOCAL PLAN RELATE TO OTHER EXISTING LOCAL PLANS AND JOINT CORE STRATEGIES?

When it is adopted (expected to be in 2018) the South Downs Local Plan will replace all existing local plans and joint core strategies within the National Park area. These plans will

continue to operate outside the National Park. The South Downs Partnership Management Plan will continue to operate across the National Park alongside the South Downs Local Plan.

The current draft of the Local Plan puts forward a single set of 96 planning policies to apply across the 1,600km<sup>2</sup> of the National Park replacing around 1400 policies currently in operation across the area.

## WILL THE LOCAL PLAN COVER WHERE I LIVE?

The Local Plan will cover the whole of the South Downs National Park. Visit the [interactive map](#) on our website to find out if this includes where you live.

## WHO IS THE LOCAL PLAN FOR?

The South Downs Local Plan is relevant for everyone who is interested in the National Park whether they are residents, visitors or do business here. Once it has been adopted, the Local Plan will be used by anyone applying for planning permission within the National Park.

## WHAT IS THIS CONSULTATION ABOUT?

This is the first Local Plan in the country to put the landscape first – our landscapes are the reason the South Downs became a National Park so it's only right that they sit at the heart of every planning decision we make. We've set out what we think are the right policies are to make this happen up to the year 2033. We are asking people to give their final comments this autumn and while we are mainly looking at the soundness of the plan, we will also listen to comments on all other aspects of the plan. Every comment will be passed to the Planning Inspectorate who will respond to them as part of their examination into the Local Plan.

Comments may be made on any aspect of the Local Plan, but should ideally focus on the following questions:

- Has the Plan been positively prepared? (Based on a strategy that provides for the development and infrastructure needs)
- In the Plan justified? (Founded on proportionate evidence and is the most appropriate strategy against all reasonable alternative)
- Is the Plan effective? (Deliverable and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities)
- Is the Plan consistent with national policy? (Enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and consistent with the DEFRA Vision and Circular on English National Parks and the Broads).
- Has the Plan met legal and procedural requirements?

## CAN COMMENTS ONLY BE MADE ON SOUNDNESS AND LEGAL COMPLIANCE?

It is advisable that representations made at this stage should focus on whether the plans meets the tests of soundness and is legally complaint. This is because these are the broad areas that the inspector will focus on in examining the Local Plan.

While we are mainly looking at the soundness and legal compliance of the plan, we will also listen to comments on all other aspects of the plan. Every comment will be passed to the Planning Inspectorate who will respond to them as part of their examination into the Local Plan.

## HOW CAN I MAKE MY COMMENT?

You can submit your comments to us online

[https://consult.southdowns.gov.uk/consult.ti/Pre\\_Sub\\_SDLP/consultationHome](https://consult.southdowns.gov.uk/consult.ti/Pre_Sub_SDLP/consultationHome)

For more information on how to respond online, see our consultation response guide

<https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/South-Downs-Local-Plan-How-to-respond.pdf>

You can also download a representation form [www.southdowns.gov.uk/localplan](http://www.southdowns.gov.uk/localplan) or write to the National Park Authority at the South Downs Centre.

## HOW LONG DOES THE CONSULTATION LAST?

The consultation will be available for comment for 8 weeks from **Tuesday 26th September 2017** to midnight **Tuesday 21st November 2017**. Comments submitted after that time will not be considered.

## HOW CAN I GET HOLD OF A COPY OF THE LOCAL PLAN?

The Local Plan is available to view at the following locations:

Location	Opening Times
Winchester Discovery Centre	Mon – Fri 9am – 7pm Sat 9am – 5pm Sun 11am – 3pm
Petersfield Town Hall	Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm

Chichester Library	Mon – Fri 9am – 7pm Sat 9am – 5pm
Storrington Library	Mon – Fri 9.30am – 5.30pm Sat 10am – 4pm
Brighton & Hove Library	Mon, Tues, Thurs 10am – 7pm Wed, Fri, Sat 10am – 5pm Sun 11am – 5pm
Lewes District Council	Mon – Fri 8.30 – 5pm

You can also purchase a hard copy of the Local Plan for £33.27 which includes postage – they cannot be collected.

- Cash payments can be made at reception at the South Downs Centre (SDC). The telephone number for the SDC is: 01730 814810
- Cheques can be handed in or posted to the SDC – be sure to include your post address.  
  - South Downs Centre
  - North Street
  - Midhurst
  - West Sussex
  - GU29 9DH
- Card payments can be made by phoning Brighton and Hove City Council – please speak to reception for further details.

## HASN'T THE PUBLIC ALREADY BEEN CONSULTED ON THE LOCAL PLAN?

Yes, the public have been consulted throughout the development of the Local Plan. There was a consultation on the issues and options for the Local Plan in 2014. The SDNPA then published a draft Local Plan setting out the Preferred Options in 2015. This pre-submission consultation is the last stage before the Authority will submit the Local Plan to the Government for examination.

## WHEN WILL THE LOCAL PLAN COME INTO FORCE?

Before it can come into force (also called being adopted) the Local Plan will be subject to an Examination in Public and the plan being found 'sound' by an Inspector. We expect this to happen in 2018.

## WHAT HAPPENS AFTER THIS CONSULTATION?

Once the consultation has closed we will look at all comments together with any new evidence and take them into account to make appropriate changes to the Local Plan. In spring 2018, the consultation Local Plan, the proposed changes, all evidence documents, and all comments from the consultation will be submitted for examination. If the plan is found 'sound' at examination the National Park Authority will then adopt it. We anticipate this will be in 2018.

## WILL THE PRE-SUBMISSION VERSION OF THE LOCAL PLAN BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN PLANNING DECISIONS NOW?

Yes but it will be given modest 'weight' in decisions in comparison to existing adopted local plans and joint core strategies.

## WHAT HAPPENS IF THE GOVERNMENT CHANGES THE LAW ON DEVELOPMENT AND LOCAL PLANS?

As with existing local plans in other parts of the country, we will monitor changes in law and follow any new legislation as appropriate.

## DOES THE LOCAL PLAN COVER MINERALS AND WASTE?

This Local Plan does not include policies on minerals and waste. These are contained in minerals and waste plans being prepared jointly with our neighbouring authorities. For further information please visit the [Minerals & Waste section](#) of our website.

## WHAT IF OUR COMMUNITY HAS, OR IS, PREPARING A NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN?

There are over 50 neighbourhood development plans being prepared or have been made in the National Park by local communities as of September 2017. All the policies in these neighbourhood development plans need to conform with the policies in the Local Plan. Neighbourhood development plans can allocate sites for development and include detailed policies on subjects important to local people.

## WHAT IS THE SHLAA AND HOW IS IT CONNECTED TO THE LOCAL PLAN?

The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is one of many pieces of evidence that supports the Local Plan. The SHLAA identifies sites across the National Park and considers whether they may be suitable for housing. Just because a site is identified in the SHLAA does not mean it will be allocated for housing in the Local Plan or granted planning permission for housing. All new sites for housing submitted will be considered through the SHLAA process by the National Park Authority. More information on this process can be found on the [SHLAA page of our website](#).

## WHAT DID YOU DO WITH PEOPLE'S COMMENTS FROM THE LOCAL PLAN PREFERRED OPTIONS CONSULTATION IN 2015?

In 2015 we asked people to comment on the first draft of the Local Plan, which set out the preferred options for tackling a range of issues in the National Park. We took all these comments into account in writing the Pre-Submission version alongside evidence-based studies on a wide range of subjects such as landscape, the historic environment and local housing need as well as requirements of Government policy and legislation. For more details about the representations received and how these were taken into account, please see the Interim Consultation Statement published on the Local Plan page of the website.

## WHAT ARE THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL (SA) AND THE HABITAT REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT (HRA)?

The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is a process carried out during the development of the Local Plan to assess the impact of proposed policies both individually or in combination against a set of desired sustainability objectives.

The Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) is used to identify whether any aspects of the Local Plan proposed policies both individually or in combination would have a negative effect on specific, designated sites. These "European Sites" include Ramsar sites, Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas.

The SA and HRA are two important pieces of evidence that support the Local Plan and we have published them for consultation at the same time. There are specific questions on them in the representation form.