

Subject: SDNPA - 10TH SEPTEMBER 2015 LOCAL PLAN WORKSHOP

- With his knowledge of having grown up in Steyning, Norman Dingeman, Vice-Chairman of SDNPA agreed with me that much of the presentation was not particularly relevant to our town. The main focus of the meeting was to present the impact of the Local Plan on new housing within the National Park and the majority of Steyning is outside the Park boundary. Steyning is however very much a gateway to the Park.
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- Duty to Cooperate. We were reminded that even if a planning application is outside the National Park that all authorities still have a duty to consider the impact on the Park. Councils must ensure they pay regard to National Park purposes.
As a gateway to the National Park, Steyning will be effected by the new policies which are being introduced to take more into account views, dark skies and tranquillity.

SD7 Views. There are now 80 view points which will aid in deciding the impact of any form of development on views both *within* or *of* the National Park. From these vantage points it is clearer for the Park Authority to see how any planning application if granted would be viewed from each direction.

SD9 Dark Skies A dark sky map is being drawn up which will comply with international standards for dark skies.

And a tranquility map has been created to support the policy on preserving tranquillity. (apologies but I did not hear the policy number).

SD27 In order to sustain the rural economy, broadband is encouraged and we were informed that the costs involved are small.

Hoping to translate the vision and objectives for the Park, the new Local Plan will take into account the landscape, local economy, local housing and the essence of all the SDNPA policies into a single streamlined document. The Plan is considered innovative and different because it takes into account Natural Capital and Ecosystem Services - both terms which needed explaining to councillors!

Natural Capital refers to the actual soil, the river valley, views, etc. and the fabric of the National Park. The Park authority wants improvement and investment for these places, to enhance and preserve them but also for the prosperity of the workers reliant upon these areas. Food is an obvious form of something from Natural Capital and but so is water, and 3 water companies rely on the Park to provide water.

Ecosystem Services refer to tourists, history, archaeology, wildlife, views, etc. and Steyning could benefit here by being a gateway to the Park. It might for example develop cycle paths leading into the Park to attract cycling visitors to the town.

The Local Plan will replace over 1000 policies from previous plans. The aim is to provide greater consistency and the document (which is a requirement of government) will be used as a 'major lever' in determining planning applications.

The role of the National Park in housing terms is that it believes it is not suitable for large housing developments but that does recognise the need for some affordable market housing to support employment and economic growth within the Park area. 120,000 people live in the South Downs National Park, with 2 million over the border, and housing requirements need to be addressed because the Park is populated.

CIL in the National Park

The CIL will replace 106 money, with 25% going direct to Parish Councils, where it must go on the provision or maintenance of infrastructure. 75% will go to the Park authority and will be put towards the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. All new housing with the exception of self builds will be subject to the CIL, which will be a standard charge based upon per square metre to simplify the charge. The charge will be compulsory and fixed.

Windfall. The term windfall applies to development sites which have not been previously identified for housing and could have been for example a shop or office.

The Local Plan will be in place until 2032 and a paper copy is available for £26 which I recommend considering purchasing for reference in the future. A paper copy of the Local Plan will be held at County Council Offices and it can also be viewed on-line. The consultation period ends on the 28th October 2015 at 23.59 and SPC can comment by paper or electronically. The public will be consulted prior to submission to the Secretary of State and after examination in early 2017 the Local Plan is hoped to be adopted in mid 2017.

A councillor from Coldwaltham expressed concern that proper attention might not be given to National Park purposes when a very busy HDC was dealing with applications. The speaker responded that all authorities must fulfil the duty to ensure consideration is given to National Park purposes.

Complaints were made by several councillors that it was not appreciated at the meeting that not all parishes have broadband.

Steve and I chatted with Karen after the meeting. I mentioned that I was new to SPC and not on the Planning committee but that Phil had asked that I raise that sometimes it was wished for the Park Authority to become more involved in planning issues and not leave quite so much to HDC. Karen she had spoken that day to Hazel and explained that she could not become involved with individual parishes.