The South Downs was established as a National Park in 2010 and The South Downs National Park Authority became the local planning authority for the National Park in 2011. The National Park contains over 1,600km$^2$ of England's most iconic lowland landscapes stretching from Winchester in the west to Eastbourne in the east. The South Downs Local Plan is the first Local Plan to plan for the National Park as a single entity. On adoption, this plan will become the statutory development plan for the whole National Park, along with the minerals and waste plans and ‘made’ (adopted) Neighbourhood Development Plans. The planning system in this country is plan-led and statute states that decisions on planning applications must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Accordingly this Local Plan will be used in the determination of planning applications.

This Pre-Submission Plan will accordingly be given some weight in the determination of planning applications by the National Park Authority and on its behalf. This weight will increase according to the stage of preparation of the Local Plan, the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies and the degree of consistency with the relevant policies with the NPPF. This is the Pre-Submission version of the Local Plan (subsequently referred to as the Local Plan) and is being published for public consultation under Regulation 19 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. This version of the plan follows on from the Options and the Preferred Options documents that were published for public consultation in 2014 and 2015 respectively.
The Local Plan covers the time period 2014 to 2033. This means that it will cover a 15-year time period from its projected time of adoption in 2018.

This online consultation includes a version of the main Pre-Submission South Downs Local Plan, which you can read online. At appropriate points in the document you will see “Add Comment” buttons that allow you to respond and give us your views. Please submit as many comments as you wish, each at the most relevant part of the document. All comments received in writing by the SDNPA will be passed in their entirety to the Local Plan Inspector on submission of the plan. This means that any comments you make will be considered by both the Authority and the Inspector. Whilst you may comment on any aspect of the Local Plan, your comments should ideally focus on these questions:

Has the Plan been positively prepared? (Based on a strategy that provides for the development and infrastructure needs)
Is the Plan justified? Founded on proportionate evidence and is the most appropriate strategy against all reasonable alternatives)
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 consistant with the DEFRA Vision & Circular on English National Parks and the Broads)
Has the Plan met legal and procedural requirements?

Three supporting documents, a Sustainability Appraisal, Habitats Regulations Assessment and Policies Map are also included as downloadable PDFs. If you would like to comment on those, there is a space to do so at the end of the main document. Please note, the Policies Map is made up of a series of documents, including:

3 x Overview maps - These are overview maps of the whole South Downs National Park. Because the National Park covers such a large area, there are three of these. They show national and local designations which relate to wider geographical areas, as well as showing the areas to which the settlement-level maps relate.

5 x Large Settlement maps - These maps show national and local designations as well as allocations and designations proposed in the Pre Submission Local Plan for the 5 larger settlements

54 x Individual Settlement maps (presented in 4 separate PDF documents) - These maps show national and local designations as well as allocations and designations proposed in the Pre Submission Local Plan for the 54 smaller settlements
There is an option to be kept informed of the progress of the plan through its next stages - please fill in the form at the beginning of the document (this will be the first page you see when you follow the link under RESPOND TO THIS CONSULTATION)

CONSULTATION DOCUMENTS

Pre Submission South Downs Local Plan
Sustainability Appraisal - Main report
Sustainability Appraisal Non-Technical Summary
Sustainability Appraisal - Appendicies
Habitats Regulations Assessment - Main Report
Habitats Regulations Assessment - Appendix Figure 2
Overview Policies Map_Western Area (North)
Overview Policies Map_Western Area (South)
Overview Policies Map_Eastern Area
East Dean & Friston Settlement Inset Policies Map
Lavant Settlement Inset Policies Map
Lewes Settlement Inset Policies Map
Midhurst Settlement Inset Policies Map
Petersfield Settlement Inset Policies Map
Settlement Inset Maps - Cover Page
Settlement Inset Maps - Alfriston to Droxford
Settlement Inset Maps - Easebourne to Itchen Abbas
Settlement Inset Maps - Kingston to Selborne
Settlement Inset Maps - Sheet to West Meon
Responding online - User Guide