

East Dean & Friston Neighbourhood Development Plan Decision Statement: November 2025

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), the South Downs National Park Authority has a statutory duty to assist communities in the preparation of neighbourhood development plans and orders and to take plans through a process of examination and referendum. The Localism Act 2011 (Part 6 chapter 3) sets out the Local Planning Authority's responsibilities under Neighbourhood Planning.
- 1.2 This statement confirms that the modifications proposed by the examiner's report have been accepted, the draft East Dean & Friston Neighbourhood Development Plan has been altered as a result of it; and that this plan may now proceed to referendum.

2. Background

- 2.1 The East Dean & Friston Neighbourhood Development Plan relates to the area that was designated by the South Downs National Park Authority as a neighbourhood area on 10 April 2019. This area corresponds with the East Dean & Friston Parish boundary that lies within the South Downs National Park Local Planning Authority Area.
- 2.2 Following the submission of the East Dean & Friston Neighbourhood Development Plan to the National Park Authority, the plan was publicised, and representations were invited. The publicity period ended on 30 June 2025.
- 2.3 Mr John Slater BA (Hons) DMS MRTPI FRGS was appointed by the South Downs National Park Authority with the consent of East Dean & Friston Parish Council, to undertake the examination of the Neighbourhood Development Plan and to prepare a report of the independent examination.
- 2.4 The examiner's report concludes that subject to making the modifications recommended by the examiner, the Plan meets the basic conditions set out in the legislation and should proceed to a Neighbourhood Planning referendum.

3. Decision

- 3.1 The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 requires the local planning authority to outline what action to take in response to the recommendations of an examiner made in a report under paragraph 10 of Schedule 4A to the 1990 Act (as applied by Section 38A of the 2004 Act) in relation to a neighbourhood development plan.
- 3.2 Having considered each of the recommendations made by the examiner's report, and the reasons for them, South Downs National Park Authority in consultation with East Dean & Friston Parish Council has decided to accept the modifications to the draft plan. Table 1 below outlines the alterations made to the draft plan under paragraph 12(6) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act (as applied by Section 38A of 2004 Act) in response to each of the Examiner's recommendations. The reasons set out have in some cases been paraphrased from the Examiners report for conciseness. This statement should be read alongside the [Examiner's Report](#).
- 3.3 If the Authority is satisfied that, subject to the modifications being made, the Neighbourhood Plan meets the legal requirements and basic conditions then it can proceed to referendum.

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Recommended Modification to the ED&FNDP	Justification	Decision
General		
Consequential supporting text changes as appropriate because of the policy modifications below, to be made by the South Downs National Park Authority in agreement with the Steering Group for the East Dean & Friston Neighbourhood Development Plan.	To ensure the supporting text reflects the policy modifications recommended by the Examiner.	Accept modifications.
POLICY EDF1: MEETING LOCAL HOUSING NEEDS		
A.iii. proposals that enable greater affordability uplifts and prioritise local residents when it comes to allocating housing (such as the use of First Homes). Such proposals should seek to prioritise those with a local connection to East Dean and Friston parish (see Glossary) and key <u>essential local</u> workers	Use a term whose meaning is explained in the Glossary of the NPPF, and which still meets the aspirations of the policy.	Accept modifications.
B. Residential development that could reasonably be expected to meet the needs of older people (by virtue of its size and location) should <u>is encouraged to</u> demonstrate how it has reflected the Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation (HAPPI) principles and the guidance contained in the RTPI’s “Dementia and town planning: Creating better environments for people living with dementia”.	The revised wording encourages development to meet the needs of older people rather than creating an over onerous and unnecessary imposition on all applicants for new housing in the parish whilst still meeting the aspirations of the policy.	Accept modifications.
POLICY EDF2: CHARACTER AND DESIGN OF DEVELOPMENT		
<p>B. As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should demonstrate how they have sought to address the following matters:</p> <p>Delete paragraph B i.</p> <p>i. make a positive contribution to the main highway approaches into the settlements (A259, Birling Gap Road and Jevington Road) through characteristic interventions. Interventions may include additional tree planting, the better management of roadside green spaces, reduction/consolidation of road signs and</p>	Outside the control of the applicant as on highway land and imposing this responsibility as a planning obligation would fail the test in the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010.	Accept modifications.

Recommended Modification to the ED&FNDP	Justification	Decision
other street furniture and wider green infrastructure as appropriate to landscape character; and		
ii-i. incorporate soft landscaping and characteristic boundary treatments including the retention and enhancement of established trees and hedgerows <u>especially on private (or unadopted) roads</u> ; and	On private roads, outside the control of the highway authority, this requirement is suitable and meets the Parish Council’s aspiration for the policy.	Accept modifications.
Where development abuts open countryside, development on the rural boundary edge should be <u>designed</u> and laid out to mitigate any detrimental visual impacts on the landscape.	Typo.	Accept modifications.
POLICY EDF4: CONSERVING HERITAGE ASSETS		
A. <i>(second paragraph)</i> In addition, development proposals <u>which fall within the Archaeological Notification Areas published by East Sussex County Council</u> should demonstrate that they have considered the potential impact on above and below ground archaeological deposits.	To constrain the policy to only apply to these areas, as otherwise will be overly onerous for all developments and would go beyond the requirements of the South Downs Local Plan policy SD16.	Accept modifications.
Add the location of “12. Air Raid Shelter” to Map 4 or 5	Currently omitted from the map.	Accept modifications.
C. delete v. v. where appropriate, make provision for the enhancement measures.	Sub-section C. v. unnecessary as enhancement already covered by C. ii.	Accept modifications.
POLICY EDF5: CONSERVING AND ENHANCING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT		
Delete B. B. Where biodiversity net gain units cannot be delivered on site, they should be prioritised for use within the parish, focusing on maintaining and improving the identified biodiversity opportunity areas. Measures to achieve biodiversity net gain, mitigation or compensation involving the creation of habitat and/or relocation of	National scheme for delivering biodiversity net gain and the elements it requires make it inappropriate for the Neighbourhood Plan policy to continue to seek to impose its own obligations.	Accept modifications.

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<p>species, should include sufficient funding to support at least 30 years of post-development habitat management or land use change.</p>		
<p>Delete the last sentence of C</p> <p>C. Proposals that seek to improve the management of and connectivity between areas of high biodiversity value areas and green spaces will be encouraged. Conversely, proposals which threaten to damage such connectivity will be strongly resisted. Proposals should seek to deliver a measurable biodiversity net gain of 20%, where possible, but at a minimum, a net gain of at least 10%.</p> <p>Amend the letters to A to C</p>	<p>Lack of specific evidence to justify a 20% biodiversity net gain, even with the caveat “where possible”. Delete to ensure basic conditions are met.</p>	<p>Accept modifications.</p>
<p>Insert after section on Hedgerows and renumber</p> <p>“Chalk grassland</p> <p>vi. The importance of chalk grassland habitats, which are regarded as nationally significant, should be recognised, with no loss or degradation occurring.”</p>	<p>This addition reflects the Parish Council support for the representations on EDF5 made by Wealden District Council and the Friends of the South Downs Society except for the farming practice elements that are outside the scope of planning policy, and which could be referenced in the supporting text.</p>	<p>Accept modifications.</p>
POLICY EDF7: PROTECTION OF LOCALLY SIGNIFICANT VIEWS		
<p>Delete Viewpoint 2 (and renumber) and amend the shaded arcs of viewpoint 1, 3 and 10 so that the arcs fall entirely within the neighbourhood area boundary.</p> <p>● View 2: Summer Down to Sea</p> <p><i>(changes to shaded arcs to be made to Figure 10)</i></p>	<p>To ensure the policy only applies to locations within the Neighbourhood Plan area.</p> <p>Views outside the Neighbourhood Plan area are covered by the South Downs Local Plan policy SD6.</p>	<p>Accept modifications.</p>
<p>In B. after “proposals” insert “within the neighbourhood area”.</p>	<p>As above.</p>	<p>Accept modifications.</p>

Recommended Modification to the ED&FNDP	Justification	Decision
POLICY EDF9: IMPROVING OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL FACILITIES, SPORT AND RECREATION		
<p>A. Proposals for new community, cultural, sport and recreational facilities, or the improvement of existing facilities, in particular facilities for children and teenagers, improvements to the recreation ground and sports pavilion and Downlands Way community space, will be supported where:</p> <p>i. the proposal contributes to <u>does not detract from</u> the overall character and landscape setting of the area; and</p>	<p>In relation to character and landscape setting, development should not detract from the character of the area in line with the expression for residential amenity, highway or heritage impact in this policy.</p> <p>No need for all development of this type to contribute to the overall character and landscape setting of the area.</p>	<p>Accept modifications</p>
<p>iv. the proposal would not have harmful impacts on heritage assets, including their setting <u>unless the public benefits arising from the development outweigh that harmful impact.</u></p>	<p>Impact on heritage assets should be weighed against the public benefits, this approach being in accordance with that taken by the NPPF.</p>	<p>Accept modifications</p>

