

Report to	<b>Planning Committee</b>
Date	<b>12 March 2026</b>
By	<b>Director of Placemaking</b>
Title of Report	<b>Retrofitting Historic Buildings for Energy Efficiency and Carbon Reduction Technical Advice Note</b>
Purpose of Report	<b>Approve the use of the Retrofitting Historic Buildings for Energy Efficiency and Carbon Reduction Technical Advice Note</b>

#### **Decision**

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**Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to:**

- 1. Approve the Retrofitting Historic Buildings for Energy Efficiency and Carbon Reduction Technical Advice Note as set out in Appendix I for publication subject to any changes proposed by the Committee.**
  - 2. Delegate authority to the Director of Placemaking in consultation with the Chair of Planning Committee to make any minor changes to the Retrofitting Historic Buildings for Energy Efficiency and Carbon Reduction Technical Advice Note.**
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#### **Executive Summary**

- Retrofitting historic buildings is frequently occurring as a topic in planning applications within the National Park and can range from insulation and draught proofing to ground source heat pumps. All actions can have implications for a building's fabric, their environment and come with cost implications.
- In response to this, the Technical Advice Note (TAN) seeks to provide concise and straightforward advice to homeowners, residents, their agents and officers. The document refers people to seek specialist advice and to contact the Park through the 'Do I Need Planning Permission' (DINPP) service, as well as including hyperlinks, rather than repeating existing information and guidance.
- The purposes of the TAN set out at **Appendix I** are to expand upon the Climate Action Policies and the Landscape and Heritage Policies in the existing and proposed new South Downs Local Plan, making clear links between retrofitting, reducing energy demand, repairs and ventilation. The document will also improve consistency across the Park on this topic and signpost users to further information.
- The TAN provides guidance for applicants and officers on appropriate proposals, methods and development within the National Park. The TAN takes a positive approach and explains how to begin; understand the building, repair, reduce demand, then make low level changes, moving to the larger ones with planning applications.

## **I. Background**

- I.1 Retrofitting historic buildings brings a fairly unique set of requirements, on a case-by-case basis, they can be relatively complex, and have implications for the fabric and environment of the building, curtilage and setting as well as neighbours and the surrounding context. A TAN on this topic is therefore considered to be a useful resource for both applicants and officers.
- I.2 Representatives from different disciplines within the Authority provided comments through the consultation, which has helped develop this guidance, both from the legal opinion and planning use.
- I.3 Consideration by Members of the committee is sought for the TAN only. The website will be updated periodically, however this is an on-going operational matter.
- I.4 The TAN is a material consideration that provides additional guidance and technical information that supports the implementation of the Climate Action Policies and the Landscape and Heritage Policies proposed in the new Local Plan and those in the current adopted Local Plan.
- I.5 On 12 February 2026, the Proposed Submission South Downs Local Plan (Regulation 19) was recommended for approval by the Planning Committee to the full National Park Authority, for publication for comment for 6 weeks in May 2026, and then submission for examination by the end of 2026. The Proposed Submission Local Plan will be considered by the full National Park Authority on 20 March 2026. The new Local Plan is anticipated to be adopted during 2027/28.
- I.6 The TAN seeks to provide positive guidance, information and support for applicants, officers and Members when dealing with the retrofitting of historic buildings. It sets out how it is possible to both preserve and enhance the historic buildings or areas in a way which can generate wider benefits for energy efficiency and carbon reduction. It is hoped the TAN would be used by those seeking planning permission or those undertaking changes under Permitted Development.

## **2. Consultation**

- 2.1 Prior to consideration by Members, the draft TAN has been the subject of a 3-week consultation with key stakeholders and members of the public from 27 November 2025 to 18 December 2025. The following were consulted:
  - Statutory Consultees, including Historic England (HE).
  - Local Planning Authorities: Host Council Planning and Conservation Officers.
  - Parish and Town Councils within the Park.
  - Local Action Groups: Winchester Action on Climate Change Ltd and Petersfield Climate Action Network.
  - South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) Planning Officers, Conservation and Design Officers and Legal Team.
- 2.2 Across respondents there was significant broad support for the TAN. The consultees have provided detailed and helpful comments in response to the draft TAN, the main themes highlighted are summarised below:
  - HE and Legal comments were to amend specific wording and were in line with other comments.
  - The addition of Permitted Development Rights, Article 4 Directions and Building Control links for further information.
  - The addition of DINPP email under each section.

- Headings of topics carried through to the associated ‘Authority View’ and the ‘Does it require permission’ boxes for clarity to what they refer to.
  - Hyperlinks for DINPP and all the Further Information links.
- 2.3 The comments have been addressed in the latest draft TAN at **Appendix I**. Where comments relate to matters outside of SDNPA control, such as Building Regulations, the TAN has sought to provide a simple explanation and signposting to further information.
- 2.4 Overall, the consultation has highlighted how difficult it is to provide information and clear guidance where so many factors require consideration. The TAN however seeks to clarify options and the Authority view; to aid consistent decision-making, this is intended to help case officers weigh in the balance the whole building approach when reaching a recommendation.
- 3. The Retrofitting Historic Buildings for Energy Efficiency and Carbon Reduction TAN**
- 3.1 The content of the TAN seeks to provide clear and concise guidance in a format which is easy to understand. The guidance balances and is ordered from understanding your building, repair, low level options to more costly and carbon efficient options. It provides technical advice on planning, permitted development and sets out SDNPA’s expectations and views with regard to planning applications.
- 3.2 The document is written positively and seeks to signpost and cross reference to guidance provided elsewhere, for example Historic England’s guidance notes. In response to the bespoke approach needed, it provides opportunities for users to seek further clarification or to submit a Do I Need Planning Permission or pre-application request.
- 4. Going Forward**
- 4.1 If planning committee approve the TAN, it will be published on the SDNPA website. It will be a material consideration that will be considered by decision makers at the Authority and host authorities when determining planning applications for retrofit developments.
- 5. Other implications**

<b>Implication</b>	<b>Yes*/No</b>
Will further decisions be required by another committee/full authority?	No
Does the proposal raise any Resource implications?	Limited. The TAN was produced by officers with a small amount of consultant input for formatting and will be used, proportionately, by planning officers when considering retrofit development in the National Park.
How does the proposal represent Value for Money?	Provides consistent guidance to assist officers and applicants on Retrofitting Historic Buildings for Energy Efficiency and Carbon Reduction, a common type of application in the National Park.
Which PMP Outcomes/ Corporate plan objectives does this deliver against	The TAN is a material consideration that provides additional guidance and technical information that supports the implementation to the PMP Outcome of Towards a Sustainable Future.

<b>Implication</b>	<b>Yes*/No</b>
Links to other projects or partner organisations	Closely relates to some of the work being undertaken by Historic England and will be updated in accordance with any updates in the future.
How does this decision contribute to the Authority's climate change objectives	Guiding better informed decisions for officers and for homeowners, through the TAN and associated web pages, raises awareness and increases resilience and adaptation of historic buildings appropriately to a changing climate.
Have you taken regard of the South Downs National Park Authority's equality duty as contained within the Equality Act 2010?	There are no direct implications arising from this report.
Are there any Human Rights implications arising from the proposal?	None
Are there any Crime & Disorder implications arising from the proposal?	None
Are there any Data Protection implications?	None

## **6. Risks Associated with the Proposed Decision**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
TAN is not published and therefore there is no specific guidance for retrofit development of historic buildings (a common form of development in the National Park).	Low	Low	Publish TAN to guide applicants, officers and Members.
Works highlighted in the document are undertaken without relevant permissions.	Low	Medium	The guidance is clear on what does and does not require permission and consistently repeats that users should seek Do I Need Planning Permission or Pre-Application advise if they are unsure.

**TIM SLANEY**

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Appendix: I. Draft Retrofitting Historic Buildings for Energy Efficiency and Carbon Reduction Technical Advice Note.  
SDNPA Consultees; Director of Placemaking; Legal Services; SDNPA Planning Officers; Conservation and Design Officers.  
External Consultees; Statutory and non-statutory consultees including Historic England (HE); Local Planning Authorities: Host Council Planning and Conservation Officers; Parish and Town Councils within the Park; Local Action Groups: Winchester Action on Climate Change Ltd and Petersfield Climate Action Network.

