

SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Held at: 10.00am on 13 November 2025 at The Memorial Hall, South Downs Centre.

Present: Heather Baker (Chair), Paul Bevan, Antonia Cox, Janet Duncton, Joan Grech, John Hyland, Gary Marsh, Andrew Shaxson and Daniel Stewart-Roberts.

Officers: Robert Ainslie (Development Manager), Robert Green (Major Planning Projects and Performance Manager), Rebecca Moutrey (Senior Solicitor), Claire Tester (Planning Policy Manager), Lewis Ford (Senior Planning Policy Officer), Richard Fryer (Senior Governance Officer), Stella New (Development Management Lead), Jane Roberts (Governance Officer), Philippa Smyth (Principal Development Management Officer) and Kevin Wright (Planning Policy Officer).

OPENING REMARKS

The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting and informed those present that South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) Members had a primary responsibility for ensuring that the Authority furthered the National Park Purposes and Duty. That Members regarded themselves first and foremost as Members of the Authority and would act in the best interests of the National Park as a whole, rather than as representatives of their appointing body or any interest groups.

ITEM 1: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

72. Apologies for absence were received from Alun Alesbury and Stephen McAuliffe.

ITEM 2: DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

73. The following declarations was made:

- Gary Marsh declared a public service interest in Agenda Item 6 as he was acquainted with the public speaker.
- Daniel Stewart-Roberts declared a public service interest in Agenda Items 6 and 7 as a Lewes District Councillor.
- John Hyland declared a public service interest in Agenda Item 10 as a representative of Hampshire Parishes.

ITEM 3: MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 9 OCTOBER 2025

74. The minutes of the previous meeting held on 9 October 2025 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

ITEM 4: UPDATES ON PREVIOUS COMMITTEE DECISIONS

75. The following updates were given by the Development Manager:

- SDNP/24/03588/REM – Land North of Buckmore Farm, Petersfield, the decision had been issued.
- SDNP/25/0142/FUL – Various Garage Sites, Petworth, no new material considerations had been raised following the neighbour notification process and a decision would be issued.
- SDNP/24/05303/FUL - Land at Matterley Farm, Ovington, an application for a non-material amendment to the application would be considered under delegated powers.

ITEM 5: URGENT ITEMS

76. There were none.

ITEM 6: SDNP/25/00496/FUL - WHITE HART HOTEL, HIGH STREET, LEWES

Proposal: Demolition of the former hotel annex and construction of five new dwellings with parking and associated landscaping.

77. The Officer presented the application and reminded Members of the report (Report PC25/26-23) and the update sheet and verbal update,
78. The following speaker addressed the committee in support of the application:
 - Martin Carpenter of Enplan, speaking as the agent.
79. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC25/26-23), the updates and the public speaker comments and commented as follows:
 - Sought confirmation that cycle parking provision was sufficient and addressed policy and local concerns.
 - Queried whether tree application comments and pre-application advice had been made publicly available.
 - Concerns were raised about the massing of the proposed block within the conservation area, and whether the design and materials would sufficiently break up the building's bulk.
 - Requested further detail on the proposed materials, especially the use of flint and metal cladding, and whether these would be subject to approval.
 - Asked for clarification on the design, size, and necessity of the garden rooms.
 - Questioned the amount of natural light available to the kitchens at the front of the dwellings, and whether the internal arrangement could be improved.
 - Noted the poor current condition of the site and the limited value of existing trees but stressed the importance of ensuring high-quality flint panels in the new development.
 - Expressed concern that the "pop-up" office rooms added considerable height to the building and questioned whether this was justified in the conservation area, especially given the design officer's reservations.
 - Supported the contemporary and elegant design but flagged the need for more detail on materials and elevations, especially for the garden rooms.
 - Considered whether the application should be deferred until further details had been provided on materials.
 - Discussed whether the Chair and Deputy Chair should be consulted once details of materials had been submitted.
 - Noted the lack of natural light in the kitchens and that this was not unusual in historic properties.
 - Emphasised the importance of the committee judging the acceptability of materials and design in public session, rather than leaving all details to Officers post-approval.
80. Members were advised:
 - There was sufficient cycle parking on the site, with provision located by the fire escape and at the rear of the site.
 - Pre-application comments were usually placed on the website, but in this instance they had been included in the officer's report, rather than published separately.
 - The materials would be brick and flint, with material samples required by condition. Metal cladding would be used on the 'pop-up' rooms, with specific details to be approved as part of conditions.

- The garden rooms would provide ancillary storage and additional cycle parking; detailed design could be secured by condition.
- Due to changes in land levels, the kitchens would not have natural light, but this was not considered grounds for refusal. Internal arrangements could be altered by future occupants.
- The rear elevation would be brick and flint, with brick to the sides. The design officer raised no concerns about the limited use of metal cladding.
- The increased height was primarily due to the set-back roof rooms, which were not unduly prominent. This approach was considered acceptable in this context.
- Consultation would be undertaken with the Chair and Deputy Chair of the committee relating to the external appearance and materials proposed.

81. **RESOLVED:**

- 1) That planning permission be granted subject to:
 - a. The satisfactory completion of a Section 106 Agreement, the final form of which is delegated to the Director of Planning, in consultation with the Chair of the Planning Committee, to secure:
 - £112,117 financial contribution equivalent to one unit to be used towards the provision of affordable housing in the South Downs National Park, as set out in the report.
 - b. The conditions set out at Paragraph 8.1 of the report, the update sheet and the addition of a condition requesting further details of the Garden Rooms, and any amendments or other conditions as required and/or to address technical matters,
- 2) That authority be delegated to the Director of Planning to refuse the application with appropriate reasons if the Section 106 Agreement is not completed or sufficient progress has not been made within 6 months of the 13 November 2025 Planning Committee Meeting.
- 3) That the discharge of the conditions relating to external appearance or materials is to be undertaken in consultation with the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Planning Committee.

ITEM 7: SDNP/25/02551/FUL - ALDI HOUSE, BROOKS ROAD, LEWES

Proposal: Demolition of four existing industrial units and part demolition of the food store for the construction of an extension to the food store with car and cycle parking, landscaping and associated works.

82. The Officer presented the application and reminded Members of the report (Report PC25/26-24) and the update sheet and provided a verbal update to note a correction: on page 52, paragraph 5.1, there were four neutral representations rather than the three as previously reported.
83. The following speaker addressed the committee in support of the application:
 - Molly Tindall representing Aldi Stores Ltd.
84. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC25/26-24), the updates and the public speaker comments and commented as follows:
 - Noted the improved appearance and the framework for supporting displaced businesses.
 - Raised concerns regarding the adequacy of the relocation strategy, observing that it primarily signposted tenants to available units and questioned whether more could be done to ensure job retention.
 - Noted that there were occupied units with other kinds of business that could be disrupted by the application.

- Acknowledged the financial contribution to town centre enhancements, while noting its modest scale.
- Commented that the visualisation of the new scheme was a significant improvement.
- Observed that the approach would encourage people to visit the area and support active travel.

85. **RESOLVED:**

- 1) That planning permission be granted subject to
 - i) The conditions set out at Paragraph 9.1 of the report and any amendments or other conditions required to address technical matters;
 - ii) A legal agreement, the final form of which is delegated to the Director of Planning, to secure the following:
 - A Framework Relocation Strategy to include a 12-month period of support for relocation and lease extension for the current occupants of the industrial units being demolished;
 - A contribution of £18,750 towards town centre enhancements and employment initiatives;
- 2) That authority be delegated to the Director of Planning to refuse the application with appropriate reasons if the legal agreement is not completed or sufficient progress made within 6 months of the Planning Committee meeting of 13 November 2025.

86. The meeting adjourned for a short break at 11.05am.

87. Vanessa Rowlands joined the meeting at 11.10am

ITEM 8: HAMPSHIRE MINERALS AND WASTE PLAN (HMWP) PARTIAL UPDATE – SCHEDULE OF MAIN MODIFICATIONS FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Purpose of Report: To update on the progress of the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan (HMWP) Partial Update, to recommend approval of the Schedules of Main and Additional Modifications to the HMWP Partial Update and Policies Map, and to recommend approval of the public consultation of the Schedules of Main and Additional Modifications to the HMWP Partial Update and Policies Map.

88. The Officer reminded Members of the report (Report PC25/26-25).

89. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC25/26-25) and commented as follows:

- Welcomed the strengthening of Policy 5.
- Queried Policy 20, the prediction of a shortfall, and whether Officers and Members would be consulted if extraction was proposed in the setting of the National Park.
- Asked about the material impact of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy on restoration.
- Raised concerns about enforcement and requested clarification on the monitoring of mineral and waste sites.
- Noted omissions from the list of wastewater treatment sites and questioned whether other treatment sites should be included.
- Expressed concern over the omission of some wastewater sites and the potential for monitoring issues
- Requested further clarification on the consultation process and respondents.

90. Members were advised:

- Potential shortfalls were regularly monitored. Any new extraction sites would require a planning application and the Authority would be consulted on any developments within the National Park's setting.
- Proposed Main Modifications to Criterion 1b of Policy 10 stated that the restoration of minerals and waste developments would be supported where a restoration scheme could demonstrate how the proposal contributed to the delivery of local and strategic priorities for habitats and species, and biodiversity networks, including Local Nature Recovery Strategies.
- Officers monitored mineral and waste sites and worked with enforcement officers. Levels of compliance from operators varied.
- Sites which did not meet safeguarding criteria were not included in the list.
- Officers understood that some wastewater treatment operators did not want site locations published.
- The Authority worked with partner authorities to ensure co-ordinated working. Engagement was carried out in accordance with the five authorities' Statements of Community Involvement.

91. **RESOLVED:**

The Planning Committee:

1. Noted the findings of the addendums to the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) (Appendix 4) and the Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) (Appendix 5) on the Schedule of Main Modifications (Appendix 1) to the submission version of the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan (HMWP) Partial Update; and
2. Approved the Schedule of Main Modifications (Appendix 1), Schedule of Main Modifications to Policies Map (Appendix 2), and Schedule of Additional Modifications (Appendix 3) to the submission version of the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan (HMWP) Partial Update; and
3. Approved the public consultation of the Schedule of Main Modifications (Appendix 1), Schedule of Main Modifications to Policies Map (Appendix 2), Schedule of Additional Modifications (Appendix 3), Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Addendum (Appendix 4) and Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment (SA/SEA) Addendum (Appendix 5) to the submission version of the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan (HMWP) Partial Update; and
4. Delegate authority to the Director of Planning, in consultation with the Chair of Planning Committee, to make any minor changes that were required prior to the start of the above public consultation.

**ITEM 9: EAST DEAN & FRISTON NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN
DECISION STATEMENT**

Purpose of Report: To consider and agree the examiner's recommended modifications to the East Dean & Friston neighbourhood development plan and publish these in the Authority's decision statement.

92. The Officer reminded Members of the report (Report PC25/26-26) and provided a verbal update regarding paragraph 3.2, specifically referencing and deleting the word 'significant' in the first sentence. The sentence should have read "The Examiner has now issued his report and identified a number of modifications, which are necessary to ensure the ED&FNDP meets the Basic Conditions." This now read correctly and aligned with the second bullet point, first sentence in the Executive Summary. This was noted as a clarification.
93. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC25/26-26) and commented as follows:

- Praised the effort and dedication of the East Dean & Friston team in preparing the Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- Welcomed the dementia friendly planning and list of heritage monuments.
- Supported the examiner's recommended modifications, noting they were minor.

94. Members were advised:

- The examiner had commended the work undertaken by the local team.

95. **RESOLVED:**

The Planning Committee:

- 1) Agreed the Decision Statement as set out at Appendix 2 of the report, which sets out the modifications that will be made to the East Dean & Friston Neighbourhood Development Plan in response to the Examiner's recommendations.
- 2) Noted the Examiner's Report at Appendix 3 and recommended modifications to make the East Dean & Friston Neighbourhood Development Plan meet the Basic Conditions.

ITEM 10: COMMUNITY PLANNING UPDATE

Purpose of Report: Update Members on the progress of Neighbourhood Development Plan, Parish and Village Design Statements, and Parish Priorities Statements across the South Downs National Park.

96. The Officer reminded Members of the report (Report PC25/26-27) and gave a verbal update, noting that in paragraph 3.4, second sentence the reference to Planning Committee on 10 October 2024 was incorrect. The correct Planning Committee was 10 April 2025.
97. The Committee considered the report by the Director of Planning (Report PC24/25-27) and commented as follows:
- Asked whether Parishes were still encouraged to produce Village Design Statements.
 - Queried awareness amongst Parishes and what guidance was provided.
 - Asked whether the removal of Government funding for the preparation of neighbourhood plans meant that groups were asking for more support from the Authority.
 - Noted that many Neighbourhood Plans seemed outdated and were losing relevance.
 - Questioned whether older plans should be reviewed and updated.
 - Asked about gaps in coverage and what was being done to encourage participation.
 - Queried whether Parish Priority Statements would continue given funding constraints.
 - Highlighted delays in Peacehaven and Telscombe Neighbourhood Plan examination and requested an update.
 - Asked whether sufficient information was available on the website to assist communities in developing plans.
 - Commented on the importance of neighbourhood plans for securing Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding.
98. Members were advised:
- Parishes were encouraged to submit earlier to inform the Local Plan; but Parish Priorities Statements were also useful for priority setting and CIL allocation.
 - A similar question had been raised in April and information about Parish Priorities Statements was included in the Authority's summer newsletter.
 - Monitoring would continue and the impact of funding changes would become clearer over time.

- Policies would become outdated over time. Updates were voluntary and required local funding.
- Information and guidance were available on the Authority's website to assist communities and the process remained unchanged.
- Neighbourhood Plans remained important for securing 25% CIL funding.

99. **RESOLVED:**

The Planning Committee noted the progress to date on the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans, Parish and Village Design Statements, and Parish Priorities Statements across the South Downs National Park.

100. The Chair closed the meeting at 12.06pm

CHAIR

Signed: _____

