

South Downs Local Plan: Proposed Submission May 2026

Statement of Representations Procedure

1. Introduction

The South Downs National Park Authority (“the Authority”) is publishing the Proposed Submission version of the new South Downs Local Plan in accordance with Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

The Proposed Submission Local Plan is the version the Authority intends to submit to the Secretary of State for independent examination. This consultation is therefore the final statutory stage at which representations can be made before submission.

Representations are invited from **09:00am on 12 May 2026 to 11.59pm on 23 June 2026**. This statement sets out where to view the documents and how to make comments.

Important Notice: In accordance with the Regulations, representations received after the deadline will be marked as late and may not be accepted by the Inspector.

2. Purpose of the Regulation 19 consultation

The purpose of the Regulation 19 consultation is to enable interested parties to make **formal representations to the appointed Planning Inspector** on whether the Local Plan:

- has been prepared in accordance with **legal and procedural requirements**, and/or
- is **sound**.

Representations made at this stage will be considered by the Inspector as part of the examination process.

3. Scope of representations

Representations must relate to matters of **legal compliance and/or soundness**.

A Local Plan is considered sound if it is:

- **Positively prepared** – providing a strategy which, as a minimum seeks to meet the area’s objectively assessed needs, and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring authorities is accommodated where it is practical to do

so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development;

- **Justified** – an appropriate strategy, taking into account reasonable alternatives and based on proportionate evidence;
- **Effective** – deliverable over the plan period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground; and
- **Consistent with national policy** – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework.

4. Document Availability

The South Downs Local Plan: Proposed Submission (Regulation 19) May 2026 and supporting documents, can be downloaded and viewed online by visiting:

<https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning-policy/new-south-downs-local-plan/>

You can view paper copies of the documents listed above and/or collect representation form(s) at our principal offices during opening hours:

- **South Downs Centre**, North Street, Midhurst, West Sussex, GU29 9DH, for opening hours see: <https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/national-park-authority/our-communities/south-downs-centre/>
- **Seven Sisters Country Park Visitor Centre**, Exceat, East Sussex, BN25 4AD, for opening hours see: <https://www.sevensisters.org.uk/plan-your-visit/opening-times/>

Alternatively, the documents can be viewed at the following libraries during their opening hours:

- **Bishops Waltham Library**, Free Street, Bishops Waltham, Hampshire, SO32 1EE
- **Findon Valley Library**, Lime Tree Avenue, Findon Valley, Worthing, West Sussex, BN14 0DH
- **Hassocks Library**, 9 Ewart Close, Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 8FJ
- **Lancing Library**, Penstone Park, Lancing, West Sussex, BN15 9DL
- **Lewes Library**, Styles Field, Friars Walk, Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 2LZ
- **Liphook Library**, London Road, Liphook, Hampshire, GU30 7AN
- **Midhurst Library**, The Grange, Bepton Road, Midhurst, West Sussex, GU29 9HD
- **Petersfield Library**, 27 The Square, Petersfield, Hampshire, GU32 3HH
- **Petworth Library**, High Street, Petworth, West Sussex, GU28 0AU
- **Steyning Library**, Church Street, Steyning, West Sussex, BN44 3YB

If you are having trouble accessing the documents, or if you require the consultation documents in an alternative format, please contact the South Downs Planning Policy Team via email at planningpolicy@southdowns.gov.uk

5. Making a representation

Representations should:

- clearly identify the section, policy or part of the Local Plan to which they relate;
- state whether the representation concerns **legal compliance**, **soundness**, or both;
- set out the reasons for the representation clearly and concisely, and
- set out whether participation at hearing session(s) is necessary.

Representations are strongly encouraged to be submitted using the Authority's online consultation platform: <https://southdowns-consult.objective.co.uk>

Representations may also be made in writing via email to planningpolicy@southdowns.gov.uk or via post to the Planning Policy Team, South Downs Centre, North Street, Midhurst, West Sussex, GU29 9DH.

Please refer to the **Representation Questionnaire** and **Guidance Note on Making a Representation**, which sets out guidance on what to consider when making a representation, you can find these on our webpage here: <https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning-policy/new-south-downs-local-plan/>

To ensure representations can be considered at examination, they must include the name and email or postal address of the person or organisation making the representation. Personal data will be processed in accordance with the Authority's privacy notice:

<https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/national-park-authority/our-work/transparency-finance/privacy-policy/>

6. Publication of representations

All duly-made representations will be:

- published on the Authority's website, and
- submitted in full to the Planning Inspector.

Personal contact details other than names (such as phone numbers, email addresses or signatures) will not be published.

7. What happens next

Following the close of the Regulation 19 consultation, the Authority will submit the Local Plan and all representations received to the Secretary of State.

The Planning Inspector will consider the representations when determining:

- whether the Local Plan is legally compliant and sound; and

- the matters to be examined at the public hearing sessions.

Any changes to the Local Plan after this stage can only be made through the **Inspector-led examination and main modifications process**, which would be subject to further consultation if required.

The examination will include hearing sessions held by the Planning Inspector in public and the Inspector will determine the most appropriate procedure to adopt to hear those who have indicated that they wish to participate at the examination hearings.

8. Notification of the next stages of the South Downs Local Plan

When making your representation you will also have the option to request to be notified of the following stages of the Local Plan process:

- the submission of the Local Plan for independent Examination,
- the publication of the Inspector's recommendations following independent Examination of the Local Plan, and
- the adoption of the Local Plan.

Once the Regulation 19 representation period has closed, updates regarding the status of the Local Plan will be published on our Local Plan webpages.