

Agenda Item 7
Report PC24/25-28

Report to	Planning Committee
Date	13 March 2025
By	Director of Planning
Title of Report	Adoption of the Upham Village Design Statement as a Supplementary Planning Document
Purpose of Report	To recommend the adoption of the Upham Village Design Statement as a Supplementary Planning Document

Decision

Recommendation:

The Planning Committee is recommended to approve the adoption of the Upham Village Design Statement as a Supplementary Planning Document

Executive Summary

The South Downs National Park Authority has set out a commitment in its Partnership Management Plan to support the development of community-led plans and initiatives which enhance the towns, villages, and landscapes of the South Downs National Park. This report presents the Upham Village Design Statement (**Appendix 1**) to the South Downs Planning Committee for adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document. If adopted, the Upham Village Design Statement would become a material consideration in the determination of planning applications in Upham, Winchester.

The Upham Village Design Statement has been prepared by a steering group of parish councillors and local volunteers and provides further detail (through 93 design guidelines) to the interpretation and implementation of South Downs Local Plan Policies SD4 (Landscape Character) and SD5 (Design), and the South Downs Design Guide, for planning decisions in Upham, Winchester.

The South Downs National Park Authority - alongside Winchester City Council and Upham Parish Council – has carried out two formal public consultations of the Upham Village Design Statement. This has exceeded the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and met the requirements of the South Downs Statement of Community Involvement 2022 (5 edition). The two public consultations were carried out in 2024 and both received 10 representations from statutory consultees and residents or individuals. A summary of all the representations – along with how each representation has been addressed and responded to – can be found in the Consultation Statement (**Appendix 2**).

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report presents the Upham Village Design Statement (Appendix 1) to the South Downs Planning Committee for adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document. If adopted, the Upham Village Design Statement would become a material consideration in the determination of planning applications in Upham, Winchester.
- 1.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) emphasises the importance of achieving well-designed places as a key aspect of sustainable development – see Chapter 12. The Framework broadly explains that development should take account of local design guidance and that, to carry weight in decision-making, such guidance should be produced as either part of the Development Plan or as a Supplementary Planning Document.
- 1.3 A **Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)** is a planning document which adds further detail to existing planning policies in an Adopted Local Plan. As the name suggests, an SPD is intended to supplement, rather than replace, existing planning policies. This means that although an SPD is capable of being a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, it does not, itself, form part of the Development Plan.

2. South Downs Partnership Management Plan & Local Plan

- 2.1 The South Downs National Park Authority (“the Authority”) has set out a commitment in its Partnership Management Plan to support community-led plans and initiatives (such as Village Design Statements) which enhance the villages and landscapes of the South Downs National Park – see Outcome 9.2 and Policy 34. In October 2013, authority was delegated to the South Downs Planning Committee to adopt community-led plans and initiatives.
- 2.2 The **Adopted South Downs Local Plan** sets out a landscape-led approach to development. The Adopted Local Plan includes Policy SD4 (Landscape Character) and Policy SD5 (Design). The purposes of these policies are to conserve and enhance the landscape character of the National Park and ensure that development is of the highest possible design quality within the National Park, respectively. In terms of the latter, the South Downs Design Guide SPD also sets out general design principles to support the implementation of Policy SD5 (Design) across the whole of the National Park.
- 2.3 A **Village Design Statement (VDS)** can build on Policy SD4, Policy SD5, and the South Downs Design Guide SPD by providing local design guidance for future changes within a smaller geographical area (i.e. a village). In summary, a VDS should:
 - Identify, describe, and/or outline the distinctive and local landscape character, design, and special qualities of a village (especially those that are highly valued by residents); and
 - Prepare design guidelines to help guide future development to conserve or enhance the identified local landscape character, design, and special qualities of a village.
- 2.4 If the Upham Village Design Statement is adopted as an SPD, then it would supplement and provide further detail to the interpretation and implementation of Policy SD4 (Landscape Character), Policy SD5 (Design), and the South Downs Design Guide SPD when determining planning applications in Upham, Winchester.
- 2.5 The Upham Village Design Statement has been prepared by a steering group of parish councillors and local volunteers. However, the administrative process for adopting it as an SPD has been carried out by the South Downs National Park Authority as the Lead Local Planning Authority. This is to ensure that the preparation and adoption of the Upham Village Design Statement meets the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and the South Downs Statement of Community Involvement.

3. Upham Village Design Statement (Appendix I)

3.1 The Upham Village Design Statement steering group has explained that the settlements of “Upham” and “Lower Upham” are one community and, as such, any reference to “village” is a reference to both settlements. No representations or evidence have been received to contradict this assertion.

3.2 The village is located on the dip slope and south-western boundary of the South Downs National Park in the district of Winchester. The village is split between the local planning authority areas of the South Downs National Park Authority and Winchester City Council, with most of the area within the South Downs National Park.

3.3 The original settlement of “Upham” (north) lies on the edge of the chalk downlands and is mostly encompassed within the Upham Conservation Area. In contrast, the settlement of “Lower Upham” (south) lies within a relatively low-lying and gently undulating landscape of London clay. The development of Lower Upham as a second centre of population has been influenced by B2177 Winchester Road. The (now) B-road was opened in 1833 as a toll road between Bishops Waltham and Winchester. It broadly delineates the boundary of the South Downs National Park, splitting the village between the South Winchester Downland Mosaic and Durley Claylands Landscape Character Areas, for the areas inside and outside of the South Downs National Park, respectively.

3.4 The first Upham Village Design Statement was adopted by Winchester City Council in 1999. Since this time:

- The South Downs National Park and Authority have been designated and established.
- The National Planning Policy Framework has been published and updated.
- The National Planning Practice Guidance has been published and updated.
- The South Downs Local Plan, South Downs Design Guide SPD, and South Downs Landscape Character Assessment have all been adopted and published.
- The Winchester Local Plan (Parts 1 & 2), Winchester High Quality Places SPD, and Winchester Landscape Character Assessment have all been adopted and published.

3.5 This new Upham Village Design Statement has been prepared by a steering group of parish councillors and local volunteers, with the support of Upham Parish Council. It uses the landscape-led approach of the Adopted South Downs Local Plan to consider local landscape character and design in its broadest sense (i.e. geology, topography, trees, and hedges etc.), before then focusing on specific elements of built character (i.e. the way in which buildings are designed, set, and sited etc.). In undertaking this analysis of local landscape character and design, the Upham Village Design Statement provides guidance – in the form of **93 design guidelines** – to architects, developers, planning officers, residents, and others on ways that new development and other works can conserve or enhance the identified local landscape character and design of the village. The 93 design guidelines are broken down as follows:

- 15 guidelines on **village character** (i.e. biodiversity, character areas, lanes and views).
- 15 guidelines on **built character** (i.e. heritage, materials, plots, and scale).
- 16 guidelines on **roofs** (i.e. chimneys, dormers, materials, and roof pitches and shapes).
- 16 guidelines on **walls** (i.e. brick, flint, render, tile hangings, and timber boarding).
- 9 guidelines on **openings** (i.e. doors, porches, skylights, and windows).
- 16 guidelines on **landscaping** (i.e. boundaries, driveways, gates, and highway edges).
- 6 guidelines on **building services** (i.e. renewable energy measures and lighting).

- 3.6 The design guidelines have been prepared using the evidence set out in Paragraph 3.4 above, along with the representations from the public consultations explained further in Paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3 below. The guidelines, collectively, set out the desire to conserve or enhance the historic, rural and special character and appearance of the village.

4. Public Consultation (Appendix 2) & Adoption

- 4.1 The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) require local planning authorities to carry out one formal public consultation (for a minimum of 4 weeks) in the preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document. The South Downs Statement of Community Involvement exceeds this requirement in the form of two stages of formal public consultation for eight and six weeks respectively. Please note, the Upham Village Design Statement was consulted on under the fifth edition (2022) – not the sixth edition (2024) - of the South Downs Statement of Community Involvement.
- 4.2 The steering group - with the support of Upham Parish Council – carried out a programme of public consultation and engagement to inform the preparation of the Upham Village Design Statement and its design guidelines. This included:
- A pilot study of Queen Street carried out by the steering group in Autumn 2020.
 - A village character survey carried out by 30 residents in Spring/Summer 2021.
 - A public meeting attended by 36 residents at Upham Village Hall in October 2021.
 - A stand at the Upham Church Fete to consult residents on draft guidelines in July 2023.
- 4.3 Following the above, in April 2024, the draft Upham Village Design Statement was submitted to the Authority so that the first formal public consultation could be carried out. In October 2024, the Upham Village Design Statement was updated (using the representations received from the first consultation) and re-submitted to both the Authority and Winchester City Council so that the second (and joint) public consultation could be carried out in line with the Regulations and both local planning authorities' statements of community involvement. A summary of the two formal consultations is as follows:
- The **first consultation** was carried out by the South Downs National Park Authority for eight weeks between 28 May and 24 July 2024. During this time, ten representations were received from four statutory consultees and six residents or individuals.
 - The **second consultation** was carried out by the South Downs National Park Authority and Winchester City Council – with the Authority leading - for six weeks between 11 November and 23 December 2024. During this time, ten representations were received from eight statutory consultees and two residents or individuals.
- 4.4 The Consultation Statement (Appendix 2) sets out what the Authority, City Council and Parish Council did to promote the two formal public consultations. A summary of the actions carried out by the Authority and Parish Council is as follows:
- The Authority published the consultation documents on its website, displayed hard copies at its offices, and sent emails to statutory consultees and interested parties.
 - The parish council notified residents through several resources such as meetings, website, social media pages, noticeboard posters, "Upham Update" (circa 320 addresses), "CommsHub" (circa 220 residents), and hard copies around the village.
- 4.5 A summary of all representations – including the issues raised and the corresponding responses and actions – can be found in the Consultation Statement (Appendix 2).
- 4.6 **External Representations.** The Upham Village Design Statement received praise and support from residents and individuals, with comments about document accessibility, specific wording, and font/graphic sizes resolved by the steering group. The statutory consultees

requested references to National Character Areas (Natural England) and the Upham Conservation Area Appraisal and Technical Assessment (Historic England) during the first consultation, whilst references to “Secured by Design” (Sussex Police), Swift Bricks (Hampshire Swifts), and sustainable drainage systems and mains water consumption limits (Southern Water) were requested during the second consultation.

- 4.7 The requested references from the first consultation have been added, but the requested references from the second consultation have not. An SPD should build on existing (and not repeat existing, nor introduce new) planning policies. For this reason, the requests from Sussex Police, Hampshire Swifts and Southern Water were not considered to be appropriate as they were either already captured in the Adopted Local Plan or another SPD, or did not identify a design-related matter which was specific to the village. That said, appropriate text amendments have been made to capture the passion of Hampshire Swifts.
- 4.8 **Internal Representations.** The South Downs National Park Authority and Winchester City Council have assisted the steering group. The local planning authorities provided comments during the first and second consultations. These were focused on:
- Text amendments for corrections, reading, understanding and/or flow.
 - The need for a map to show the area where the guidelines would apply.
 - Clarification about whether use of “Upham” meant the parish, settlement, or village etc.
 - Refinement of design guidelines in terms of clarity and language given the status and weight of an SPD in planning decisions.
- 4.9 **National Park Purposes.** Section 245 of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 amends and strengthens the Section 11A(2) duty of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. The duty requires relevant authorities (including this Authority) to seek to further the purposes of the National Park. These purposes are: (1) to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area; and (2) to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public. The Government’s guidance from December 2024 explains that this duty is active and, as such, it is incumbent on this Authority to give significant weight to Section 245 in the preparation and adoption of Supplementary Planning Documents.
- 4.10 **Conclusion.** The Upham Village Design Statement is considered to meet the requirements of the Town and County Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and the South Downs Statement of Community Involvement 2022 (5 edition). The Upham Village Design Statement is also considered to be in general conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework, Planning Practice Guidance, South Downs Local Plan, and South Downs Design Guide SPD. Finally, it is considered that the Upham Village Design Statement would further the purposes of the National Park as it would help guide future changes to conserve or enhance the local landscape character, design, and special qualities of the village within the South Downs National Park.
- 4.11 **Adoption.** Given all the above, the Upham Village Design Statement is recommended for adoption as an SPD. Please note, both local planning authorities are scheduled to consider and adopt the Upham Village Design Statement as an SPD on Thursday 13 March 2025.

5. Other Implications

Implication	Yes*/No
Will further decisions be required by another committee/full authority?	No.
Does the proposal raise any Resource implications?	No. Any costs associated with the Upham Village Design Statement have come from existing budgets.
Which PMP Outcomes / Corporate Plan Objectives does this deliver against?	PMP Outcome 9.2 and PMP Policy 34. Community-led plans also have the potential to contribute to the three corporate plan objectives in relation to climate change, nature recovery, and a National Park for all.
Links to other projects or partner organisations?	If adopted, the Upham Village Design Statement will be an SPD to the Adopted South Downs Local Plan and Winchester Local Plan.
How does this decision contribute to the Authority's climate change objectives?	If adopted, the Upham Village Design Statement will set out guidance about how to successfully integrate renewable and low carbon energy systems in the village.
Are there any Social Value implications arising from the proposal?	The requirements of the Public Service (Social Value) Act 2012 is considered for appropriate expenditure and programmes undertaken by the Authority.
Have you taken regard of the South Downs National Park Authority's equality duty as contained within the Equality Act 2010?	Due regard, where relevant, has been taken to the South Downs National Park Authority's equality duty. An Equalities Impact Assessment was prepared for the Adopted South Downs Local Plan which considered SPDs. If adopted, the Upham Village Design Statement will supplement Local Plan Policies SD4 and SD5.
Are there any Human Rights implications arising from the proposal?	No.
Are there any Crime & Disorder implications arising from the proposal?	No.
Are there any Health & Safety implications arising from the proposal?	No.
Are there any Data Protection implications?	No.

6. Risks Associated with the Proposed Decision

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
The content of the Upham Village Design Statement could conflict with the National Park Purposes and/or Duty.	Low	Medium	South Downs National Park Authority officers have reviewed the Upham Village Design Statement during its preparation and have provided recommendations to the steering group and Upham Parish Council. These have all been actioned.
The potential reputational risk for the SDNPA associated with not adopting the Upham Village Design Statement.	Low	Medium	South Downs National Park Authority officers have worked, and will continue to work, with the steering group and Upham Parish Council.

TIM SLANEY**Director of Planning****South Downs National Park Authority**

Contact Officer: Lewis Ford, Senior Planning Policy Officer

Telephone: 01730 819285

Email: lewis.ford@southdowns.gov.uk

Appendices: Appendix 1 - Upham Village Design Statement including Appendices.
Appendix 2 - Upham Village Design Statement Consultation Statement.

SDNPA Consultees: Legal Services, Chief Finance Officer, Monitoring Officer, and Director of Planning.

External Consultees: None.

Background Documents: Town & Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012
National Planning Policy Framework
National Planning Practice Guidance
South Downs Partnership Management Plan
South Downs Local Plan
South Downs Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document
SDNPA Agenda Item 9 (Report 34/13) – 15 October 2013

