

19 June 2017

West Chiltington Parish Council

Dear Sirs,

Subject: West Chiltington Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2032

Thank you for consulting the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) on the pre-submission consultation draft of the West Chiltington Neighbourhood Plan. The National Park Authority welcomes the publication of this plan, which is a result of a considerable amount of hard work by the parish council and the local community.

A small area of West Chiltington parish is in the South Downs National Park (SDNP). On the 17 February 2014, the SDNPA designated this area as a Neighbourhood Area following an application from West Chiltington Parish Council. As only a very small area of the Parish is within the SDNP, these comments focus on elements of the West Chiltington Neighbourhood Plan (WCNP) most relevant to the National Park:

1.2 Plan Preparation process

It would be helpful to acknowledge in the process summary that the WCNDP has been through two pre-submission consultations.

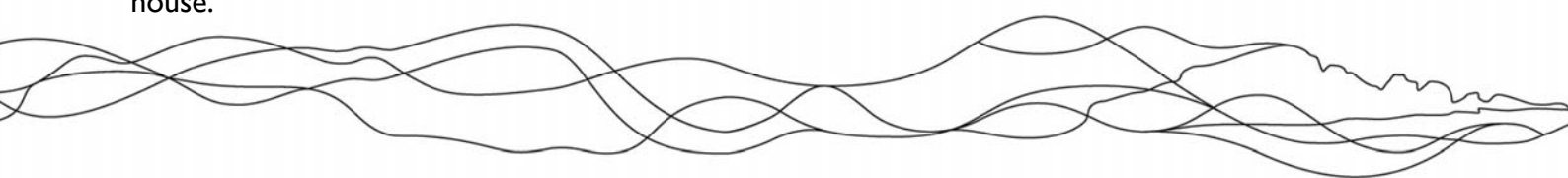
West Chiltington is partially within the SDNP. As the main settlement is outside the SDNP, Horsham District Council is the lead authority for the neighbourhood plan. The WCNDP will need to be submitted to Horsham DC for independent examination.

2.1.2 Local Plan policy

While only a small area of West Chiltington is within the SDNP, the emerging Local Plan of the SDNPA will be the Development Plan for that part of West Chiltington and is therefore of importance. In particular, a small area of the SSSI site of Hurstin Warren (Monkmead Woods) is within the neighbourhood area. The emerging South Downs Local Plan has specific policy on Biodiversity and Geodiversity which covers SSSI.

Policy EHI Built Up Area Boundary (BUAB)

We note the built-up boundary defined in Map A. The Western boundary of West Chiltington Common includes large gardens to the rear of properties on Monkmead Lane. The settlement boundary also includes land to the south of properties on Sunset Lane. Gardens are an important part of the setting and attractiveness of settlements, softening the transition at the settlement edge, marking the edge of settlements in what is generally an attractive way, softening the appearance of built-up areas from the countryside and containing vegetation which shields development. For these reasons the SDNPA excludes large and long gardens from settlement boundaries and would recommend that West Chiltington NDP does like wise. This will not affect permitted development rights or the planning status held by gardens as land ancillary to residential use. It is recommended that the settlement boundary runs 10m behind the relevant rear or side wall of the main dwelling house.



Policy EH3 Green Infrastructure and Ecosystem Services

We support the identification and protection of Biodiversity Corridors in this policy.

Policy EH9 'Unlit village' status

We support this policy which seeks to protect the unlit environment of the Parish. The dark night skies are a special quality of the SDNP which is recognised by its International Dark Sky Reserve status.

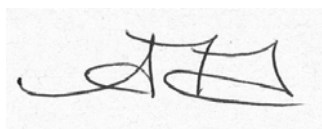
Policy EH12 Mineral and Hydro-carbon Extraction

This policy covers development involving conventional mineral extraction and proposals for conventional hydro-carbon extraction. It is our understanding that this is 'excluded development' as minerals are a county matter and therefore cannot be covered by the NDP.

Policy LC5 Designation of Local Green Space

We note and support the designation of Monkmead Wood as LGS.

Yours sincerely,



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