

A photograph of a woman and a young child walking through a wooden fence in a green field. The woman is wearing a dark blue shirt and jeans, and the child is wearing a pink shirt. They are both smiling and looking towards the camera. The background shows rolling green hills under a blue sky with some clouds. A large, stylized number '6' is overlaid on the left side of the image.

PEOPLE CONNECTED TO PLACES

INTRODUCTION

6.1 The theme for this chapter, People Connected to Places, is taken from the *PMP*⁵³. It is primarily based on the second purpose of the National Park, namely, to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public. It is also relevant to the National Park duty. The policies in this chapter are divided into two sub-sections: sustainable transport, and understanding and enjoyment of the National Park.

6.2 Improving the efficiency of transport networks and the promotion of sustainable tourism are both key cross-boundary strategic issues identified by the National Park Authority for the purpose of fulfilling the *Duty to Cooperate*.

Local Plan Objectives

The following Local Plan objectives are considered most relevant for this section:

Objective 4: To achieve a sustainable use of ecosystem services thus enhancing natural capital across the landscapes of the National Park and contributing to wealth and human health and wellbeing

Objective 5: To protect and provide opportunities for everyone to discover, enjoy, understand and value the National Park and its special qualities

⁵³ Partnership Management Plan: Shaping the future of your South Downs National Park 2014 – 2019 (South Downs National Park Authority, 2013)

6A. SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

INTRODUCTION

6.3 This section of the Local Plan contains two strategic policies and two development management policies. The first strategic policy, SD19: Transport and Accessibility, seeks to minimise the traffic impacts of new development and facilitate improvements to public transport. The second strategic policy, SD20: Walking, Cycling and Equestrian Routes, is focussed on the protection and enhancement of the PRoW network and the safeguarding of land for new routes. The first development management policy, SD21: Public Realm, Highway Design and Public Art, is about the protection of the existing public realm especially historic rural roads and ensuring that new developments provide good quality public spaces. Finally, Policy SD22: Parking Provision, covers new public vehicle parks and parking on private developments.

6.4 Effective planning policies on transport routes and the public realm are essential to fulfilling the National Park purposes and duty. Firstly, our transport policies will facilitate developments that make it easier for people to travel to and around the National Park by sustainable means. Secondly, transport policies can help support the National Park Authority's duty to communities, by focussing growth in the most sustainable locations, so it best meets the needs

of residents and businesses while protecting the special qualities. Thirdly, most visitors experience the National Park's special qualities mainly whilst travelling. Therefore the public realm (such as roads, pavements, public rights of way and open access land) needs to be conserved and enhanced, to improve people's experience of it.

6.5 There are a number of studies supporting the transport policies in the Local Plan. The *Transport Study Phase 1*⁵⁴ provides an inventory of existing available data in relation to transport issues and an overview of the issues affecting the National Park. The *Local Plan Transport Assessment*⁵⁵ looks at the impact of the Local Plan's proposed development in Petersfield, Liss, Midhurst and Petworth, and at the former Syngenta site, on traffic flows through key junctions in the National Park. The *Site Allocations Highways Assessment* looks at all the housing allocations set out in Chapter 9⁵⁶. Finally, *Roads in the South Downs*⁵⁷ provides a resource and reference point for emerging best practice in rural and urban highway design, drawing on experience gained in other UK National Parks.

⁵⁴ SDNPA Transport Study – Phase 1 Report (MTRU, 2013)

⁵⁵ Transport Assessment of the South Downs Local Plan (Hampshire Services, 2017)

⁵⁶ Site Allocations Highways Assessment (Hampshire Services, 2017)

⁵⁷ Roads in the South Downs (Hamilton-Baillie Associates Ltd, 2015)

Strategic Policy SD19: Transport and Accessibility

1. Development proposals will be permitted provided that they are located and designed to minimise the need to travel and promote the use of sustainable modes of transport.
2. Development proposals that are likely to generate a significant number of journeys must be located near existing town and village centres, public transport routes, main roads and, where relevant, the cycle network. Such developments will be required to provide a transport assessment or transport statement.
3. Development proposals must demonstrate the continued safe and efficient operation of the strategic and local road networks.
4. The following improvements to transport infrastructure will be supported:
 - a) Public transport waiting facilities, particularly those with reliable and accessible information;
 - b) Infrastructure supporting the transfer of freight from road to rail and water;
 - c) Improvements to walking, cycling and bus connectivity at all transport interchanges; and
 - d) Improvements to the quality and provision of cycle parking at railway stations and key bus stops.
5. In town and village centres, development will be permitted which appropriately provides for improved footways and cycle routes, cycle parking, and measures to restrict the impact of heavy goods vehicles and other traffic on historic streets.

6.6 The purpose of Policy SD19 is to encourage development towards the most sustainable locations in transport terms. All new development will be expected to be located and designed so as to minimise the need to travel, and to maximise the availability of relevant sustainable transport options, so that growth in private vehicle use is kept to a minimum.

6.7 Information to support a planning application will include a design and access statement stating the likely vehicle movements to be generated by the development, and, for some developments, transport assessments.

TRANSPORT ASSESSMENTS AND TRAVEL PLANS

6.8 A Transport Assessment (TA), Transport Statement (TS), Transport Report (TR) and/or Travel Plan (TP) will be required on development that generates significant amounts of traffic movement. This requirement will be determined in accordance with the relevant guidance and thresholds produced by the local highway authority for the area where the development takes place, whilst having strong regard to the environmental sensitivity of the National Park. The TA, TS and/or TP must set out mitigation measures that are necessary to ensure that development is sustainable and deliverable, and to prevent harm to the special qualities. They must also demonstrate the continued safe and efficient operation of the relevant strategic and local road networks.

6.9 TAs, TSs and TPs will be secured by condition or legal agreement. They must be agreed with the Authority at the earliest opportunity, with appropriate input from the local highway authority and Highways England if required. The impact of traffic generated from a development should be considered cumulatively by taking into account all committed development in the area including, where relevant, outside the National Park.

6.10 The HRA identified that some traffic movements may have the potential to impact on internationally designated nature conservation sites. This should be duly taken into account when considering the transport impact of new development. Further information is set out in Policy SD9: Biodiversity and Geodiversity and its supporting text.

PROVISION OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT

6.11 There is potential to improve the role of railway and bus stations as hubs by improving bus interchanges, cycle parking and other infrastructure. The provision of more sympathetically designed and located bus shelters can make public transport a more attractive proposition. Connectivity and signage to walking routes into the countryside will also be supported and facilitated

where possible through the planning process. Freight transport by railway and water will also be encouraged, since any reduction in the movement of freight via the road network would be beneficial to the environment.

TOWN AND VILLAGE CENTRES

6.12 The centres of the National Park's towns and villages provide opportunities for developments to take advantage of better public transport connectivity and encourage walking and cycling. However, vehicle traffic has been identified as having a major negative impact on the environment in some settlements. The Authority will seek opportunities to reduce negative impacts from traffic, and to give priority to the safe movement of walkers and cyclists, including through planning decisions.

STRATEGIC ROADS

6.13 Policy SD42: Infrastructure deals with projects relating to strategic roads.

Strategic Policy SD20: Walking, Cycling and Equestrian Routes

1. Development proposals will be permitted provided they contribute to a network of attractive and functional non-motorised travel routes, with appropriate signage, throughout the National Park.
2. The following disused railway line routes within the National Park, as shown on the Policies Map, are safeguarded for existing, and potential future use as non-motorised travel routes. Development proposals that facilitate such use will be permitted. Development proposals that adversely affect their future potential as non-motorised transport routes will be refused:
 - a) Bordon to Bentley;
 - b) Petersfield to Pulborough (via Midhurst);
 - c) Chichester to Midhurst (Centurion Way);
 - d) Wickham to Alton (Meon Valley Trail);
 - e) Guildford to Shoreham-by-Sea (Downs Link);
 - f) Liss to Longmoor;
 - g) Devil's Dyke Route; and
 - h) New Alresford to Kingsworthy (Watercress Way).
3. The following corridors, as shown on the Policies Map, are safeguarded for future restoration to their respective historic uses. Development proposals will not be permitted where they would adversely affect their future potential for such restoration. Proposals for restoration to their historic uses will be supported:
 - a) The original course of the former Lewes – Uckfield railway line; and
 - b) The Wey and Arun Canal.

4. Development proposals will be permitted provided they protect and enhance existing crossings provided for non-motorised travel routes across major roads, railways and watercourses. Proposals for sensitively designed new crossings, and proposals to upgrade the safety of existing crossings, will be supported.
5. Development proposals will be permitted provided they incorporate attractive, accessible public links through the site, which are suitable for pedestrians, cyclists, mobility scooters and equestrians as appropriate, which connect to the nearest convenient point on the public rights of way network and/or local footway network.
6. Development proposals will be permitted provided that they:
 - a) Maintain existing public rights of way; and
 - b) Conserve and enhance the amenity value and tranquillity of, and views from, non-motorised travel routes and access land.

6.14 The purpose of Policy SD20 is to safeguard and enhance the extensive network of routes across the National Park, which provide motor traffic-free travel and recreational opportunities. These non-motorised travel routes include public rights of way, for example footpaths, bridleways and restricted byways, as well as permissive rights of way, designated cycle routes and quiet, very lightly-trafficked lanes.

6.15 These routes are a valued asset to many types of user, including cyclists, walkers, horse riders and users of mobility aids. They are a fundamental element of Purpose 2, and greatly valued by local communities and visitors to the National Park alike. Being so close to many urban areas, the National Park should also be easily accessible from those areas by non-motorised transport routes. The National Park Authority will work to increase accessibility by public rights of way and other non-motorised routes, and also take opportunities to increase connectivity between the rights of way network and public transport, whilst avoiding harm to the special qualities.

DISUSED RAILWAY LINES

6.16 There are a number of former railway lines running through the National Park which present outstanding opportunities for new non-motorised user paths. These are defined as routes for pedestrians, cyclists and horse-riders for leisure and/or commuting. The use of electric powered vehicles may be permissible in some circumstances, for example pedelecs (low-powered electric bicycles) and Class 2 mobility scooters or any updated equivalent. Some of these routes are already partly converted to non-motorised user paths, and development to extend the network is underway. The safeguarding of these routes will protect them from any development that would prevent future proposals to convert them to non-motorised user paths.

6.17 In many cases, the exact route of development for these schemes is not yet established; some diversions from the original railway line route may well ultimately be necessary. If a site along one of the safeguarded routes is proposed for redevelopment or conversion then the route of the former railway must be protected within the proposed development.

6.18 In instances where the line passes in or close to designated wildlife sites or where a survey reveals protected species, regard must be had to relevant policies in the development plan particularly Policy SD9: Biodiversity and Geodiversity. A diversionary route may prove to be more appropriate.

6.19 Development of a recreational transport route within the Singleton & Cocking Tunnels SAC will not be permitted and this section is left out of the safeguarding of the Chichester to Midhurst railway line route. Likewise, the section of the Liss – Bordon Railway which runs through Longmoor and Woolmer Forest is not suitable for development; the only safeguarded section of this route is that between Liss and Longmoor, which already operates as a non-motorised transport route.

6.20 Wherever possible, development proposals on disused railway lines should retain existing structures and features connected with railway use.

RESTORATION OF ABANDONED ROUTES

6.21 The National Park Authority supports restoration of the short sections of the Lewes – Uckfield railway (near Hamsey) and the Wey and Arun Canal to railway and canal use respectively, and will safeguard these routes. Proposals for such restoration should provide suitable routes for non-motorised travel alongside the new railway or canal, wherever feasible. Should proposals for a non-motorised transport route (as described in Criterion 2) come forward on the route of the Lewes – Uckfield railway, before it is restored to railway use, these will also be supported.

CROSSING MAJOR ROADS AND RAILWAYS

6.22 Major roads and railways can often create breaks and safety hazards in the network of public rights of way and non-motorised routes. The result is that some leisure users may be discouraged from accessing the National Park. Proposals for developments to reduce the severance effect of major roads and railways will generally be supported. Policies SD4: Landscape Character, SD5: Design and SD9: Biodiversity and Geodiversity will be of particular relevance in considering such applications. Existing crossing points, including existing bridges across watercourses, will be protected, and their safety conserved and enhanced where possible, including through Section 106 contributions. Enhancement may include the introduction of speed limits, signage or a change of surface or levels. Wherever new crossing places are installed, they should be well-signed, of a high quality and locally distinctive design, respecting their setting and convenient and safe for all non-motorised users who may legitimately wish to use them.

CONNECTIONS FROM NEW DEVELOPMENT

6.23 Where new development takes place, it should provide opportunities for new or enhanced connections for pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders. This should be achieved on-site, and where appropriate off-site. Wherever possible, development proposals with potential to generate footfall, for example residential development, employment uses, and development open to the public, should provide the appropriate infrastructure to link routes on site to the

nearby public rights of way network, footways and, where relevant, the routes listed in Criterion 2 of Policy SD20.

PROTECTING THE AMENITY OF PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY, OTHER NON-MOTORISED ROUTES AND ACCESS LAND

6.24 The rights of way network, together with access land, non-motorised user paths and permissive paths, are some of the National Park's most important assets in attracting visitors, and the Authority will protect the quality of experience enjoyed by users. Development which harms views from, or is otherwise detrimental to the amenity value, character and tranquillity of public rights of way and other non-motorised user routes, will not be permitted. This includes development that would increase vehicular traffic on the network, for example, on a public right of way that follows the line of a private driveway, to the detriment of its enjoyment by walkers, cyclists and horse riders. Developments that are likely to generate significant additional pressure on the surrounding rights of way network will be required to provide a mitigation contribution to the local transport authority (LTA) towards enhancing the local network.

6.25 Developments affecting PRoW must refer to the *Rights of Way Improvement Plan* for the local area, and any relevant LTA design standards applicable to rights of way. A commuted sum may be required to cover future maintenance. The historic alignment of rights of way should be safeguarded. In exceptional circumstances it may be appropriate to make minor diversions to rights of way, providing the amenity value and convenience for their users is not harmed; such changes will also be subject to application for a *Public Path Order*.

Development Management Policy SD21: Public Realm, Highway Design and Public Art

1. Development proposals will be permitted provided that they protect and enhance highway safety and follow the principles set out in the document, *Roads in the South Downs*, or any future replacement.
2. Development will not be permitted where it would reduce the biodiversity, landscape and amenity value and character of historic rural roads. Particular attention will be given to new access points and other physical alterations to roads, and to the impacts of additional traffic.
3. Site layout must be designed to protect the safety and amenity of all road users. The design and layout of new development must give priority to the needs of pedestrians, users of mobility aids, cyclists and equestrians. Movement through the site must be a safe, legible and attractive experience for all users, with roads and surfaces that contribute to the experience rather than dominate it.
4. Street design and management proposals must be context-sensitive, responding to the specific character, activities, heritage, built form and layout, materials and street furniture of the location. Highway design must pay particular attention to the role and location of buildings, doors and entry points.
5. Appropriately designed and located new public art will be supported, in particular within settlements. New public art should be site specific, reflecting and respecting the site and its context.

6.26 The purpose of Policy SD21 is to protect and enhance the public realm and street scene in the National Park, for the benefit of all users and in support of Purpose 2 of the National Park in particular.

ROADS IN THE SOUTH DOWNS

6.27 The guidance document *Roads in the South Downs* developed by the local highways authorities and the National Park Authority, sets out broad principles and procedures which should be followed by all developments involving changes to the public realm and the creation of new public spaces

and highways. Development proposals will not be permitted where they do not protect highway safety whilst following the principles of context-specific design set out in *Roads in the South Downs*. Development will be expected to contribute to the adaptation of existing highways so that standardised road infrastructure can be minimised in a way consistent with highway safety.

HISTORIC RURAL ROADS

6.28 Historic rural roads are defined as those roads outside towns shown on the *second edition of the Ordnance Survey*⁵⁸, which have not undergone significant widening or straightening in the intervening period. 'Roads' in this context refer to the highway itself as well as any associated pavements or cycle paths, verges, banks, ditches and boundary features.

6.29 Both development proposals themselves, and their off-site traffic impacts, may impact on historic rural roads. Physical impacts may include the removal of portions of hedgerows and banks for new access points, or the construction of new kerbs and signage. Development proposals involving physical alterations to roads and their immediate setting should identify whether the roads in question are historic rural roads and if so, demonstrate that the historical significance, ecological, landscape and recreational value and character of those roads are conserved and enhanced. The integrity of banks, hedges, walls and roadside trees must be maintained.

6.30 A Design and Access Statement should demonstrate that Policy SD21 is complied with, covering both physical changes arising from the development and impacts on traffic levels. The level of detail required in the statement should be proportionate to the expected impact. As a guideline, any development proposal outside Lewes, Petersfield, Midhurst, Petworth and Liss which comprises at least one net additional dwelling, or the addition or change of use of 100m² or more of floorspace, will generally be required to specifically address the matters set out in Policy SD21.

⁵⁸ Ordnance Survey 2nd edition, Six-inch to the mile, England and Wales, 1891 – 1914: accessible online through various providers including National Library of Scotland, <http://maps.nls.uk/os>

6.31 Firstly, the statement must detail the expected traffic flows arising from the development and whether any routes leading to or from the site are likely to experience a traffic increase of approximately 10% or more on existing hourly vehicular traffic as a result. Where this applies, the assessment should check whether these routes meet the definition of historic rural roads given above. If that is the case it must be demonstrated that the changes to traffic levels and patterns arising from the development would conserve and enhance the ecological, landscape and recreational value of those roads. Cumulative impact must be taken into account.

6.32 Current levels of agriculture and forestry related traffic are part of the rural character of the National Park. Whilst this policy applies equally to agricultural and forestry developments where planning permission is required, there may be circumstances where benefits to the purposes of the National Park from specific agricultural or forestry operations outweigh a negative impact of traffic increases arising from those operations that would otherwise be unacceptable.

STREET LAYOUT

6.33 This policy, specifically covering areas within the public realm, must be read in close conjunction with Policy SD5: Design, which discusses the design of new development more broadly.

6.34 *Roads in the South Downs* and the national guidance documents *Manual for Streets*⁵⁹, *Manual for Streets 2*⁶⁰ and the *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges*⁶¹ provide useful guidance in relation to site layout, design and the safety of all users. Street clutter should be minimised and removed where safe to do so. Formal traffic calming measures can be inappropriate; good design at the outset should limit the need for further physical measures. New and amended road layout and design in rural areas should take account of

⁵⁹ Manual for Streets (Department for Transport, 2007)

⁶⁰ Manual for Streets 2: Wider Application of the Principles, (Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation, 2010)

⁶¹ Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (Highways England, last updated 2017)

the movement of large vehicles and machinery associated with agriculture and forestry.

6.35 Given the ageing population of the local area and the importance of visitors from this demographic group to the National Park's economy, it is especially important that the needs of disabled users of the public realm be factored into the design of new development at an early stage. A locally distinctive and easily legible and navigable environment is particularly important for people with visual impairments and those with dementia.

SENSITIVITY TO CONTEXT

6.36 Context-specific design of the public realm is important for maintaining and enhancing the attractiveness and distinctiveness of towns and villages. *Roads in the South Downs* and the Historic England document, *Streets for All: South East*⁶² provide guidance on this.

6.37 New street lighting may be considered inappropriate in areas of the National Park due to the need to protect dark night skies. Detail on street lighting is contained in Policy SD8 (Dark Night Skies).

PUBLIC ART

6.38 Public art is generally more characteristic of towns, villages and designed landscapes than of the broader countryside. The principle of new public art will be supported within settlement boundaries, especially when incorporated into the fabric of developments by the engagement of artists at an early stage in the design process. Proposals for new public art outside settlement boundaries, where it is subject to the planning process, will be assessed on a case by case basis according to the policies contained in this Local Plan.

⁶² Streets for All: South East (Historic England, last updated April 2018)

Development Management Policy SD22: Parking Provision

1. Development proposals for new, extended or re-located public parking will be permitted provided that they are located in or adjacent to the settlements listed in Policy SD25: Development Strategy, or have a strong functional link to an established cultural heritage, wildlife or landscape visitor attraction, provided that:
 - a) There is evidence that overriding traffic management or recreation management benefits can be achieved;
 - b) It is a component of a strategic traffic management scheme which gives precedence to sustainable transport; and
 - c) The site is close to and easily accessible from main roads by appropriate routes, and well connected to the PRow network.
2. Development proposals will be permitted if they provide an appropriate level of private cycle and vehicle parking to serve the needs of that development in accordance with the relevant adopted parking standards for the locality. Wherever feasible, electric vehicle charging facilities must also be provided.
3. All new private and public parking provision will:
 - a) Be of a location, scale and design that reflects its context; and
 - b) Incorporate appropriate sustainable drainage systems.
4. All new public parking provision will comply with the following:
 - a) Wherever feasible, electric vehicle charging facilities must be provided. Where located with potential for onward travel by mobility scooter, this should include charging facilities for such scooters; and
 - b) Where located with good accessibility to the bridleway network, include provision for horse box parking.

6.39 New parking areas will be expected to contribute to a range of ecosystem services while protecting the landscape, and their distribution will contribute to the spatial strategy for the National Park.

NEW PUBLIC CAR PARKS

6.40 Roadside car parking is a problem at various locations, causing damage to verges and reducing road capacity. However, the ability of the National Park's road network and car parks to accommodate an increasing number of visitors' cars is limited. It is not practicable, nor would it be desirable in landscape terms, to cater for peak demand. The Authority will direct new public car parking provision to locations in or adjacent to the settlements listed in Policy SD25 (Development Strategy), where it will maximise benefits to the local economy and minimise harm to the landscape.

6.41 The construction of new public car parks should always be justified as part of an overall traffic management scheme whose primary focus is increasing access to the site by public and non-motorised transport. Large scale car parks with supporting infrastructure such as lighting can be particularly obtrusive in the landscape. Development proposals for significant new car parks may be classed as major development within the meaning set out in Policy SD3.

6.42 Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) can be a means of improving access and preventing inconsiderate parking in towns and villages, and may be necessary in some cases to mitigate the impact of development. Associated street clutter should be avoided and additional signage kept to a minimum.

6.43 There are many existing visitor attractions in the countryside away from settlements related to the National Park purposes, which may wish to expand or relocate their parking facilities. Policy SD22: Criterion 1 only applies to parking areas whose primary purpose is to serve the visitor attraction in question.

PARKING STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL AND NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS

6.44 The provision of vehicle and cycle parking for new development should be in accordance with the local parking guidance applicable to that area.

DESIGN, LOCATION AND LAYOUT OF NEW VEHICLE PARKING

6.45 New vehicle parking areas, whether public or private, can negatively impact on landscape, the local environment, biodiversity and drainage when inappropriately sited and designed. The cumulative impact of changes on biodiversity and surface water run-off will be given particular consideration when deciding applications for the loss of existing garden space to car parking.

6.46 Permeable parking surfaces should be used in preference to impermeable surfaces unless there are overriding reasons that render their use unsuitable. Materials should be selected which are appropriate to the site context and predicted levels of use. Usage should be made of existing and proposed buildings, landscape features and planting to successfully integrate

the parking area within its surrounding landscape context and avoid negative impacts on local character. Changes to existing parking areas to bring them into line with the principles of *Roads in the South Downs* will be supported.

6.47 The type of parking provided must be accessible to all and resilient to future changes. All new public car parks should therefore deliver a proportion of parking spaces for disabled people/blue badge holders, cyclists and motorcyclists which are compliant with the relevant national and local guidelines for the area. Public parking should address the needs of mobility scooter users, and accommodate horse boxes, in line with the National Park's Purpose 2 and duty. Electric vehicle charging facilities must be provided for in all new parking areas, including residential developments and public car and cycle parks, unless it can be demonstrated that this is not viable or that adequate connections to the electricity grid are not available.

6B. UNDERSTANDING AND ENJOYMENT OF THE NATIONAL PARK

INTRODUCTION

6.48 This section of the Local Plan includes Strategic Policy SD23: Sustainable Tourism, relating to sustainable delivery of development proposals for visitor accommodation, attractions and recreation facilities, supporting the *Sustainable Tourism Strategy*⁶³. It also includes Development Management Policy SD24: Equestrian Uses, relating to the planning, design and management of land on which horses are kept.

6.49 The National Park is a major resource for recreation and tourism, which play a significant role in the local economy. The *South Downs Visitor and Tourism Economic Impact Study*⁶⁴ report noted that, in 2011/12, 46 million visitor days were spent in the National Park, generating over £464m of expenditure and supporting over 8,000 jobs. By supporting and promoting sustainable tourism and recreation there is an opportunity to contribute to sustainable economic growth and contribute to meeting Purpose 2. Where development proposals appear to conflict with Purpose 1, then *The Sandford Principle* will be applied and greater weight will be given to Purpose 1.

6.50 The *South Downs Visitor and Tourism Economic Impact Study* and the *South Downs Visitor Accommodation Review*⁶⁵ found that the tourism sector is largely leisure driven, and there are frequent shortages of all types of accommodation at weekends throughout the year and during the

week in summer. There is strong demand for high-quality accommodation and clear prospects for future growth in the demand for all types of visitor accommodation. There are some gaps in accommodation provision, particularly hotel accommodation in Petersfield and accommodation supply along the South Downs Way. A significant proportion of visits are day trips from those living in the National Park or in the villages, towns and cities surrounding the National Park.

6.51 Enabling the provision of appropriate, properly scaled accommodation will help to manage the number of visitors who stay within the National Park for overnight/multi-night stays.

6.52 The National Park has sensitive habitats and landscapes, and a rich and varied historic environment. The National Park Authority's *Sustainable Tourism Strategy*⁶⁶ has been developed in association with many partner organisations to guide tourism activities and our work with partners, so that visitors enjoy the National Park without compromising its special qualities. The strategy establishes four themes or 'lands' which seek to engage the public, building knowledge and patronage of the National Park. They are Adventure, Cultural, Natural and Working Lands.

6.53 Equestrian activities are strongly linked with the understanding and enjoyment of the National Park through their significant role in shaping the National Park's landscape, agriculture and industry, and their role in recreation and sport. The race meetings at Goodwood and polo fixtures in Midhurst are important national sporting events. The keeping of horses has the potential to make a positive contribution to the local landscape and offers opportunities

⁶³ South Downs National Park Sustainable Tourism Strategy 2015 – 20, (South Downs National Park Authority, 2016)

⁶⁴ South Downs Visitor & Tourism Economic Impact Study: Technical Report on the Research Findings (TSE Research, 2013)

⁶⁵ South Downs National Park Visitor Accommodation Review: Report of Key Findings (Hotel Solutions, 2014)

⁶⁶ South Downs National Park Sustainable Tourism Strategy 2015 – 20 (South Downs National Park Authority, 2017)

to diversify the rural economy. While the grazing of horses does not require planning permission, the keeping of horses and related development does. This type of development includes small-scale private domestic stables, riding schools, commercial livery yards of various scales and polo related activity.

Strategic Policy SD23: Sustainable Tourism

1. Development proposals for visitor accommodation, visitor attractions and recreation facilities will be permitted where it is demonstrated that:
 - a) The proposals will provide opportunities for visitors to increase their awareness, understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities;
 - b) The design and location of the development minimises the need for travel by private car and encourages access and/or subsequent travel by sustainable means, including public transport, walking, cycling or horse riding;
 - c) Development proposals will not detract from the experience of visitors or adversely affect the character, historical significance, appearance or amenity of the area;
 - d) Development proposals make use of existing buildings, and, if no suitable existing buildings are available, the design of any new buildings are sensitive to the character and setting;
 - e) Ancillary facilities are not disproportionately large in relation to the rest of the visitor facilities;
 - f) Any proposal does not have an adverse impact on the vitality and viability of town or village centres or assets of community value; and
 - g) Where proposals are located outside settlement policy boundaries as defined on the Policies Map, they:
 - i. Positively contribute to the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park; and
 - ii. Are closely associated with other attractions/established tourism uses, including the public rights of way network; or

iii. Are part of farm diversification schemes or endorsed Whole Estate Plans.

2. Development proposals that would result in the loss of visitor accommodation, visitor attractions and recreation facilities will not be permitted unless :
 - a) Evidence is provided that the current use is financially unviable and a robust marketing campaign of at least 12 months has been carried out that clearly demonstrates there is no market demand for the existing use or an equivalent tourism use; or
 - b) The current use or related development harms the special qualities.
3. The Authority will support a year-round visitor economy, while ensuring the facility remains for visitor use only.
4. Development proposals, on their own or cumulatively with other development uses, must not prejudice or disadvantage people's enjoyment of other existing and appropriate tourism and recreation activities. Development proposals that generate significant additional pressure upon the surrounding rights of way network will be required to mitigate these impacts.

Details of the marketing requirements are set out in Appendix 3.

6.54 The purpose of this policy is to foster the responsible and sustainable delivery of tourism and recreation development in accordance with the *Sustainable Tourism Strategy*. Proposals for visitor accommodation, attractions, recreational activities, environmental education and interpretation should provide opportunities for visitors to increase their awareness, enjoyment, and understanding of the National Park. They should also foster guardianship of the special qualities, for example, by promoting and incorporating the National Park's natural beauty, wildlife, cultural heritage, and the ecosystem services the National Park provides. Proposals will be supported which reflect the four themes as set out in the *SDNPA's Sustainable Tourism Strategy* and future updates. There are many diverse and creative ways in which development proposals could address this, which should be tailored to the context of the proposals.

6.55 This policy applies to recreation facilities which will attract visitors both from within and outside the National Park and contribute to the visitor economy. Requirements and guidance for proposals for recreation facilities to meet local needs within the National Park such as sports pitches and local parks are set out in Policy SD46: Provision and Protection of Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities and Burial Grounds/Cemeteries.

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

6.56 While the National Park Authority will support growth in sustainable tourism, there are associated challenges for the environment and local communities. High numbers of visitors can put pressure on some locations or 'hot-spots', for example, by impacting on tranquillity, increasing traffic and parking congestion, or causing physical erosion. The Authority will support proposals for sustainable attractions and recreational activities, which avoid undesirable impacts, and contribute to the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment whilst providing for the needs of users and bringing benefits to the local economy.

PROPOSALS OUTSIDE OF SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES

6.57 Development proposals for visitor accommodation, attractions and recreation facilities should be located sustainably. Locating such tourism development within existing settlements, particularly those identified as hubs in Chapter 3: Spatial Portrait and Strategy give most opportunity for access to sustainable transport and other facilities, helping to minimise use of the private car.

6.58 Given the nature of some tourism-related and recreational activities, a more rural location or proximity to a geographically specific feature, such as the coast or a river, may be required. Criterion 1(g) of Policy SD23 seeks to ensure that these are planned for appropriately. An example of how a proposal might contribute to Purpose 1 and to ecosystem services, is habitat restoration of a degraded site.

6.59 Every opportunity for sustainable travel should be utilised including access to the site and/or subsequent travel, for example bicycle hire provision, as part of visitor accommodation. This is to ensure that the proposals are in accordance with National Park purposes and do not harm the special qualities.

RETENTION AND REUSE OF EXISTING BUILDINGS

6.60 Landscape character and built form are central to the attractiveness of the National Park as a destination for visitors and therefore, in the first instance, proposals should retain and utilise existing buildings. If existing buildings are not available, or are causing harm to the special qualities, then proposals for any new buildings should be accompanied by justification and evidence that the proposals are sensitive to the site and its wider context. Favourable consideration will be given to the removal of existing buildings which produce net gains for landscape.

RETENTION OF VISITOR ACCOMMODATION, VISITOR ATTRACTION, RECREATION FACILITIES AND ASSOCIATED DEVELOPMENT

6.61 The Authority will seek to retain visitor accommodation. This is supported by existing evidence in the *Visitor Accommodation Review*, which indicates a need to increase capacity and potential for growth in demand for visitor accommodation. This study also identifies that due to the availability of sites for new development, any loss of visitor accommodation can be difficult to replace. Proposals that would result in the loss of visitor accommodation will be required to demonstrate that it is financially unviable, by providing evidence in accordance with Part 2(a) of Policy SD23, and in accordance with Appendix 3: Marketing Requirements for Change of Use Applications.

6.62 The minimum marketing period required by Policy SD23 is 12 months. A longer marketing period may be required to cover more than one season or where the existing use is located in close proximity to established tourist attractions or the rights of way network.

6.63 Redevelopment of visitor accommodation, visitor attraction, recreation facilities or associated development which is currently resulting in harm to

the special qualities of the National Park should, in the first instance, be redeveloped for other more suitable tourist or community uses.

YEAR-ROUND VISITOR ECONOMY

6.64 In order to support a year-round visitor economy, the Authority may support proposals for the relaxation or removal of seasonal planning restrictions, where appropriate. Instead, conditions will be used to prevent the occupation of accommodation as a permanent residential dwelling and restrict continuous periods of stays by occupiers, ensuring the facility remains for visitor use.

Development Management Policy SD24: Equestrian Uses

1. Development proposals for equestrian development will be permitted where they:
 - a) Are of a scale and/or an intensity of equestrian use compatible with the landscape and the special qualities;
 - b) Demonstrate good design which is well located and responds to local character and distinctiveness;
 - c) Re-use existing buildings wherever feasible and viable;
 - d) Locate new buildings, stables, yard areas and facilities adjacent to existing buildings provided they respect the amenities and activities of surrounding properties and uses;
 - e) Are well located to existing utilities and transport infrastructure, including vehicular and field accesses, tracks and bridleways;
 - f) Provide new or supplementary landscape features including hard and soft treatments and planting, consistent with local character; and
 - g) Demonstrate a conservation based land management approach.

6.65 The purpose of this policy is to ensure the careful planning, design and management of land on which horses are kept. It is important that equestrian activities have a positive impact and protect natural beauty. Good design should be informed by local character and distinctiveness, with particular

reference to farm buildings, layout and materials. Further criteria on landscape and design is set out in Policies SD4 and SD5 respectively.

FENCING AND SUBDIVISION

6.66 The subdivision of fields into small turnout paddocks can affect landscape character and relates to many of the criteria of this policy. Fencing which subdivides large fields into individual paddocks can have a significant visual impact on the landscape. Sensitive and well thought out fencing which respects the existing field pattern and contours, together with appropriate levels of grazing, can enhance a site leading also to improvements in biodiversity and the quality of grazing. The removal of hedgerows from existing field boundaries will be strongly resisted.

STABLES, FIELD SHELTERS AND NEW BUILDINGS

6.67 The location of new buildings like stables, field shelters, and tack storage can change the character of the land and views, particularly when poorly sited substantial and intrusive earthworks take place including manèges. Equine buildings on sites which are open, exposed, elevated or sloped are likely to have particular landscape impacts that may make it difficult to achieve sensitive design solutions. Wherever viable, existing buildings should be re-used to avoid additional buildings in the countryside.

6.68 New buildings should be sited next to existing buildings and new structures should be kept to a minimum. The layout of buildings should seek to contain and enclose yard areas for storage, parking and other activities. Equestrian development such as new barns and manèges should be sensitively lit in accordance with Policy SD8: Dark Night Skies. Examples of equestrian development that can impact on dark night skies include barns with extensive glazing and roof lights, floodlit manèges and other intrusive lighting may not be permitted.

JUMPS, FEED BINS, GENERAL STORAGE

6.69 Equestrian equipment like jumps and open storage can harm views. Careful design and layout should mitigate against these impacts through the

siting of buildings and permanent structures to screen and protect them from the elements. Management of manure and waste should take account of the amenities of local residents and other uses as well as environmental protection requirements.

UTILITIES AND TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

6.70 Development proposals should be well located to existing transport infrastructure and utilities infrastructure, including water, electricity, and gas. Access for cars and larger vehicles is often required as part of an application. Car parking, trailer storage and manure arrangements can create clutter and have urbanising influences in the landscape. This should be addressed through good design and the careful location of these areas in relation to existing landscape features and boundaries. Sites that are well located adjacent to the bridleway network can reduce pressures on the land and provide good recreational opportunities.

LANDSCAPE FEATURES AND TREATMENTS

6.71 Where new or supplementary landscape features such as planting or hard landscape features and boundary treatments are required, these should reflect the local character of the site and wider area and planting should consist of a locally appropriate native species mix. Further requirements on this matter can be found in Policy SD4: Landscape Character and SD5: Design.

CONSERVATION BASED LAND MANAGEMENT

6.72 The National Park Authority seeks to encourage owners to adopt a best practice approach towards managing the land, depending on the breed, size and purpose of keeping horses, which supports horse welfare as well. A conservation based land management approach is strongly encouraged. This could include a range of measures such as: species rich grazing with a locally native seeding mix, incorporation of headlands around paddocks (ungrazed areas along hedgerows), grazing rotation programme, on site hay production, native tree planting in groups and restoration hedgerows as a framework for paddock subdivision and track grazing systems. This approach may also be influenced by soil type and natural drainage patterns where the support of

natural drainage processes through management of ditches and water courses can contribute to the resilience of the soil to wear, and increase biodiversity habitats.

6.73 It will be appropriate in some cases for management plans to be devised and submitted to support planning applications to demonstrate how this approach will be delivered. Advice should be sought from the Authority at the earliest opportunity and prior to submitting an application on whether a management plan would be needed.