

Report to	National Park Authority
Date	26 July 2012
By	Director of Strategy & Partnerships
Title of Report	South Downs National Park Vision
Purpose of Report	To agree the Vision statement for the South Downs National Park

The Authority is recommended to:

- 1) select Option A for the Vision from the versions set out in this report.**
 - 2) note that, as part of the SDMP, impact measures will be developed as a basis for monitoring progress towards the achievement of the Vision**
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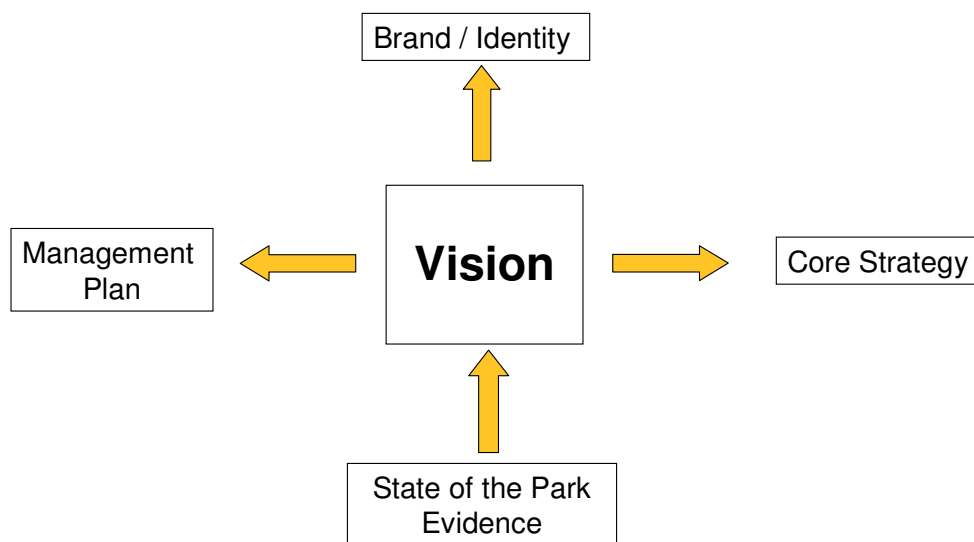
1. Introduction

- 1.1 A great deal of engagement, data and policy analysis work has undertaken over the last 18 months. The Special Qualities of the National Park have been agreed, and the pre-publication version of the State of the National Park report is being presented to this Authority meeting for approval.
- 1.2 At its November 2011 meeting, the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) agreed the overall structure for the South Downs Management Plan, including within it a thirty year vision statement.
- 1.3 A series of vision concepts were developed in early 2012. These were consulted on using the online Forum and directly with key stakeholders, and the drafts and the consultation findings discussed in a joint meeting between the Authority and the South Downs Partnerships (SDP) on 26 April 2012.
- 1.4 The joint SDNPA/SDP meeting gave a clear steer in terms of developing the final version (**see Appendix 2**), and asked for an external writer to be brought in to assist (see option 3).
- 1.5 The use of an external writer was done but did not produce quite the results expected (option B), so further work was undertaken by officers to provide an alternative option (A). Both are set out in **Appendix I** of this paper.
- 1.6 The Authority is recommended to select Option A. This version has been created very directly from the material used in the joint workshop – both the draft that went in to this meeting and the comments from it. It gives emphasis to those ideas and phrases which most struck a chord with Members and Partners and has removed or toned down those which did not win favour. It is sufficiently short to be easily digested and used in many different ways, but clear and precise enough to give hooks for the Management Plan.

2. Background

- 2.1 In 2011 the SDNPA adopted the performance log framework that uses the terms Impact, Outcome, Outputs and Inputs. The impact is the highest level indicator and input the lowest.
- 2.2 The Vision for the South Downs National Park describes the 30 year aspirations or ‘impacts’ that a broad constituency of partners and organisations want to achieve. Once agreed, it will provide the strategic steer for the South Downs Management Plan, the Local Plan, and for the development of a shared brand and identity for the National Park (see below). Due

to its wide ranging influence, it is important that 'buy in' from a wide range of partners has been achieved.



- 2.3 A great deal of engagement, data gathering and policy work was undertaken during 2010 and 2011 and this has all been used to inform the Vision. Specifically, people were asked to provide their ideas for a Vision via the “postcards for the future” campaign, as part of the Autumn 2011 workshops, and through the Online Forum discussions.
- 2.4 The Special Qualities of the SDNP were agreed by the Authority in 2011, and they have informed the thinking for the Vision.
- 2.5 A series of concepts for the Vision were prepared during November and December 2011. During February, parallel workshops were held with SDNPA Members, the South Downs Partnership and with staff. From these three workshops the concepts were adapted then put out for a structured consultation with the online forum and 200 key partner organisations, including all parish councils, at the end of March. There were 100 responses from the online forum and 26 from the partners.
- 2.6 Following this consultation, the first ever joint SDNPA/SDP meeting on 26 April included a workshop to discuss the vision concepts and the responses that had been received back at that point. This resulted in some specific and agreed changes noted against the original draft (attached as **Appendix I**)
- 2.7 Some background work on impact measures has been done following initial discussions with members at the 8 February 2012 Leadership workshop.

3. Resources

- 3.1 There are no resource implications of this report

4. Risk management

- 4.1 There is a balance to strike between agreeing a Vision which is bland, offends no-one, but provides insufficiently strong overall direction of the National Park, and one which is too divisive to command general support. This risk has been mitigated by combining of broad consultation with a strong steer from the NPA and the SDP.

5. Human Rights, Equalities, Health and Safety

5.1 The version of the Vision proposed places strong emphasis on inclusivity and provides a good platform for the SDNPA's approach in this area.

6. External Consultees

6.1 None with this paper, because external consultees have been extensively involved in developing the proposed Vision.

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Appendices	1. Options for Vision statement 2. Notes of 8 Feb Leadership workshop
SDNPA Consultees	Chief Executive Officer, Director of Corporate Services, Director of Planning, Director of Strategy and Partnerships, Head of Operations, Chief Finance Officer, Deputy Chief Finance Officer, Monitoring Officer & Senior Solicitor.
Background Documents	None

Appendix I: Options for the Vision Statement

Option A

By 2032

The iconic English lowland landscapes and heritage of the South Downs National Park have been conserved and greatly enhanced. These inspirational and distinctive places, where people live, work, farm and relax, have adapted well to the impacts of climate change and other pressures.

People understand, value, and look after the vital natural services that the South Downs National Park provides. Large areas of high-quality and well-managed habitat form a network supporting wildlife throughout the landscape.

Opportunities exist for everyone to discover, enjoy, understand and value the South Downs National Park and its special qualities. The relationship between people and landscape enhances their lives and inspires them to become actively involved in caring for it and using its resources more responsibly.

The South Downs National Park underpins the economic and social well-being of the communities in and around it, which are more self-sustaining and empowered to shape their own future. Its villages and market towns are thriving centres for residents, visitors and businesses and are supporting the wider rural community

Successful farming, forestry, tourism and other business activities within the South Downs National Park actively contribute to, and derive economic benefit from, its unique identity and special qualities.

Option B (produced by external writer)

1: The South Downs have been a bastion since earliest times. Our ancestors were secure here these many thousand years. We treasure their culture, their industry, their memory, that made this land supreme. Images of green hills with shepherds safeguarding their sheep are biblical in message, an allegory for freedom, protection, belonging and wilderness. In WW2 they were a battle for Britain emblem. Here we can walk across the rounded hills, or stand on the white cliffs and hear the battering world below. This is Arcadia: but it has to be fought for.

The Park is a place of many parts. Each needs all. Each interlocks. No part is an island. Butterflies need flowers and plants, flowers need sheep, sheep need farmers with all their industry. There are crops of cattle, corn, timber, while tourism is an industry with many trades and skills. Together with the Park Authority they all help fund these varied woods and grassland hills, these villages and towns, these winding roads and streams. All need people to value and drive forward the ideal.

Today, and for the future, this is the land where we bank our biomass, our work, and our way of life. We must ensure that our children, and our children's children treasure our works, our life, our memory and what we leave behind us. That is our fight today.

2: The South Downs are a shop-window to Europe and the world. Their white cliffs give welcome, and the rich hinterland of friendly towns and secret villages give grace and attraction for visitors. This is a land engineered by people over many thousands of years. From Stone Age to Bronze, Iron Age to Roman, Saxon to Medieval and onwards to the present, this landscape today satisfies our deepest sense of perfection and respect, history and culture. . It has inspired artists and composers, poets and writers of every attainment

from the loftiest to the most personal. In a busy world people will need this contact ever more, as an expression of their own lives.

The South Downs is one of the richest eco-systems in the world: the tapestry of downland, woodland, marsh, meadows, heaths and river valleys provide a total of about 2000 flowering plants. People made these wild places by farming and forestry, building and design. They have valued and maintained them over the many changing years since man arrived. For the next thirty years or so it will be the people of this present Age who will shape the South Downs Park, take their living, and decide its fate. This step into the future will be taken more easily with the help of the Park Authority.

Appendix 2: Notes from Joint South Downs Partnership – SDNPA Member workshop 26th April 2012

At the joint workshop on 26th April, members of the Partnership and National Park Authority discussed the vision paragraphs set out below. At the plenary session the group agreed on making the following amendments to the draft vision submitted. These were further supported during the NPA Member-only session after lunch.

Yellow highlighting = a word or phrase that was particularly supported

Strikethrough = a word or phrase that should be omitted

^[superscript] = proposed wording to be inserted / to replace anything struck out

Paragraph 1

The ~~natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the South Downs National Park's~~ **iconic English** lowland landscapes ~~of chalk, weald, river valley and spectacular coastal cliffs~~ have been well ~~conserved and greatly enhanced~~. These **inspirational landscapes**, where **people live work and farm**, are well **adapted** to the impacts of ~~climate change~~.

Comments: ← Live, farm and work – and enjoy/play

Other rural businesses e.g. forestry

Adaptability of landscape

Finishes 'the impacts of'... what?

Paragraph 2

People ^[understand and] **value** the **natural services** that ~~these landscapes~~ ^[the South Downs] provide, including the sustainable production of food, renewable energy, clean water, carbon capture and flood control. Increased Areas of ^[high quality] well-managed habitat form a ~~connected~~ network together to form a sensitively ~~farmed~~ ^[managed] landscape.

Comments: Second sentence always was the weakest in the whole vision; as it is currently re- worded there is repetition of similar meaning words in the context they are used - well-managed / sensitively; network / together. Would it be better expressed as - 'Areas of high quality habitat form a network of sensitively managed landscape'?

Paragraph 3

~~Everyone has~~ ^[People have many] the opportunity^[ies] to discover, enjoy, understand and value the South Downs and its special qualities. The ~~growing~~ relationship between people and the landscape enhances their ~~health and wellbeing~~ ^[lives] and inspires them to become actively involved in caring for this ^[/ their] ~~special~~ ^[another word for special?] environment, using ~~transport, energy and water more efficiently~~ ^[resources more responsibly].

Paragraph 4

This 21st century National Park underpins the economic and social well-being of communities in and around the area, which are self sustaining and empowered to shape their own future. ~~Sensitive development within the National Park allows villages and market towns to be thriving centres of support for residents, businesses and visitors with new and enhanced services that support wider rural communities.~~

Comments: Mutually beneficial relationship between people/ landscape/ visitors/ businesses

The words **balanced** and, in particular **thriving** were supported

Paragraph 5

~~A strong, shared identity and sense of place is derived from both the past and continuing influence of people on the landscape. This supports Farming, tourism, forestry and other business, allowing people to trade on and strengthen the special qualities~~ ^[and activities shape and benefit from the special identity] ~~of the National Park in enterprising and innovative ways.~~

Comments: **Active** involvement – two way

Economic activity with 2-way benefit