



Public Document Pack

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6 March 2025

PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Planning Policy Committee will be held in **Council Chamber, Arun Civic Centre, Maltravers Road, Littlehampton, BN17 5LF** on **Tuesday 18 March 2025 at 6.00 pm** and you are requested to attend.

Members: Councillors Yeates (Chair), Lury (Vice-Chair), Elkins, Goodheart, Huntley, Long, McAuliffe, Partridge, Mrs Stainton, Tandy and Bower

PLEASE NOTE:

A live webcast of the meeting will be available via the Council's [Web Pages](#)

Any members of the public wishing to address the Committee meeting during Public Question Time, will need to email Committees@arun.gov.uk by 5.15 pm on **Tuesday, 11 March 2025** in line with current Committee Meeting Procedure Rules.

For further information on the items to be discussed, please contact Committees@arun.gov.uk

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and Officers are invited to make any declaration of pecuniary, personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on this agenda, and are reminded that they should re-declare their interest before consideration of the items or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.

Members and Officers should make their declaration by stating:

- a) the item they have the interest in
- b) whether it is a pecuniary/personal interest and/or prejudicial interest
- c) the nature of the interest

3. MINUTES

(Pages 1 - 10)

The Committee will be asked to approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Planning Policy Committee held on 28 January 2025.

4. ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA THAT THE CHAIR OF THE MEETING IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

To receive questions from the public (for a period of up to 15 minutes).

6. ARUN LOCAL PLAN UPDATE (2023 - 2041) APPOINTMENT OF LEAD CONSULTANT FOLLOWING AN OPEN TENDER PROCESS

(Pages 11 - 22)

This report updates the Committee on the outcome of the tender process to appoint a consultancy to lead on the preparation of a new Local Plan, with support from ADC's Planning Policy and Conservation Team.

7. BARNHAM/EASTERGATE/WESTERGATE INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY PLAN

(Pages 23 - 34)

This report seeks the agreement of the Committee on the latest revision of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) for the Barnham/Eastergate/Westergate (BEW) Strategic Allocation. The revised IDP establishes the overall infrastructure needs of the development and proportionately distributes this between the sites which form the allocation. These figures have been derived through negotiation with relevant stakeholders.

8. DELIVERABILITY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING THROUGH THE SECTION 106 PROCESS (Pages 35 - 40)

Over the past 12-18 months, Arun District Council has had multiple discussions with developers around difficulties in disposing of s106 affordable housing to Registered Providers (RP's). In response to this, a report was commissioned to look at the issues and provide advice around how we should carry out these discussions around alternative delivery of affordable housing on sites through varying the requirements of planning obligations.

9. LAND USE FRAMEWORK CONSULTATION (Pages 41 - 62)

DEFRA proposes to develop a Land Use Framework that, they say, could be used to help guide development within the whole of the UK as well as create better climate resilience and agricultural practices for the future.

10. ARUN LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (LDS) UPDATE (Pages 63 - 84)

The council is required to produce, and keep up to date, a Local Development Scheme (LDS). The LDS provides a work programme for the production of those Development Plan Documents to be prepared over a three-year period and is monitored in the Authority Monitoring Report and used for resource planning by PINS (the Planning Inspectorate).

11. RESPONSE TO REGULATION 18 CONSULTATION ON THE SOUTH DOWNS LOCAL PLAN REVIEW (Pages 85 - 102)

This report is intended to update members of the Planning Policy Committee and seek their agreement on the draft response to the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) on a current Regulation 18 Consultation on their Local Plan Review. The current South Downs Local Plan covers the period 2014 to 2033 and was adopted in July 2019. It is being reviewed to ensure it is up-to-date and addresses critical issues such as nature recovery, climate change, affordable housing and helping local communities thrive.

OUTSIDE BODIES - FEEDBACK FROM MEETINGS

12. WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 103 - 104)

The Committee is requested to note the Work Programme.

Note: If Members have any detailed questions, they are reminded that they need to inform the Chair and relevant Director in advance of the meeting.

Note: Filming, Photography and Recording at Council Meetings – The District Council supports the principles of openness and transparency in its decision making and permits filming, recording and the taking of photographs at its meetings that are open to the public. This meeting may therefore be recorded, filmed or broadcast by video or audio, by third parties. Arrangements for these activities should operate in accordance with guidelines agreed by the Council and as available via the following link [PART 8 - CP - Section 5 Filming Photographic Protocol](#)

Agenda Item 3

Subject to approval at the next Planning Policy Committee meeting

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PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE

28 January 2025 at 6.00 pm

Present: Councillors Yeates (Chair), Lury (Vice-Chair), Bower, Elkins, Long, McAuliffe, Partridge, Mrs Stainton, Tandy and Hamilton (Substitute for Huntley)

471. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Goodheart and Councillor Huntley.

472. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Elkins declared a Personal Interest in respect of Agenda Item 8 as a member of West Sussex County Council.

473. MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 November 2024 were approved by the Committee and signed by the Chair.

474. ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA THAT THE CHAIR OF THE MEETING IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

There were no urgent items presented at the meeting.

475. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

476. COMMITTEE REVENUE BUDGET 2025/26

The Group Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer was invited by the Chair to present the report. The report recommended this Committee's General Fund Revenue Budget for 2025/26 to the Policy and Finance Committee on 13 February 2025, as part of the Council's overall revenue and capital budget. He drew members attention to Appendix A and the explanatory information at paragraphs 3.4 and 3.5. The net decrease in the 2024/25 budget had decreased by £210k mainly due to the anticipated increase in planning fee income. The Government had increased the Planning fee by £270. It was anticipated the number of planning applications received by the Council during 2025/26 would increase. It was also anticipated that the Council would be able to recover administration charges from Community Infrastructure Levy schemes resulting from additional activity in that area. Referring to Appendix A, although the

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Employees budget had increased for 2025/26, this had been offset by Services and Supplies, due to permanent staff now being in place.

The recommendations were proposed by Councillor Partridge and seconded by Councillor McAuliffe.

The Chair then invited questions and comments from members. In response to a question as to why the Premises budget had increased from zero to £3,000 in 2025/26. The Group Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer undertook to provide a written response.

The Committee

RESOLVED that it

a) Agrees the 2025/26 Revenue Budget as set out in Appendix A; and

RECOMMENDS TO POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE THAT

b) the Revenue Budgets for this Committee be included in the Council's overall 2025/26 Revenue Budget.

477. HOUSING AND ECONOMIC LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT (HELAA 2024 UPDATE)

The Chair drew members attention to the agenda supplement circulated before the meeting that provided a correction to Table 1: Summary of New Sites at paragraph 4.6 of the report. The supplement also added for noting, information where no update was provided by the landowner, developer or promotor in response to the Council's 'call for sites' and advised that the Interactive HELAA Map on the Council's website would be updated in due course.

The Chair then invited the Interim Head of Planning Policy to present the updated Housing and Economic Land Availability Study (HELAA) report to the Committee. He provided members with a synopsis of the HELAA, previously approved in 2021. Its purpose was to identify the future supply of housing and economic land that was suitable, available and achievable during the Local Plan period. Its evidence primarily informed Local Plan making and the identification of a Five-Year Housing Land Supply (5YHLS) of housing land. However, it was important to note that the HELAA did not itself determine that a site would be allocated for development. The inclusion of a site did not necessarily indicate it would be taken forward as an allocation or that planning permission would be granted. It provided details of a range of sites that were potentially available for development to meet the Council's housing need and was a living document that provided a snapshot of the current position. Whilst it was not a statutory requirement to update the HELAA on an annual basis, officers considered that now was the right time following the approval of the Regulation 18 Document of Travel document and the start of the Local Plan process.

The updated HELAA followed the annual call for sites for consideration undertaken during 2023 and 2024. Landowners and developers of sites previously proposed, existing larger planning permissions and strategic sites were also contacted directly requesting a progress update to help inform if the HELAA status should be changed. The HELAA report was based on the best evidence and information available at the time of preparation. Officers have been as consistent, objective, and even handed as possible in determining whether a site should be classified as deliverable, developable or not currently developable.

He referred to paragraph 3.5 of the report, advising that the HELAA did not form part of the Development Plan. The identification of a site as deliverable or developable did not mean that it became an allocated site nor did it preclude sites not identified from coming forward in the future through the planning application process at any time. Paragraph 4.2 provided an explanation of the National Planning Policy Framework classifications in the HELAA being 'deliverable', 'developable' and 'not currently developable'.

He advised that a total of 310 individual sites were assessed. A report on each site had been made available on the Council's website and officers were in the progress of updating the interactive map. A total of 25 new sites were put forward for consideration, of which 24 were proposed for housing, which was less than during 2023. Of the new sites only six were considered to be deliverable, two developable, with the remaining sites having been discounted for the time being. The total number of deliverable sites overall was currently 18 which was less than during 2021 and 2023. The reason for this could be that some sites were now classified as commitments or development had started as planning permission had been granted and can be counted in the Council's 5YHLS.

Whilst the number of developable sites had increased, this was by the same amount that the deliverable sites had reduced. Officers were required to ensure that the 5YHLS was realistic as once published it could be challenged by developers. The number of strategic sites considered deliverable had reduced from ten to four resulting in a reduction in the anticipated dwelling yield from 6,840 to 4,386 coming forward in the next five years. This has impacted the 5YHLS, which has reduced from 4.17 to 3.41 years. A number of these sites previously identified as deliverable are now formal commitments and will still deliver housing. The number of sites not currently developable has increased from 233 to 253. The Interim Head of Planning Policy indicated that a further call for sites was scheduled to take place during Summer 2025.

The recommendation was proposed by Councillor Partridge and seconded by Councillor McAuliffe.

The Chair invited questions and comments from Members:

- Concern was raised that deliverable sites were not coming forward soon enough and the impact on the deliverability of sites across the District. The Interim Head of Planning Policy conformed that the allocations were still set out in the Local Plan and the deliverability of sites was assessed on whether or not they were

likely to be achievable or become deliverable within the next five years. He confirmed there were still around 8,000 commitments.

- It was confirmed there was no obligation to inform a landowner that their site had been submitted for inclusion in the HELAA. However, to properly demonstrate a site was achievable it really should be the landowner or their representative as the person who could bring the land forward for development and can confirm the land was genuinely available.
- The Interim Head of Planning Policy undertook to provide Councillor Elkins with details of the planning process concerning the HELAA.
- The usefulness of the interactive online map of sites and a commitment was sought that the map will be available once the update information is live.
- The lack of employment land coming forward. Confirmed that the employment development sites had been updated and only one site had come forward. The Council would also identify suitable employment sites that could come forward.
- Appendix 12 contained a list of nine renewable energy sites. It was suggested these were not Blue/Green infrastructure, which was a strategic network of natural and semi-natural areas designed to deliver ecosystem services. It should have its own category or be included with biodiversity net gain as it would help mitigate the flood impacts in the District. The Interim Head of Planning Policy advised that the HELAA only looked at housing and economic development land. He explained that during the call for sites a number had come forward that were not strictly within this category and rather than lose these sites a decision had been made to also include them. He agreed that, on reflection, the sites identified would be better classified under large scale solar sites and undertook to amend the wording in the appendix.
- With regards to the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework, the Interim Head of Planning Policy advised he was not aware of the effect this had on developers concerning the HELAA. However generally he was aware that a number of developers, who had previously withdrawn their planning applications, have indicated they may re-submit them following the publication of the Framework.

RESOLVED

That the Planning Policy Committee:-

- i) Notes the updated Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) 2024 as part of the evidence base for the Local Plan and any future Development Plan Document preparation; and
- ii) Delegates authority to the Group Head of Planning to, if necessary, make minor editorial changes prior to publication of the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment 2024 Update; and
- iii) Agrees that the Housing and Land Availability Assessment 2024 Update be published on the Council's web site.

478. AUTHORITY MONITORING REPORT 2023/24

[Councillor Elkins declared a Personal Interest during discussion of this item as a member of West Sussex County Council].

The Chair invited the Interim Head of Planning Policy to present the report to the Committee. The report updated members on Arun's Monitoring Report (AMR), which is updated for the monitoring year 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. The AMR was a backwards looking document with two exceptions. These being 1) information on the Duty to Cooperate and the inclusion of any data concerning engagement on local plans that took place after 31 March 2024 collected up to 31 December 2024 and 2) the Council's Five-year Housing Land Supply that had an element of looking forward at the housing projections. The updated Local Development Scheme would be considered by this Committee for approval at its meeting on 18 March 2025. He referred to the updated Gypsy and Traveller policy following a change to Government Policy that it should also include those who had ceased to travel, which would be done through the new Local Plan. He referred to progress concerning Neighbourhood Plans and the Duty to Cooperate.

A key issue was the Council's 5YHLS following an assessment carried out at the beginning of 2024, resulting in a 4.17-year supply, which had been challenged by developers. The new standard methodology had been adopted following the introduction of the updated National Planning Policy Framework in December 2024 and it was therefore deemed appropriate to use the latest figure of 1,474 dwellings per annum with a 20% contingency buffer and a 10% optimism bias for the deliverability of strategic developments, which equated to a 3.41-year supply, as set out in Chapter 4, paragraph 4.5.2, of the AMR. The housing delivery test was below the required 75%, which automatically triggered the requirement for a 20% buffer taking the 5-year total need to 8,856. Officers had found it challenging to reach a supply of 1,000 dwellings required in the adopted Local Plan. Therefore, the Council's total expected supply was 6,035 against the total need. As regards to the Housing Delivery test, whilst the Council was below the 75% requirement this was an improvement compared to the previous measurement, which was encouraging. The number of net housing completions was the highest amount achieved in a number of years. The provision of Affordable Housing remained consistent at 27% against the Council's Policy target of 30%. There had been a reduction in the amount of land for commercial floorspace coming forward. There was a statutory requirement for adopted Infrastructure Funding Statement to be included in the AMR.

The recommendation was proposed by Councillor McAuliffe and seconded by Councillor Partridge.

The Chair invited questions and comments from Members:

- Concern was raised that developers were not building at the rate required of them leading to the Council's five-year housing land supply not being met.
- Councillor Lury referred to a letter he had written on behalf of the Planning Policy Committee setting out their concerns that the Council was being set up to fail in

meeting its 5YHLS, advising that the situation had worsened. The developers should be penalised, and not the Council, for not delivering their sites within the required timeframes.

- The need for the provision of more social housing in the District was raised.
- Referring to paragraph 1.7 listing the evidence studies, was there data available detailing what had been delivered as a result of those studies, such as for cycling and walking infrastructure? It was suggested that the information could be monitored and publicised against how well the Council was doing against the recommendations of the evidence studies commissioned. The Interim Head of Planning Policy advised that the AMR information was a snapshot summary. The Council's website had pages dedicated to the Arun Local Plan update where the evidence database was updated and uploaded to the Council's website as and when the evidence was taken forward during the Local Plan process. Once the Council was in a position to take the Local Plan forward members would be engaged closely in the process. He undertook to discuss the amount of detail available on the website with Councillor McAuliffe outside of the meeting.
- Reference was also made to Appendix 10, Sussex Biodiversity Annual Monitoring Report and the list of habitats and species and it was asked how this data was used in terms of the planning process? The Interim Head of Planning Policy advised that this Report would be used to inform the development of the Council's Biodiversity Action Plan and Biodiversity Net Gain Strategy. The Local Nature Recovery Strategy would also feed into those documents as well, which he confirmed officers were closely involved with its working groups. Whilst the AMR reported on what has happened, it was also about using the data and taking it forward through the various strategies.
- Concerns about the lack of highway, sewerage and health service infrastructure to support development were raised.
- It would be helpful for the list of birds in the Biodiversity Plan to include information on their increasing and decreasing numbers.
- The table at paragraph 6.10 implied there had been no additional completed and occupied floorspace by town centre and leisure uses and paragraph 6.11 stated that regeneration was not being achieved. The benefit of the report was that this was evidence in written form that the Employment Land Policy was not being achieved.
- It was acknowledged that officers had done a good job in negotiating good outcomes for Section 106 money but there was concern that the process took too long and the money was not being allocated. He provided details of attempts that had been made by Wick School, Littlehampton and others to engage with West Sussex County Council to negotiate the allocation of Section 106 money for improvement projects. Could an approach be made to West Sussex County Council? The Chair suggested that the member take up the issue with the relevant County Councillor.
- The Council's Five-Year Housing Land Supply was challenging and the need to meet these targets could result in houses being built in the wrong places and there was concern that local young people could be priced out of the market.
- Page 213, Appendix 4 – Ensure the text contained within the agenda documents are readable.

- The Interim Head of Planning Policy clarified that the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment carried out to inform the Local Plan. Firstly an overall assessment was undertaken in conjunction with the Environment Agency followed by an assessment of whether the allocations passed the assessments. The Group Head of Planning added that flood risk data itself was different and was kept up to date by the Environment Agency and available on their website and the Council used this in flood risk assessments to determine planning applications. The Interim Head of Planning Policy advised that flood risk assessments were required to be undertaken using national data predominantly through the Environment Agency. He asked Councillor Hamilton to forward to him further information concerning Climate Central an international flood risk assessment organisation based at Princeton University, which he would raise with the chosen external consultants following the commissioning of a new Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Part 1) from, in the near future.
- The importance of understanding that ,over a number of years, members had been trying to address the issues about the lack of infrastructure and development coming forward through the AMR. The current Local Plan was designed with the economy in mind, with policies intended to overcome the issues of out commuting and Arun’s job density ratio being the third worst in the South East. The Council needed to continue to press this point to the Government.

RESOLVED

That the Planning Policy Committee

- i) Notes and publishes the Authority Monitoring Report 2023/24.
- ii) Delegates authority to the Group Head of Planning to, if necessary, make minor editorial changes prior to publication of the Authority Monitoring Report 2023/24.

479. CONSULTATION ON DRAFT CONSERVATION AREA CHARACTER APPRAISAL FOR BOGNOR REGIS WATERLOO SQUARE AND THE STEYNE

The Chair invited the Interim Head of Planning Policy to present the report to the Committee, concerning the draft consultation character appraisal for Bognor Regis Waterloo Square and the Steyne Conservation Area. The Council has a Statutory duty to update and review the evidence concerning the district’s special historic and architectural interest areas, including their boundaries. Character appraisals formed part of the evidence base supporting the designation and management of conservation areas. They were used to inform decision making when considering planning applications and fed into the preparation of the Council’s Local Plan policies.

He drew attention to Figure 26 on page 326 that set out the proposed amendments to the boundary. Following a thorough appraisal of the conservation area the Hothampton Sunken Gardens, Bognor Regis (Area 1) had been included within the area as officers considered there was merit its inclusion as it provided a valuable part of the setting of the conservation area. He referred to the map on page 326 where it was

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proposed to remove Inner Court, Norfolk Square, Bognor Regis (Area 2), which was a modern building with the boundary running through its garden that incorporated two features and were viewed as not making a position contribution.

The recommendation was proposed by Councillor McAuliffe and seconded by Councillor Hamilton.

The Chair invited questions and comments from Members. A number of members thanked officers for the report, which they were pleased to see, as a number of buildings had been lost in the surrounding area. They considered that it was appropriate to include the Sunken Gardens and to remove the anomaly concerning Inner Court, Norfolk Square.

A correction was made to Page 314, Figure 21: Amend 'Some of the existing building sin...' to read 'Some of the existing buildings in...'

Discussion took place surrounding Figure 25 on Page 324, an empty plot of land at the junction of Norfolk Road and the Esplanade, Bognor Regis. A member provided an update on progress advising that the Council was in discussions with the owner to deal with the unkemptness of the site and to provide hoarding around the perimeter of the site. The Interim Head of Planning Policy advised that if required the Council could serve a Section 215 untidy site notice on the owner.

Responding to questions concerning Figure 24: an unkept building, the Interim Head of Planning Policy advised that the Council's Building Control Team were investigating and had issued enforcement notices on the land.

The Committee

RESOLVED to agree

- i) The draft conservation area character appraisal for Bognor Regis Waterloo Square and The Steyne, which includes proposed boundary changes, is published for the purpose of public consultation for a minimum period of 4 weeks;
- ii) That the Group Head of Planning, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the committee, be given delegated authority to agree minor editorial changes prior to publication; and
- iii) That following public consultation, should only minor changes be necessary, authority be delegated to the Group Head of Planning to adopt the appraisals. In the event that comments are received that require significant changes, the amended appraisal will be reported back to the next available committee meeting for a decision.

The Chair informed the Committee that there was an amendment to the recommendation to appoint a lead consultant for the preparation of the new Local Plan.

The Chair then invited the Group Head of Planning to provide a verbal update to the Committee. He referred to an email he had sent to the Committee dated 16 January 2025 concerning the situation following the Government's proposals for Devolution and local government reorganisation. Following the work undertaken by the Interim Head of Planning Policy, who had spent a lot of time processing the tender through a rigorous assessment process, and in light of the Government's recent Devolution and Local Government reorganisation announcement, officers have evaluated whether continuing the process at this time provided value for money. There was therefore currently too much uncertainty to proceed with the recommendation in the report to appoint a Lead Consultant. A deferral of the item would hopefully provide officers with more information and more detail on the proposed reorganisation.

Officers had therefore amended the recommendation in the report to: That the Committee defers this agenda item to its next meeting on 18 March 2025.

The recommendation was proposed by Councillor Partridge and seconded by Councillor Bower.

RESOLVED

That the Committee defers this agenda item to its next meeting on 18 March 2025.

481. WORK PROGRAMME

The Interim Head of Planning Policy provided details of the reports due for consideration at the next meeting and responded to questions:

- Local Plan Consultancy Appointment
- Local Development Scheme update
- The Council's response to the South Downs National Park Regulation 18 consultation.

The Ford Neighbourhood Plan 2 would be considered by Full Council on 19 March 2025

The Committee noted the Work Programme for 2025-2026.

(The meeting concluded at 7.58 pm)

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PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE 18 MARCH 2025 SUPPLEMENTARY UPDATE SHEET

Agenda Item - Arun Local Plan Update (2023 – 2041) – Appointment of Lead Consultant following an Open Tender process

Background

The Committee will recall that a report was presented to the meeting held on 28 January 2025, under agenda item 10, recommending the formal appointment of an external planning consultancy (now confirmed, following the expiry of the tender standstill period as 'Prior & Partners' based in London) to lead on the preparation of the Local Plan Update (2023 - 2041) in accordance with the provisions of the draft Statement of Works Contract and in collaboration with the council's Planning Policy & Conservation Team. Under the provisions of the tender, the contract is intended to cover a period of three years, with the possibility of a further six-month extension, should that be required.

At the January meeting, the Chairman invited the Group Head of Planning to provide a verbal update to the Committee. He referred to an email he had sent to the Committee on 16 January concerning the situation following the Government's proposals for Devolution and local government reorganisation. He noted that in light of the Government's recent Devolution and Local Government reorganisation announcement, officers had evaluated whether continuing the process at this time provided value for money and said there was too much uncertainty to proceed with the recommendation in the report to appoint a Lead Consultant at that time. The Group Head of Planning recommended deferral of the item to enable officers to obtain more information and further detail on the government's proposals so that the implications of this on the Local Plan preparation/timetable could be properly assessed and reported back to elected members.

The Committee resolved to defer the item to its next meeting on 18 March 2025.

The Interim Head of Planning Policy has subsequently met with Prior & Partners on 4 February 2025 to appraise them of the situation in respect to the tender to confirm that no formal decision whether or not to proceed with the commission would be taken until the matter has been reconsidered by the Planning Policy Committee. We are now in a period of inactivity as far as the contract is concerned, although the Planning Policy & Conservation Team is still progressing Local Plan work in respect to key evidence gathering.

Update since January Committee meeting

Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation

On 5 February 2025, we received official confirmation that Sussex and Brighton are part of the Devolution Priority Programme (DPP) and that the county elections which had been planned for May 2025, have been postponed. A consultation from the

Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) commenced later in the month seeking views on proposals for a Mayoral Combined County Authority for the local government areas of East Sussex County Council, West Sussex County Council, and Brighton and Hove City Council. The first election for a new Mayor is intended to take place in May 2026.

At the same time, under proposals for local government reorganisation, Arun and other Sussex authorities have been asked by central government to consider the different options for unitarisation, including how the county might be divided into one or more unitary authorities, each having a population of at least 500,000. These initial options are due to be submitted to government by 21 March. Once that information has been submitted, full business cases for the options will be prepared before final proposals are submitted to government in September 2025. Elections for the shadow unitary authorities are due to follow in 2027 with the intention that the new unitary authorities will come into being in 2028, on what is known as Vesting Day.

There are still some unknowns at this point, but what is clear is that Arun District Council is unlikely to exist as a standalone entity in just over three years' time and this introduces a great deal of uncertainty in terms of developing and investing in a new Local Plan, which is still at a relatively early stage of production, having only delivered the Direction of Travel document last year.

Pending changes to the way Local Plans are prepared

The main legislation governing the production of local plans is set out in 'The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.' This is the legislation under which the current Arun Local Plan (2018) was prepared and adopted. However, the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (LURA) 2023 identified the intention for future Plans to be produced under a new plan-making system that is expected to be implemented from summer or autumn 2025. Any Plans not subject to transitional arrangements must be submitted for examination under the existing system by December 2026 if they are to be considered under the existing regulations. Any Plans likely to be submitted after that time will need to be prepared and examined under LURA.

It is clear from the draft timetable set out in the updated Local Development Scheme (March 2025), due to be considered elsewhere on this Committee agenda that the updated Plan will need to be prepared under LURA. Whilst an outline of how the new plan-making system based on a 30 month timeframe might work, including three so-called gateway assessment stages, was included in the consultation undertaken between 25 July - 18 October 2023 by the previous government on the implementation of plan-making reforms through the Act, it is clear that this process will need to be the subject of secondary legislation setting out the exact procedures that local authorities must follow in producing a new Local Plan. On 27 February 2025, MHCLG published their reply to the 2023 consultation on plan-making reforms, which attracted almost 500 responses.

Whilst the reforms were proposed by the previous government, MHCLG acknowledge that although they recognise the challenges faced by authorities in preparing plans at pace, they remain committed to accelerating the process and broadly agree with the stated target to prepare and adopt Plans within a 30 month timescale.

The government believes that wide ranging plan-making reforms – such as the introduction of gateways; shorter, simpler and more standardised content focused on the core principles of plan-making; and a series of digital transformation initiatives – will support this aim. However, until the additional guidance and tools, together with the actual legislative changes governing the new plan-making process come forward, we are in somewhat of a vacuum.

National Development Management Policies

In addition, in November 2024, the Housing Minister revealed that the government plans to consult on proposals for new national development management policies (NDMPs) during 2025, after which it intends to publish a “slimmed down” version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) focused solely on plan-making. The suggestion is that the NDMPs will simplify the system and make it more rules-based, making it easier for councils to agree shorter and more locally-focused local plans, for developers to navigate the planning system, and for residents to have greater certainty about what is and isn’t allowed.

However, as yet the consultation on these national policies has not transpired and if the intention is that these would be subject to proper and widespread consultation, the likelihood is that we will not have an agreed suite of national development management policies until towards the end of the year, at the earliest. Knowing that the NDMPs are pending but having no details about what topics these new policies might cover, results in further uncertainty when deciding on the scope of a new Local Plan for Arun and creates risk of undertaking potentially abortive and costly work in developing updated/replacement planning policies for the district, which is a key focus of the work intended to be undertaken by the consultants under the terms of this tender.

Implications of continuing with the appointment of an external consultant now

As can be seen from the information above, in view of the significant unknowns surrounding:

- (a) local government reorganisation;
- (b) the new plan-making process under the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, which will be subject to secondary legislation; and
- (c) the scope and focus of pending National Development Management Policies,

the council is currently in a very difficult position. Proceeding to enter into a three-year (minimum) contract with an external consultancy to lead on the preparation of a new Local Plan at a cost of several hundred thousand pounds represents a significant risk.

The proposed appointment has gone through a robust and comprehensive tender process and officers have no concerns, whatsoever, with the ability of the successful bidder (Prior & Partners) to deliver a quality product, given their in-house expertise and experience of work of similar nature. Nevertheless, it is felt that, in the particular circumstances, to continue with this appointment at the current time would not be in the best interests of the council or our residents and, with regret, we feel that we have no option but to recommend that the council does not enter into a contract with the company at this time and that the procurement process is terminated.

The published tender documents made it clear that the council is not obliged to enter into a formal contract and that we reserved the right to terminate the procurement process at any time and for any reason, so there is no risk of compensation being payable in this situation.

Proposed next steps should the Committee be minded not to appoint at this time

In recommending that the council does not enter into a contract with an external consultancy at this stage, officers are certainly not suggesting that the Policy & Conservation Team should 'down tools' and does not progress the Local Plan update. On the contrary, the suggested pause will enable the council to use existing internal resource and budget already allocated to the Plan to progress up-to-date evidence gathering on key matters that not only will be essential in developing new local planning policies at the relevant time, but will also assist colleagues in Development Management in determining planning applications.

This includes, but is not limited to, the following topics where the current evidence base is becoming outdated or where additional information is needed. This work will be necessary whichever route the council ultimately takes in terms of progressing the new Local Plan.

- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) Part 1 – Since the last update, there have been new flood risk maps produced and the allowances for climate change have also altered. In addition, the government has very recently published the National Flood Risk Assessment 2 (NaFRA2) and the new NaFRA2 flood zone data on a 'flood map for planning' is due to be released on 25 March 2025. The proposed update to the SFRA is, therefore, considered timely and will be used by our Engineers as well as in planning decisions.
- District Landscape Assessment (sensitivity, gap analysis and environmental capacity to take new development) - The last assessment for West Sussex resulted in the identification of 42 unique areas and the production of land management guidelines for each character area. A further Arun-centric landscape study was produced in 2017 in connection with the Local Plan, but this focused solely on the landscape capacity of the proposed strategic sites to accommodate new development. An update is overdue.
- Settlement Sustainability Assessment – This will provide an update of services and facilities in each of the district's settlements, which, in turn, will help to inform the spatial strategy for Arun, following a previous study in 2007.
- Arun Transport Study (Stage 1 pre site allocations assessment) – To update modelling to provide a post-Covid baseline position against which we can assess the capacity of the strategic and local road network to support growth and to produce a transport vision for Arun. It will also consider opportunities to promote active travel and sustainable transport.

In addition, we intend to undertake a further 'Call for Sites' in the summer months and officers are currently in the process of developing new site selection criteria, which will put us in a strong position when we are in a position to move forward in earnest.

There are some areas of evidence gathering that the Planning Service had intended to take forward this year, but which it would make sense to place on pause for the time being, including the Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment and the identification of new strategic sites for allocation. It would also not be prudent to commission other more detailed studies on specific topics prior to understanding what the National Development Management Policies will include, as these may not feature in the new Arun Local Plan.

We are in regular contact with our counterparts at neighbouring authorities and will continue to engage with them positively and proactively under the Duty to Cooperate. Furthermore, the local government reorganisation agenda may afford opportunities to benefit from economies of scale in terms of commissioning additional joint studies covering more than one district. This is something we are actively exploring through bodies such as the Planning Policy Officers Group and Transport Infrastructure Management Group and will become much clearer over the coming months as more information comes forward from central government.

Finally, once further concrete information around the formation of new unitary authorities is known, the council may decide to 'reframe' the scope and content of a commission and go back out to procurement through an appropriate route. This would, of course, be referred back to the Planning Policy Committee for approval at the relevant juncture.

Updated recommendation

That the Planning Policy Committee resolves:

- i) To not appoint an external consultancy to lead on the preparation of the Local Plan Update (2023 to 2041) under the open tender published on 12 November 2024, and that the formal bidders be informed accordingly; and
- ii) That an updated progress report relating to the development of the Arun Local Plan (2023 to 2041) is brought before the Planning Policy Committee later in the year, once full business cases for the proposed new unitary authority have been submitted to central government and further details around the outcomes of local government reorganisation, national development management policies and the details of the Levelling Up & Regeneration Act are known.

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REPORT TO:	Planning Policy Committee - 28 January 2025
SUBJECT:	Arun Local Plan Update (2023 – 2041) – Appointment of Lead Consultant following an Open Tender process
LEAD OFFICER:	Zac Ellwood (Interim Head of Planning Policy)
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor Gill Yeates (Chair of Planning Policy Committee)
WARDS:	All
CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:	
The recommendations supports:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the Wellbeing of Arun; • Delivering the right homes in the right places; • Supporting our environment to support us; • Fulfilling Arun’s economic potential. 	
DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:	
The proposals in an update Arun Local Plan will help to promote joined up working with agencies and partners championing active healthy lifestyles through leisure, arts and culture, while meeting housing and other needs and enhancing the quality of the heritage, natural and built environments, addressing climate change and promoting economic growth, in a sustainable manner.	
FINANCIAL SUMMARY:	
There are financial implications arising from the Local Plan Update program, which will be managed from within the existing departmental revenue budget, as addressed in the council’s Annual budget and Medium Term Financial Forecast.	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report updates the Committee on the outcome of the competitive tender process to appoint a consultancy to lead on the preparation of a new Local Plan covering the period 2023 to 2041, with support from ADC’s Planning Policy and Conservation Team. This approach is as outlined in a report endorsed at the Planning Policy Committee meeting held on 8 June 2023 and subsequently ratified by Full Council on 19 July 2023.
- 1.2 As the value of the contract is significant, approval from the Planning Policy Committee is required under the Council’s Constitution.
- 1.3 The report seeks formal approval to award the Statement of Works contract to the successful bidder following the tender process.
- 1.4 The contract will cover a period of 3 years (with scope for an extension of 6 months, should this prove necessary), and will take the Local Plan Update all the way through to Examination and subsequent formal adoption as part of the statutory development plan for the district.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Planning Policy Committee resolves to:-
- i. Formally agree the appointment of **[company name to be confirmed via an Update Sheet following the end of the statutory standstill period]** to lead on the preparation of the Local Plan Update (2023 to 2041) in accordance with the provisions of the draft Statement of Works Contract and in collaboration with the council's Planning Policy & Conservation Team.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 3.1 The current Arun Local Plan (2011 to 2031) was formally adopted in July 2018. At a meeting held in June 2023, the Planning Policy Committee agreed to re-start the Local Plan update process, which had initially commenced in January 2020 but was paused in Autumn 2021 and the pause confirmed again in Summer 2022. The decision of the PPC was ratified by Full Council in July 2023.
- 3.2 The 2023 report noted that due to capacity constraints within the Planning Policy Team, it was proposed to outsource the majority of the Local Plan work to ensure the new Local Plan timetable could be delivered. It was agreed the work would be packaged up under a purchaser provider model with external consultants working alongside council officers. The Policy & Conservation Team would continue to focus on existing working commitments (including supporting Neighbourhood Planning) as well as providing a management interface with a consultancy through what was referred to as a 'Statement of Work Contract' (SWC). It should be noted that the commissioning further external support, outside of the SWC will still be necessary in terms of creating the evidence base for the new Local Plan – for example in terms of an updated Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and the new Arun Transport Study/modelling – procurement of which are being progressed separately.
- 3.3 On 19 July 2023, the Council endorsed (amongst other related actions) the following (please note that the numbering below replicates the numbering in the PPC/Full Council reports):
- i. That the Council recommence the preparation of a Local Plan Update;
 - ii. Agrees the Vision and Objectives (Appendix 1 and 2) in principle, subject to stakeholder engagement and public consultation as part of a 'Direction of Travel' document...
 - iii. The Schedule of internal (Schedule A) and external (Schedule B) commissioned Projects (Appendix 3) be progressed to prepare the Local Plan update;
 - v. That the Statement of Works Contract be approved as a departure from Standing Orders;

- vi. Agree that the plan period for the update be 2023 to 2041 but subject to updated land supply data, the start date (and potentially end date) may be rolled forward as necessary.
- 3.4 The Direction of Travel document for the Local Plan Update was subsequently drafted and was the subject of public consultation under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 between 5 March and 13 May 2024. The outcomes of this consultation were reported to the Planning Policy Committee on 26 September and will be used to help inform the emerging Local Plan.
- 3.5 The Invitation to Tender was formally published in November 2024 and the tender process has now been completed. Subject to approval by the Planning Policy Committee, we will be able to move forward with appointing a lead consultancy, who we anticipate commencing work against the contract in February 2025.

4. DETAIL

- 4.1 Following a significant period of engagement with the council's retained procurement specialists, Hampshire Strategic Procurement Service (affiliated with Hampshire County Council) - including the preparation of a detailed Procurement Strategy that considered various 'route to market' options (e.g. use of Frameworks, two-stage, selective tendering, etc.) - it was decided to proceed on an 'Open Tender' basis for the Local Plan Update procurement. This provides the most competition among suppliers and encourages new or emerging vendors to bid and obtain work.
- 4.2 The Invitation to Tender for this contract went 'live' on 12 November 2024.
- 4.3 The bidding process ended on 12 December 2024 and the various bids that met the stated qualifications were appraised against pre-determined scoring criteria during the following week. The tenders were assessed and evaluated on the basis of a 60:40 'Quality to Cost' ratio, to seek to ensure Value for Money to the council. This is a relatively standard scoring approach within the industry.
- 4.4 Following the intensive tender evaluation process, the highest scoring submission was received from **[company name to be confirmed via an Update Sheet following the end of the statutory standstill period]**, who have been identified as the preferred supplier. The chosen consultancy has demonstrated extensive experience and capacity in delivering similar work for other local authorities and their bid falls within the maximum budget identified for this contract, which will be implemented over a period of three years.

4.5 The intention to award the contract notice has been published and has been the subject of a suitable 'standstill period' of at least eight working days beginning with the day on which the contract award notice was published. The standstill period is the period between the contracting authority announcing its intention to enter into a contract (by publishing the contract award notice) and actually entering into that contract; the contracting authority cannot enter into the contract during the standstill period. The standstill period provides an opportunity for suppliers to raise any concerns about, or formally challenge, the award decision before the contract is entered into.

4.6 No challenges were received during the standstill period, which ran until 17 January 2025. The council can now, lawfully, enter into a contract with the preferred supplier.

5. NEXT STEPS

5.1 Subject to approval by the Planning Policy Committee, the contract details will be finessed and signed with the preferred bidder, thereby enabling an inception meeting to take place in February and for work on the Local Plan Update to begin in earnest.

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 None in relation to the proposed appointment.

7. OPTIONS/ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

7.1 The requirement for external consultancy support to take the Local Plan Update through to adoption has already been agreed in principle at both the Planning Policy Committee and Full Council meetings.

7.2 Other options/alternatives considered include:

- Seeking to undertake Local Plan preparation in-house only within existing establishment resources – This has been discounted because of capacity issues and because it would lead to further delays in progressing the new Plan. It would also necessitate the buying-in of expert advice on a significant number of topic areas, due to the absence of certain specialisms within the Planning Policy & Conservation Team. The appointment of a lead consultant is likely to be more cost effective in this regard.

- Not to progress a new Local Plan at this time – This has been discounted on the basis that the 2018 Arun Local Plan is over five years old and, in the absence of being able to demonstrate a deliverable 5year supply of housing sites and recent poor performance against the Housing Delivery Test, the policies most important for determining planning applications are considered out-of-date and this leaves the council exposed to speculative developments on non-allocated land. Not producing a new Local Plan would also deny the Council the opportunity to seek to strengthen existing planning policies around key matters, such as climate change, sustainable design, biodiversity and affordable housing. Finally, national policy requires that Local Plans are kept up to date and should be reviewed and updated within 5 years. We are already beyond this period.

8. COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE/SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 8.1 There are financial implications arising from the Local Plan Update programme, which will be managed from within the existing departmental revenue budget through the budget setting process.

9. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 Implementing the recommendation will help to minimise the risk that the council will fail to meet national policies and regulations for plan-making.

10. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER

- 10.1 There are no governance or legal implications arising for the recommendation in this report.

11. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 11.1 There are no human resource implications arising from this report.

12. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT

- 12.1 There are no direct health and safety impacts arising from this report.

13. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT

- 13.1 There are no direct implications for council property.

14. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)/SOCIAL VALUE

- 14.1 The proposed appointment has no direct implications in this regard.

15. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE

15.1 The proposed appointment has no direct implications in climate change or environmental terms. However, climate change has been identified in the tender pack as a key issue that will need to run through the new Local Plan; so the appointed consultant will be aware of the importance of this topic when taking work forward.

16. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

16.1 There are no direct adverse implications for crime and disorder.

17. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT

17.1 There are no direct adverse implications for human rights.

18. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION/DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS

18.1 There are no implications for FOI or Data Protection. The appointed consultancy will be bound by GPDR as a data processor.

CONTACT OFFICER:

Name: Zac Ellwood
Job Title: Interim Head of Planning Policy
Contact Number: 01903 737509

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None.

Arun District Council

REPORT TO:	Planning Policy Committee – 18 March 2025
SUBJECT:	Barnham, Eastergate and Westergate Strategic Allocation Infrastructure Delivery Plan
LEAD OFFICER:	David Easton, Strategic Development Team Leader
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor Gill Yeates – Chair of Planning Policy Committee
WARDS:	Barnham
CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:	
<p>The recommendation supports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the Wellbeing of Arun; • Delivering the rights homes in the right places; • Supporting our environment to support us; and • Fulfilling Arun’s economic potential. 	
DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:	
<p>The Barnham, Eastergate and Westergate Infrastructure Delivery Plan has been prepared to inform discussions with developers around financial contributions necessary to mitigate the impact of the Barnham, Eastergate and Westergate strategic allocation (H SP2c SD5) on key services, facilities and infrastructure and meet the objectives of the Arun Local Plan.</p>	
FINANCIAL SUMMARY:	
<p>There are no financial implications arising from the Barnham, Eastergate and Westergate Infrastructure Delivery Plan.</p>	

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks the agreement of the Committee on the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) for the Barnham/Eastergate/Westergate (BEW) Strategic Allocation. The IDP establishes the overall infrastructure needs of the development and proportionately distributes this between the sites which form the allocation. These figures have been derived through negotiation with relevant stakeholders.

- 1.2 The Council should be confirming what the overall infrastructure requirements are for the strategic allocation as a whole. Individual applicants should then be jointly setting out how each application site will deliver the required infrastructure. The council should not have to be the body responsible to distributing this between application sites and private commercial agreements between applicants will be required (which the council will not be party to).

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Planning Policy Committee resolves to:

Agree that the BEW IDP is accepted as the basis for Section 106 negotiations with developers on the BEW Strategic Allocation.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 3.1 Barnham/Eastergate/Westergate (BEW) is allocated under policy H SP2c (SD5). The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) for the BEW Strategic Allocation has been prepared to form the basis of negotiations with developers in the preparation of Section 106 Agreements.
- 3.2 The IDP establishes the infrastructure necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms to mitigate the impacts with a cost identified for its delivery. The IDP then splits this proportionately between the various parcels which form the strategic allocation based on the indicative quantum of development proposed.

4. DETAIL

- 4.1 Barnham/Eastergate/Westergate (BEW) is a strategic allocation through the Arun Local Plan under policy H SP2c (SD5). Policy H SP2c identifies that the allocation will provide at least 2,300 dwellings over the plan period, and up to 3,000 dwellings in total, 700 of which will be delivered beyond 2031. Policy H SP2c (SD5) identifies several key infrastructure requirements for the allocation as a whole including:

- Community Hub to include a local centre including retail, commercial and community facilities.
- New tier 7 library facility.
- Healthcare facilities.
- A new A29 route through the allocation.
- Provision of east-west route to the north of the railway line.
- Westergate Link cycle scheme, in addition to further cycle routes to/from Bognor Regis.
- A new two-form entry primary school and a new one-form (expandable to two-form) entry primary school plus nursery places.
- Sports pitches and changing facilities.

This list excludes the site-by-site infrastructure required for each site such as open space and affordable housing.

- 4.2 A Framework Masterplan was prepared by JTP on behalf of a number of landowners for the site and this document set out the broad design principles to deliver the allocation and guide future planning applications which come forward as part of the allocation. As part of this process, design and technical work was undertaken by the landowners to better understand site constraints. This included capacity testing which demonstrated that the site could accommodate an increase in the number of dwellings of up to 4,300. The Framework Masterplan was presented to Planning Committee on the 25 November 2020 where the Committee resolved:

“...that the ‘Barnham, Eastergate and Westergate Framework Masterplan Version for Endorsement November 2020’ be endorsed subject to the submission of a satisfactory Phasing and Delivery Plan to Officers for consideration and to be appended to the endorsed Framework Masterplan.”

- 4.3 Given the increase in the number of dwellings, additional infrastructure was identified as necessary through the framework masterplan process to make the development acceptable in planning terms. Whilst this was not explicitly considered as part of the framework masterplan officers did liaise with appropriate bodies to ensure delivery and service provision for key infrastructure items. It was ultimately concluded that funding for infrastructure would be secured from both committed projects where contributions have already been secured as part of existing planning applications as well as subsequent planning applications.
- 4.4 Therefore, negotiations have been taking place between the Local Planning Authority, key consultees and the applicants around the infrastructure requirements of the strategic allocation. These negotiations formed the basis of the IDP, which seeks to encapsulate the infrastructure requirements to address the needs of the allocation as a whole.
- 4.5 A financial contribution towards the Bognor Roundabout (A27) and Whyke Roundabout (A27) are included within the IDP but the Local Planning Authority (LPA) are still awaiting formal confirmation from National Highways that the contribution amount is agreed. However, it should be noted that the methodology adopted by the council reflects that adopted through the determination of BE/134/22/OUT (West of Bersted) which was agreed by National Highways.
- 4.6 Mitigation will be necessary to ensure adequate GP provision but currently the IDP table appended to the report identifies that this is to be confirmed (TBC). The reason for this is that currently we are aware of the proposals of the NHS insofar as it relates to the early phases, but it is still to be confirmed how they will deliver the GP provision to address the needs of future phases and whether this will be through expansion of existing services or provision of new services as part of later phases.
- 4.7 The IDP has proportionately distributed the financial contributions between each of the sites which forms the wider BEW Strategic Allocation. This has been done purely based on indicative numbers of dwellings for each site. It is anticipated that through the drafting of the Section 106 agreements some regularisation will occur to ensure that sites are contributing towards infrastructure projects which will be delivered as part of or alongside the earlier phases.
- 4.8 The BEW IDP table is appended to this report, and this sets out the overall mitigation package required to offset the impact of the strategic allocation upon existing facilities, services and key infrastructure. This table identifies the project, its associated cost and then provides a proportional distribution of this between the various sites which form the strategic allocation. It should be noted that the distribution is indicative at this time with exact numbers of subsequent applications unknown.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The financial contributions identified through the BEW IDP have been provided through consultation responses received through consultation undertaken on relevant planning applications falling within the BEW Strategic Allocation.

6. OPTIONS/ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

- 6.1 The following options are available:

Not to accept the BEW IDP and instead negotiate Section 106 agreements on a site-specific basis. However, this option has been discounted due to the infrastructure requirements arising from the entirety of the Strategic Allocation.

7. COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE/SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 7.1 There are no adverse financial implications as the BEW IDP would inform negotiations associated with planning applications and these would be carried out within existing resources and funding.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 There are no adverse implications for the council or Arun communities arising from adopting the IDP as it will inform S106 negotiations in advance of determination of planning applications.

9. COMMENTS FROM THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER

- 9.1 No comment received.

10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 10.1 There is no direct human resource impact for Arun District Council arising from the adoption of the BEW IDP.

11. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT

- 11.1 There are no direct Health & Safety implications arising from this report's recommendation.

12. PROPERTY AND ESTATES IMPACT

- 12.1 There are no direct property and estates implications arising from this report's recommendation.

13. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE

- 13.1 There are no direct implications for Arun District Council regarding equalities.

14. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT / SOCIAL VALUE

14.1 While there are no direct impacts associated with adopting the BEW IDP as the basis of negotiations with developers

15. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

15.1 The BEW IDP incorporates financial contributions towards West Sussex Police and as such would positively impact upon the reduction of crime and disorder.

16. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT

16.1 There are no implications arising from adopting the BEW IDP.

17. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS

17.1 There are no direct implications arising from the BEW IDP in terms of data protection.

CONTACT OFFICER:

Name: David Easton
Job Title: Strategic Strategic Development Team Leader
Contact Number: 01903 737698

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None

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Category	Type of Infrastructure	Infrastructure Project	Type of Contribution	Land owner/Developer	Responsible for Delivery	Total Cost of Scheme to BEW Allocation - Base date Q1 2024 (June 2024)	Cost per parcel for each developer							Total
							Barratt	Southern Consortium (North of Railway) BN/11/22/OUT	Southern Consortium (South of Railway) including Garden Land	CALA - AL/11/24/OUT	Woodgate Centre - AL/107/21/PL	Boweries - BN/135/20/PL	Warwick Nursery - BN/153/20/PL	
							551	1250	1845	400	180	30	44	
	12.8%	29.1%	42.9%	9.3%	4.2%	0.7%	1.0%	100%						
Education	Early Years Facility (north)	Provision of land (0.2ha) and financial contributions for on site Early Years facilities to provide for 107 places.	S106 and Land	Southern Consortium	Provision on site and delivery by developer	£3,100,000.00	£397,232.56	£901,162.79	£1,330,116.28	£288,372.09	£129,767.44	£21,627.91	£31,720.93	£3,100,000.00
	Early Years Facility (south)	Provision of land (0.2ha) and financial contributions for on site Early Years facilities to provide for 108 places.	S106 and Land	Southern Consortium	Provision on site and delivery by developer	£3,100,000.00	£397,232.56	£901,162.79	£1,330,116.28	£288,372.09	£129,767.44	£21,627.91	£31,720.93	£3,100,000.00
	Primary School - Northern Parcel	Provision of land (2.8ha) and financial contributions for 1 x 3FE primary school	S106 and Land	Southern Consortium	Provision of land - financial contributions to WSCC. Handed to developer providing school on WSCC taking ownership. Provision of school - delivered by developers and managed thereafter by Academy Trust or WSCC (TBC)	£15,000,000.00	£1,922,093.02	£4,360,465.12	£6,436,046.51	£1,395,348.84	£627,906.98	£104,651.16	£153,488.37	£15,000,000.00
	Primary School - Southern Parcel	Provision of land (2.8ha) and financial contributions for 1 x 3FE primary school	S106 and Land	Southern Consortium	Provision of land - financial contributions to WSCC. Handed to developer providing school on WSCC taking ownership. Provision of school - delivered by developers and managed thereafter by Academy Trust or WSCC (TBC)	£15,000,000.00	£1,922,093.02	£4,360,465.12	£6,436,046.51	£1,395,348.84	£627,906.98	£104,651.16	£153,488.37	£15,000,000.00
	SSC Facility (north)	Provision of land (0.03ha) and financial contributions for SSC	S106 and Land	Southern Consortium	Delivered by developers and supplemented by financial contributions	£1,200,000.00	£153,767.44	£348,837.21	£514,883.72	£111,627.91	£50,232.56	£8,372.09	£12,279.07	£1,200,000.00
	SSC Facility (south)	Provision of land (0.03ha) and financial contributions for SSC	S106 and Land	Southern Consortium	Delivered by developers and supplemented by financial contributions	£1,200,000.00	£153,767.44	£348,837.21	£514,883.72	£111,627.91	£50,232.56	£8,372.09	£12,279.07	£1,200,000.00
	Secondary School Transport Contribution	School bus travel contribution	S106	N/A	Financial Contribution to WSCC	TBC	To be calculated using methodology	To be calculated using methodology	To be calculated using methodology	To be calculated using methodology	To be calculated using methodology	To be calculated using methodology	To be calculated using methodology	To be calculated using methodology
	Secondary School	Secondary places would be provided through contributions to a new school, as set out in the joint WSCC/Arun secondary school paper	S106	N/A	Contributions to off-site delivery at Ford	£36,932 per secondary pupil	To be calculated using methodology	To be calculated using methodology	To be calculated using methodology	To be calculated using methodology	To be calculated using methodology	To be calculated using methodology	To be calculated using methodology	To be calculated using methodology
	Sixth Form	Contributions to be spent on classroom infrastructure at St Philip Howard Catholic High School Sixth Form or Sixth Form provision at the new Secondary School	S106	N/A	Contributions to off-site delivery	£33,056 per sixth form pupil	To be calculated using methodology	To be calculated using methodology	To be calculated using methodology	To be calculated using methodology	To be calculated using methodology	To be calculated using methodology	To be calculated using methodology	To be calculated using methodology
	School Land		S106	Southern Consortium	Southern Consortium	£1,497,426.00	£191,879.47	N/A - landowner	N/A - landowner	£139,295.44	£62,682.95	£10,447.16	£15,322.50	£419,627.52
TOTAL						£40,097,426.00	£5,138,065.52	£11,220,930.23	£16,562,093.02	£3,729,993.12	£1,678,496.90	£279,749.48	£410,299.24	£39,019,627.52

Community														
Library	New Tier 7 library facility as part of community/neighbourhood centre or sports hub to include shelving and self-service facilities	S106 and Land	Southern Consortium	Delivery by developers and/or financial contributions	£100,000.00	£12,813.95	£29,069.77	£42,906.98	£9,302.33	£4,186.05	£697.67	£1,023.26	£100,000.00	
Eastergate Hall Extension +60 sqm, Eastergate Sports Pavilion Ground Rebuild and Expansion	Rebuild and 440 m2 extension	S106 Financial Contribution		Financial Contribution to ADC	£162,000.00	£20,758.60	£47,093.02	£69,509.30	£15,069.77	£6,781.40	£1,130.23	£1,657.67	£162,000.00	
Aldingbourne Sports Centre Rebuild and Expand	467 m2 extension	S106 Financial Contribution		Financial Contribution to ADC	£1,600,000.00	£205,023.26	£465,116.28	£686,511.63	£148,837.21	£66,976.74	£11,162.79	£16,372.09	£1,600,000.00	
Barnham Community Hall Extension	405 m2 extension	S106 Financial Contribution		Financial Contribution to ADC	£400,000.00	£51,255.81	£116,279.07	£171,627.91	£37,209.30	£16,744.19	£2,790.70	£4,093.02	£400,000.00	
Sports Hub - Indoor Sports/Leisure	Including: sports hub ancillary facilities, health and fitness, sports hall and remaining Community Centre contribution	S106 and Land	Southern Consortium	Delivery by developers and management handed to ADC following completion.	£5,550,134.00	£711,191.59	£1,613,411.05	£2,381,394.70	£516,291.53	£232,331.19	£38,721.87	£56,792.07	£5,550,134.00	
Provision of 1 x 3G Pitch	Delivery of 1 no. 3G Pitch.	S106 and Land		Delivery by developers and management handed to ADC following completion.	£1,140,000.00	£146,079.07	£331,395.35	£489,139.53	£106,046.51	£47,720.93	£7,953.49	£11,665.12	£1,140,000.00	
3G Pitch Maintenance	Maintenance contribution towards 3G Pitch.	S106 Financial Contribution		ADC	£679,515.00	£87,072.74	£197,533.43	£291,559.34	£63,210.70	£28,444.81	£4,740.80	£6,953.18	£679,515.00	
2 no. grass playing pitches	Grass playing pitches delivered on site.	Delivery on site or S106 and Land		Delivery by developers and management handed to ADC following completion.	£220,000.00	£28,190.70	£63,953.49	£94,395.35	£20,465.12	£9,209.30	£1,534.88	£2,251.16	£220,000.00	
Playing pitch maintenance	Maintenance contribution towards grass playing pitches.	S106 Financial Contribution		ADC	£634,681.00	£81,327.73	£184,500.29	£272,322.43	£59,040.09	£26,568.04	£4,428.01	£6,494.41	£634,681.00	
Cricket Pitch plus pavillion	Natural Turf Pitch (with 8-pitch square and 2 Winter Sport Pitches plus pavillion with changing rooms, showers, toilets and club room	On-site delivery or S106 and Land		Delivery by developers and management handed to ADC following completion.	£1,095,000.00	£140,312.79	£318,313.95	£469,831.40	£101,860.47	£45,837.21	£7,639.53	£11,204.65	£1,095,000.00	
Cricket Pitch Maintenance	Maintenance contribution towards cricket pitch.	S106 Financial Contribution		ADC	£1,518,220.00	£194,544.00	£441,343.02	£651,422.30	£141,229.77	£63,553.40	£10,592.23	£15,535.27	£1,518,220.00	
Skatepark (North)	Delivery of 1000sqm skatepark on site.	On-site delivery or S106 and Land		Delivery by developer or financial contribution to ADC	£650,000.00	£83,290.70	£188,953.49	£278,895.35	£60,465.12	£27,209.30	£4,534.88	£6,651.16	£650,000.00	
Rife Park (North)	Delivery of NEAP provision to be delivered in the north of the allocation.	On-site delivery or S106 and Land		Delivery by developer or financial contribution to ADC	£350,000.00	£44,848.84	£101,744.19	£150,174.42	£32,558.14	£14,651.16	£2,441.86	£3,581.40	£350,000.00	
Multi use sports area (MUSA) South	Delivery of MUSA in the south of the site alongside sports hall.	On-site delivery or S106 and Land		Delivery by developer or financial contribution to ADC	£250,000.00	£32,034.88	£72,674.42	£107,267.44	£23,255.81	£10,465.12	£1,744.19	£2,558.14	£250,000.00	
Rife Park (South)	Delivery of NEAP provision in the south of the site.	On-site delivery or S106 and Land		Delivery by developer or financial contribution to ADC	£350,000.00	£44,848.84	£101,744.19	£150,174.42	£32,558.14	£14,651.16	£2,441.86	£3,581.40	£350,000.00	
Swimming Pool	Swimming pool expansion/provision in the district	S106 Financial Contribution		Financial contribution to ADC	£2,158,454.58	£276,583.37	£627,457.73	£926,127.60	£200,786.47	£90,353.91	£15,058.99	£22,086.51	£2,158,454.58	
Total					£16,858,004.58	£2,160,176.87	£4,900,582.73	£7,233,260.10	£1,568,186.47	£705,683.91	£117,613.99	£172,500.51	£16,858,004.58	

A29 Realignment	S106 and Land	Financial contributions to WSCC/developer delivery - TBC	£62,281,000.00	£7,980,658.37	£18,104,941.86	£26,722,894.19	£5,793,581.40	£2,607,111.63	£434,518.60	£637,293.95	£62,281,000.00
A27 Fontwell East RBT Improvements	S106 Financial Contribution	Financial Contribution to ADC delivery by National Highways	£590,000.00	£75,602.33	£171,511.63	£253,151.16	£54,883.72	£24,697.67	£4,116.28	£6,037.21	£590,000.00
A27 Fontwell West RBT Improvements	S106 Financial Contribution	Financial Contribution to ADC delivery by National Highways	£2,300,000.00	£294,720.93	£668,604.65	£986,860.47	£213,953.49	£96,279.07	£16,046.51	£23,534.88	£2,300,000.00
A27/B2233 Nyton Road	S106 Financial Contribution	Financial Contribution to ADC delivery by National Highways	£327,000.00	£41,901.63	£95,058.14	£140,305.81	£30,418.60	£13,688.37	£2,281.40	£3,346.05	£327,000.00
Barnham Village Centre Improvements	S106 Financial Contribution		£173,400.00	£22,219.40	£50,406.98	£74,400.70	£16,130.23	£7,258.60	£1,209.77	£1,774.33	£173,400.00
E-W Link Road	On-site delivery	On-site delivery.		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Bus service contribution	S106 Financial Contribution	WSCC	£1,697,943.00	£217,573.63	£493,588.08	£728,536.01	£157,948.19	£71,076.68	£11,846.11	£17,374.30	£1,697,943.00
Car parking at Barnham Rail Station	On-site delivery	Developer delivery - site to be offered to the Parish Council for an agreed period.	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
A29-A259 Rowan Way Junction	S106 Financial Contribution	WSCC	£691,740.00	£88,639.24	£201,087.21	£296,804.72	£64,347.91	£28,956.56	£4,826.09	£7,078.27	£691,740.00
A29-A259 Felpham Relief Road Junction	S106 Financial Contribution	WSCC	£351,540.00	£45,046.17	£102,191.86	£150,835.19	£32,701.40	£14,715.63	£2,452.60	£3,597.15	£351,540.00
Cycle links - BEW to SDNP	S106 Financial Contribution	WSCC	£1,530,500.00	£196,117.56	£444,912.79	£656,691.28	£142,372.09	£64,067.44	£10,677.91	£15,660.93	£1,530,500.00
Westergate cycle scheme shared use pedestrian/cycle path between Ormiston Academy and St Philip Howard School	On-site delivery	Delivered by developers		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Barnham-Tangmere Cycle Route	S106 Financial Contribution	WSCC	£2,324,000.00	£297,796.28	£675,581.40	£997,158.14	£216,186.05	£97,283.72	£16,213.95	£23,780.47	£2,324,000.00
Barnham-Bognor Regis Cycle Route	S106 Financial Contribution	WSCC	£2,040,500.00	£261,468.72	£593,168.60	£875,516.86	£189,813.95	£85,416.28	£14,236.05	£20,879.53	£2,040,500.00
B2233 - Pedestrian Improvement Measures	S106 Financial Contribution	WSCC	£387,000.00	£49,590.00	£112,500.00	£166,050.00	£36,000.00	£16,200.00	£2,700.00	£3,960.00	£387,000.00
Additional cycle parking at Barnham Station	S106 Financial Contribution	WSCC	£35,000.00	£4,484.88	£10,174.42	£15,017.44	£3,255.81	£1,465.12	£244.19	£358.14	£35,000.00
Creation of a dedicated NMU grade separated railway crossing to provide a safe connection between sections of the proposed Rife Valley Park	On-site delivery	Developer delivery		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Creation of a dedicated NMU grade separated railway crossing to provide a safe crossing of the Barnham-Bognor branch line various PROW	On-site delivery	Developer delivery		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Create dedicated grade-separated crossings of the A29 link road for NMU's. To deliver a sustainable and safe long term connection within the future community.	On-site delivery	Developer delivery		£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Network Rail Costs				£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00

Education		Contributions to be spent on classroom infrastructure at St Philip Howard Catholic High School Sixth Form or Sixth Form provision at the new Secondary School													
	Sixth Form		S106		Contributions to off-site delivery	£33,056 per sixth form pupil	N/A		£917,799.00						£917,799.00
Other	NHS					Calculated using ICB 'Health Tariff'			£1,895,728.00						£1,895,728.00
Other	Fire and Rescue					£15 per head									

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Arun District Council

REPORT TO:	Planning Policy Committee – 18 March 2025
SUBJECT:	Deliverability of affordable housing through the Section 106 process
LEAD OFFICER:	Neil Crowther – Group Head of Planning
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor Gill Yeates – Chair of Planning Policy Committee
WARDS:	All
CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:	
<p>The recommendations support:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the Wellbeing of Arun; • Delivering the right homes in the right places. 	
DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:	
<p>The report will help deliver the right affordable housing at a time when policy compliant affordable housing delivery is unlikely.</p>	
FINANCIAL SUMMARY:	
<p>No financial implications as officers time is met within existing budget.</p>	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 Over the past 12-18 months, Arun District Council has had multiple discussions with developers around difficulties in disposing of s106 affordable housing to Registered Providers (RP's). In response to this, a report was commissioned to look at the issues and provide advice around how we should carry out these discussions around alternative delivery of affordable housing on sites through varying the requirements of planning obligations.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the contents of the Three Dragons report are noted and that it is adopted for the purposes of discussions and negotiations with applicants who are seeking to submit Deed of Variation applications in respect of affordable housing.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 3.1 The report outlines the issues associated with the deliverability of affordable housing in recent years and recommends a framework for considering amendments through Deeds of Variation applications.

4. DETAIL

4.1 Any amendments to the delivery of affordable housing on sites with planning permission is required to be agreed through the submission of a deed of variation (DoV).

4.2 Over the past 12-18 months, the council has had to have discussions with multiple developers around the difficulties of disposing of affordable housing units to Registered Providers (RP's) to deliver a s106 compliant scheme. This is a national issue that has come about in recent times as a result of the funding received from RP's (in part). RP's have ceased involvement in new s106 schemes and have become far more selective in what they get involved in. The amount RP's are willing to pay have reduced and they are concentrating their funding on improvements to existing stock. The work has also highlighted issues with safety and decarbonisation requirements as reason why RP's are also not taking on s106 units. All of this results in a reduction in the number of affordable homes coming forward and difficulties in bringing forward large development sites.

It is important to acknowledge that the receipt of any DoV application that follows on from the above issues is being submitted due to deliverability issues rather than viability issues.

4.3 In the short term, a solution to these issues must be found and officers commissioned a report to look at how the council could manage this issue and provide some kind of framework to have these discussions around alternative delivery in order for development sites to continue to be delivered. However, it has to be accepted that being proactive and flexible will result in a reduction of overall numbers of affordable housing.

4.4 It is unknown how long these issues in the market will persist and it is hoped that future funding programmes and changes to national policy will address this issue. There are also some recommended actions for the council in order to attempt to address some of the issues locally.

4.5 The report (in section 5) seeks to set out a framework to follow when assessing options for the amended delivery of affordable housing in order to arrive at the most beneficial outcome for that scheme. This is around ensuring that the requisite evidence is submitted to demonstrate that the policy compliant s106 cannot be delivered as well as looking at alternative options. These include

- Amending the tenure of some or all of the units
(the potential implications on overall numbers in set out in Appendix 2 of the report)
- Amending the phasing of delivery
- When commuted sums may be received
- 'Gifting' affordable units to the council

To varying degrees, all of these options are likely to result in a reduction in overall numbers. However, the fundamental principle of any discussion around amendments is that whatever is proposed is equal in cost to the developer as a s106 compliant scheme would have been and evidence of this is essential.

This must include factoring in the Community Infrastructure Levy which would not be applied to affordable units but must be applied to open market units.

- 4.6 The work undertaken has highlighted a number of recommendations for work that the council (both Planning & Housing officers) need to carry out. This includes
- Restart RP liaison group – enabler to work with group – may include working with neighbouring authorities.
 - S106 template for AH to be reviewed by housing planning and legal – including cascade options and timetable – and including RP preferred partners and building standards
 - Development of an affordable housing SPD or policy statement to include recommendations on tenure and dwelling mix for AH could be included – being careful not to predetermine future local needs assessment. This is also because First Homes are no longer required to be part of the affordable housing mix and should also review how AH units are concentrated and whether there are maximum/minimum numbers in flatted clusters.
 - Begin working with a financial viability model to ensure a consistent approach to calculating commuted sums. This can also be used to generate financial contributions from the rounding down proportions that currently takes place so that the instances where less than one dwelling is required now results in the payment of a commuted sum.
 - Review and/or amend a minimum build standards document that should be applied to new development and incorporated within the council's s106 template.
- 4.7 At the time of publication of the agenda, the background document was being finalised. This will be uploaded and circulated in advance of the meeting.

5. CONSULTATION

5.1 None

6. OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

6.1 To adopt a position whereby the council will only accept the delivery of a s106 compliant scheme under the current circumstances would be unreasonable and would lead to the stalling of multiple developments. It would also result in a significant number of appeals that would be exceptionally difficult to defend.

7. COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE/SECTION 151 OFFICER

7.1 Additional work will be completed by Planning & Housing officers which will then be reviewed by legal all working within Arun, therefore there is no additional cost to the council and is covered within existing budgets.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 N/a

9. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER

9.1 No comments to make.

10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

10.1 None

11. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT

11.1 None

12. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT

12.1 No comment.

13. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE

13.1 The outcome of this work may be fewer affordable housing units are able to be delivered in the short term.

14. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE

14.1 None

15. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

15.1 None

16. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT

16.1 None

17. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS

17.1 None

CONTACT OFFICER:

Name: Neil Crowther
Job Title: Group Head of Planning
Contact Number: 01903 737839

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Affordable Housing Delivery in Arun – March 2025 (to be published before the meeting)

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REPORT TO:	Planning Policy Committee – 18 March 2025
SUBJECT:	National Land Use Framework Consultation
LEAD OFFICER:	Mark Pengelly (Principal Planning Officer – Planning Policy & Conservation)
LEAD MEMBER:	Cllr Gill Yeates (Chair of Planning Policy Committee)
WARDS:	All
CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:	
<p>The recommendation supports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Delivering the right homes in the right places; • Supporting our environment to support us; • Fulfilling Arun’s economic potential. 	
DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:	
<p>DEFRA are in the process of developing a national Land Use Framework that would create policies surrounding changes to land use taking a strategic spatial approach. The Land Use Framework will interact with other foundational strategies DEFRA are developing. These include the Environmental Improvement Plan, a 25-year roadmap for farming, and a food strategy. Whilst this is not a planning policy document, the Land Use Framework has the potential to have a significant impact upon work on the emerging Arun Local Plan as proposed allocations will need to take into consideration the land use implications and trade-offs between different land uses. It also potentially ties into the devolution and local government reorganisation agendas on the basis that the Framework is intended to take an approach that goes beyond the local district area.</p>	
FINANCIAL SUMMARY:	
Key Financial Considerations:	
<p>There are no direct financial implications arising from the consultation and Arun’s response to this at this stage. Should the Land Use Framework be implemented, any financial implications arising from the framework will need to form part of the budgeting setting processes and managed within budget constraints.</p>	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report is intended to set out the proposed Land Use Framework and the implications for Arun arising from this framework. The report further seeks agreement from the Committee to the draft consultation response to the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) on behalf of Arun District Council.
- 1.2 The consultation poses a total of 24 specific questions that the government is seeking views on and the proposed draft response on behalf of Arun District Council and covering letter are attached as Appendix 1 to this report. The final deadline to submit comments for the consultation is 25 April 2025.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That Planning Policy Committee resolves to: -

Agree the draft cover letter and responses to the 24 questions within the consultation as set out in Appendix 1 to this report, for submission to DEFRA, as being the formal consultation response on behalf of Arun District Council.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

3.1. DEFRA proposes to develop a Land Use Framework that, they say, could be used to help guide development within the whole of the UK as well as create better climate resilience and agricultural practices for the future.

3.2. In publishing a Land Use Framework, DEFRA is also stating that it is seeking to develop a toolkit to support decision making and inform discussion on how they can guarantee the UK's long-term food security, support development, and achieve the targets on nature and climate, which they feel will deliver multiple benefits and support economic growth.

3.3. The stated aims of the consultation are to get feedback from a variety of sources including local authorities, land managers, farmers and private developers (among others), to set out a direction for England's land use. The Framework's vision is to:

- Make space for nature recovery, water, and emissions reduction.
- Support sustainable and resilient food production.
- Deliver new infrastructure and housing.
- Fix the foundations for resilient long-term economic growth.
- Co-create plans for delivery.

3.4. The government state that the Land Use Framework is intended to interact with other foundational strategies DEFRA are developing. These include the Environmental Improvement Plan, a 25-year roadmap for farming, and a food strategy. Across government, the Land Use Framework is proposed to support sustainable growth, interacting with the Strategic Spatial Energy Plan as clean power is accelerated to 2030, and driving the ambition to build 1.5 million new homes. The consultation says this is critical to the delivery of this Government's missions, and the long-term prosperity of our country.

4. DETAIL

- 4.1. It should be noted that this is a consultation from DEFRA only and is not a consultation from MHCLG (the department responsible for Planning). There is limited reference to planning within the consultation and nothing that would indicate that government policy on this issue will be changed. It should also be noted that this consultation has been published only a few weeks after the government published a new NPPF that removed the specific reference to agricultural land for food security being a consideration when deciding on where housing should be located. The consultation does state that it is not intended to replace the planning system and that the information is to inform decisions, not impose them.
- 4.2. It is intended that the Framework will be published in 2025 and will include:
- Principles that Government will apply to policy with land use implications.
 - A description of how policy levers will develop and adapt to support land use change.
 - A release of land use data and analysis to support public and private sector innovation in spatial decision making, and the development of tools to support land managers in practice.
- 4.3. The evidence base that underpins this consultation is designed to be a basis for wider reform that includes a Farming Roadmap, a Food Strategy and the review of the Environmental Improvement Plan.
- 4.4. The proposed timeline for the development of the Land Use Framework is set out in Figure 1, below.

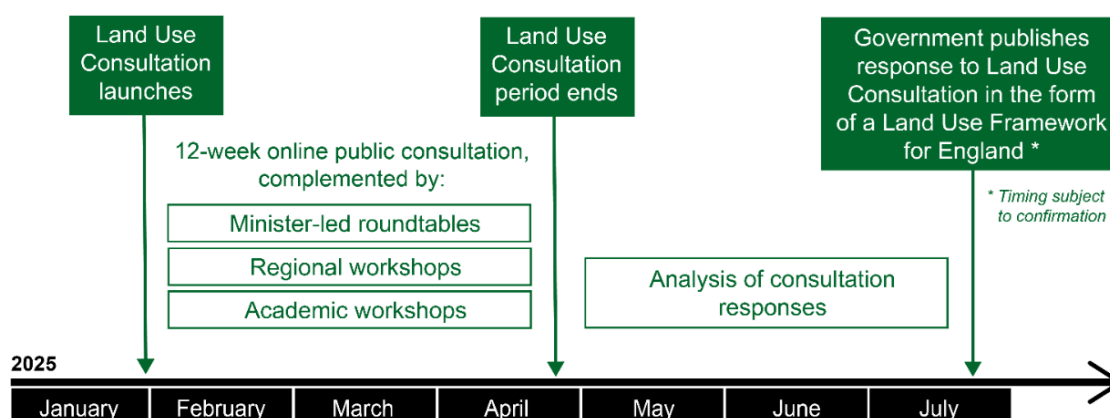


Figure 1: Timeline of key milestones and activities in the Land Use Consultation process

4.5 This Land Use Consultation seeks to take a long-term view of English land use. The government recognises there are practical delivery challenges and opportunities faced by communities, businesses, developers, landowners and farmers today. To address these, some proposed policy changes have been developed for land use challenges under four themes:

- Aligned incentives
- Joined-up decisions
- Accessible and high-quality data; and
- Skills.

4.6 Figure 4 (below), taken from DEFRA's consultation documents, details the anticipated changes to land use by 2050 and describes their different categories. This is further visually represented in Figure 5.

Figure 4: The approximate percentages of England's total agricultural land area that our analysis shows may need to change in use or management by 2050^[4].

<p>Category 1 – Land management change Changes in the way the land is farmed, without introducing new habitats or planting trees. It falls outside of the scope of land use change discussed in this document.</p> <p><i>Examples: Planting cover crops to reduce soil loss, or reducing fertiliser use to prevent water pollution.</i></p>	<p>Not in scope</p>
<p>Category 2 – Small changes maintaining the same agricultural land use Introducing nature within fields, in margins and / or small portions, providing environmental and climate benefits alongside food production.</p> <p><i>Examples: Arable field margins, riparian features such as river buffer strips.</i></p>	<p>1% (50kha)</p>
<p>Category 3.1 – Changes in agricultural land use, for both food and environmental / climate benefits This is mainly about incorporating more trees alongside food production.</p>	<p>4% (370kha)</p>
<p>Category 3.2 – Changes in agricultural land use, mainly for environmental and climate benefits with limited food production. The land is being farmed mainly for other benefits than food.</p> <p><i>Examples: Creation/restoration of species-rich grassland habitats; responsible management of peat; planting of short rotation coppice.</i></p>	<p>5% (430kha)</p>
<p>Category 4 – Change away from agricultural land, for environmental and climate benefits. Land use becomes non-agricultural. Land is fully dedicated to delivering environmental and climate benefits.</p> <p><i>Examples: Restoration and maintenance of peat-forming and peat-dependent habitats; creation of woodland; creation / restoration of coastal and lowland heathland habitats.</i></p>	<p>9% (760kha)</p>



Figure 5: Estimated type and extent of land use changes needed to 2035 and 2050. Categories of land use change are defined in Figure 4 and the Analytical Annex^[9].

5 IMPLICATIONS FOR ARUN

5.1 The aspirations and principles behind the proposed National Land Use Framework are generally considered positive, however, they appear to be at odds with some of the other recent legislative updates coming out from central government. These include the recently published National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF), and the English Devolution White Paper 2024.

5.2 In terms of the NPPF as per paragraph 11:

“Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

For plan-making this means that:

b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas⁶, unless:

i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area⁷; or

ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.”

Footnote 7 states that:

“The policies referred to are those in this Framework (rather than those in development plans) relating to: habitats sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 194) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, a National Landscape, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 75); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.”

5.3 It is noted that no reference to agricultural land is made within footnote 7, which is the primary concern of the Land Use Framework. Furthermore, whilst footnote 65 of the NPPF does still refer to agricultural land, stating

“Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality.”

the 2024 revisions to the NPPF deleted the specific reference in the December 2023 version to the role that agricultural land plays in food production. In Arun's response to the July 2024 consultation on proposed reforms to the Planning System, the council made it clear it felt that removing specific reference to food production was unnecessary and short-sighted given global instability in areas that make a substantial contribution to the world's food demand and could undermine the UK's food security. The council argued that removal of this part of the footnote would further reduce the weight afforded to the protection of higher-grade agricultural land and will lead to it being targeted by developers. However, these concerns were ignored.

- 5.4 Further, the reference to exceptional circumstances (with agricultural land and food production potentially being one such circumstance) possibly justifying a lower housing requirement figure, was also removed in the 2024 NPPF. The consultation is clear that it seeks to deliver something that will 'support' the delivery of 1.5 million homes, though, in Arun's case, it is difficult to understand how the protection of agricultural land for food production and delivering such enormous housing numbers goes hand in hand. There have been multiple appeals in Arun in recent years where the loss of agricultural land has been quickly outweighed by the need to provide housing, and even the loss of the highest quality Grade 1 (Excellent Quality) land has only been afforded 'moderate weight' in at least two recent appeal decisions relating to housing. The revisions to the NPPF further reduce the weight afforded to the protection of agricultural land.
- 5.5 The proposed rollout now of a Land Use Framework, therefore, seems to be at odds with the NPPF and does not appear to represent joined up thinking on the part of central government. Clarity on how these two documents (NPPF and Land Use Framework) are intended to work alongside each other is essential and is currently absent.
- 5.6 In terms of the English Devolution White Paper, it could be argued that DEFRA's proposed new Land Use Framework is aligned with the overall principles, in that it is seeking to look at land use at a more strategic, regional level, as opposed to decisions on the release of land being taken at the district/borough level only. Nevertheless, the timing does not seem appropriate as local authorities in Sussex are currently in the process of gearing up for the new combined authority and making decisions about how larger Unitaries may be formed.
- 5.7 Accordingly, it is considered rather premature to expect a strategic approach to land use until such time as the new combined authority is in place and the structure, size and administrative boundaries have been decided. It would seem to make sense to pause rollout of the Land Use Framework for the time being.

- 5.8 In addition, the clear message coming out from MHCLG over the past few months is that all authorities should be progressing their own Local Plans at pace to help deliver the government's promised 1.5 million new homes (370,000 per year). This will necessarily involve many very local decisions over the next few years on releasing greenfield land (much of it likely to be in agricultural use) for new housing allocations and this goes against the suggestion in the consultation on the Land Use Framework that these decisions should be made at a more strategic level.
- 5.9 Furthermore, the way the new standard method for calculating housing need was derived was based on the premise that all authorities in England should 'take their share' of new housing, notwithstanding any physical constraints as may be present, and was presented as a mandatory target. The circumstances under which a local authority could seek to justify including a Local Plan housing target lower than that derived from the new standard method certainly did not include reference to where it would lead to the loss of higher-grade agricultural land or impact on food production. This is a further area where there, sadly, appears to be a lack of joined up thinking across government departments.
- 5.10 The recent messaging from MHCLG, combined with the proposed changes to inheritance tax relief available for agricultural property is likely to encourage more landowners to put agricultural landholdings forward for housing or other uses, which seems to run directly contrary to what this DEFRA Land Use Framework is purporting to be seeking to achieve.

6 NEXT STEPS

- 6.1 The proposed responses on behalf of Arun District Council to the 24 questions asked in the consultation, together with a cover letter setting out our general observations of the Framework are included in Appendix 1, and reflect the broad comments based on the information in this report.
- 6.2 Subject to the decision of the Planning Policy Committee, and any agreed revisions to the responses, these will be sent to DEFRA before the consultation period ends on 25 April 2025.

7 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 None undertaken.

8 OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

- 8.1 To decide not to respond to this consultation - this option was dismissed on the grounds that the implications of the Land Use Framework could be far-reaching for Arun and our residents, and it was, therefore, considered preferable to engage fully with the consultation process so that the views of the Council can be taken into consideration in the final, published Framework.
- 8.2 No other options or alternatives were considered.

9 COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE/SECTION 151 OFFICER

9.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the consultation and Arun's response to this at this stage. Should the Land Use Framework be implemented, any financial implications arising from the framework will need to form part of the budgeting setting processes and managed within budget constraints. This is due to the potential for additional consideration or technical studies requirements that may inform the emerging Arun Local Plan.

10 COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER

10.1 There are no governance or legal implications arising for the recommendation in this report.

11 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

11.1 None.

12 HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT

12.1 None.

13 PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT

13.1 None arising directly from this consultation.

14 EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE

14.1 None.

15 CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE

15.1 The recommendations do not have direct implications to climate change arising from this report, although should the Framework be rolled out, the proposed land use changes and framework will, inevitably, have some in climate change and environmental impacts.

16 CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

16.1 There are no direct adverse implications for crime and disorder.

17 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT

17.1 None.

18 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS

18.1 None.

CONTACT OFFICER:

Name: Mark Pengelly
Job Title: Principal Planning Officer
Contact Number: 01903 737802

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Appendix 1 - Land Use Consultation 2025 Questions and Proposed Answers

Appendix 1 - Land Use Consultation 2025 Questions and proposed answers

Question	Suggested ADC response
<p>1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with our assessment of the scale and type of land use change needed, as set out in this consultation and the Analytical Annex (Appendix 2)?</p> <p>Please explain your response, including your views on the potential scale of change and the type of change needed, including any specific types of change.</p>	<p>Neither agree nor disagree - Based on the evidence provided the assessment of land use change seems to be largely reasonable.</p> <p>The proposed quantity of land required for homes is considered slightly low (200m²/new home). Whilst this level of density is achievable in more urban areas, a lower density is likely in more rural settings especially with the creation of new settlements or towns.</p>
<p>2. Do you agree or disagree with the land use principles proposed?</p> <p>Please provide any reasons for your response including any changes you believe should be made.</p>	<p>Agree – Taking each principle in turn:</p> <p>Co-design: This is a good objective with local participation likely to add a lot of value to assessment of land and process.</p> <p>Multifunctional land: This is a very ambitious principle to achieve, but good in theory.</p> <p>Playing to the strengths of the land: This is good in theory, however, almost impossible usually in practice.</p> <p>Decisions fit for the long-term: Does this include the impacts of climate change of agricultural land and the anticipated effects?</p> <p>Responsive by design: How will this be monitored and updated?</p>

Question	Suggested ADC response
3. Beyond Government departments in England, which other decision makers do you think would benefit from applying these principles?	<p>Combined and local authorities (including local planning authorities) – These principles are generally incorporated into local authorities, including Arun, with particular reference to the planning department.</p> <p>Landowners and land managers (including environmental and heritage groups) – These principles could facilitate more appropriate development if used by landowners.</p>
4. What are the policies, incentives and other changes that are needed to support decision makers in the agricultural sector to deliver this scale of land use change, while considering the importance of food production?	<p>The Land Use Framework needs to be aligned with national planning policy. The removal in the current NPPF of the previous reference to the importance of food production in footnote 65 of the NPPF 2023 was not helpful in this regard and sends conflicting messages about how important this issue really is to the government.</p> <p>Farmers need to have income security on all types of land use. This will be on a location-based situation, however, farmers should be able to make a profit on their produce no matter what crop they produce, potential climate change impacts on their harvest, or biodiversity projects that support local wildlife. Farmers should also not feel that their only option for making a profit is from selling their land to developers for new developments. Encouraging creation of land banks and wilding projects can support alternative land uses also.</p>
5. How could Government support more land managers to implement multifunctional land uses that deliver a wider range of benefits, such as agroforestry systems with trees within pasture or arable fields?	Decarbonising or biodiversity increasing actions taken by land managers should be encouraged through BNG contributions paid from developments to those land managers as well as prioritisation of their crops being purchased at harvest time.
6. What should the Government consider in identifying suitable locations for spatially targeted incentives?	Projects that encourage wilding and forestry creation should be aimed at areas close to urban developments, allowing for local residents to benefit from these schemes and have access to natural open spaces.

Question	Suggested ADC response
7. What approach(es) could most effectively support land managers and the agricultural sector to steer land use changes to where they can deliver greater potential benefits and lower trade-offs?	A proportion of agricultural land can be used to support climate change mitigation measures, including but not exclusively, periphery tree planting for wind protection, wildflower fields for biodiversity and soil regeneration, and mixed crop planting to reduce chemicals required for soil longevity.
8. In addition to promoting multifunctional land uses and spatially targeting land use change incentives, what more could be done by Government or others to reduce the risk that we displace more food production and environmental impacts abroad?	<p>Monitoring land use change or production on agricultural land – identifying where land is losing its production yield with assessment protocols and mitigation measures available to address this.</p> <p>Accounting for displaced food production impacts in project appraisals – with further measures of how food replacement can be achieved.</p> <p>Protecting the best agricultural land from permanent land use changes – with the only caveat being that this is unless said land is located in the most sustainable location for development within a geographical region.</p>
9. What should Government consider in increasing private investment towards appropriate land use changes?	Large scale agricultural land developments should include urban farming projects and dual system water reticulation systems as standard to reduce their reliance of commercial farming and water supply.
10. What changes are needed to accelerate 30by30 delivery, including by enabling Protected Landscapes to contribute more?	<p>Strengthened Protected Landscapes legislation (around governance and regulations or duties on key actors) with a greater focus on nature – This could include more stringent development criteria in and around Protected Landscapes.</p> <p>Resources: such as funding or guidance for those managing Protected Landscapes for nature.</p>

Question	Suggested ADC response
11. What approaches could cost-effectively support nature and food production in urban landscapes and on land managed for recreation?	Community gardens can offer both food production and if designed well also be used as recreational space for the community.
12. How can Government ensure that development and infrastructure spatial plans take advantage of potential co-benefits and manage trade-offs?	Guidance, training and policy will all help to ensure that plan makers are well versed in best practice when it comes to potential co-benefits and how these can be best utilised.
13. How can local authorities and Government better take account of land use opportunities in transport planning?	Sustainable transport interventions need to be at the heart of every new development. Developments should also aim to have access to or create access to the rail and bus network to ensure that residents have the opportunity to use public transport. Active travel also needs to be designed into every development and the private sector used to fund active travel improvements in the area.
14. How can Government support closer coordination across plans and strategies for different sectors and outcomes at the local and regional level?	The devolution of authorities will support the creation of larger more strategic plans that can support more incorporation of strategies from other regions. Better coordination could be achieved if those authorities can base growth proposals on local evidence and sustainability assessments rather than just blunt housing targets set by the Government that pay little respect to significant land use constraints.
15. Would including additional major landowners and land managers in the Adaptation Reporting Power process support adaptation knowledge sharing?	Yes – major landowners and land managers are likely to already be preparing for the impact of climate change or have felt this first hand in the recent climate change over the past few years. They will be able to give advice and guidance on what has worked and best practice.
16. Below is a list of activities the Government could implement to support landowners, land managers, and communities to understand and prepare for the impacts of climate change.	Providing better information on local climate impacts to inform local decision making and strategies (for example, translating UK Climate Projections into what these mean in terms of on-the-ground impacts on farming, buildings, communities and nature) (Met Office UK Climate

Question	Suggested ADC response
<p>Please select the activities you think should be prioritised and give any reasons for your answer, or specific approaches you would like to see.</p>	<p>Projections available at https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/approach/collaboration/ukcp)</p> <p>Providing improved tools and guidance for turning climate information into tangible actions (for example, how to produce an adaptation plan for different sectors)</p> <p>Developing and sharing clearer objectives and resilience standards (for example, a clear picture and standards of good practice for each sector under a 2°C climate scenario: the climate changes we will experience if there is 2°C of global average temperature increase above pre-industrial baselines by 2100)</p> <p>Supporting the right actions in the right places in a changing climate (for example, prioritising incentives for sustainable land uses where they will be most resilient to climate change).</p>
<p>17. What changes to how Government's spatial data is presented or shared could increase its value in decision making and make it more accessible?</p>	<p>Updating existing Government tools, apps, portals or websites – This could support the decisions made on strategic developments especially if compared to other suitable sites.</p> <p>Bringing data from different sectors together into common portals or maps – A single point mapping system with a wide variety of layers and information could greatly improve strategic land use assessments.</p> <p>Increasing consistency across spatial and land datasets</p>
<p>18. What improvements could be made to how spatial data is captured, managed, or used to support land use decisions in the following sectors?</p>	<p>Development and planning: such as environmental survey data – GIS mapping should be used to identify suitable development areas where there is poorer agricultural land with few or no constraints, whilst still in a sustainable location. This can then be used with identifying land least</p>

Question	Suggested ADC response
	<p>suitable for development that should be flagged during development applications.</p> <p>Farming: such as supply chain data and carbon or nature baseline measurements – This can then indicate the best farming land to preserve.</p> <p>Environment and forestry: such as local and volunteer-collected environmental records – This can be used to identify potential forestry expansion projects and BNG regions.</p> <p>Recreation and access: such as accessible land and route data</p> <p>Government-published land and agricultural statistics.</p>
19. What improvements are needed to the quality, availability and accessibility of ALC data to support effective land use decisions?	The scale of ALC needs to be refined to ensure that plan making and planning decisions can use it when assessing potentially impactful neighbouring land uses and land use changes.
20. Which sources of spatial data should Government consider making free or easier to access, including via open licensing, to increase their potential benefit?	Transport modelling is not assessed or presented in a universal way with different areas having different methods of assessment and with very limited actual access to data. This could be combined and mapped to help better understand the current transport issues within each region and larger more strategic areas.
21. What gaps in land management capacity or skills do you anticipate as part of the land use transition?	<p>Development and planning – Upskilling land managers to better understand the planning system could support their assessment of their land and potential uses for it beyond agriculture.</p> <p>Farming – local and regional authorities could use some training on the needs and uses of farmland to better plan for future development.</p>

Question	Suggested ADC response
	Environment and forestry – training around what to be aware of in terms of environmental sensitivity should be encouraged.
22. How could the sharing of best practice in innovative land use practices and management be improved?	As some of these practices could be considered to give farmers a competitive advantage, rewards for sharing their knowledge should be created.
23. Should a Land Use Framework for England be updated periodically, and if so, how frequently should this occur?	Yes, every 3 years – This will allow for a regular update that is able to monitor climate change and best practice advice.
24. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed areas above? (Please refer to section on <i>Making Government effective in policy co-creation</i>)	Strongly agree – The proposed interventions would benefit strategic planning and development and if correctly and effectively implemented could help steer future development within the UK. There does, however, need to be consistency between this Land Use Framework and the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework.

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Seacole Building
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London
SW1P 4DF

21 March 2025

Please ask for:
Neil Crowther
Growth
Direct Line: 01903 737839

Dear Sir/Madam

Consultation on the Land Use Framework

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this consultation for the development of a national Land Use Framework. Please accept this letter, in addition to the responses to the questions submitted via the consultation portal, as representing the formal response of Arun District Council (Arun).

General comments

The aspirations and principles behind the proposed National Land Use Framework are generally considered positive, however, we note they appear to be at odds with some of the other recent legislative updates coming out from central government. These include the recently published National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF), and the English Devolution White Paper 2024.

In terms of the NPPF, no specific protection is given to the protection of agricultural land and, indeed, the 2024 revision to the NPPF deleted the specific reference that had previously been in the December 2023 version, to the important role that agricultural land plays in food production. This seems to run contrary to what the Land Use Framework is now advocating. In Arun's response to the July 2024 consultation from MHCLG on proposed reforms to the Planning System, Arun commented that removing specific reference to food production was unnecessary and short-sighted given global instability in areas that make a substantial contribution to the world's food demand, and that it could undermine the UK's food security. We argued that removal of this part of the footnote would further reduce the weight afforded to the protection of higher-grade agricultural land and will lead to it being targeted by developers. However, these concerns were ignored.

Further, the reference to exceptional circumstances (with agricultural land and food production potentially being one such circumstance) possibly justifying a lower housing requirement figure in Local Plans, was also removed in the 2024 NPPF. The Land Use Framework consultation is clear that it seeks to deliver something that will 'support' the delivery of 1.5 million homes, though, in Arun's case, it is difficult to understand how the protection of agricultural land for food production and the need to deliver such enormous housing numbers goes hand in hand. Furthermore, there have been multiple appeals in Arun in recent years where the loss of

agricultural land has been quickly outweighed by the need to provide housing, and even the loss of Grade 1 land has only been afforded 'moderate weight' by Inspectors.

The proposed rollout now of a Land Use Framework, therefore, seems to conflict with the NPPF and does not appear to represent joined up thinking on the part of central government. Clarity on how these two documents (NPPF and Land Use Framework) are intended to work alongside each other is essential, but this is currently absent.

Turning to the English Devolution White Paper, it could be argued that the Land Use Framework is aligned with the overall principles in that it is seeking to look at land use at a more strategic, regional level, as opposed to decisions on the release of land being taken at the district/borough level only. Nevertheless, the timing does not seem appropriate, because local authorities in Sussex are currently in the process of gearing up for the new combined strategic authority and making decisions about how larger unitaries may be formed. It is rather premature to expect a strategic approach to land use until such time as the combined Sussex & Brighton authority is in place and the structure, size and administrative boundaries of the new, larger unitary authorities have been decided. Accordingly, we believe it would make sense to pause rollout of the Land Use Framework for the time being.

In addition, the clear message from MHCLG over the past few months is that all authorities should be progressing their own Local Plans at pace to help deliver the government's promised 1.5 million new homes (370,000 per year). This will necessarily involve many very local decisions over the next few years on releasing greenfield land (much of it likely to be in agricultural use) for housing allocations and goes against the suggestion in the consultation on the Land Use Framework that these decisions should be made at a strategic level.

Furthermore, the way the new standard method for calculating housing need is based on the premise that all authorities in England should 'take their share' of new housing - notwithstanding any physical constraints as may be present - and has been presented as a mandatory target. The circumstances under which a local authority can seek to justify including a Local Plan housing target lower than that derived from the new standard method do not include where it would lead to the loss of higher-grade agricultural land or negatively impact on food production. The recent messaging from MHCLG, combined with the proposed changes to inheritance tax relief available for agricultural property is likely to encourage more landowners to put agricultural landholdings forward for housing or other uses, which runs directly contrary to what this DEFRA Land Use Framework seeks to achieve. This is a further area where there appears to be a lack of joined up thinking across government departments.

In summary, whilst the stated ambitions in the Land Use Framework are laudable, they will be to no beneficial effect, whatsoever, without national planning policy that promotes and enables retention of high-quality agricultural land and biodiversity rich areas.

Yours sincerely

Neil Crowther
Group Head of Planning – Growth Directorate
Arun District Council

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REPORT TO:	Planning Policy Committee 18 March 2025
SUBJECT:	Arun District Council Local Development Scheme 2025 - 2028
LEAD OFFICER:	Zac Ellwood (Interim Head of Planning Policy)
LEAD MEMBER:	Cllr Gill Yeates – Chairman of Planning Policy Committee
WARDS:	All
CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:	
<p>The recommendations support:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the Wellbeing of Arun; • Delivering the right homes in the right places. 	
DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:	
<p>The proposals will help to enhance the quality of the natural and built environment, protect the district’s natural and heritage assets and to promote economic growth in a sustainable manner, striking a balance between the need for development and the protection of scarce resources.</p>	
FINANCIAL SUMMARY:	
<p>There are no direct financial implications arising from this proposed update to the Local Development Scheme itself. The costs of the plan will need to be met from within the current revenue budget, £120,000 has been allocated within the 2025/26 budget and will be reviewed as part of the monthly budget monitoring process.</p>	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. This report seeks the Committee’s agreement to recommend to Full Council, adoption of an updated Local Development Scheme (LDS).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Planning Policy Committee
- i. Recommends to Full Council that the draft Local Development Scheme March 2025 for the period 2025-2028 (as set out in Background Paper 1) be adopted; and
 - ii. That authority be delegated to the Group Head of Planning, in consultation with the Chair of Planning Policy Committee, to undertake minor updating and drafting of any amendments required to the LDS prior to publication of the final, approved version on the council’s website.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 3.1. The council is required to produce, and keep up to date, a Local Development Scheme (LDS). The LDS provides a work programme for the production of those Development Plan Documents to be prepared over a three-year period and is monitored in the Authority Monitoring Report and used for resource planning by PINS (the Planning Inspectorate).
- 3.2. The current LDS was adopted by Full Council on 8 November 2023. In light of the significant recent changes to the NPPF, the Deputy Prime Minister has asked that all local planning authorities produce an updated Local Development Scheme (LDS) within 12 weeks of the publication of the NPPF on 12 December 2024 (i.e. by no later than 6 March 2025). They have advised that the updated LDS should include clear, realistic, and specific dates for consultation and submission of the local plan. As the current Arun District Council Local Development Scheme (LDS) was last updated in November 2023 and was intended to cover the period up to 2025, the LDS is in need of updating this year.
- 3.3. The current LDS anticipates a final adoption date of December 2026. However, this timetable was based on the situation prevailing at the time of its production (November 2023), and circumstances have changed significantly since then and even in a stable planning environment meeting this target would have been very challenging to achieve.
- 3.4. The revised LDS (Background Paper 1) sets out updated timescales for the production of the Local Plan update. The summary table is reproduced below:

Timetable.	Regulation 18(1) Direction of Travel consultation (Issues & Options).	March to September 2024 (completed)
	Initial evidence gathering period, plan visioning, strategy development, and drafting the plan.	January 2025 to March 2026
	Reg 18 (2) (or LURA equivalent) Draft DPD consultation (Policies & Allocations)	April to September 2026
	Regulation 19 (or LURA equivalent) Publication consultation.	April to September 2027
	Reg 22 (or LURA equivalent) Submission to Secretary of State.	January 2028
	Examination.	March 2028
	Inspector's Report Received.	April to June 2028
	Adoption.	Summer 2028

4. DETAIL

- 4.1. The LDS sets out revised proposed key dates for the Arun Local Plan update, including the various consultation stages, pre-submission, document publication, formal submission and examination and, ultimately, its adoption in 2028.

- 4.2. The Local Plan timetable has been updated from that anticipated in the 2023 Local Development Scheme and, on the basis that, due to the level of evidence work involved, the Local Plan cannot be submitted before December 2026, it is acknowledged that the Plan will, therefore, need to be prepared under the provisions of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (LURA). This proposes substantial changes to the process for taking Local Plans forward.
- 4.3. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (LURA) 2023 paves the way for reforms to the plan-making process and the form and content of local plans. In 2023, the previous Government consulted on some of the detail of these reforms. It is expected that many of these proposals will be carried forward by the new government, but the full implications of the reforms will not be known until more information (including secondary legislation) is published. The Government has indicated that there will be a consultation on future policy changes in Spring 2025 and a new plan-making system will be implemented later in 2025. This does put us in a difficult position in terms of being able to produce a detailed and reliable timetable for the delivery of a new Local Plan and the timescales set out in the revised Local Development Scheme are, therefore, liable to change.
- 4.4. In addition, in December 2024 the Government published the English Devolution White Paper announcing the facilitation of a programme of local government reorganisation. This may have implications for how the new Local Plan is prepared. The government has specified the updated LDS should include clear, realistic and specific dates for consultation and submission. However, it is important to note that, as further details on the planned reforms to plan-making are published and the potential outcomes of changes resulting from the English Devolution White Paper are known, the LDS may need to be reviewed.
- 4.5. Further, current uncertainty relates to the publication of National Development Management Policies (NDMPs), which the Minister for Housing announced last year, but have yet to transpire. The NDMPs could have a significant impact on the scope and content of the Local Plan and the evidence base needed to support it. Local Authorities will, understandably, be reluctant to expend significant resource at this time in developing local policies on issues that might be replaced by these NDMPs and may wish to pause certain activities. This is one of the reasons why the timetable set out in the updated LDS (Background Paper 1) does not envisage formal submission of the Plan for Examination until early 2028.
- 4.6. Local Plans will not be able to repeat or conflict with the NDMPs. The Government intend to consult on future policy changes, including a set of national policies for decision making in Spring 2025. On this basis, the scope of local plans will be limited to 'locally specific' matters. The LURA 2023 sets out the following requirements for local plans. Local plans must:
- Be designed to secure that the use and development of land in the LPA's area contributes to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change;
 - Take account of any local nature recovery strategy;
 - Take account of an assessment of the amount, and type, of housing that is needed in the LPA's area, including affordable housing.

- 4.7 The Government may prescribe further matters for Local Plans through regulations. Therefore, until further detail on the proposed reforms is published, the Council is unable to confirm the scope and contents of the new Local Plan. When preparing a Plan, the Council has to carry out certain activities, including:
- Preparing a suite of research and evidence to support the new Local Plan.
 - Formal stages of public consultation as we prepare the draft Plan.
 - Engagement with a wide range of public bodies and infrastructure providers.
 - Demonstrating the new Plan is sustainable and protects species and habitats.
 - Demonstrating compliance with Equality Act 2010/Human Rights Act 1998.
- 4.8 The requirements for the above activities have changed through the LURA 2023 or are expected to change as part of the wider planning reforms, for example:
- The streamlining of the evidence requirements for new Local Plans.
 - Removal of current Duty to Cooperate, replaced with a new 'alignment policy.'
 - The LURA secures powers to replace the existing system of environment assessment (including sustainability appraisals) with a new form of environment assessment known as Environment Outcome Reports (EOR).
 - Two formal mandatory public consultations at particular stages of process.
 - Introduction of mandatory gateway assessments ('gateways') to process.
- 4.9 The LURA itself does not prescribe timescales for plan making as these are to be brought forward in regulations, however, the government's July 2023 consultation on the implementation of plan-making reforms indicates that LPAs will be required to prepare and adopt a plan within 30 months (see draft timetable with indicative plan stages in Figure 1, below) and to start work on new plans by,

at the latest, 5 years after adoption of their previous plan.

Figure 1 – The proposed 30-month plan preparation timeframe (Source: Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: consultation on implementation of plan-making reforms (July 2023)¹⁷



¹⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/plan-making-reforms-consultation-on-implementation/levelling-up-and-regeneration-bill-consultation-on-implementation-of-plan-making-reforms#chapter2>

5. CONCLUSION

5.1. The update to the LDS will help to ensure that Arun maintains effective and timely preparation of its development plan so that development management decisions relating to development within the district accord with up-to-date development plans, consistent with national policy and sustainable development. However, proposed changes in legislation and the devolution agenda do create uncertainties and the draft Local Plan timetable in the updated Arun District Council Local Development Scheme 2025 has been prepared on the basis of what we consider to be a realistic and achievable timeframe, in the circumstances. It is liable to change.

6. CONSULTATION

6.1. The council is not required to consult on the LDS which is the authority's plan making timetable.

7. OPTIONS AVAILABLE

7.1. The range of options available are to;

- approve the LDS March 2025 to ensure a 'sound' development plan is prepared to guide future growth and infrastructure provision;
- or not to approve the LDS March 2025, with the risk that planning decisions are not in accordance with an up-to-date development plan and determined by appeal.

8. COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE/SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 8.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this proposed update to the Local Development Scheme itself. The costs of the plan will need to be met from within the current revenue budget, £120,000 has been allocated within the 2025/26 budget and will be reviewed as part of the monthly budget monitoring process.

9. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER

- 9.1. Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004 as amended by the Localism Act 2011 requires the council to prepare and maintain a Local Development Scheme, and the report sets out the procedure to enable it to be updated. There are no Governance or legal implications arising from this update.

10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 10.1. There are no implications arising for Human Resources.

11. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT

- 11.1. There are no direct implications for Health & Safety.

12. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT

- 12.1. There are no direct implications for council property.

13. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE

- 13.1. There are no direct adverse implications arising from preparing and adopting the LDS for Equalities/Social Value. However, the programmed plan making may give rise to such positive and adverse implications but is subject to Sustainability Appraisal and Equalities Appraisal during plan preparation and community consultation, to ensure that adverse effects are mitigated.

14. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE

- 14.1. There are no direct adverse implications arising from preparing and adopting the updated LDS for Climate Change. However, the associated plan making may give rise to such positive and adverse implications but is subject to Sustainability Appraisal Environment Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment during its preparation and community consultation, to ensure that adverse effects are mitigated.

15. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

15.1. There are no direct adverse implications for Crime and Disorder. However, the council has a legislative obligation to consider the impact on crime and disorder in all development plans and projects within the district.

16. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT

16.1. There are no direct adverse implications for Human Rights.

17. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS

17.1. There are no implications for FOI/Data Protection.

CONTACT OFFICER:-

Name:	Zac Ellwood
Job Title:	Interim Head of Planning Policy
Contact Number:	01903 737509

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Background Paper 1: Draft Arun Local Development Scheme (LDS) 2025 to 2028

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ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME
2025 to 2028



March 2025

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 In light of the significant recent changes to the NPPF, the Deputy Prime Minister has asked that all local planning authorities produce an updated Local Development Scheme (LDS) within 12 weeks of the publication of the NPPF on 12 December 2024 (i.e. by no later than 6 March 2025). They have advised that the updated LDS should include clear, realistic, and specific dates for consultation and submission of the local plan. The Arun District Council Local Development Scheme (LDS) was last updated in September 2023 and was intended to cover the period up to 2025. The LDS is, therefore, in need of updating this year, in any case.
- 1.2 The updated Local Development Scheme 2025 to 2028 has been prepared in conformity with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (The Act), as amended by section 111 of the Localism Act 2011. The local planning authority must resolve that the scheme is to have effect and specify the date from which it will do so. The LDS will be adopted and come into effect following a resolution of Full Council,
- 1.3 The Act (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) states that a Local Development Scheme must specify:
 - The local development documents which are to be development plan documents;
 - The subject matter and geographical area to which each development plan document relates;
 - Which development plan documents, if any, are to be prepared jointly with one or more other local planning authorities;
 - Any matter or area in respect of which the authority has agreed (or proposes to agree) to the constitution of a joint committee [with other local planning authorities]; and
 - The timetable for the preparation and revision of the development plan documents.
- 1.4 The LDS therefore, sets out details of the current Development Plan for Arun and introduces the scope and timeframe for preparing the emerging local Development Plan Documents (DPDs), which will ultimately form part of the Development Plan.

Recent Changes to the Planning System

- 1.5 The Local Plan must be prepared in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was revised and published in December 2024 and the Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). The NPPF must also be read alongside Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, which was updated at the same time as the NPPF. Further signaled changes are set out in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (LURA) 2023, which will change the way Local Plans are developed and delivered. Local Plans submitted after December

2026 will need to be prepared under the new LURA process.

1.6 The Localism Act 2011 allows for communities to draw up Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs). Arun's Local Planning Authority Area is parished with 21 Parish/Town Councils. The Table below shows the current position in regard to made NDPs, those subject to review and those updated. Once NDPs are adopted ('made') by the Council, they will sit beside the Arun Local Plan and become part of the statutory Development Plan which guides decision making in the district.

1.7 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations came into force in 2010 and have been amended successively, the latest amendment being in September 2019. The approved Arun CIL Charging Schedule was implemented coming into effect on 1 April 2020.

2. Arun District Council's Development Plan

2.1 All planning applications in Arun District Council must be considered against the Development Plan which within the Arun local planning authority area (i.e. outside of the South Downs National Park area – SDNP - that falls within part of Arun District) currently consists of the following adopted plans:

- Arun Local Plan 2018;
- West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan 2018 (i.e. prepared by West Sussex County Council and South Downs National Park Authorities);
- West Sussex Waste Local Plan (2014);
- South Inshore and South Offshore Marine Plan 2018
- Made Neighbourhood Development Plans (see table below).

	'Made' NDP	Currently Preparing a NDP	Currently reviewing or updating 'Made' NDP	Updated NDP 'Made'
Aldingbourne	Y	N	N	Y
Aldwick	N	N	N	N
Angmering	Y	N	Y	N
Arundel	Y	N	N	Y
Barnham & Eastergate	Y	N	N	Y
Bersted	Y	N	N	N
Bognor Regis	Y	N	N	N
Climping	Y	N	N	N
East Preston	Y	N	Y	N
Felpham	Y	N	N	Y
Ferring	Y	N	N	N
Ford	Y	N	Y	N
Kingston	Y	N	N	N

Littlehampton	Y	N	N	N
Middleton – On-Sea	N	Y	N	N
Pagham	N	Y	N	N
Rustington	Y	N	N	N
Walberton	Y	N	N	Y
Yapton	Y	N	Y	Y
Lyminster & Crossbush	Y	N	N	N
Poling	N	N	N	N

The emerging and made documents can be viewed at the following link:

[Neighbourhood planning | Arun District Council](#)

Arun Local Plan (2011-2031)

- 2.2 The Arun Local Plan was adopted by Full Council on 18 July 2018 (incorporating Main Modifications), and replaced the Local Plan 2003 (in its entirety within Arun local planning authority area) and all of the saved policies from the 2003 Plan. Decisions on planning applications need to accord with the Adopted Arun Local Plan 2018 unless other material circumstances indicate otherwise.

West Sussex Minerals Local Plan 2018

- 2.3 The West Sussex Joint Minerals Local Plan (JMLP), which was adopted in July 2018 and partially reviewed in March 2021, ensures the supply of minerals to at least 2033. It sets out the vision, objectives and strategy for mineral land-use planning in West Sussex and provides 10 strategic policies and 15 Development Management policies to provide a policy framework for determining mineral planning applications. It also sets out minerals safeguarding areas and facilities, and site allocations for minerals development. The JMLP replaces any saved policies and development management decisions must accord with the statutory development plan for West Sussex unless material circumstances indicate otherwise. The JMLP can be found on the West Sussex County Council (WSCC) website:

www.westsussex.gov.uk/mwdf.

The West Sussex Waste Local Plan

- 2.4 The West Sussex Waste Local Plan (WLP) (2014) was adopted on 11 April 2014. It sets the vision, objective and strategy for waste planning in West Sussex until 2031. It includes Use-Specific Policies, Development Management Policies and Waste Site Allocation policies. The allocation policies aim to ensure there is sufficient capacity to meet identified shortfalls in transfer, recycling and recovery capacity across the county. The WLP includes two strategic sites within Arun District at Hobbs Barn, near Climping and Site north of Wastewater Treatment

Works, Ford. These are included on the Arun Local Plan Policies Maps. In accordance with national policy, West Sussex Mineral Planning authority reviewed the WLP 2014 in 2019 and 2024 and concluded that the polices were fit for purpose and did not need updating.

Neighbourhood Development Plans

- 2.5 There are a number of Neighbourhood Development Plans within the Arun District that have been 'made'. These give communities the power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area. They include the location of new homes, shops and offices. They influence what those new buildings should look like and inform what infrastructure should be provided.

3. Emerging Plans

Arun Local Plan Update DPD

- 3.1 On 15 January 2020 Arun District Council resolved to update the Arun Local Plan following a review of housing policies and housing delivery performance (in 2019). In addition, the council declared a 'Climate Change Emergency' which included the need to develop a new planning framework to improve the level of sustainability and infrastructure and to revise the existing development management policies.
- 3.2 Consequently, preparation of a Non-Strategic Sites Allocations DPD (NSSA DPD) to support the existing ALP 2018 was abandoned to ensure that the resources and timetable for the Local Plan review are prioritized within the context of the Climate Change Emergency and key priorities of the council.
- 3.3 The ALP 2018 commitment to provide at least 1,250 dwellings for the period to 2031 will mean that contributions from Neighbourhood Development Plan reviews will be expected to deliver a proportion of the ALP 2018 dwelling requirement to 2031 as currently agreed with those Parish Neighborhood Development bodies.
- 3.4 The council does not have a 5-year housing land supply and has failed the Government's Housing Delivery Test every year since it was first published in 2018. Applications will be determined in accordance with presumption in favour of sustainable development (set out in paragraph 11d) of the National Planning Policy Framework 2024, until a 5-year housing land supply is re-established and or the Local Plan update or NDPs preparation and review, together, identify planned provision to meet requirements.
- 3.5 In October 2021 the council paused work on the Local Plan update because of signaled changes to national planning policy and the need

to ensure that plan making was fit for purpose and cost effective. The pause was reconsidered but maintained June 2022. However, in July 2023 the council resolved to lift the pause to the Local Plan update on the basis that the impending changes are broadly understood and there was a need to progress plan making to address the significant housing economic and infrastructure needs of the area sustainably.

- 3.6 The Adopted Arun local plan 2018 is now over 5 years old. Public consultation on a Regulation 18 Direction of Travel (Issues & Options) document took place between March and May 2024 and the local planning authority is now considering next stages. Further details regarding the timetable for the preparation of this DPD is provided in Appendix 1 to this report.

4. Supporting Documents

Supplementary Planning Documents

- 4.1 As well as programming work on the DPDs, the council may also choose to prepare SPDs. Adopted SPDs do not form part of the statutory development plan but following public consultation and, once adopted are a material consideration for development management decisions. Recently adopted SPDs include: -

- Open space, Playing Pitches, Indoor and Built Sports Facilities SPD;
- Arun Parking Standards (including eVehicles) SPD;
- Arun Design Guide SPD (updated 2024).

Infrastructure Funding Statement

- 4.2 The Local Plan identifies what infrastructure is needed within the district over the lifetime of the Plan, when it will be provided and how much it will cost. This is set out within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). The IDP sets out infrastructure that is to be provided by s.106 contributions and via Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) receipts.
- 4.3 The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations ('CIL Regulations') were introduced in April 2010 and have been amended. Arun implemented and approved an Arun CIL Charging Schedule on 1st April 2020. However, it should be noted that the CIL charging schedule is not part of the development plan. Under the CIL Regulations (as amended) Arun will be required to prepare an Infrastructure List together with an Infrastructure Funding Statement to monitor CIL income and spend for the calendar year annually. Arun approved a 3-year CIL Infrastructure Investment Plan in September 2024.

Statement of Community Involvement

- 4.4 The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out the

council's process for undertaking consultation on both planning policy documents and as part of the Development Control process.

- 4.5 The SCI was adopted in January 2024. Public consultations and engagement must be carried out in accordance with the provisions within the SCI.

5. Process and Procedures

Resources

- 5.1 The Planning Policy and Conservation Team (7 FTE) are leading the production of the Local Plan and supporting DPDs, SPD and monitoring including of housing delivery. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) officer FTE post is responsible for implementation and monitoring of CIL receipts and spend and is now fully funded through CIL receipts. Supporting the production of Neighbourhood Plans is presently grant funded by central government.

Monitoring and Review

- 5.2 The Localism Act 2011 removed the requirement for Local Planning Authorities to submit Annual Monitoring Reports to the Secretary of State. Instead, authorities are now required to prepare an Authority Monitoring Report and make this available to the public. This report monitors details such as the progress of the preparation and implementation of Local Development Documents including the Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Documents (all data to be included within the authority's monitoring report is set out in Regulation 34 of the Town and Country Planning, (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Arun District Council's most up to date monitoring report for the period 2023 to 2024 was agreed by the Planning Policy Committee in January 2025 and can also be accessed on the ADC Evidence and Monitoring website using the following link:

[Monitoring reports | Arun District Council](#)

Reviewing the Local Development Scheme

- 5.3 This Local Development Scheme (LDS) and the associated draft timetable for plan preparation have been produced at the request of the Deputy Prime Minister who has asked that all local planning authorities produce an updated LDS by 6 March 2025. The dates suggested are based on a best estimate on information available at the time of writing.
- 5.4 The council may produce a revised Local Development Scheme during this period, if required, to reflect any changes in the documents to be prepared. This could be as a result of changes in the planning system, national legislation/guidance, or resource constraints.

5.5 Specific issues that have the potential to impact on the Local Plan timetable as set out in this LDS include:

- Requirement for Plans due to be submitted for examination after December 2026 to be prepared under the new Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023. The LURA proposes substantial changes to the process for taking Local Plans forward and the form and content of such plans. The full implications of the reforms will not be known until more information (including secondary legislation) is published. The Government has indicated that there will be a consultation on future policy changes in Spring 2025 and a new plan-making system will be implemented later in 2025. This current uncertainty makes it difficult to produce a detailed and reliable timetable for the delivery of a new Local Plan
- Further current uncertainty relates to the publication of National Development Management Policies (NDMPs), which the Minister for Housing announced would be published in 2025, but have yet to transpire. The NDMPs could have a significant impact on the scope and content of the Local Plan and the evidence base needed to support it. Local Authorities will, understandably, be reluctant to expend significant resource at this time in developing local policies on issues that might be replaced by these NDMPs and may wish to pause certain activities.
- On 16th December 2024, the Government published the English Devolution White Paper. This announced the facilitation of a programme of local government reorganisation. This may have implications for how the new Local Plan is prepared. The government has specified that the updated LDS should include clear, realistic, and specific dates for consultation and submission of the local plan. However, it is important to note that, as further details on the planned reforms to plan-making are published by the Government and the potential outcomes of changes resulting from the English Devolution White Paper are known, this LDS will need be reviewed.

APPENDIX 1

Development Plan Document (DPD) Profiles

Arun Local Plan Update Development Plan Document		
Geographical Area.	All parts of Arun District excluding that part within the South Downs National Park Boundary.	
Subject to Independent Examination.	Yes.	
Produced jointly with other authorities.	No, although Parish and Town Council's may wish to assist and update their NPs accordingly.	
Timetable.	Regulation 18(1) Direction of Travel consultation (Issues & Options).	March to September 2024 (completed)
	Initial evidence gathering period, plan visioning, strategy development, and drafting the plan.	January 2025 to March 2026
	Reg 18 (2) (or LURA equivalent) Draft DPD consultation (Policies & Allocations)	April to September 2026
	Regulation 19 (or LURA equivalent) Publication consultation.	April to September 2027
	Reg 22 (or LURA equivalent) Submission to Secretary of State.	January 2028
	Examination.	March 2028
	Inspector's Report Received.	April to June 2028
	Adoption.	Summer 2028
Resources.	The document will require significant input from the Planning Policy Team and officers from other council Departments. Consideration is also being given to appointing a consultancy to lead on plan preparation.	
Review.	Once adopted, the policy and delivery strategy will be monitored though the Authority Monitoring Report.	

APPENDIX 2 - Risk Assessment

High to Low 1-11	Risk	Impact	Actions
1	Unknown impacts arising from devolution and local government reorganisation and further significant changes to national planning policy. Guidance on LURA Local Plan process is delayed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Causes slippage in programme. - Possible change in emphasis in document. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that timetable is flexible to adapt and adopt new requirements and priorities. • Plan Local Plan preparation around processes external to Planning Policy Team. • Be prepared to review LDS timetable.
2	Loss/recruitment difficulties - key staff.	Slippage in programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit to vacant posts as quickly as possible or consider contracting support/secondments.
3	Updates to evidence base studies and new reports undertaken by external specialists are delayed or take longer than anticipated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Causes slippage in programme. - Sections of the Local Plan cannot be completed due to lack of evidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure briefs for consultants are clear on inputs and output requirements. • Hold regular project progress meetings. • Set clear deadlines for consultants.
4	Policy Team required to do other unforeseen work, including additional appeals/work on other corporate projects.	Diverts team from LDF causing a slippage in programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service Business Plan to make Local Plan corporate priority and other work minimized or stopped. • Consider additional resources/using staff from other services.

5	Lack of in-house skills for specialised areas of policy work/Sustainability Appraisals/background studies.	Slow progress causing a slippage in programme. Quality compromised. Evidence base challenged or undermined.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take prompt action to fill vacancies. • Ensure financial resources available to commission work. • Ensure working arrangements between teams are clear.
6	Volume of work greater than anticipated e.g. on submitted representations.	Causes slippage in programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure timetable is realistic but has some flexibility built in. • Proactively monitor progress against LDS. • Consider additional resources. • Use a project management approach e.g., PID with Project sponsor and Board.

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High to Low 1-11	Risk	Impact	Actions
7	Insufficient budget provision to finance the project	- Work slips or cannot be progressed. - Objectives on quality compromised.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure provision of base budget for plan preparation period Base budget spending monthly monitoring and review.
8	Local Plan programme too ambitious	- Key milestones in programme not met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure LDS is realistic. Monitor progress against LDS and amend if necessary.
9	Planning Inspectorate unable to meet the timescale for examination and reporting	- Examination and/or report is delayed. - Key milestones in programme not met.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Close liaison with the Planning Inspectorate to ensure early warning of any problems (e.g. consultation on LDS). Maintain up to date Service Level Agreements with the Inspectorate.
10	Local Plan fails test of "soundness"	- DPD has to be withdrawn and further work undertaken for resubmission. - Progress on other LDD/CIL charging schedule slips.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PAS toolkit and critical friend. Ensure documents have a robust evidence base and well audited community and stakeholder engagement. Undertake NPPF and legal compliance self-assessment. Maintain close working relationship with the Planning Inspectorate. Keep up to date on experience from elsewhere. Keep up to date with NPPF and test of soundness. Retain Counsel Opinion.
11	Legal Challenge	- Adopted document quashed. - Additional workload. - Legal costs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure procedures, Act, Regulations etc. are complied with. Undertake soundness self-assessment. Retain Counsel Opinion.

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REPORT TO:	Planning Policy Committee – 18 March 2025
SUBJECT:	Response to Regulation 18 consultation on the South Downs Local Plan Review (20 January to 17 March 2025)
LEAD OFFICER:	Victoria Hobday (Senior Planning Officer)
LEAD MEMBER:	Cllr Gill Yeates - Chair of Planning Policy Committee
WARDS:	All wards (mainly those adjoining the South Downs National Park)
CORPORATE PRIORITY / POLICY CONTEXT / CORPORATE VISION:	
<p>The recommendations support:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving the wellbeing of Arun; and • Supporting our environment to support us. 	
DIRECTORATE POLICY CONTEXT:	
<p>The proposed response to this consultation will contribute to improving the wellbeing of Arun, protecting the district’s natural environment assets and promoting economic growth in a sustainable manner, striking the balance between the need for development and the protection of scarce resources.</p>	
FINANCIAL SUMMARY:	
<p>The South Downs National Park Local Plan Review Regulation 18 consultation that is the focus of this report is not owned or under the responsibility of the council to produce, so there is no direct budgetary or financial impact on Arun.</p>	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. This report is intended to update members of the Planning Policy Committee on the key messages from the current Regulation 18 consultation on the South Downs National Park Authority’s (SDNPA) Local Plan Review, particularly any changes that may directly and indirectly affect Arun residents. It also seeks approval for Arun’s proposed response to the consultation.
- 1.2. The SDNPA Local Plan Review is being consulted on under Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 from 20 January to 17 March 2025. Whilst the consultation period officially expires before the date of this meeting the SDNPA has agreed to an extension of time for Arun District Council to submit any comments by 21 March 2025, to take account of the Planning Policy Committee meeting dates.
- 1.3. The proposed response to this consultation is presented for consideration in Appendix 1.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. Planning Policy Committee resolves to:-

- i. Note the content of the SDNPA's Local Plan Review insofar as it affects interests within the Arun District.
- ii. Agree the proposed response to the SDNPA Local Plan Review (Appendix 1).
- iii. Delegate authority to the Group Head of Planning to, if necessary, make minor editorial changes prior to issuing the consultation response to the SDNPA.

3. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 3.1. This report is intended to update members of the Planning Policy Committee and seek their agreement on the draft response to the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) on a current Regulation 18 Consultation on their Local Plan Review. The current South Downs Local Plan covers the period 2014 to 2033 and was adopted in July 2019. It is being reviewed to ensure it is up-to-date and addresses critical issues such as nature recovery, climate change, affordable housing and helping local communities thrive.
- 3.2. The new South Downs Local Plan is intended to cover the period up to 2042. The Regulation 18 consultation of the Local Plan Review started on 20 January 2025 and is the main opportunity for people to help shape the final Plan, so the National Park Authority (NPA) is inviting comments from local communities, stakeholders, and the development sector. This feedback will help shape the next version of the Local Plan, which is intended to be published in 2026 ahead of its submission for examination by an independent Inspector. Once the new Local Plan is formally adopted it will be used to help decide all planning applications in the National Park.
- 3.3 This report provides a brief overview of the Local Plan Review. It considers any changes that are intended to apply within the district or that may impact the review of the Arun Local Plan (ALP). Finally, it recommends a suitable response to the consultation on behalf of Arun.

4. SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

- 4.1 The review of the South Downs National Park Local Plan commenced in May 2022 with the updating of the evidence base for the Plan. This included a 'call for sites' in Summer 2022 to inform a Land Availability Assessment and the publication of the Housing and Economic Needs Assessment in November 2023. The NPA undertook various other evidence base updates and assessments required by legislation, e.g. Habitats Regulations Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment. Early engagement was carried out with Town and Parish Councils from February 2023, with additional 'early participation' public engagement in the third quarter of 2024 to reflect the requirements of the new plan-making system being introduced under the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (LURA) 2023.

4.2 The NPA is also reviewing its Partnership Management Plan (PMP) which sets out the long-term vision and objectives for the National Park. Whilst the PMP has a wider remit than just planning, the Local Plan is a delivery vehicle for many of the PMP objectives, hence the SDNPA consider it important that the two plans align with and support each other. A Corporate Plan is also produced every five years, setting out the priorities for the NPA. The priorities for the period 2020-2025 are nature recovery, climate action and a National Park for all, and these priorities are reflected in the Local Plan Review.

4.3 The SDNPA's anticipated timeline following this consultation is:-

- Present Pre-Submission version of Plan to Planning Committee and a full NPA meeting – October – December 2025;
- Second Public Consultation Document (Regulation 19) – early 2026;
- Submission for examination – 2026;
- Adoption – 2027.

Overview

4.4 In addition to NPA priorities set out in Paragraph 4.2 above, the scope of the Local Plan Review responds to a number of issues, including:

- Changes to national policy and legislation, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and upcoming changes to the plan making system in the LURA 2023, including National Development Management Policies.
- Changes to the NPA's priorities and objectives.
- New issues which have arisen since the adoption of the current Local Plan, e.g. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).
- Development management decisions and appeals, and difficulties encountered in implementing adopted policies.

4.5 The factors which fed into the various policy updates are helpfully indicated in the preamble to each draft policy. In addition, the actual proposed changes are indicated either by striking through text proposed for removal and underlining new text. There are clearly articulated questions for consultation which focus, but do not restrict responses. Finally, there is effective use of a colour scheme for indicating the scale of changes to the policies. This all makes for a very clear and user-friendly consultation document, and there is much inspiration as we progress the review of the adopted ALP, in terms of presentation.

Selected detail and implications for Arun

4.6 The NPA's core policy in respect of the presumption in favour of sustainable development is unchanged (SD1). Its approach to ecosystem services (SD2) has been strengthened and reflects the emerging concept of 'Regenerative Design', which is a holistic approach in which human systems are designed to co-exist and co-evolve over time with natural systems. It seeks not only to reduce harm and restore equilibrium but goes a step further in seeking to restore and repair damage done to date. As well, the policy incorporates the concept of 'environmental net gain', which firmly establishes an expanded definition of ecosystem services as the foundation for the Local Plan Review. These approaches are reflected in a number of other policies, including those relating to the water environment. The policy on major development (SD3) adds the requirement for such development to have a Health Impact Assessment, firmly establishing the link between sustainable places and health and wellbeing outcomes.

4.7 The landscape and heritage policies have been revised to emphasise the protection of cultural heritage in line with the provisions of the LURA, and address frequently occurring matters in the planning application process.

4.8 The nature recovery policies have been reviewed and revised to incorporate updated planning and environmental guidance and legislation and for the most part, go further than the existing policies in the ALP, including the proposal to require a higher percentage of BNG in new developments, beyond the statutory minimum of 10%. The consultation posits various alternative scenarios for viability testing, as set out below:

Scenario 1 – a minimum of 20% for all types of relevant development.

Scenario 2 – a minimum of 10% for minor development and 20% for major development.

Scenario 3 – as Scenario 2 plus 33% for strategic greenfield sites.

Scenario 4 – a minimum of 25% for all relevant development according to the following:

- Provision of the statutory minimum of 10% Biodiversity Gain must follow the Government's Biodiversity Gain Hierarchy which prioritises on-site provision in the first instance.
- Provision of the portion of Biodiversity Gain beyond the statutory minimum (10-25%+) to be incentivised to deliver via strategic offsetting sites.

4.9 Although the new Arun Local Plan (2023 to 2041) is still at an early stage of preparation, the viability testing and evidence base for this policy could potentially influence Arun's approach to BNG as part of the review of the ALP and we could, similarly, test various scenarios for establishing a new BNG requirement that is above and beyond that currently required under statute. This will be explored further under the emerging Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and as the ALP review progresses. As well, a new policy (NEW4) on the Arun Valley SPA/SAC/Ramsar dealing with water neutrality could, similarly, set a precedent for consideration as part of the ALP review, should this emerge as an important issue for the district.

- 4.10 Whilst the climate action policies are not plentiful, the SDNPA corporate policies on Climate Action and Nature Recovery are considered to have been appropriately picked up in a number of policies in the South Downs Local Plan Review.
- 4.11 The policy on the supply of homes (SD26) defers an update on housing figures to the Regulation 19 (pre-submission publication) stage, and the current Regulation 18 Local Plan Review proposes potential allocations into which further work is needed to confirm viability. The existing SDNP Local Plan makes provision for 250 new dwellings per year, including a windfall allowance. This updated Plan notes that the (then) annualised objectively assessed need (OAN) was 447 dwellings per year, but the Sustainability Appraisal confirmed that the NPA would not be meeting its statutory purpose as a National Park if it were to fully meet the OAN within its own boundaries. Whilst the ALP makes provision for the whole of the OAN for housing in the district's administrative area, including the part that lies within the SDNPA, Arun's increased Local Housing Need under the new standard methodology will be very challenging to achieve. Notwithstanding the Duty to Corporate requirements, Arun is unlikely to be in a position to meet unmet housing need arising from the SDNPA. The draft response to the current consultation in Appendix 1 to this report proposes that the SDNPA carefully considers its ability to provide for its needs as part of an appropriate quantum of development, given that Arun is not the only neighbouring authority that is grappling with the demanding housing figures arising from the new standard methodology for calculating need, noting that the overall proposed increase in housing numbers over the whole of West Sussex equates to around 43%
- 4.12 Other housing policies, including those relating to accessible homes (NEW1), affordable homes (SD28) and rural exception sites (SD29) all set higher and more specific requirements than the policies in the Arun Local Plan. The viability testing of these and other policies will likely influence the review of the ALP in due course, albeit noting that house prices for properties in the South Downs National Park itself are likely to be higher, on average, than those for equivalent sized properties outside of the SDNP.
- 4.13 In terms of allocations, the Local Plan Review proposes carrying over an existing allocation at Soldiers Field House, Findon (SD70). We are not aware of any significant changes in circumstances since the site was allocated in 2019 which would justify amendments to this allocation. The Local Plan Review identifies a potential allocation at the Former Allotments north of The Quadrangle, Findon, which emerged through the 'call for sites' process in summer 2022. Paragraph 5.1 of the Local Plan Review notes that this, and other potential allocation are provisional, and "further work will need to be undertaken before they can be included within the final Plan." Based on the information provided, the site identified provisionally for 20 dwellings is well contained by hard boundaries including Findon Road and existing development. Other than these sites, there are no further existing or proposed allocations within the Local Plan Review in Arun District.
- 4.14 With the exception of the employment need figures (SD35), the policies relating to the economy are largely unchanged. There is a new policy (NEW8) which supports viticulture, winemaking and wine tourism, subject to protection of the existing local retail offer.

4.15 Connectivity and accessibility within the National Park is emphasised, including the importance of an enhanced green infrastructure network.

5. CONSULTATION

5.1. Consultation has been carried out within Arun's Planning Policy and Climate Change and Sustainability Teams to inform the potential responses.

6. OPTIONS / ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

6.1. To consider and respond to the consultation and where necessary take account of its content, through any necessary integration into strategies or plans that the council may create.

6.2. To note the consultation but not to incorporate its content, where needed, or formally respond at this stage. This option was discounted on the basis that maintaining robust working relationships with Arun's neighbouring authorities is advisable and indeed necessary given the Duty to Corporate requirements enshrined in legislation.

7. COMMENTS BY THE GROUP HEAD OF FINANCE/SECTION 151 OFFICER

7.1. As a consultee there are no financial implications from the content of this report.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1. By responding to the consultation, the council may be able to influence the form of the final plan. Not doing so may open risk of failing to comply with Duty to Corporate requirements in the plan-making system.

9. COMMENTS OF THE GROUP HEAD OF LAW AND GOVERNANCE & MONITORING OFFICER

9.1. As a consultee and stakeholder there are no direct legal or governance implications for the council.

10. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

10.1. There are no direct human resource impacts for the council.

11. HEALTH & SAFETY IMPACT

11.1. There are no direct health and safety implications arising from this report's recommendations.

12. PROPERTY & ESTATES IMPACT

12.1. There are no direct implications for property and estates from the content of this report.

13. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) / SOCIAL VALUE

13.1. The council is a consultee and the document being consulted on is the responsibility of another organisation, hence there are no direct implications for the council regarding equalities.

14. CLIMATE CHANGE & ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT/SOCIAL VALUE

14.1. There will be no direct impacts to the environment as the council is only a stakeholder on the plan.

15. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

15.1. There are no implications from this report on crime and disorder.

16. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPACT

16.1. No human rights would be impacted by this proposal.

17. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION / DATA PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS

17.1. As the council is purely responding to a statutory consultation being carried out by another statutory body, there are no direct implications in terms of data protection.

CONTACT OFFICER:

Name: Victoria Hobday
Job Title: Senior Planning Officer
Contact Number: 01903 737790

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

1. [The South Downs National Park Local Plan Review](#)

***Appendix 1: Proposed ADC Response to the South Downs
National Park Local Plan Review***



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South Downs National Park Authority
Planning Policy Team,
South Downs Centre,
North Street,
Midhurst GU29 9DH

21 March 2025

Please ask for:

Your Ref:

Neil Crowther
Growth

Our Ref:

Direct Line: 01903 737839

Dear Sir/Madam

Consultation on the South Downs National Park Authority Local Plan Review

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the documents forming the first public consultation (Regulation 18) on the South Downs National Park (SDNP) Local Plan Review. Please accept this letter as representing the formal response from Arun District Council (Arun). I would like to extend our thanks for granting us a short extension of time to allow our elected members to consider this response at Planning Policy Committee on 18 March 2025.

General comments

Arun applauds your proactive approach to updating your Local Plan, and we particularly commend the clear and focused approach to identifying the proposed changes from policy text which is otherwise unchanged. We note and support the various changes which have been proposed in response to new policy and guidance at the national level, including the NPPF.

In general, we consider that you have properly identified the key issues likely to be of relevance to the Local Plan Review, especially in respect to the core policies focused on sustainable development, the significance of landscape and heritage, and environmental considerations including climate action, nature recovery and water and pollution. We are in agreement with the broad focus of the Local Plan Review and consider that the main challenges that need to be addressed through a strategic approach have been identified. Points of detail are addressed in the table which is appended to this letter.

Thank you once again for giving us an opportunity to comment on the SDNP Local Plan Review and we wish you all the best in taking this forward. We look forward to following progress on the Plan and to proactively engaging with the SDNPA as the Plan develops.

If you wish to discuss the contents of this letter, or if there is anything you do not understand, please contact me.

Yours sincerely

Neil Crowther
Group Head of Planning – Growth Directorate
Arun District Council

Policy	Comment
Core Policies	
SD2: Ecosystem Services	Arun supports the requirements for major applications. We note the changes and feel that the use of regenerative design to restore ecosystem services is a technically complex requirement and may be restrictive to minor applications by putting onerous burdens on applicants to evidence how they are meeting this policy. The SDNPA may wish to consider a threshold for triggering this requirement.
SD3: Major Development	Whilst we generally support the requirements for major applications, we feel this change may be restrictive to minor applications by putting onerous burdens on applicants to evidence how they are meeting this policy. This could be addressed through a threshold for triggering requirement at criterion 4. The planning term 'Major Development' is already clearly defined in The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010, as amended, and it may, therefore, be confusing for the SDNP to suggest that it will use an alternative definition based on perceived impact. It may be preferable for policy SD3 to refer to 'Significant' development' rather than 'Major.'
Landscape & Heritage	
SD4: Landscape Character	We note the changes to the wording at to 1d and wish to draw your attention to the fact that many non-native species are equally valuable for wildlife. Also, many native species, particularly street trees are unsuited to the urban environment. Diversity of plants is key to climate change adaptation.
Nature Recovery	
SD9: Biodiversity & Geodiversity	<p>We support the changes to SD9, including the inclusion of green, blue and dark corridors. We consider the policy should, however, reference the biodiversity duty on public bodies introduced by the Environment Act 2021 to conserve and enhance biodiversity.</p> <p><u>Biodiversity Net Gain</u>: We support the inclusion of reference to BNG into policy SD9 and consideration for seeking a higher percentage of BNG beyond the mandatory 10%. Whilst we support the principle of testing four scenarios, we offer no preference for any of these. We are interested in the viability testing and</p>

	<p>evidence base as the findings may help to influence development of Arun’s emerging Local Plan policy in relation to BNG.</p> <p>It should be noted that under the current Government Guidance, applications that deliver non-significant habitat gains are not required to secure a HMMP or 30-year management and maintenance – see extract below from DEFRA Guidance - Make on-site biodiversity gains as a developer - GOV.UK.</p> <p><i>“Non-significant enhancements: Non-significant enhancements are habitat enhancements whose loss will not significantly decrease the development’s biodiversity value. They should still be included in your metric calculations. Examples include private gardens which have a low distinctiveness value, or container planting. These enhancements do not normally require maintenance provisions so for non-significant enhancements, you do not need to have an HMMP, legal agreement or commitment to maintain them for 30 years.”</i></p> <p>This should be reflected in criterion 4.</p>
SD10: International Sites	<p>We support the proposed changes and welcome the identification of specific Special Areas for Conservation (SACs) for bats. A proportion of the HRA 12,000 metre buffer lies within Arun. This will influence Arun’s future policies on this SAC.</p>
NEW3: Arun Valley Special Protection Area (SPA): Functionally Linked Habitat	<p>We support the proposed new policy for the Arun Valley SPA, as well as the stronger policy wording and requirement for provision of appropriate alternative habitat before development proceeds.</p> <p>This policy does not however acknowledge the Arun Valley Impact risk zone (IRZ) identified in the Arun Local Plan. This zone is partly within the SDNP and identifies functionally linked land. This IRZ is important as there is considerable development pressure within and adjacent to the IRZ.</p> <p>The Habitats Regulations Assessment also concludes that the Arun Valley Special Protection Area (SPA) is vulnerable to unsympathetic management. It is</p>

	<p>important that an appropriate hydrological regime is maintained, which includes winter flooding. The site is vulnerable to water quality deterioration, loss of functionally connected land and recreation pressures (including disturbance). Additionally, impact risk zones for this SPA have been defined covering areas in the foraging distance of Bewick's Swans, which include wide areas falling inside the planning responsibility of this Local Plan. Loss of habitat within these impact risk zones, which is regularly used by foraging Bewick's Swans (i.e. Is functionally linked to the SPA), could have a significant effect on the SPA, and will need assessment under the Habitats Regulations at the project level.</p> <p>Wild birds standing advice is a material planning consideration for LPAs. This sets out requirements for surveys for breeding birds, wintering birds and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • barn owls and other birds listed in Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, • birds listed in Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, • red and amber list birds of conservation concern. <p>We would request this is considered in relation to the draft policies for nature recovery.</p>
<p>SD11: Trees, Woodlands, and Hedgerows</p>	<p>We support the proposed changes and welcome the inclusion of scrub throughout the policy. Scrub is a vital habitat for many species and has previously lacked protection. Scrub is a key habitat in nature recovery as it is often a transition habitat and provides important niches for wildlife. We also support the inclusion of protection of ancient and veteran trees.</p> <p>We support the requirement for appropriate replacement or compensation for the loss of qualifying habitats. Whilst we welcome the reuse of wood onsite, this policy could be strengthened by requiring major applications to retain deadwood on site.</p> <p>The importance of increasing diversity of new planting is vital to mitigating the impacts of climate change and the influx of pests and diseases.</p>

Water and Pollution	
SD17: Protection of the Water Environment	<p>Whilst we welcome the strengthening of this policy, there is no definition of the water environment in either this chapter or in the Glossary, and there is no mention of riparian zones.</p> <p>Whilst we support the inclusion of criteria 3, 4, and 5, defining “adequate protection zones and buffers” would be helpful.</p>
SD50: Sustainable Drainage Systems	<p>We support the requirements for major applications and the inclusion of monitoring. We note that criterion 3 includes substantial technical requirements. This will also require physical space within the development site to implement. We feel this change may be restrictive to minor applications by putting onerous burdens on applicants to evidence how they are meeting this policy. This could be addressed through a threshold for triggering requirement at criterion 3.</p>
Homes	
SD26: Supply of Homes	<p>We note that the Policy defers updating housing figures to the Regulation 19 stage. Text confirms that the existing Local Plan plans for 250 new homes per year, including a windfall allowance. It is noted that this, and other related figures, are likely to change as more work is done on the proposed allocations, and further sites are put forward. There is, however, no indication at this stage as to whether the figure will likely go up or down.</p> <p>The related consultation question asks what level of growth the National Park should be planning for. This is ultimately a question for the SDNPA to answer. However, the SDNPA will be aware that changes to the standard method for calculating local housing need, published in the revised National Planning Policy Framework on 12 December 2024, have significantly increased housing needs in the South East. The requirement for West Sussex has gone up by some 43% overall and this will be challenging to achieve. As a result, Arun is unlikely to be in a position to support other planning authorities in meeting unmet housing need. We would, of course, be open to future discussions alongside other neighbouring authorities about how we can potentially support each other under the Duty to Cooperate.</p>

	<p>Arun is not the only local authority in the SDNP in this position, and hard decisions will be needed across the board to deliver the enhanced housing requirements. We accordingly suggest that the SDNPA gives consideration to providing for a level of development, such that it is still able, to comply with its statutory purposes and duty, whilst appropriately addressing the enormous development demands which are being made of its neighbours and constituent authorities.</p> <p>Finally on this point, the fact that the Local Plan review is deferring an update of its housing figures to the Regulation 19 stage, which paragraph 1.13 of the revised LP states offers limited grounds for making representations compared with the current Regulation 18 stage, restricts the scope of the current consultation on this most important and increasingly contentious topic of housing supply.</p>
Policy SD28: Affordable Homes	<p>Securing affordable housing in the right numbers and tenure is a problem across the SE of England at present. Whilst we support your council's ambition to seek to reduce existing deprivation and inequalities, the viability of provision as outlined will need to be tested through the development management process, particularly on sites with gross capacity to provide between 3 and 9 homes.</p>
Economy	
Policy NEW8: Viticulture, Winemaking and Wine Tourism	<p>Whilst the policy is supported in principle, in seeking to protect the local retail offer, criterion 2a sets out thresholds for the percentage of local goods to be sold. Whilst the intent of this is understood, it is not a land use consideration, and we consider it should be deleted from the policy and replaced with an ambition statement instead.</p>
Communities, Open Space & Active Travel	
SD45: Green Infrastructure	<p>We support the proposed changes, including the clarification and strengthening of the policy wording. The change to improving health and wellbeing through provision of green and blue spaces is particularly welcome. For major applications, commitment to the use of the urban greening factor should be considered.</p>

SD20: Walking, Cycling and Equestrian Routes

We note the requirement to link to the network of non-motorised routes beyond the national park, and welcome this joined up approach. Arun will work closely with the SDNPA in respect to routes between our two administrative areas.

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Agenda Item 12

PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2025

Economy Committee	Report Author	Public consultation prior to Committee Meeting (Y/N)	Date of Meeting	Full Council Meeting Date
Karl Roberts, Neil Crowther				
Deliverability of affordable housing through the s.106 process	N Crowther		18 March 25	14 May 2025
Arun Local Development Scheme (LDS) Update	Z Ellwood			
Response to Regulation 18 Consultation on the South Downs Local Plan Review (20 January to 17 March 2025)	V Hobday			
Land Use Framework Consultation	M Pengelly			
Barnham/Eastergate/Westergate Infrastructure Development Plan (BEWIDP)	D Easton			
Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - update on allocations and expenditure	I Moody & J Grieves	N	12 June 2025 TBC	July 2025
Consultation on Draft Conservation Area Character Appraisal for Public Comment (Aldwick Road, Bognor Regis)	M White	N		
Consultation on Draft Conservation Area Character Appraisal for Public Comment (Arundel)	M White	N		
Consultation on Draft Conservation Area Character Appraisal for Public Comment (Littlehampton Seafront)	M White	N		
Budget 2025/26 process	A Baden		4 September 2025 TBC	November 2025 TBC
Authority Monitoring Report (AMR)	N Crowther	N	13 November 2025 TBC	January 2026 TBC
Arun Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024/25	I Moody	N		
Arun Local Plan 2023/2041 Update (tentative – could be 27 Jan 2026)	I Moody	N		
Committee Revenue and Capital Budgets 2026/27	A Baden		27 January 2026 TBC	February 2026 (Special Budget Council) TBC

PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2025

Economy Committee	Report Author	Public consultation prior to Committee Meeting (Y/N)	Date of Meeting	Full Council Meeting Date
Karl Roberts, Neil Crowther				March 2026 TBC
			26 March 2026 TBC	May 2026 TBC
			2027 TBC	