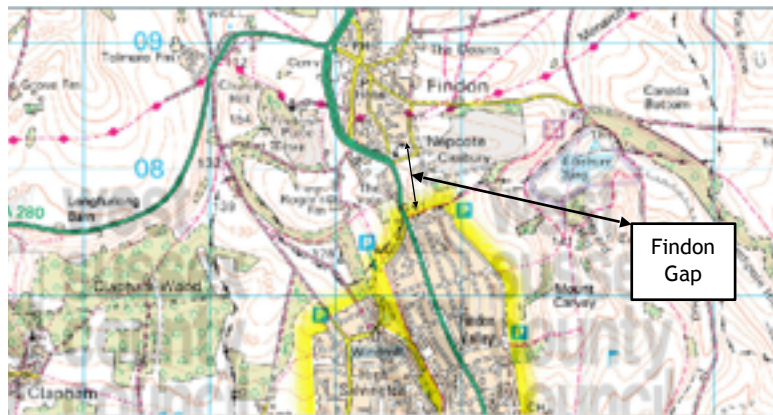


Policy ES1 Findon Gap

The village attaches great importance to conserving and enhancing the open land between the built up boundary around the southern end of the village and northern boundary of the Borough of Worthing which in this part of the Findon Dry Valley is coincident with the SDNPA boundary. This is referred to as the Findon Gap and historically is recognised as a Local Gap and mapped as a Strategic Gap in the 2012 Arun Green Infrastructure Study page 138. <http://www.arun.gov.uk/download.cfm?doc=docm93jjjm4n6854.pdf&ver>.

Some development has already taken place in the Findon Gap on the western side of the A24 (The Vale) but the Gap retains strong visual landscape value in sharp contrast to the suburban development of Findon Valley within the Borough of Worthing; this may have been a factor in demarking the SDNP boundary where it crosses the Findon Dry Valley. In brief the Gap serves as an important visual marker for this important gateway to and from the South Downs National Park. It is visible from the A24 trunk route and footpaths on the secondary escarpment to the east and west of the A24, most notably from Cissbury Ring and West Hill (marked by the relay mast at 128 metres elevation on the map)



In addition to its visual landscape value the Findon Gap is an important green infrastructural corridor facilitating east-west wildlife migration to and from downland habitats on the east

and west sides of the Findon Dry Valley. Furthermore this corridor contributes to public access to the SDNP. It is served by two substantial car parks readily accessible from the A24, up to six buses per hour linking it to central Worthing and could be served by a relatively simple extension of the Findon Valley to central Worthing Cycle Path. The east west footpath linking the residual crest of the secondary escarpment at Cissbury Ring to the corresponding secondary escarpment around West Hill is popular and offers access to a variety of downland habitats. The paddock land in the south west part of the Gap is contiguous with the sliver of South Downs National Park which is The Gallops in Worthing Borough and thus an important element of equestrian access and heritage is maintained.

The Gap is to become a target to enhance its value within the green infrastructure and to strengthen its landscape impact particularly as an urban buffer against the existing development in Findon Valley. The parish will seek to prepare a plan in partnership with the SDNPA and neighbouring authorities to encourage landowners to manage scrub, improve wildlife habitats, plant trees where appropriate to reinforce the urban buffer, further improve the management of paddocks and conserve the historic agricultural buildings which remain an integral part of the Gap. The Gap also contains a privately owned plot designated as allotments. This is no longer in use but its reinstatement would be consistent with enhancement of the green infrastructure. Likewise a significant pond on private land adjacent to the Wyevale Garden Centre offers a further opportunity for partnership working for enhancement.