

Progress on the updated Findon Neighbourhood Plan

The updated Neighbourhood Plan (UNP) has at last reached its final, formal consultation stage and will be subject to an independent Examination by an experienced planning consultant, following on from the consultation period, which ends on 16 September 2019.

Posters giving details of the consultation have been displayed round Findon and on the Findon Parish Council website where the UNP, the supporting Consultation and Basic Conditions Statements and the Evidence Base can be viewed. A paper version of the UNP and the supporting statements are also available at the Village Store. The South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) website also includes the documents under the 'Neighbourhood Planning' section. The SDNPA are our local planning authority (LPA) with strategic responsibility for planning matters in the South Downs National Park.

Most of you will recall that the UNP was primarily undertaken to allocate housing sites to meet the housing provision for Findon of around 30 new dwellings over the 16 year period of the UNP and that the housing site locations that emerged, as community preferred locations, are fundamentally different to those locations brought forward by the SDNPA and which are now included in the new SDNP Local Plan, adopted in July 2019.

The housing sites proposed in the UNP are at significantly less landscape sensitive and less local heritage sensitive locations than the Elm Rise and Soldiers Field sites which have been included in the SDNP Local Plan. The UNP sites also have considerably more community support, demonstrated through the housing site preferences surveys undertaken last year.

Although the independent Examiner will see the community comments which were made during the previous two local consultation stages and which have been incorporated into the final version of the UNP, this final consultation is a chance to demonstrate community support, or not, for the UNP and the way it was undertaken with proper local consultation.

We would encourage as many of you who can, to take up this opportunity, either by email or by writing a letter to the SDNPA. Comments can just be an overall statement of support, particularly if you have already engaged in the earlier local consultations, or can include particular concerns about any part of the UNP or the proposed housing site allocations. You can also comment on the SDNP Local Plan housing site allocations and on the process by which these allocations were made, in practice, with little or no local consultation.

You will of course also have the opportunity to vote in a local referendum on the updated Neighbourhood Plan, if the independent Examiner recommends that it can proceed to a referendum, with or without modifications and the SDNPA accepts that recommendation.

Comments can be made either by email to neighbourhood@southdowns.gov.uk or by post to **Planning Policy, South Downs National Park Authority, South Downs Centre, North Street, Midhurst, GU29 9DH**.....by monday 16th September 2019.

Thank you for all your support during the lengthy preparation of the UNP, which has had to run in parallel with the various stage of preparation of the SDNP Local Plan. We trust the UNP represents a fair balance of aspirations of the majority of the community in Findon parish and that the SDNPA will give full weight to these UNP aspirations and policies, when taking decisions on planning applications for new housing in Findon.

Updated Neighbourhood Plan Working Group

Findon Parish Council