

West Sussex County Council Infrastructure Position Statement for the South Downs National Park

The South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) is preparing an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP), which will identify future infrastructure needs within the Park to accompany the Local Plan. The IDP will also inform work to prepare for the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The IDP will identify infrastructure needs over the Local Plan period, which will be approximately 15 years from adoption.

This position statement identifies existing and planned infrastructure provision for County Council services. Given that it is currently unknown where and how much growth will be planned for in this part of the SDNP, the County Council is unable to identify specific infrastructure requirements at this stage. Where possible, this statement sets out key infrastructure planning considerations for each service. As the growth strategy emerges for this part of the SDNP, the County Council will work with the SDNP to identify future infrastructure requirements. The County Council will develop a Strategic Infrastructure Package to set out the infrastructure required to enable the provision of County Council services to meet the needs of new development within the SDNP.

Local Road Network and Sustainable Transport

West Sussex County Council is the Local Highway Authority for part of the SDNP. The County Council's aims, objectives and strategic priorities for transport are set out in the West Sussex Transport Plan 2011-2026 (WSTP). This includes a rural strategy, which sets out key issues for Rural West Sussex. There is also a long term strategy within the WSTP, which includes a commitment to work closely with the SDNPA to manage the impact of visitors to the area on the transport network.

The County Council is currently working with the SDNPA on a number of projects as part of the Two National Parks Local Sustainable Transport Fund (until March 2016) and South Downs Cycle Ambition (until March 2015) programmes using funding provided by the Department for Transport. Projects being delivered by these two programmes include:

- Planned improvements to cycling routes as part of a vision for a network of core routes into and around the National Park. These include improvements from Chichester, Barnham, Arundel and Shoreham-by-Sea gateways into the National Park, and cycle crossing improvements at Amberley station and for the Downs Link at Bramber.
- Enhancements to core bus routes across the park on Sundays throughout the year, including between Chichester and Petworth, between Midhurst and Petersfield and Crawley to Brighton via Hassocks and Pyecombe, and

enhanced bus real time passenger information at rail stations within and near to the Park.

- A National Park wide programme of behavioural change and promotional activities to increase sustainable transport use amongst visitors travelling to and within the Park.

Over the last three years, local members within the County Council have worked alongside their representative communities to develop a Community Issues list for each County Local Committee (CLC) area. The Community Issues lists record the aspirations and desires of local communities, from improving access to schools, to taking on highway responsibility through devolved powers. Items recorded on the lists have the support of parish councils and elected members. The Community Issues lists are used by members to choose Infrastructure Priorities (the schemes which will be delivered on the ground). These lists are reviewed regularly. The Community Issues are a key tool in the delivery of the Stronger Communities Programme.

Strategic infrastructure priorities for transport will be identified in line with the WSTP and, where appropriate, aim to help deliver the WSTP. A transport evidence base to support the Local Plan will need to be prepared to assess the impact of planned new development within the SDNP. The scale of evidence required will depend on the level of housing and employment growth that is anticipated.

Education

Existing education provision within the SDNP has been identified on a map – please see the attached plan.

As the Education Authority, the County Council provides school and youth education services within the county. The revenue costs of these services are accepted, but where new housing development would give rise to an increase in the population above the accepted available capacity in the relevant locality, then a contribution towards the costs of providing additional infrastructure will be sought.

The contributions will apply to all age groups from 4 to 18 years. It can therefore relate to primary and secondary schools in whatever pattern exists in the area and also to early years and youth services. There may be occasions when existing school sites cannot expand beyond existing capacity to cater for the child population a new housing development would generate. In such cases, it will be necessary (particularly in larger housing developments) to seek sites as well as financial contributions towards their development. This will be assessed on the likely child product of the housing development. For schools, the relevant building costs multiplier per pupil place, published by the Department for

Education will be applied. For youth facilities, the estimated costs of providing the necessary accommodation will be applied.

For primary schools, the County Council currently secures developer contributions for education provision within a particular locality; not just the primary school that is closest to a proposed development. For the SDNP Local Plan area there is not a defined locality, as not all the education provision from a locality sits within the SDNP. Localities that have schools within the SDNP are: Bourne, Chichester, Midhurst / Petworth, Angmering, Steyning / Storrington and Worthing.

Developer contributions do not reflect the true cost of providing a new school and these are topped up with the basic need grant. For example, the County Council may only receive £1m from a developer when the cost of a new school is £4-5m. However, announcements for 2013/14 showed a reduced level of funding in the form of the basic need grant. Should this reflect a continuing trend, then this will put pressure on funding for education infrastructure and additional developer contributions may be required in the future to supplement the reduced levels of grant funding.

The County Council is yet to determine its position regarding the suitability of CIL as a funding mechanism for different types of education infrastructure. For example, the provision of new primary schools may be more suited to S106 agreements. This could be reflected as an 'exclusion' in the Draft Regulation 123 List. The potential to accept transfers of land or infrastructure delivery 'in-kind' in satisfaction of the whole or part of the CIL would be welcomed. For example, this could allow developers to provide a new school on land provided by the developer to meet their obligations and for the buildings to be handed over to the academy / free school sponsor ready for occupation.

Provision to meet the needs of all pupils educationally should be considered including those with special educational needs and those that need specialist provision. There are also those pupils who for a time may not be thriving in a large school and may access alternative provision. This provision needs to increase at the same rate as the population in areas within West Sussex.

The County Council has a duty to secure sufficient free early education places for 3 and 4 year olds and the 40% most disadvantaged 2 year olds including children with disabilities from September 2014. The County Council also has a duty to ensure that the provision of childcare places (age group 0-14 and up to 18 for disabled young people) is sufficient to meet the needs of working parents.

Libraries

Within the SDNP, there are libraries in Arundel, Findon, Hassocks, Midhurst, Petworth, Steyning and Storrington. There is also mobile provision throughout

West Sussex. There is no planned provision of new library infrastructure in the National Park.

The County Council is continuing to explore opportunities for shared provision and use of buildings, expanding the virtual offer (e books and on-line services), the provision of unstaffed collections with self-service terminals in community buildings and a reassessment of the effectiveness of current library locations. In general this will mean a much more flexible approach to providing access to the Library Service than merely expanding or building more libraries. For instance, Midhurst Library is now delivered from The Grange: a shared building offering Leisure Services, Registration and a Library. In Petworth, plans for offering shared services from the existing library building are well developed. The requirement for infrastructure to support additional developments will need to be equally flexible and creative. Solutions could include funding to support an expansion to the virtual offer, or to enable the creation of partnership opportunities that require conversions and alterations to provide access to the service rather than the physical building of additional space.

Any increase in residential development within the National Park is likely to create additional demand for library provision. A flexible approach is required where the need for library provision is identified. Depending on the location or type of housing proposed, options may include enhancement of an existing service, additional mobile library coverage or shared provision in a community building (either staffed or self- service).

Fire & Rescue

Within the SDNP, there are fire stations in Midhurst and Petworth. There are also a number located on its boundary in Storrington, Steyning, Arundel, Henfield.

Financial contributions towards fire and rescue infrastructure, such as fire stations and appliances, may be required to meet the population growth from a proposed development. The West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (WSF&RS) works on an integrated, countywide structure. Where a need for supporting infrastructure in relation to a proposed development is identified, a proportional contribution towards the cost of infrastructure may be required. The WSF&RS is currently undertaking a service review and is therefore unable to identify specific improvement schemes at this stage. Additionally, the WSF&RS is required to produce an Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP) every five years with an annual action plan. The IRMP allows the WSF&RS to match its resources to the risk within the county; the next full review will be completed in 2015. It is suggested that fire and rescue infrastructure is identified as a type of infrastructure that may be funded by CIL. An appropriate exclusion is fire hydrants, which would be best delivered through S106 agreements.

Waste Management

West Sussex County Council, as Waste Disposal Authority and working with the District / Borough Council Waste Collection Authorities, co-ordinates and manages reduction, re-use, recycling, treatment and disposal of municipal waste, including household and some commercial / industrial waste. The Authority has a number of facilities in the County including waste transfer stations (WTS), household waste recycling sites (HWRS) and a materials recycling facility (MRF) which are operated under contract. One of these sites, the Midhurst HWRS, is located within the South Downs National Park (SDNP). The Authority also currently provides a mobile household waste service within the SDNP at Petworth, Fernhurst and South Harting. Other sites are located outside the SDNP, but their catchments include areas within the SDNP ie. Ford MRF, Lancing WTS, Chichester WTS & HWRS, Burgess Hill WTS & HWRS, Littlehampton HWRS, Worthing HWRS, Shoreham-By-Sea HWRS and Billingshurst HWRS.

Development throughout West Sussex has a cumulative effect on the above facilities and services. Whilst additional infrastructure is not currently planned, development proposals within the SDNP will be monitored for their effect.

Green Infrastructure and Public Rights of Way

The planning, creation and management of green infrastructure is an important component of community infrastructure. Multi-functioning green infrastructure can play a significant role in delivering improved transport (e.g. public rights of way network and cycle routes), improved health (through improved access to greenspace, higher quality environment, clean air, etc) and flood defence, as well as enhanced biodiversity. Improvements and upgrades to Public Rights of Way will be integral to delivering the Special Qualities of the SDNP and support its statutory purpose to promote enjoyment of the Park.

Green Infrastructure should be identified in the draft CIL Regulation 123 list. This should include improvements and upgrades to Public Rights of Way (other than site specific requirements).

Youth Support and Development

There is a team of dedicated Youth Workers who undertake youth projects at various facilities across the county, for the South Downs area. This mainly consists of specific youth projects concentrating on the rural areas and outer fringes of larger settlement areas, using the Youth Support and Development Services (YSDS) mobile support units to provide targeted support with the use of the 'Snack Wagon' and 'Purple Bus'.

Any significant increase in households would mean an increase of young people with the potential for the number to grow in future years dependent on occupancy of families with younger children. This increase would determine

whether any new development would produce a gap in localised services for young people.

Where gaps in YSDS provision are identified, in the interests of supporting strong communities, specific solutions meeting the requirements for young people within a locality are to be developed. Required facilities should ideally be dedicated space for young people's use that enables community interaction and reduces the potential for community tension between differing residents. Proposed facilities do not necessarily need to be provided within a new development site, but must be situated within a suitable catchment area. Specific 'Open Place Spaces' can also be created within Open Spaces provided in association with new development in order to support young people based outcomes.

The youth building withdrawals across the area have been significant. This has had an impact on services being delivered at a universal level, and the need for communities to take the lead in developing and delivering appropriate youth provision needs to be encouraged to support the universal requirement. There is adequate YSDS provision existing for the current needs, providing targeted and specialist support to tackle issues associated with young people. Concentrating on the rural areas and outer fringes of larger settlement areas, there will be continued use of the mobile support units through the 'Snack Wagon' and 'Purple Bus'.

West Sussex County Council
19th September 2014