South Downs
National Park Authority

South Downs Local Plan Review
First consultation (Regulation 18)

Integrated Impact Assessment
(to include Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment)

APPENDIX A
SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

October 2024

Key Sustainability Issues and Consequences for Future Baseline of the South Downs National Park (taken from the 2024 Scoping Report)

Key Sustainability Issues	Evidence and Trends	Consequences for Future Baseline
Landscape	Landscape	Landscape
Degradation of landscape character.	Increasing specialisation of agriculture, increase in the areas of cultivation or cropping, changing lifestyles and changing forms of land ownership. Incremental, small-scale change with gradual erosion of local rural character is a key concern. Conversion of former farm buildings remains an issue, and a recent increase in small holdings and alternative farm enterprises has led to subdivision and clutter. There has also been a notable decrease in grazing, and, in some areas, lack of management and 'set aside' is creating an agricultural landscape that is at odds with the managed character.	Continued loss and degradation of landscape character.
Increased urbanisation and loss of local distinctiveness, character and integrity of the historic built environment and its setting.	Local distinctiveness being eroded by incremental change, small-scale developments, extensions and conversions unsympathetic to settlement form and local vernacular styles. The percentage of listed buildings at risk remains low.	Pressures for provision of housing, particularly affordable housing within the SDNP have the potential to adversely affect the landscape character and the overspill of existing villages and market towns into surrounding rural areas. Further unsympathetic developments will lead to the greater erosion or loss of the character and local distinctiveness of the SDNP settlements and landscape.

Key Sustainability Issues	Evidence and Trends	Consequences for Future Baseline
Tranquillity and Dark Night Skies.	Loss of landscape character and tranquillity through poorly sited noisy developments and/or excessive and poorly designed lighting. The South Downs is accessible to a large surrounding population, with 10 million people within an hour's drive. There is consequent demand for infrastructure and facilities, increasing recreational car traffic within the National Park. This results in changes to existing recreation sites, and cumulative effects on the special qualities of remoteness and 'wilderness' that people come to enjoy.	Continued loss of landscape character and tranquillity and reduction in dark sky zone and increased light pollution. Increase in traffic within the National Park and increase in noise and air pollution.
Landscapes can provide support for species needing to move or respond to climate change.	Some habitats and species are more sensitive to climatic change than others. Species composition can change, for example favouring grasses and more drought tolerant species. Small sites have less resilience and isolated fragments of habitat are more likely to be lost. Through increasing the resilience of the National Park's natural environment to change, this will enable landscape character both to be protected and evolve in a way which will enhance its capacity to support the Special Qualities of the National Park. This will also help the landscape of the National Park adapt to the likely impacts of climate change and extreme weather events over the longer term through promoting a landscape level ecological approach.	Ecological connectivity is an important function of the landscapes. Without it, species are unable to move and adapt to environmental change. Increased habitat fragmentation will mean that landscapes will lack the adaptive capacity to deal with major threats, such as a shift in climatic conditions.

Key Sustainability Issues	Evidence and Trends	Consequences for Future Baseline
Biodiversity and Nature Recovery	Biodiversity and Nature Recovery	Biodiversity and Nature Recovery
Potential conflicts between differing priorities e.g. access and biodiversity.	Recreational use of internationally designated nature conservation sites has the potential to prevent appropriate management or exacerbate existing management difficulties, cause damage through erosion and fragmentation, cause nutrient enrichment because of dog fouling, and cause disturbance to sensitive species such as ground-nesting birds and wintering wildfowl.	Pressures for increased provision of access and recreational opportunities and increased development within and on the edge of the SDNP have the potential to adversely affect the richness and diversity of the Park's wildlife and habitats.

Key Sustainability Issues	Evidence and Trends	Consequences for Future Baseline
Climate change threats to biodiversity.	The Climate Change Adaption Plan sets out the main vulnerabilities to climate change impacts relating to the key natural and cultural assets of the National Park. These have been based around the projections presented within the UK Climate Impact Projections (2009). There are significant impacts on species, habitats and the natural assets of the South Downs. In some cases, the speed of change may be greater than the ability of species or habitats to fully adapt or shift. Though evidence is being accrued, it is not understood what the full ecological impacts of climate change. In the longer term there are challenges in deciding which species and habitats it is realistic to conserve and enhance, and which need to be supported to adapt or shift their range – or face loss. Key issues include a) changes in species composition and declines in diversity due to changes in climatic conditions and vulnerability of some species to temperature change, b) impacts on species may include changes in distribution and abundance, and the timing of seasonal events and habitat use. Therefore, there are likely to be changes in the composition of plant and animal communities, c) habitats are also likely to change, for example higher growth rates in forests, d) decrease in the overall ecological connectivity of the wider landscape, c) loss of condition of designated sites or priority habitats may occur. A key threat is also coastal squeeze – which is from the rise in sea level – and the loss of inter-tidal habitat.	Risk assessments and the Climate Change action plan will need to be kept under review as climate change impacts that have been considered may occur over a shorter timescale than originally projected. Over the longer-term other risks may materialise that were not considered or planned for. Therefore, a continual management and understanding of the baseline situation is constant and essential. Actions include: Increase habitat connectivity and the permeability of the landscape to wildlife. Undertake adaptive management and ensure that areas of valuable habitat are bigger, better managed and joined up. Increase the quality and habitat diversity of wildlife sites. Improve the quality of existing 'core' wildlife sites (such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)) to enable populations of target species to grow and expand their range.

Key Sustainability Issues	Evidence and Trends	Consequences for Future Baseline
Long-term, sustainable land management for biodiversity, ecosystem services and ecological networks.	Many wildlife habitats are small and fragmented. Lack of long-term, sustainable land management for biodiversity, ecosystem services. Loss of ecological networks (trees, woodland and hedgerows).	The failure to address habitat fragmentation and management issues will result in further deterioration in site conditions and loss of biodiversity through insufficient capacity to support vulnerable species. Loss of ecological networks will impact on the ability to support habitats and species and ecological linkages.
Biodiversity Net Gain.	Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is an approach to development and associated land management that aims to leave biodiversity in a measurably better state than before. The Government made it a mandatory requirement for all development to achieve a 10% net gain for biodiversity through the Environment Act.	The number of development schemes that leave biodiversity in a measurably better state than before increases in number and significance.
Key Sustainability Issues	Evidence and Trends	Consequences for Future Baseline
Historic environment, Heritage Assets and Cultural Heritage	Historic environment, Heritage Assets and Cultural Heritage	Historic environment, Heritage Assets and Cultural Heritage
Damage to archaeological sites and historic features and historic landscapes and designated parkland.	Two flint mines within the National Park are listed as 'Heritage at Risk'. 33 of the Heritage at Risk sites in the National Park are Bronze Age in date and 30 of these are sites with one or more barrows. Parts of the Chichester Entrenchments, the Caburn hillfort, two field systems and a settlement are on the Heritage at Risk register. The Heritage at Risk register includes one stretch of Roman road, a temple site and a villa/farmstead in the National Park. There is only one Saxon site on the Heritage at Risk register. This is a cemetery site. While the Heritage At Risk register does not include any medieval archaeological site it does include six medieval buildings, four of which are churches.	Lack of detailed knowledge and management may lead to further degradation and loss of archaeological features and other heritage assets.

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Heritage asset at risk including Conservation Areas and listed buildings.	Using the Buildings at Risk (BaR) Survey, there are 5,861 listed buildings. Of these 69 are now recorded as being at risk, which gives a percentage of 1.17%. The percentage of buildings being at risk remains very low by national standards, probably reflecting high property values within the National Park.	Buildings and structures of limited or no economic value are expected to become ever more prominent among those listed buildings identified as at risk. Failure to address heritage assets at risk will result in an increase in number and/or a lack of imaginative solutions to those that remain on the at risk register.
Climate change affecting the Historic Environment.	Energy efficiency assessment of the existing building stock is complicated by the fact that standard calculating methods underestimate the thermal performance of traditionally built buildings. Protection of heritage assets is important when upgrading the energy performance of these buildings. Historic assets such as barrows, hill forts and buried archaeology are sensitive to rainfall, erosion and encroachment by vegetation. If current and projected trends continue these features may be adversely affected.	Effective assessment and targeting of energy efficiency programmes will be needed to ensure heritage assets are protected when improving the efficiency of buildings.
Key Sustainability Issues	Evidence and Trends	Consequences for Future Baseline
Climate Change	Climate Change	Climate Change
Flood risk, increased soil erosion and adaptation related to both sea level rise and current and projected wetter winters. Increased cycles of drought and flooding are projected. Increase in extreme rainfall events and flooding.	Observed sea level rise between 1970 and 2000 has been around 50mm and now averages 3mm per year. The southeast has seen a notable increase in risk on the UK wildfire index. Some chalk grassland species are more sensitive to drought and heat stress than others. Species composition can change, with conditions favouring some grasses. The cost of damage to UK properties through flooding has reached around £1.3 billion per annum. More extreme rainfall events, such as in 2007, 2009 and 2012, have caused significant disruption and damage.	If this trend continues the effectiveness of coastal defences may be reduced, increasing the risk of coastal flooding. Sea level rise may affect the natural functioning of tidal rivers and estuaries. The trend towards hotter, drier summers may see an increased fire risk on lowland heath. There may be increased risk of flooding of properties and agricultural land in river valleys and low-lying areas.

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Increased heat and the impacts on health and wellbeing. Flooding and the impact on health.	Environmental impacts, driven by climate change, are likely to have significant impacts on society, health and well-being. Extremes or increases in summer temperatures can lead to increased mortality and morbidity in elderly or vulnerable groups of the population. Flooding events increasingly affect the lives of many communities. Along with the risks to life and property there are also impacts upon health and wellbeing, social cohesion and disruption to essential services. Higher temperatures and weaker air circulation leads to increased low level ozone formation and poorer air quality.	Without adaptation strategies and actions, the impact of climate change on health and well-being will increase especially among vulnerable members of the population. Action includes: Work with partners and recreation interest groups to manage and promote recreational access and to provide a greater variety of recreational activities. Promote green corridors, high quality green spaces and street trees within the urban environment to improve capacity for regulating air quality, providing shade and helping to manage the 'urban heat island' effect at a local level. Develop design codes that result in more sustainable building and schemes, with the best design, layout and materials to make them resilient to climate change.
Opportunities to develop low carbon and renewable energy within the NP consistent with SDNPA purposes.	Generation of electricity from renewable sources is increasing in the Southeast. In 2013, the region generated 5,550 GWh of electricity from renewable sources; equivalent to 14.3% of total energy consumption in the region, and the second highest of any region in England. Of this, 3,336 GWh were from wind, 965 GWh were from landfill gas, and 814 GWh were from other sources of bioenergy. There is considerable opportunity for increasing the number of homes heated through wood fuel. The Forestry Commission suggest that there is around 328km2 of woodland cover across the South Downs.	Any development in respect of renewables cannot be allowed to compromise the nationally important landscape character which National Park status is designated to conserve and enhance. The challenge for the SDNPA is to determine the right technology in the right place.

Key Sustainability Issues	Evidence and Trends	Consequences for Future Baseline
Community, Health & Wellbeing	Community, Health & and Wellbeing	Community, Health & and Wellbeing
Demographic and needs of the local population.	As is the case in most areas in the UK, the population in the South Downs National Park is ageing. Although there has been growth in the 16-24 and 45-64 age bands between 2002 and 2016, this has not been sufficient to offset decline in the 0-15 and 25-44 age groups and the growth in the over 65s. The biggest growth of 3.1% has been in the 65-74 age band (Ref: Economic Profile of the South Downs National Park 2018). The 65+ age group has continued to increase at the fastest rate and now makes up 25.35% of the population in the National Park while 25 to 44 year olds have shown the greatest decline (reference Economic Profile update 2020).	Facilities for youth become increasingly difficult to sustain because of out-migration of families that cannot afford to live in SDNP and the lack of employment opportunities in rural areas. Given the high proportion of larger houses and the associated high prices of housing, access to affordable housing is a key issue facing many local communities. Young people and young families find it difficult to get low-cost housing and therefore to continue living in the area. Fewer working residents living in the park results in increased traffic movements. Specific housing for older residents may be required.
Loss or reduction in availability of some community assets and services.	The potential for town centre floorspace development is highly constrained, with all main town centres containing significant numbers of listed buildings and an already tightly packed street scene. There are few areas of derelict land of any significant size, nor are there opportunities for larger-scale redevelopment. It is important that all residents within the National Park have access to a range of essential services and facilities, where possible, and the smaller village centres have a vital role to play. There may also be pressure on neighbouring authorities to provide accessible and relevant services. There is a wide range of community infrastructure facilities that are vital in maintaining the sustainability of both larger settlements and rural communities. Community infrastructure facilities enable essential public services to be provided as locally as possible.	The continued loss of community facilities undermines the communities themselves and the degree of social interaction as well as detracting from the sense of place that these facilities provide. This results in communities accessing services and facilities outside the community / National Park increasing pressure on rural roads etc.

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Urban areas adjacent to the park include pockets of poverty and poor health.	Mapping the indices of multiple deprivation (IMD) demonstrates that in terms of general deprivation, overall, this is low across the SDNP, but there are areas of higher deprivation around Brighton and Hove and Worthing, as well as pockets at Petworth and, notably, a large rural area of Lewes District.	Some social and cultural groups of people groups visit National Parks less than others. This is also evident regarding gender and disability. Without effective Local Plan and Partnership Management Plan policies to address this, SDNPA would be failing in its responsibility to promote understanding and enjoyment to all sectors of society. Health and wellbeing will deteriorate without a suitable partnership strategy.
Incidences of rural crime in the South Downs National Park encompassing: Wildlife Crime – Poaching, hare coursing Anti-Social Behaviour – fly tipping, littering, illegal use of private land. Farm crime – metal theft, fuel theft, equipment theft and sheep worrying	Rural crime highlighted as a common issue in community led plans across the National Park. High numbers of people focused on some areas of the SDNP has led to recurring problems for some landowners and communities. These include injuries to sheep and disturbance to ground nesting birds by uncontrolled dogs, inconsiderate car parking, fly tipping and gates being left open.	Increased costs for landowners. Cost of removing fly-tipping, negative impact on the special qualities of the National Park, impact on visitors / tourism.
Key Sustainability Issues	Evidence and Trends	Consequences for Future Baseline
Employment and Economy	Employment and Economy	Employment and Economy
Economy – disconnected from the landscape/local area (out-commuting to jobs in surrounding towns/cities).	Approximately 14,000 residents commute out to other destinations in the southeast, including London. The population is dominated by the "Countryside category" i.e. well-off individuals living in rural or semi-rural location, mostly living in detached housing, working in agriculture or a professional capacity and often working from home.	Pattern of out-commuting does not foster strong locally based rural economy further undermining communities and local services. It can also create differences in the salary levels of those that live within the SDNPA but work outside of the National Park and those that are local workers, living within the Park. Increased trend of home working may however support daytime activities in some villages.

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Many areas of the SDNP suffer from poor broadband access and/or 'dead zones' with no signal. This is a constraint to competitiveness in the online marketplace.	The 2012 State of the Park report recorded that there were very few places within the National Park with broadband speeds higher than 8Mb per second. The national BDUK programme is addressing much of this with the roll out of superfast broadband (24Mbps). Programmes are aimed at achieving 95% coverage. Modelling work commissioned by SDNPA, and other information, shows that areas of SDNP will be in the last 5% not covered by the national programme.	Any shortfall in achieving comprehensive (100%) superfast broadband coverage will constrain business growth in the National Park and the competitiveness of existing businesses. There is a visual and landscape impact of new telecommunication masts within the Park.
Global market-driven forces influence agriculture within the National Park. This has resulted in increased intensity of agricultural activities.	Land used for agriculture and forestry covers most of the National Park and is the most important provider of its ecosystem services. These range from the provisioning of food, biomass and other materials such as timber to the regulation of water and soil quality. It provides habitats for many of the National Park's most distinctive species, and the cultural benefits arising from the protection of beautiful and centuries old landscapes that attract visitors.	Changing agriculture has affected the landscape and features of the South Downs in the past and will continue to do so in the future; recognition of this underpins the need for an ecosystem services approach that should include a realistic valuation of food production (strategic and social importance, not just farm-gate prices).

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The tourism sector is largely leisure driven, and there are frequent shortages of all types of accommodation at weekends throughout the year and during the week in summer. There is strong demand for high-quality accommodation and clear prospects for future growth in the demand for all types of visitor accommodation. The National Park has sensitive habitats and landscapes, and a rich and varied historic environment. There is a need to ensure visitors enjoy the National Park without compromising its special qualities. Proposals for visitor accommodation, attractions, recreational activities, environmental education and interpretation should provide opportunities for visitors to increase their awareness, enjoyment, and understanding of the National Park.	The South Downs National Park is the largest rural resource for recreation and tourism in the Southeast of England, thus tourism plays a significant role in its local economy. The last overarching estimate showed that the National Park has approximately 46 million visitor days per year, making it the most popular Protected Landscape in the country which generates an income of nearly £5 billion and supports some 12,000 jobs. The South Downs National Park is found within just a few miles of several major conurbations. The National Park also has fragile habitats and sensitive areas, a small number of hotspots currently attract a very disproportionate number of its visitors, and the vast majority arrive by car.	Consideration of development proposals for visitor accommodation, visitor attractions and recreation facilities that minimised travel and does not detract from the local area is important and without this – the impact on visitors to the Park could be negative. The tourism offer should be a year-round visitor economy and without this, the season will continue to have peaks and troughs – to the detriment of the tourism sector.
Key Sustainability Issues	Evidence and Trends	Consequences for Future Baseline
Equality and Inclusion	Equality and Inclusion	Equality and Inclusion
Inequalities exist in both physical and educational access to the countryside and cultural facilities between different race, ethnicity and social groups and between genders and those with disabilities.	Although 10% of the population nationally is from a BME background, only 1% of visits to National Park are from a BME community (Campaign for National Parks).	Some social and cultural groups of people groups visit National Parks less than others. This is also evident regarding gender and disability. Without effective Local Plan and Partnership Management Plan policies to address this, SDNPA would be failing in its responsibility to promote understanding and enjoyment to all sectors of society.

Key Sustainability Issues	Evidence and Trends	Consequences for Future Baseline
The South Downs is under huge pressure from car use. Accessibility for disabled people and those without cars (especially the young and elderly) across the National Park is becoming increasingly difficult.	The South Downs is under huge pressure from car use. The 2018 Visitor Survey estimates that 77% of visits were made by car. Improving public transport into and around the boundary is therefore vital. The retention and expansion of rural transport services is a key issue for the National Park. Rural bus services have reduced in the last five years through cuts in the budgets of Passenger Transport Authorities. This is having an impact on young people's ability to access education and employment and is increasing isolation among elderly or disabled rural residents without access to a car.	Certain groups in society are not able to access the opportunities within the park such as towns, services, education and employment as suitable and accessible and affordable public transport is either not available or is infrequent.
Need to provide housing and facilities for an aging population	The population in the South Downs National Park is ageing. Although there has been growth in the 16-24 and 45-64 age bands between 2002 and 2016, this has not been sufficient to offset decline in the 0-15 and 25-44 age groups and the growth in the over 65s. The biggest growth of 3.1% has been in the 65-74 age band (Ref: Economic Profile of the South Downs National Park 2018). The 65+ age group has continued to increase at the fastest rate and now makes up 25.35% of the population in the National Park while 25 to 44 year olds have shown the greatest decline (reference Economic Profile update 2020).	Specific housing for older residents may be required.

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Housing	Housing	Housing
Need for affordable homes.	The analysis within the 2023 HEDNA identifies a notable need for affordable housing, and provision of new affordable housing is an important and pressing issue in the area. There has been a notable increase (+22% or around 5,500 people) in the number of older people in the National Park (those aged 65 and over). The proportion of households with dependent children in SDNP is low with around 25% of all households containing dependent children in 2021 (compared with around 29% regionally and nationally). Given the nature of the area and the needs identified, many units should be houses rather than flats – particularly for homes with 2- or 3-bedrooms. There is potentially a demand for bungalows, although realistically significant delivery of this type of accommodation is unlikely. It is however possible that delivery of some bungalows might be particularly attractive to older person households downsizing and may help to release larger (family-sized) accommodation back into family use.	Provision of housing to meet local needs is crucial to ensure the sustainability and vitality of communities within the National Park. Population will continue to age; loss of facilities will continue with a lack of younger population to fill local jobs. Increased development pressure on areas outside the National Park.

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Housing to meet local needs.	The residents of the National Park play a pivotal role in sustaining its vibrant communities and shaping its unique landscapes. There is real pride in our towns and villages, and many people dedicate time and resources to enhancing community life, conserving what is important to their local area and planning for the needs of future generations. Together we want to help our communities to become more sustainable and resilient and to provide environments that improve health and wellbeing, where residents have better access to housing, jobs, facilities, infrastructure and the services they need. Generally, house prices are higher in the National Park than surrounding urban areas, which tends to prevent those on low incomes from accessing housing. A high proportion of larger dwellings exacerbates this situation and can lead to unbalanced communities with young people and families unable to live in the National Park.	Housing to meet local needs is important to sustain future generations and communities, and to support rural enterprise. However, the provision of housing should not be at the expense of a nationally protected landscape.
Under provision of transit and permanent traveller sites.	Accommodation needs assessments Are currently being updated but are likely to result in additional need for gypsy and traveller pitches and travelling showman plots. The 2022 'call for sites' for the Land Availability Assessment included such sites, but few were submitted. Further site identification work will need to be carried out, including discussions with adjoining authorities, to identify suitable sites to meet the unmet need.	Increase in illegal encampments; increase in planning applications for pitches / sites; potentially an increase in planning appeals related to the former.

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Low capacity for settlements to accommodate new housing. Resistance from community. Locations for new housing often unsustainable.	Sites are allocated within the adopted local plan and neighbourhood plans. The AMR showed the output for 2022/23 was below the annualised provision figure from the Local Plan. However, the level of completions has picked up from the previous two years when the impact on construction progress of the Covid-19 pandemic and multiple lockdowns was clearly seen. This gradual return to pre-pandemic levels reflects national trends in the construction industry. The SDNPA has a robust five-year land supply of housing principally due to several large sites coming forward for development at the same time. The supply translates to 6.92 years against the annualised local plan provision figure of 250 dwellings per annum, or 6.58 years against the provision figure plus 5% buffer and taking into account the previous year undersupply (272 dwellings per annum).	It should be noted there is an issue with Sussex North Water Resource Zone that impacts on potential developability of some sites in the housing trajectory due to water neutrality.
Key Sustainability Issues	Evidence and Trends	Consequences for Future Baseline
Transport	Transport	Transport
Poor public transport infrastructure within the SDNP. High dependence on cars by residents in / around SDNP with associated peak time congestion and parking.	Many areas in the SDNP have poor public transport accessibility, reflecting a lack of bus service provision both within, and connecting to, the area. The poor public transport infrastructure is reflected in high dependence upon cars with 85% of residents owning one car and an estimated 63% of the working population travelling to work by car representing 7.76 million two-way journeys annually. Subsidised bus services have been cut in all four Local Transport Authority areas within SDNP.	Increasing dependence upon cars is not consistent with the low carbon economy that the SDNPA is seeking to develop. Poor public transport infrastructure combined with increasing numbers of visitors to the National Park will exacerbate problems of congestion on roads and adversely affect tranquillity. Lack of access to public transport results in social exclusion leaving vulnerable groups in rural areas without access to services that are readily available to residents with cars or those living in urban areas.

Key Sustainability Issues	Evidence and Trends	Consequences for Future Baseline
High visitor dependence upon cars makes car parking an issue particularly for popular destinations and for mass participation events such as long-distance runs /cycle rides.	Data suggests an average of 39 million visitor days spent in the South Downs, 84% of which are reliant upon cars.	Continued growth in car usage by communities in and around the park, combined with increased volume of traffic associated with visitors will exacerbate existing problems of congestion and car parking in the SDNP undermining the NP purposes. It will impact negatively on landscape protection and nature recovery, air pollution and noise. Issues are likely to be: Managing access points to reduce negative impacts at hotspots; planning access points and interchanges to boost visits by sustainable means; and planning rights of way improvements in relation to access by sustainable means of travel. Consideration of charging points for electric cars.

Key Sustainability Issues	Evidence and Trends	Consequences for Future Baseline
Protection & Sustainable Use of Resources	Protection & Sustainable Use of Resources	Protection & Sustainable Use of Resources
Water demand for both domestic and agricultural use exceeds supply, with resulting over-abstraction from aquifers / rivers affecting quality of water sources.	Parts of the region are under serious water stress. Abstraction, from both the Chalk and Lower Greensand aquifers across the National Park, already exceed the available natural resource (Environment Agency, 2012).	The government target is to reduce per capita consumption to 130 litres / day whereas current pcc for the SDNP resource zones is 170 litres / day. The Building Regulations (2010) Part G was amended in 2015 to require that all new dwellings must ensure that potential water consumption must not exceed 125 litres/person/day, or 110 litres/person/day where required under planning conditions (HM Government, 2015b). The Governments Environmental Improvement Plan contains a commitment to consider a new standard for new homes in England of 105 litres per person per day (l/p/d) and 100 l/p/d where there is a clear local need, such as in areas of serious water stress. Portsmouth Water encourage local planning authorities to consider higher standards of water efficiency in new developments, with all new homes being built to a minimum standard of 100 litres per person per day. Southern Water want to help customers reduce how much water they use to 100 litres per person, per day by 2040. By 2025, Southeast Water are targeting the annual amount of water used by each of our customers to reduce from 143.1 litres a day in 2019/20 to 131.5 litres a day. During 2022/23, customers each used an average of 150.3 litres of water a day For Thames Water - in 2021-22, the three-year rolling average pcc performance was 147.5 litres per person per day (against a target of 142.6). Increasing population growth in the coastal towns will place existing chalk aquifers under further pressure and without reduction in per capita consumption in the longer term.

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Maintenance of clean water supply in face of increasing demand given drier summers.	Clean water is essential for life. The chalk aquifers and river catchments of the South Downs provide drinking water, and we rely on the supply for commercial and domestic uses.	Water shortages during dry periods will result in more frequent incidence of hosepipe bans and water usage restrictions.
All development proposals within the Sussex North Water Resource (Supply) Zone that consume mains water that would lead to a material increase in water demand will need to demonstrate 'water neutrality.	Within the Sussex North zone – for every new development, total water use in the region after the development must be equal to or less than the total water-use in the region before the new development. The existing water supply in the Sussex North water supply zone cannot be ruled out as contributing to the declines in wildlife within internationally protected sites in the Arun Valley, Sussex. The SDNPA lies within water company areas of "serious water stress" as outlined in the Government document Water stressed areas – 2021 classification.	Increasing pressure on abstraction will increase the vulnerability of surface water bodies and aquifers to further deterioration in ecological status without adequate management measures to address these issues. The developing strategy will include guidelines for water consumption requirements for new development within Sussex North water supply zone. It is Intended that these will be transposed into Policies and accompanying tools within each Local Plan within the Sussex North water supply zone. The document Water stressed areas – 2021 classification - should also be used as an evidence base for determining water consumption standards, especially for the areas within the National Park boundary that fall outside of the Sussex North Water Supply Zone.
Increased impact on soil condition with increased erosion and nutrient loss.	Soil degradation in England is currently estimated at between £250 and £350 Million per annum. Increased cycles of drought and flooding are projected. Since 1990, southern England has experienced an increase in soil moisture deficit, with a corresponding increase in water abstraction for irrigation. In spring 2011 the region experienced much drier than average conditions, causing problems for farmers.	If these trends continue, we may see a decline in yields or loss of crops due to drought. There may be an impact on soil condition with increased erosion and nutrient loss/run-off on some steeper slopes. Higher rainfall is likely to result in increased soil erosion.