

Statement of Common Ground

with the South Downs National Park Authority

February 2020

Introduction & Background

This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) is a jointly agreed statement between the South Down National Park Authority (respondent No R231) and Havant Borough Council ('the authorities') in relation to the Pre-Submission Draft (Regulation 19) Havant Borough Local Plan 2036 (HBLP). The South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) is a neighbouring authority to Havant Borough Council. A plan is provided at Appendix 1 showing the location and administrative areas covered by the statement.

Cross boundary meetings have taken place in the formulation of the HBLP, and draft versions of pertinent policies for the HBLP were shared with SDNPA.

Representations

The SDNPA submitted a formal response to the Regulation 19 Consultation (Respondent Number R231).

Respondent no.	Respondent name	Comment no.
R231	South Downs National Park Authority	C01 – C06

The SDNPA did not raise any concerns regarding soundness or legal compliance, but suggested a number of improvements to the plan, which have been agreed by HBC, and are discussed below.

Cross-boundary priorities

The SDNPA has a set of six strategic cross-boundary priorities:

- Conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area
- Conserving and enhancing the region's biodiversity (including green infrastructure issues)
- The delivery of new homes, including affordable homes and pitches for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople
- The promotion of sustainable tourism
- Development of the local economy
- Improving the efficiency of transport networks by enhancing the proportion of travel by sustainable modes and promoting policies which reduce the need to travel.

HBC commits to working with SDNP on cross-boundary matters, and considers that their Local Plan contributes to these priorities.

Development allocations

a. Southleigh (KP5)

The land currently forms an undeveloped corridor between the National Park and Chichester Harbour AONB. The authorities agree that opportunities should be sought for wildlife linkages between the two protected landscapes. The SDNPA suggested improvements to the policy to

achieve this. Suggested changes are set out in Appendix 2. The two authorities will work together, and with neighbouring authority Chichester District Council and West Sussex County Council, to develop these wildlife corridors, which may also need to extend into other nearby development sites in order to connect with Chichester Harbour AONB.

The SDNPA welcomed reference to walking and cycling links to the SDNP (criterion a.xv), but suggested that policy should also acknowledge that this may require off-site enhancements. In addition, the SDNPA suggested that due to the scale of the site close to the National Park's Dark Night Sky Reserve, the allocation would benefit from referencing the conservation and enhancement of Dark Night Skies.

b. Havant Thicket Reservoir (KP9)

The SDNPA encourages a policy approach that would seek to maximise recreational opportunities arising from this major infrastructure project. The scheme has the potential to provide a number of benefits – recreational as well as the main reservoir function. The various formal recreation routes around the site will help absorb recreation pressures in the area. The SDNP suggested that to maximise this benefit, the policy should reference links with the SDNP. Opportunities for non-motorised watersports activities are likely to compliment the SDNP's Purpose 2 and should be supported in principle. Wording changes have been agreed and are set out at Appendix 2.

c. Land North of Long Copse Lane (H8)

The SDNPA welcomed the reference to multi-user links (criteria k.vii and k.viii), and the woodland buffer for Bechstein's bats, but suggested further additional text to clarify the provisions, as well as a clear reference to the National Park's Dark Night Sky Reserve. Wording changes to deal with these comments have been agreed by the council and the Authority and set out at Appendix 2.

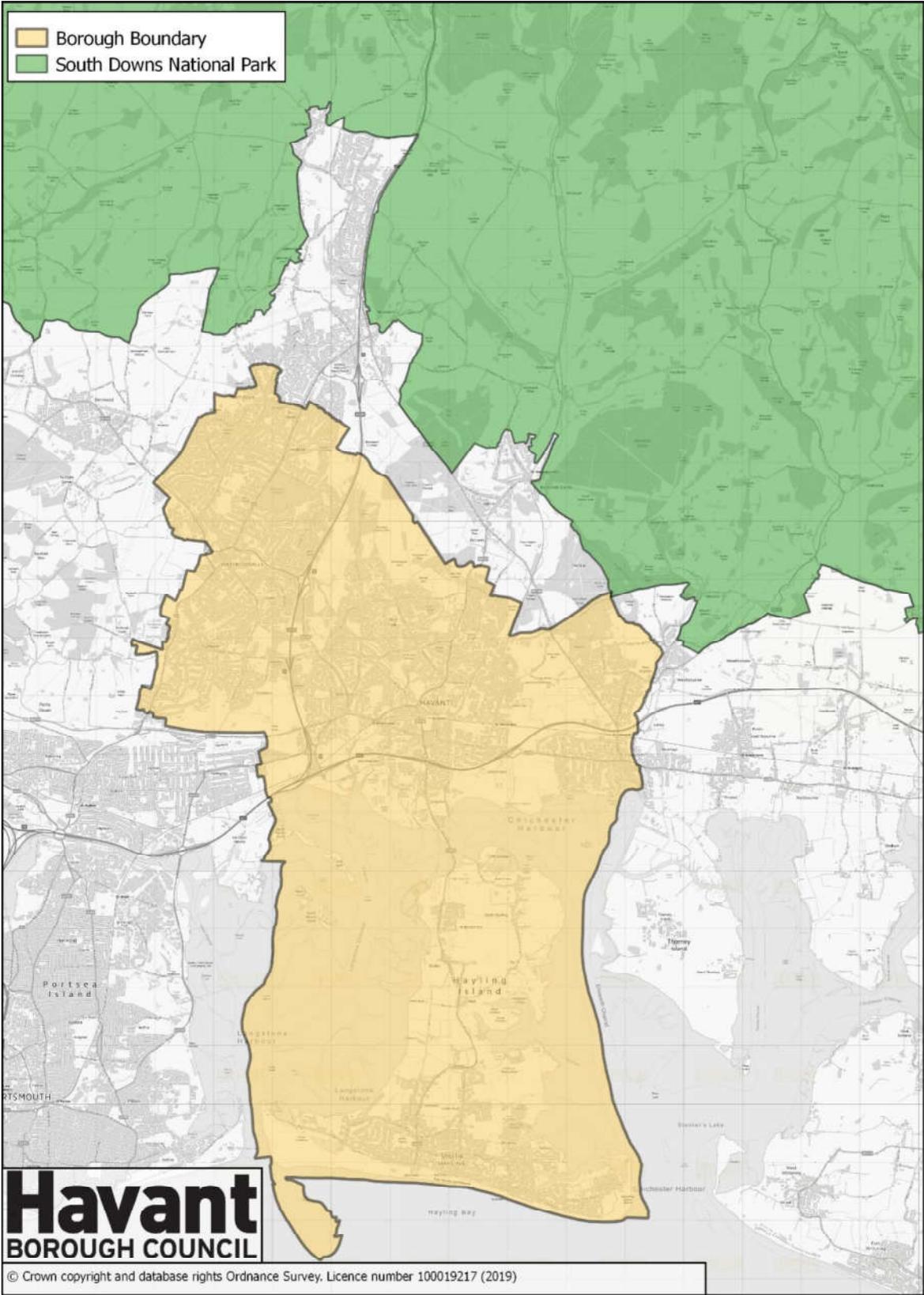
d. Camp Field, Bartons Road (H18)

The SDNPA considers that this site is not particularly close to the boundary of the park, and would be unlikely to be viewed from within SDNP. The two authorities therefore agree that references to the SDNP may be removed from this policy.

Signatories

This statement has been prepared and agreed by the following organisations	
Havant Borough Council	South Downs National Park Authority
	
Simon Jenkins Director of Regeneration and Place Date: 06 February 2020	Lucy Howard Planning Policy Manager Date 3 February 2020

Appendix 1: Map of administrative areas



Appendix 2: Schedule of Agreed Proposed Changes

Key:

Text proposed to be deleted is shown as ~~struckthrough~~

New text to be inserted is shown by underlining

Comment Reference	Paragraph / policy number	Agreed Proposed Change
R231	Policy KP5 criterion b.xv. (p.64)	Travel & Transport... xv. Enhanced <u>on- and off-site walking and cycling routes...</u>
R231	Policy KP5 criterion c.iii. (p.64)	...in particular responding positively to the special qualities of the South Downs National Park, <u>including consideration of the Dark Night Sky Reserve</u>
R231	Policy KP5 criterion vi.e) (p.65)	vi. A comprehensive ecological mitigation <u>strategy in line with policies E14 and E15</u> , which achieves biodiversity net gain, and includes, but is not limited to:.... e) The creation of green linkages and wildlife corridors <u>within and through the site, in particular to connect the protected landscapes of the South Downs National Park and the Chichester Harbour AONB and making best use of existing natural features such as trees and streams including along the stream</u>
R231	Policy KP9 criterion b. (p.84)	b. The reservoir provides additional leisure opportunities which complement existing provision in the borough <u>and the surrounding area</u> , and will become an attraction for local communities;
R231	Policy E14 supporting text (p.148)	<u>Under heading 'Joint Working' insert paragraph to read: The Council will work with neighbouring authorities to develop key wildlife and ecological corridors. Chichester District Council has identified strategic wildlife corridors, which includes the River Ems on the Havant - Chichester border. It is also important to preserve the links between the protected areas of South Downs National Park and the Chichester Harbour AONB. This is reflected in particular in the requirements of the site allocations under KP5 Southleigh and H8 Long Copse Lane.</u>
R231	Policy H8 criterion i (p.228)	... positively responds to the special qualities of the South Downs National Park, <u>including consideration of the Dark Night Sky Reserve</u>
R231	Policy H8 Criterion f (p.228)	Replace criterion f with: The development enhances the relevant Local Ecological Network opportunity areas and safeguards the connections between the protected landscapes of the South Downs National Park and the Chichester Harbour AONB;

Comment Reference	Paragraph / policy number	Agreed Proposed Change
R231	Policy H8 criterion k.iii (p.228)	iii. Retains and integrates the protected and existing trees and hedgerows found on and surrounding the site and leaves a substantial landscape buffer between the development and the ancient woodland of Southleigh Forest to the west and north;
R231	Policy H8 criteria k.vii and viii (p.229)	vii. Provides a multi-user link across the site which connects to Havant Footpath 67 and Havant BOAT 66a and Havant Bridleway 66b; viii. Enables easy access for pedestrians and cyclists to existing and planned routes, including those linking east to Southleigh Forest and those linking north towards the South Downs National Park; vii. Provides easy and convenient multi-user links across the site and connecting to existing and planned routes, including those linking north to the Southleigh Forest and the South Downs National Park (Havant BOAT 66a and Havant Bridleway 66b), and those connecting with Emsworth to the south (Havant Footpath 67).
R231	Policy H18 Site opportunities and constraints (p.254)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site lies in a Local Ecological Network Opportunity Area. • The site is in proximity to the South Downs National Park. • Southleigh Forest and the South Downs National Park is a little distance away to the North East.
R231	Policy H18 criterion f (p.255)	f. The proposal considers and responds positively to the special qualities of the South Downs National Park;