

DUTY TO COOPERATE STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND

BETWEEN: Winchester City Council and the South Downs National Park Authority

DATE: March 2018

1. Introduction

1.1 This Statement of Common Ground (SCG) is a jointly agreed statement between Winchester City Council (WCC) and the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA). It sets out the position and understanding with respect to key relevant duty to cooperate matters, and agreed actions to resolve outstanding matters. It is not binding on either party, but sets out a clear and positive direction to inform ongoing strategy and plan-making.

2. Context

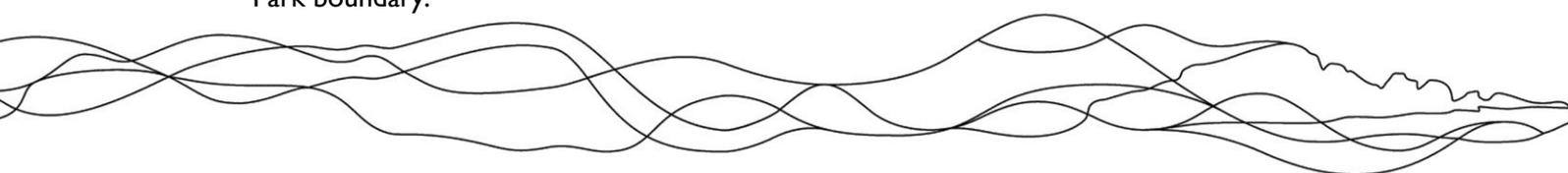
2.1 Section 62 of the Environment Act 1995 requires all relevant authorities, including local authorities such as Winchester City Council, to have regard to the purposes of national parks. These are:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area;
- To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public.

2.2 As a National Park and Local Planning Authority, plan-making for the SDNPA is subject to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) whereby Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs, with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change, unless specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted. An example of such restrictions given in footnote 9 on page 4 of NPPF is policies relating to the development of sites within a National Park.

2.3 Furthermore, paragraph 115 of the NPPF states that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in all these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. It should also be noted that the DEFRA UK Government Vision and Circular 2010 on English National Parks and the Broads, referenced in the NPPF at this point makes clear that the Government recognizes that the Parks are not suitable locations for unrestricted housing and does not therefore provide general housing targets for them.

2.4 Winchester is a city council area within the county of Hampshire of which approximately 40% falls within the South Downs National Park. This means that statutory planning responsibilities within the city administrative area are geographically split along the National Park boundary.



- 2.5 Both local authorities fall partly in the Central Hampshire Housing Market Area as defined in the South Downs Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) published in 2017.
- 2.6 The two authorities have worked in partnership to ensure that strategic planning issues are properly and holistically addressed, initially through the production of a Joint Core Strategy (Winchester District Local Plan Part 1) and subsequently through their respective Local Plans.

3. Purpose and objectives

- 3.1 The SDNPA is preparing its first Local Plan – the South Downs Local Plan (SDLP). The SDLP is a landscape-led plan, with ecosystem services (the provision of goods and services arising from natural capital) at its heart. The SDLP will provide a comprehensive development plan document to cover the whole of the National Park, with the exception of minerals and waste.
- 3.2 The purpose of this SCG is to demonstrate clearly and concisely how strategic cross-boundary matters relevant to the SDLP, which are specific to the two authorities, have been and will continue be jointly addressed. In relation to Winchester City Council these issues focus on addressing objectively assessed development needs, particularly housing needs. Further detail is given in the South Downs National Park Duty to Cooperate Statement¹.

4. Addressing unmet housing need

- 4.1 It is agreed between the parties that the housing supply and objectively assessed need in the whole of Winchester city district (both within and outside of the South Downs National Park) is as set out in Table 1 below (figures are annual averages unless otherwise stated):

Table 1 Housing supply and need in the Winchester part of the South Downs National Park

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
HMA / District area	SDLP housing provision (total) ¹	SDLP housing provision (A divided by 19 years)	OAN inside SDNP ²	Unmet need inside SDNP ³ (C minus B)	Local Authority Local Plan provision (area outside SDNP) ⁴	Local Authority OAN per annum (whole area) ⁵	Total annual over-supply by L.A./HMA ⁶ (B+E-F)	Total annual unmet need by L.A./HMA ⁶ (B+E-F)
Winchester	283	15	31	16	625	625	15	-
Central Hants HMA	1859	98	144	46	2555	2655	-	2

¹ South Downs National Park Duty to Cooperate Statement, 2017

Notes:

¹ SDLP & NDP housing allocations plus commitments plus windfall (to be provided over the Local Plan period 2014-33)

² South Downs HEDNA 2017 (Table 4)

³ The difference between SDNP OAN and SDNP annualised provision (previous two columns)

⁴ Housing provision targets based on Winchester District Local Plan Part I - Joint Core Strategy adopted March 2013.

⁵ Objectively Assessed Housing Need as set out in the Joint Core Strategy

⁶ This is the difference between the total provision and the total OAN, for the whole area (both within and outside SDNP).

4.2 The table above reflects that the Winchester Joint Core Strategy meets the whole of the objectively assessed housing need for the City's administrative area, including the part that lies within the South Downs National Park and the communities that live in it. As such, both parties confirm that these communities' housing needs will be met through the provision of housing through the Winchester Joint Core Strategy, with the provision proposed in the SDLP being over and above the Winchester City area OAN to 2031.

4.3 This situation reflects the requirements of the current (2012) NPPF and relates to the period up to 2031. An alternative method of assessing housing needs is expected to be introduced through revisions to the NPPF. Both parties acknowledge that, following adoption of the SDLP, future reviews of both the SDLP and the Winchester Local Plan will need to take account of a recalculated level of housing need, and potentially review how it is apportioned between the authorities, once the new methodology comes into effect.

5. Addressing unmet Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople need

5.1 It is agreed between the parties that the identified need for Gypsy and Traveller pitches in the National Park part of Winchester (as established through the 2016 Winchester GTAA²) is zero. With respect to Travelling Showpeople, there is no identified need for plots within the National Park part of Winchester. The current position is summarised in Table 2.

Table 2 Winchester part of the SDNP Gypsy & Traveller Need 2016 – 2036 as at 1st March 2018

	Gypsy & Traveller pitches	Travelling Showpeople plots
Total existing authorised pitches/plots	1	3
Total current need	0	0
Total Future Need 2021 - 2036	0	0

5.2 However, the Winchester Traveller DPD has been unable to identify sufficient travelling showpersons' sites to meet the identified need and has requested neighbouring authorities (including the SDNP Authority) to assist under the Duty to Cooperate. Despite carrying out a joint site assessment study with WCC and East Hampshire District Council³, the SDNP Authority has also not been able to identify any suitable or available sites which could assist in providing for travelling showpersons and therefore the authorities agree that any applications in the future will be considered on their merits as necessary.

² Winchester Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (ORS, 2016)

³ Site Assessment Study (on behalf of East Hampshire District Council, SDNPA, Winchester City Council), July 2016

6. Other matters

6.1 Representations have been made by WCC to the pre-submission SDLP on detailed wording or requesting minor changes to the Policies Map. It is agreed that these are not strategic cross-boundary matters, and are therefore not addressed in this statement.

Signed on behalf of Winchester City Council

Date 19 March 2018

Position: Head of Strategic Planning

Signed on behalf of the South Downs National
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Date

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