25th May 2018

Dear Sir/Madam

RESPONSE TO THE HORSHAM ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION

Thank you for notifying the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) of your formal consultation on the above document. Please treat this letter as our response.

The SDNPA supports the proposed early stages of the strategy in so far as the changes proposed focus growth within a hierarchy of the most sustainable settlements in the District. It is important to stress that Horsham District Council has a duty of regard to the two purposes of a National Park (Section 62 of the Environment Act 1995). This includes assessing the impacts of decisions about development outside of the National Park, such as the impacts upon its setting. This will be particularly important as the review progresses and considers development within smaller settlements and outside current settlement boundaries.

The SDNP Local Plan was submitted to Government at the end of April 2018. It includes a spatial strategy for development for the whole of the National Park, which is for a medium level of development across the towns and villages of the National Park. This is to enable the communities of these smaller settlements to be more sustainable and maintain their existing facilities and services. We consider that this approach meets with the statutory duty of a National Park, which is to foster the social and economic well being of communities.

Whilst the Council’s evidence for housing growth in the Horsham District excludes the National Park area, the SDNPA’s proposed spatial strategy and housing policy (publicly available) supports a modest amount of growth in smaller villages which includes those in the Horsham District. The SDNPA would welcome continuing discussions through the Duty to Co-operate on the potential impact of the proposed strategy within Horsham District on the setting of the South Downs National Park.

Yours faithfully

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