

Lewes District Council & South Downs National Park Authority Joint Core Strategy

Frequently Asked Questions

1) What is the Core Strategy?

The Core Strategy is a strategic level plan for the whole district. It forms Part 1 of the Local Plan and sets out a long term vision and policy framework to guide development and change in the period to 2030.

The Core Strategy addresses local needs and opportunities in relation to housing, employment, and infrastructure. It is a joint strategy with the South Downs National Park Authority which covers the whole of Lewes District.

2) Why is it a joint strategy?

Parts of the district are within the national park, parts are outside it. The National Park Authority is the planning authority for land within its boundary; Lewes District Council is the planning authority for the rest of the district.

3) What policies does it contain?

Spatial Policies 1 to 8 (Core Strategy Section 6) aim to deliver new homes and jobs for the district and allocate sites for development at:

- Lewes (Land at North Street/Eastgate and Old Malling Farm)
- Wivelsfield Parish (Land at Greenhill Way, Haywards Heath)
- Ringmer (Land at Bishops Lane)
- Newhaven (Land at Harbour Heights)
- Peacehaven (Land at Lower Hoddern Farm)

Core Policies 1 to 14 (Core Strategy Section 7) seek to deliver sustainable development in terms of supporting the local economy, delivering affordable homes, safeguarding the environment, enabling adaptation to climate change and helping to secure high quality design.

4) Has it been adopted?

The Core Strategy was adopted by Lewes District Council on 11 May 2016 and by the South Downs National Park Authority on 23 June 2016. It now forms part of the statutory development plan for the area. Decisions on planning applications must be taken in accordance with the development plan unless

there are other important factors (material considerations) that indicate otherwise¹.

5) What is the development plan for the area?

The development plan for Lewes District comprises:

- Lewes District Joint Core Strategy (Local Plan Part 1)
- Retained policies of the Lewes District Local Plan 2003 (listed in Appendix 2 of the Core Strategy)
- [Newick Neighbourhood Plan](#)
- [Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan](#)
- [East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Plan](#)

6) What are the retained policies of the Local Plan 2003?

The previous Lewes District Local Plan was adopted in 2003 and its policies were due to expire in 2007 as a result of new legislation². However, the Government agreed that a number of policies could be 'saved' beyond this date and hence remain part of the statutory development plan for the area until replaced by the policies of the new Local Plan.

Some of these 'saved' Local Plan 2003 policies have now been replaced by the policies of the Core Strategy but others have been retained. These retained policies will be reviewed and eventually superseded by the Local Plan Part 2 or the South Downs National Park Local Plan (see Q8). Until that happens, the policies will continue to be used to make decisions on planning applications in the district.

7) What are Neighbourhood Plans?

The Government introduced neighbourhood planning in 2011³, enabling town and parish councils to prepare plans with legal weight. Neighbourhood Plans are subject to an independent examination and a vote by the local community in a referendum. Only a neighbourhood plan that appropriately fits with national policies and local strategic policies (i.e. the Core Strategy) and complies with important legal conditions may be put to a referendum.

When a neighbourhood plan has passed examination, achieved successful local support through referendum and is then formally 'made' by the local planning authority (i.e. Lewes District Council or the National Park Authority),

¹ Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

² Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

³ Localism Act 2011

it will form part of the statutory development plan and be used by the local planning authority in deciding planning applications. Currently the Newick and Ringmer Neighbourhood Plans are 'made' but others are being prepared.

8) What comes next?

The District Council is currently preparing the Local Plan Part 2. This will include small-scale site allocations and set out more detailed (non-strategic) policies to guide development and change within those areas of Lewes District outside of the National Park. When it is adopted, the Local Plan Part 2 will also comprise part of the development plan for the area.

The National Park Authority is also preparing its own Local Plan. This park-wide plan will eventually supersede the Joint Core Strategy for the area of Lewes District within the National Park. It will contain both strategic and more detailed planning policies. For further information, visit www.southdowns.gov.uk