

What is the 'new Local Plan'?

The Lewes District Local Plan Part 1 was adopted in 2016. In 2018 the Government introduced a requirement for all councils to review their local plans every five years, and then update them where necessary. The new Local Plan, which will replace the current Local Plan that was adopted in 2016 and will set out where and how new development will take place over the period to 2040. It will include site allocations for different land uses, such as housing and employment, and policies to help tackle the climate emergency, safeguard the environment, and secure high quality design.

What area will the new Local Plan cover?

The new Local Plan will cover the whole of Lewes District excluding the South Downs National Park. This is because the South Downs National Park Authority adopted its own local plan – the South Downs Local Plan

How does the new Local Plan work with Neighbourhood Planning?

Neighbourhood Planning was introduced by the Localism Act (2011) and offers a number of new tools for communities to shape the places in which they live and work. The Council strongly supports the role of neighbourhood planning, which has been both popular and successful throughout the district.

The Local Plan, prepared by the Council, is the principal planning document for the area. Local Plans must be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development and must be consistent with the NPPF. Local Plans should set out the strategic priorities for the area, for example, the number of new homes and jobs needed in the area and requirement for infrastructure and facilities. The new Local Plan will provide an up-to-date strategic policy framework for local communities who are preparing or reviewing a neighbourhood plan.

Neighbourhood Plans should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area. Neighbourhood Plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. Crucially, this means that a Neighbourhood Plan cannot propose less growth than required by the Local Plan.

It should be noted that to achieve 'general conformity', the Neighbourhood Plan does not need to be identical to the Local Plan. It is reasonable for a Neighbourhood Plan to influence strategic priorities, providing it does not undermine them.

What is the Issues & Options stage?

The Issues and Options consultation was the first opportunity for the local community to become involved in the preparation of new Local Plan Review. The Consultation ran for 8 weeks between the 9th July and the 3rd September 2021. The Issues and Options consultation sought to gather information and views from local communities and other stakeholders that will assist in the development of the next stages of the local plan. It did not contain any proposals on policies or development sites, but sought views on issues to be addressed. This consultation asked questions across six key issues (Tackling Climate Change, Protecting and Enhancing the Quality of Environment, Accommodating and Delivering Growth, Improving Access to Housing, Promoting a Prosperous Economy, Building Community Wealth, Creating Healthy and Sustainable Communities with Infrastructure).

What is the Issues & Options Data Release and Summary Report document?

The Issues and Options Summary Report and data release shows the responses received by the Council to the Issues and Options consultation. The report is not a response to the issues that were raised; however it does provide a short, quantitative data summary to the accompanying dataset release. Just because a question was not included in the document, does not mean that we have not received the response.

All responses received to each consultation question are available and can be viewed [here](#) alongside the Issues and Options Summary Report.

Why are we releasing this data?

To provide transparency on what we have received – in terms of representations - at this stage of the process whilst further evidence is gathered.

How will the responses be taken into consideration in Local Plan Preparation?

The Issues and Options consultation responses will form part of the local plan evidence base, which we are in the process of preparing. Other technical evidence being developed includes, amongst others: the housing needs assessment, economic needs assessment, strategic flood risk assessment, transport studies, rural settlement study, Biodiversity Net Gain and the Habitats Regulations Assessment.

What is the 'evidence base' and how is it gathered?

Local plans must be based on sound and up to date evidence. These include the housing needs assessment, economic needs assessment, strategic flood risk assessment, transport studies, rural settlement study and the Habitats Regulations Assessment. Every local plan must also be informed by a Sustainability Appraisal. The Council also ran a consultation on the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report which sets out the sustainability objectives against which the new Local Plan options will be assessed.