

Water Neutrality Progress Update

JULY 2023

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Submission Crawley Borough Local Plan Policy SDC4 sets out a framework through which the Local Plan, and planning applications, can achieve water neutrality. Its approach is supported by the joint evidence base of the Water Neutrality Strategy (Parts A to C)¹, with work ongoing to establish a Local Authority-led offsetting scheme, the Sussex North Offsetting Water Scheme (referred to as SNOWS).
- 1.2 A Water Neutrality Topic Paper², prepared jointly by Crawley Borough Council, Chichester District Council, and Horsham District Council, supports the Submission Local Plan. It provides an overview of joint working undertaken, shared evidence base and offsetting scheme progress. The Topic Paper also sets out a 'Next Steps & Conclusions' section, detailing further work being undertaken at the time of its May 2023 publication.
- 1.3 The Local Authorities have continued to make progress in planning to address water neutrality through their respective Local Plans. This paper provides an update on work undertaken since publication of the Water Neutrality Topic Paper in May 2023.

2. Local Plan Representations on Water Neutrality

- 2.1 Publication Consultation (under Regulation 18(2) of the Environmental Information Regulations 2004) (04 Tc 071) 2.8 (A16x83) TJO Tc 0 Tw (.)13a6.946 0 T

3. PINS Advisory Meeting

3.1 An advisory meeting was held with a PINS appointed Planning Inspector on 21 June 2023. This was attended by the Local Authorities, Natural England and the Environment Agency.

3.2 A range of matters relating to Policy SDC4 were discussed, with the advisory Inspector specifically referencing:

- a need for the policy to be sufficiently clear to provide certainty for decision makers and applicants as to what is expected.
- the importance in clearly setting out what types of development the policy would apply to, including for supporting infrastructure where necessary.
- a need for further detail on the emerging offsetting scheme, including how this will be accessed (whilst recognising that this work is complex and ongoing).

4. Proposed Modifications to Policy SDC4

4.1 Having regard to Local Plan Publication Consultation representations received and feedback from the PINS advisory meeting, Crawley Borough Council, Chichester District Council, Horsham District Council, South Downs National Park Authority and West Sussex County Council met to discuss and agree suggested

6.3 The SNOWS scheme is discussed under Section 5 of the Topic Paper, and to provide an update

Appendix 1: SNOWS Project Update

Sussex North Offsetting Water Scheme (SNOWS)
Project review July 2023
For CBC Local Plan submission

Purpose

Current progress

SNOWS Project Scope

SNOWS Schedule

Delivery Plan _____

properties register SNOWS Access Prioritisation Protocol _____ Offset

SNOWS processes

SNOWS File Plan Document & Deliverable Register

Outstanding scope to be delivered

autumn

late 2023/early 2024