Statement of Representations Procedure

Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended and saved)

Title of document: Wealden Proposed Submission Local Plan (Regulation 19) Publication

The subject matter and area covered: Wealden District Council is preparing a new Local Plan. The new Local Plan will be the key planning document for the district, excluding the area covered by the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA). The South Downs National Park has planning powers for its own area.

The Wealden Local Plan will guide how the district develops up to 2042.It will set out a vision, identify where development will take place and include strategic and non-strategic policies supporting social, environmental and economic (sustainability) goals. Once adopted, it will form part of the Development Plan for the district, replacing all existing local plan policies, guide decisions on planning applications, and help inform investment and infrastructure provision.

Overall, this Plan will help meet the district's needs while protecting the natural and built environment. It will support growth alongside infrastructure, services and facilities that communities need and help deliver the Council's climate change objectives.

Following earlier consultation stages in 2020/2021, 2024 and 2026, we are now inviting representations on the Council's Proposed Submission Local Plan in advance of submitting the Plan for Examination later this year.

Period for submitting representations: The consultation on the Wealden Proposed Submission Local Plan (Regulation 19) Publication runs from Monday 21 September to 5pm on Monday 2 November 2026.

This stage of the process is more formal than the previous consultations, meaning when making a representation, it must explain whether you consider the Plan meets its legal and procedural requirements and whether it is 'sound'. A Plan is 'sound' if it is:

- **Positively prepared** – The plan should provide a strategy that seeks to meet the area's identified development needs, as a minimum, where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development.
- **Justified** – The plan should be an appropriate strategy, considering reasonable alternatives and based on proportionate evidence.
- **Effective** – The plan should be deliverable over the plan period to 2042 and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters.

- **Consistent with national policy** – The plan should enable sustainable development in accordance with national planning policy.

Our guidance notes to explain these requirements and how to prepare your representation. The guidance note can be found on our website using the weblink above

During the period for making representations, the Proposed Submission Local Plan, Sustainability Appraisal, Habitats Regulations Assessment, Policies Map, Evidence Base and other supporting documents can be viewed online:

- On the Council's website through the Local Plan webpage at https://www.wealden.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/new-local-plan/

Hard copies of the Proposed Submission Local Plan, Sustainability Appraisal, Habitats Regulations Assessment, Policies Map, are available for inspection at:

- At Wealden District Council offices (Hailsham), East Sussex County Council offices (Lewes), Crowborough Town Council offices, Forest Row Parish Council offices, Hailsham Town Council offices, Heathfield and Waldron Parish Council offices, Horam Parish Council offices, Maresfield Parish Council offices, Mayfield and Five Ashes Parish Council offices, Polegate Town Council offices, Uckfield Town Council office and Willingdon and Jevington Parish Council offices, all available during their normal opening hours.
- In all libraries in Wealden District during their normal opening hours.

Making and submitting representations: Wealden District Council strongly encourages **r**epresentations to be submitted online through the **consultation portal**. The portal can be accessed through the Council's Local Plan webpage. Representations may also be submitted via email using the prescribed Representation Form via email.

The Representation Form is available:

- From the Council's website as set out above, or
- By emailing planningpolicy@wealden.gov.uk or telephoning 01892 602008

Representations will also be accepted by post to the following address: Planning Policy Team, Wealden District Council Offices, Vicarage Lane, Hailsham, BN27 2AX

You may provide a representation in writing and send in using the contact information above. Although please do consider using the online portal or response form as this helps structure your representation in a way that is most useful for the examining Inspector.

Your response, including your name, address and email address (where provided), will be shared with the government and the Planning Inspectorate. A copy of all comments received will be made available to the Planning Inspectorate and Secretary of State in line with the Regulations (The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 – Regulations 20, 22 and 35). This includes publication of your name and response on the council's website.

We will not be able to consider confidential or anonymous responses.

The Planning Inspectorates Privacy Notice is available here.

The Council's Privacy Policy, including service specific privacy notices is available here.

All representations received within the consultation period will be summarised and submitted, alongside the Local Plan, supporting documents and evidence base, to the Secretary of State via the Planning Inspectorate (PINS). PINS will appoint an independent Planning Inspector to examine the plan. You can state when making your representation if you wish to appear at a hearing session of the public Examination. The Inspector will determine the most appropriate procedure to adopt to hear those who have indicated that they wish to participate at the oral part of the examination. However, it will be for the Planning Inspector (from the Planning Inspectorate) to decide who attends hearing sessions. Written representations will carry the same weight as those presented orally. The Examination in Public (EiP) hearing sessions are likely to take place in 2027.

Where there are groups of people who share a common view, it would be helpful if the group submitted a single representation, appending the names, addresses and email addresses of those represented. Where requested, all the named representatives will be notified of future stages.

Request to be notified: When making your representation, you may also request to be notified when we submit the plan for independent examination, when the Inspector's Report is published and/or when the Local Plan is adopted, by contacting the Planning Policy Team using the methods above.