



ROWLANDS CASTLE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REFERENDUM

INFORMATION FOR VOTERS

About this booklet

On 19 September 2023, there will be a referendum on a neighbourhood plan for your area. This booklet explains more about the referendum that is going to take place and how you can take part in it. In this booklet you can find out about:

- The planning system
- The development plan [of which neighbourhood plans are part]
- The neighbourhood plan
- The neighbourhood area
- The referendum and how you can take part

The Planning System

The planning system manages the use and development of land and buildings. It exists to ensure that development is in the public interest and contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. This means ensuring that meeting the needs of the present do not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It also means allowing growth that balances supporting the economy and community needs for homes, jobs, transport and infrastructure while protecting and enhancing the built and natural environment.

The planning system has two main parts:

- Plan making – setting out proposals for development and policies to guide development over time.
- Managing development – where development is agreed through the granting of planning permission.

Not all forms of development require planning permission as some building operations, depending on their scale and type, are covered by permitted development rights. For development that requires planning permission, East Hampshire District Council and South Downs National Park Authority are responsible for deciding whether the development should go ahead.

Decisions on planning applications in the Rowlands Castle area are based on the National Planning Policy Framework, the East Hampshire Joint Core Strategy (2014), the East Hampshire Housing and Employment Allocations (2016) , the 'saved' policies of the East Hampshire District Local Plan Second Review 2006, the South Downs Local Plan (2019) and the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013 and (if made following the referendum) the Rowlands Castle Neighbourhood Plan.

National Planning Policy Framework

The latest version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2021. It sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The framework gives guidance to local planning authorities in drawing up development plans and on making decisions on planning

applications. The NPPF is available as an on-line resource, together with associated planning practice guidance, at <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>

What is a Development Plan?

In England, planning applications are determined by local planning authorities in accordance with the Development Plan. A Development Plan is a set of documents that set out the policies for the development and use of land across the entire local authority area. East Hampshire District Council and South Downs National Park Authority must prepare a local plan which sets planning policies within the local planning authority area. Local plans must be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. They must be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and the NPPF.

Decisions must be made in accordance with the local development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The local Development Plan for the Rowlands Castle area currently comprises the East Hampshire Joint Core Strategy 2014, the East Hampshire Housing and Employment Allocations 2016, the 'saved' policies of the East Hampshire District Local Plan Second Review 2006, the South Downs Local Plan 2019 and the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013.

These documents can be accessed via the following links:

East Hampshire Joint Core Strategy 2014

East Hampshire Housing and Employment Allocations 2016

East Hampshire District Local Plan Second Review 2006 ('saved' policies)

<https://www.easthants.gov.uk/planning-services/planning-policy/local-plan/adopted-local-plan>

South Downs Local Plan 2019

<https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning-policy/south-downs-local-plan/>

Hampshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2013

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/strategic-planning/hampshire-minerals-waste-plan>

What is Neighbourhood Planning?

Neighbourhood planning was introduced under the Localism Act 2011 to give local communities more control in the planning of their neighbourhoods. It introduced new rights and powers to allow local communities to shape new development in their local area. It enables communities to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need through planning policies relating to the development and use of land.

Neighbourhood planning aims to help local communities play a direct role in planning for the areas in which they live and work. A community can prepare a neighbourhood plan. This plan can show how the community wants land to be used and developed in its area.

Who can prepare a Neighbourhood Plan?

Neighbourhood plans are prepared by town or parish councils, or neighbourhood forums. In this case, the Rowlands Castle Neighbourhood Plan was prepared by Rowlands Castle Parish Council, with the support of a steering group.

What is a neighbourhood area?

A neighbourhood area can cover single streets or large urban or rural areas. The boundaries of a neighbourhood area are put forward by:

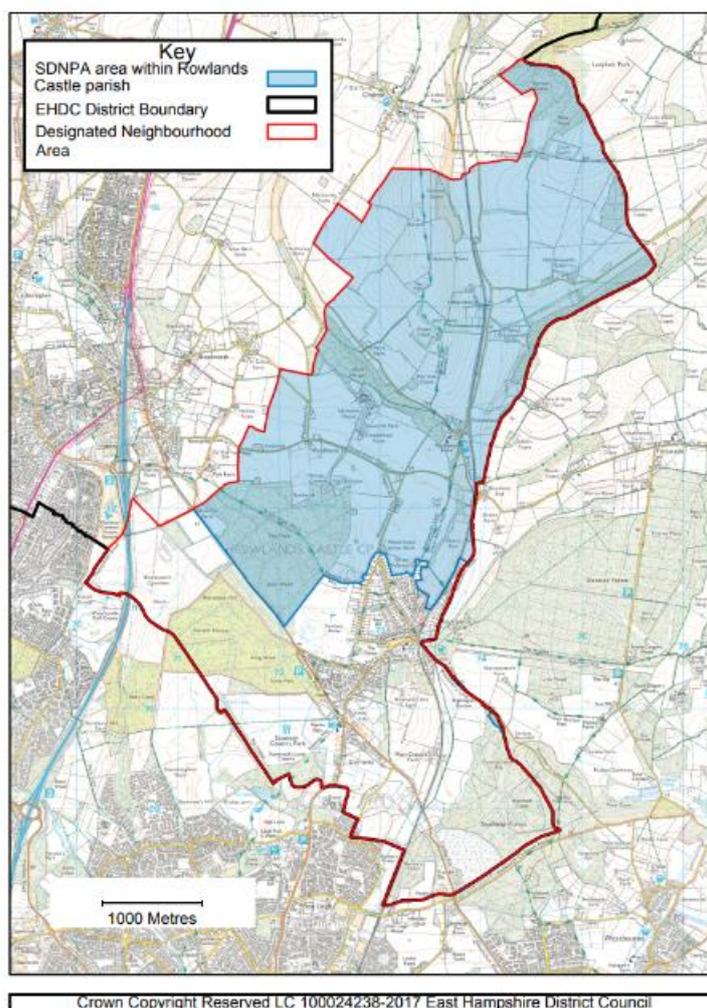
- Town or parish councils
- A neighbourhood forum (a group of at least 21 people in areas without town or parish councils)

In Rowlands Castle, the boundary of the neighbourhood area follows the parish area of Rowlands Castle.

Neighbourhood Planning in Rowlands Castle

The Referendum area is identified on the map below and is identical to the area which has been designated as the Rowlands Castle Neighbourhood Plan area.

Designated Neighbourhood Area: Rowlands Castle



Referendum on the Neighbourhood Plan

A referendum asks you to vote 'yes' or 'no' to a question. For this referendum you will receive a ballot paper with this question:

"Do you want East Hampshire District Council and South Downs National Park Authority to use the neighbourhood plan for Rowlands Castle to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?"

How do I vote in the referendum?

You vote by putting a cross (X) in the 'Yes' or 'No' box on your ballot paper. Put a cross in only one box or your vote will not be counted.

If more people vote 'yes' than 'no' in this referendum, then East Hampshire District Council and South Downs National Park Authority will use the Neighbourhood Plan to help it decide planning applications in Rowlands Castle.

The Neighbourhood Plan once adopted will then become part of the Development Plan. If more people vote 'no' than 'yes', then planning applications will be decided

without using the Neighbourhood Plan as part of the Development Plan for the local area.

Can I vote?

A person is entitled to vote if at the time of the referendum, they meet the eligibility criteria to vote in a local election for the area and if they live in the referendum area. Everyone on East Hampshire District Council's electoral register (at the date of the vote) within the referendum area is entitled to vote. The eligibility criteria to vote are:

- you are registered to vote in local council elections; and
- you are 18 years of age or over on 19th September 2023.

Casting your vote

Your designated polling station will be printed on your polling card. If you have misplaced this, you can phone electoral services on 01730 234350 who will be able to tell your polling station.

All electors will be required to show photographic identification to vote at polling stations. Accepted forms of voter ID include UK passports and UK photo driving licences.

To see the full list of acceptable identification, please click on the following link <https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/voter-id/accepted-forms-photo-id>

If you do not possess any of the acceptable forms of photographic identification, you can apply to your local electoral registration officer for a free Voter Authority Certificate. Completed applications must reach us before **5pm on Monday 11th September 2023**. You can apply for a Voter Authority Certificate online at voter-authority-certificate.service.gov.uk

Register to vote

If you are an eligible elector and you are already on the Register of Electors for East Hampshire, you do not need to re-register for these elections. [Information on how to register is available on the GOV.UK website](#). The deadline for applying to register for voting in this election is Friday 1st September 2023.

EU citizens legally resident in the UK may register for the local government franchise and are able to vote in all elections that use the local government franchise. EU citizens currently retain their rights to vote in local elections even though the UK has left the EU for September 2023.

Details of where your polling station is located will be found on your poll card.

Poll cards

Poll cards will be sent out from 30th August 2023 and postal packs will be sent out around 6th September 2023.

Voting by post or proxy

If you are unable to get to your polling station on 19 September or would prefer to vote another way to cast your vote, you can register for a postal or proxy vote. We would encourage anyone who requires a postal vote to apply for one as soon as possible due to an expected increase in the number of postal votes being required for this year:

- [Register to vote by post](#) - the deadline to apply for a postal vote is 5pm on Monday 4th September 2023
- [Register to vote by proxy](#) - the deadline to apply to vote by proxy is 5pm on Monday 11th September 2023

Please note that you will need to print these forms as a signature is required in order to complete the form.

Completed forms can either be scanned and emailed to electoral.services@easthants.gov.uk or posted back to the address shown on the form.

Outcome of the Referendum

The counting of the votes must take place as soon as practicable after the close of poll and the date, time and location of the count must be advised to any counting observers in writing by the Counting Officer.

If more people vote 'yes' than 'no' in this referendum, then East Hampshire District Council and South Downs National Park Authority will adopt the plan as soon as practicable and use the Neighbourhood Plan to help it decide planning applications in Rowlands Castle as part of the Development Plan.

If more people vote 'no' than 'yes', then planning applications will be decided without using the Neighbourhood Plan as part of the Development Plan for the Rowlands Castle area.

How to find out more:

- Further general information on neighbourhood planning is available at:
<http://www.easthants.gov.uk/planning-policy/neighbourhood-plans>
<https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/>

- You can find specific documents on the Rowlands Castle Neighbourhood Plan at: <https://www.easthants.gov.uk/planning-services/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/emerging-neighbourhood-plans/rowlands>
- For queries about planning issues and neighbourhood planning in general, please contact East Hampshire District Council's Planning Policy Team on localplan@easthants.gov.uk or neighbourhoodplans@easthants.gov.uk or call 01730 234102 or contact South Downs National Park Authority on planningpolicy@southdowns.gov.uk
- For more information about voting and the arrangements for this referendum, please contact East Hampshire District Councils Helpline on 01730 234350 or email electoral.services@easthants.gov.uk or write to Electoral Services, East Hampshire District Council, Penns Place, Petersfield, Hampshire, GU31 4EX.