

The template

This document provides the business case template for projects seeking funding which is made available through the **South East Local Enterprise Partnership**. It is therefore designed to satisfy all SELEP governance processes, approvals by the Strategic Board, the Accountability Board and also the early requirements of the Independent Technical Evaluation process where applied.

It is also designed to be applicable across all funding streams made available by Government through SELEP. It should be filled in by the scheme promoter – defined as the final beneficiary of funding. In most cases, this is the local authority; but in some cases the local authority acts as Accountable Body for a private sector final beneficiary. In those circumstances, the private sector beneficiary would complete this application and the SELEP team would be on hand, with local partners in the federated boards, to support the promoter.

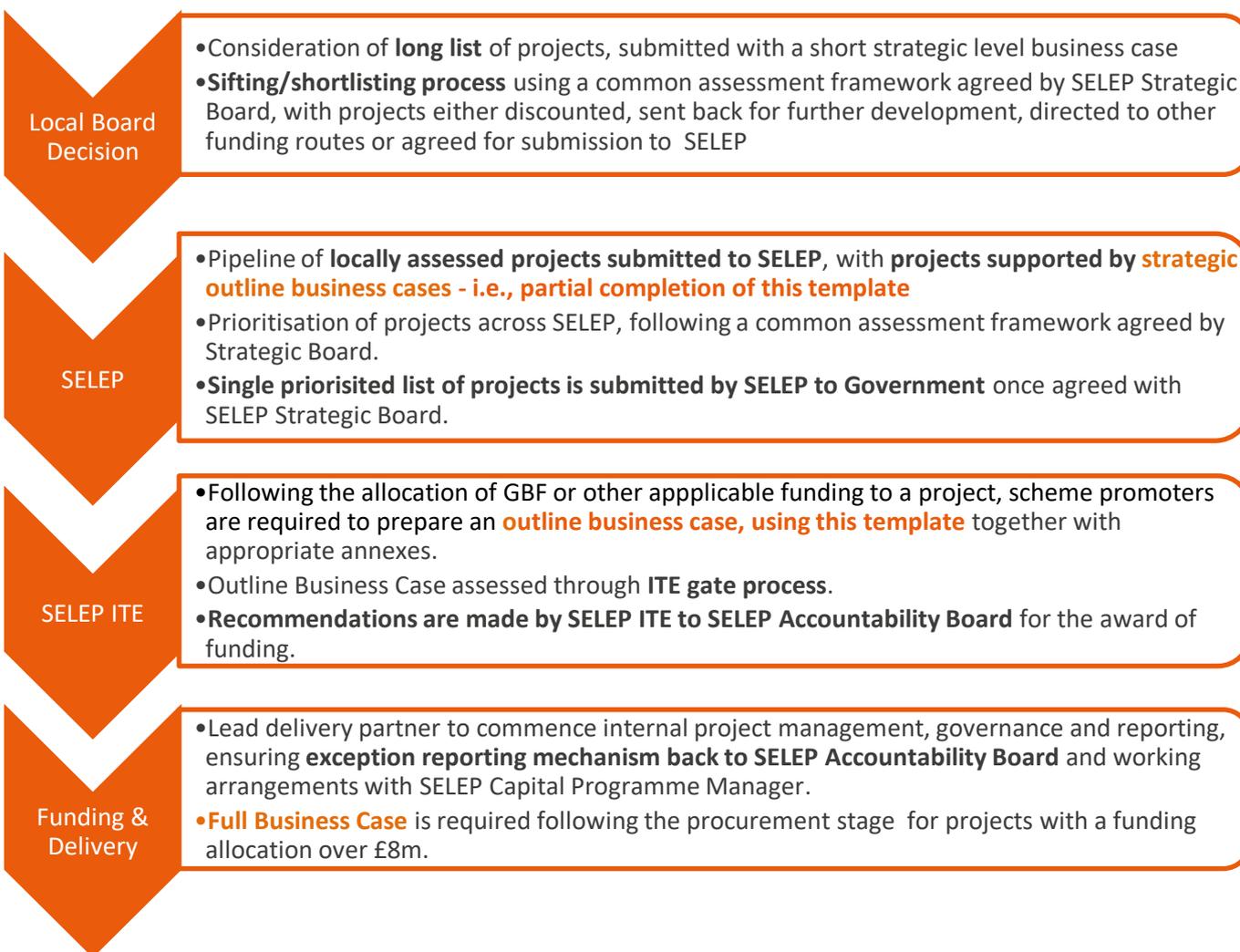
Please note that this template should be completed in accordance with the guidelines laid down in the HM Treasury's Green Book. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-green-book-appraisal-and-evaluation-in-central-government>

As described below, there are likely to be two phases of completion of this template. The first, an 'outline business case' stage, should see the promoter include as much information as would be appropriate for submission though SELEP to Government calls for projects where the amount awarded to the project is not yet known. If successful, the second stage of filling this template in would be informed by clarity around funding and would therefore require a fully completed business case, inclusive of the economic appraisal which is sought below. At this juncture, the business case would therefore dovetail with SELEP's Independent Technical Evaluation process and be taken forward to funding and delivery.

The standard process

This document forms the initial SELEP part of a normal project development process. The four steps in the process are defined below in simplified terms.

Note – this does not illustrate background work undertaken locally, such as evidence base development, baselining and local management of the project pool and reflects the working reality of submitting funding bids to Government. In the form that follows:



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1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

- 1.1. **Project name:**
Seven Sisters Country Park Visitor Infrastructure Uplift
- 1.2. **Project type:**
Cultural Sector
- 1.3. **Federated Board Area:**
East Sussex
- 1.4. **Lead County Council / Unitary Authority:**
East Sussex County Council
- 1.5. **Development location:**
Seven Sisters Country Park, Exceat, near Seaford, East Sussex, BN25 4AD

1.6. **Project Summary:**
Seven Sisters Country Park - 280ha of rolling chalk downland, iconic coastline and wetlands just outside Eastbourne - attracts over 500k visitors per year, yet is run-down, with a very limited engagement and retail offer. The barn used as a welcome point is closed from October-April (has not opened since 2020) and has poor accessibility. With SDNPA taking over responsibility for the Country Park in summer 2021, a complete review and new business plan is being implemented. This project represents a comprehensive refresh of the visitor offer, including upgraded physical and intellectual access, new toilets and a 233 sqm of new retail space for local businesses. In addition, it will refurbish 3 dilapidated properties increasing the local tourism provision and providing on site accommodation for a Site Warden. It will allow us to open 364 days per year, showcase products from local producers and makers, signpost visitors to local attractions and businesses and provide an accessible welcome for visitors with a year round events programme. Income generated will be reinvested in the ongoing protection of this designated landscape within the South Downs National Park and in supporting a vibrant rural economy. The project has already created 7.8 FTE and is expected to create a further 6.5 FTE within the next year.

1.7. **Delivery partners:**

Partner	Nature of involvement (financial, operational etc.)
South Downs National Park Authority	Owner of site and project oversight of renovations
South Downs National Park Trust	Partner charity which has secured some of the current funding

1.8. **Promoting Body:**
South Downs National Park Authority

1.9. **Senior Responsible Owner (SRO):**
Trevor Beattie
Chief Executive
South Downs Centre
[REDACTED]



1.10. Total project value and funding sources:

Funding source	Local/National	Amount (£)	Constraints, dependencies or risks and mitigation
<i>South Downs National Park Authority</i>	Local	£1,700,000	Secured
<i>Woolfson Foundation</i>	National	£70,000	Secured
<i>Rampion Fund (via South Downs Trust)</i>	Local	£25,000	Secured
<i>CIL</i>	Local	£180,000	Secured
<i>SELEP</i>	Local	£200,000	Unsecured
Total project value		£2,175,000	

1.11. SELEP funding request, including type (LGF, GPF, GBF etc.):

£200,000 to support a further 133 sqm of new retail space and the refurbishment/enhancement of 3 cottages, creating 3 holiday lets and 1 flat for a Staff Warden. State Aid has been considered and is not a concern.

1.12. Exemptions:

Value for Money exemptions, scheme below financial value required.

1.13. Key dates:

31 July 2021 - Completion of handover of site from East Sussex County Council (ESCC) to South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA)

May \ June 2021 - Award construction contract

August \ September 2021 - Construction

Easter 2022 - Visitor Centre open to public

September 2022 – New Retail Centre and Cottages open

1.14. Project development stage:

Project development stages completed to date				
Task	Description	Outputs achieved	Complete/Incomplete	Timescale
RIBA stage 0 – Strategic Definition (currently underway)		Gleeds Repot	Complete	N/A
RIBA stage 1 – Preparation and design brief (currently underway)		RIBA stage 1 brief	Complete	N/A



RIBA stage 2 – Concept Design (currently underway)		RIBA stage 2 report	Complete	N/A
RIBA stage 3 – Developed Design (currently underway)		RIBA stage 3 report	Complete	N/A
RIBA Stage 4 – Technical Design (currently underway)		RIBA stage 4 report and tender pack	Complete	N/A
Tendering Phase and Contractor Appointment (currently underway)		Contractor appointment	Complete	N/A
RIBA stage 0 – Strategic Definition (Phase 2 Pump Barn and Foxhole Cottages funded by GBF)		Gleeds Repot	Complete	N/A
RIBA stage 1 – Preparation and design brief (Phase 2 Pump Barn and Foxhole Cottages funded by GBF)		RIBA stage 1 brief	Complete	N/A
RIBA stage 2 – Concept Design (Phase 2 Pump Barn and Foxhole Cottages Funded by GBF)		RIBA stage 2 report	Complete	N/A
RIBA stage 3 – Developed Design (Phase 2 Pump Barn and Foxhole Cottages funded by GBF)		RIBA stage 3 report	Complete	N/A
Project development stages to be completed				
Task	Description	Complete/ Incomplete	Timescale	
RIBA Stage 5 – Construction (currently underway)	Construction	Incomplete	March 22”	
RIBA Stage 6 – Handover (currently underway)	Handover	Incomplete	September 22”	

RIBA Stage 4 – Technical Design (Pump Barn and Foxhole Cottages funded by GBF)	Design	Incomplete	March-April 22”
Tendering and Contractor Appointment (Pump Barn and Foxhole Cottages funded by GBF)	Tender	Incomplete	May 22”
RIBA Stage 5 – Construction (Pump Barn and Foxhole Cottages funded by GBF)	Construction	Incomplete	June 22”
RIBA Stage 6 – Handover (Phase 2 Pump Barn and Foxhole Cottages funded by GBF)	Handover	Incomplete	September 22”

1.15. Proposed completion of outputs:
September 2022

2. STRATEGIC CASE

2.1. Scope / Scheme Description:

A major upgrade of the Visitor Welcome at Seven Sisters Country Park, East Sussex. It will transform a run down traditional Sussex threshing barn which operated as a seasonal welcome point for visitors until its closure in 2020, to create a new, high quality, Visitor Centre, South Downs National Park information point and a retail offer. We will also improve access for all, converting a former workshop building into new visitor toilets to replace the current small block, which lacks disabled access. The new block will include a Changing Places standard toilet, offering the highest standard of accessibility. We will also landscape the public realm around the buildings, providing level access to the buildings from the car park and bus stop and places to sit and picnic.

The project includes the internal reconfiguration of the barn, which is currently split level, to provide level access throughout the site for visitors with reduced mobility. New heating and lighting will enable year round opening and digital infrastructure will support a regularly changing interpretation and information offer. The new centre will have a strong local focus, interpreting the local culture, heritage and environment and showcasing local food and drink, arts and crafts and things to do. Visitors to the Country Park will be signposted to a range of activities within the site itself (canoeing, cycling, craft experiences, Ranger tours) and in the wider area including farm shops, pubs, vineyards, local attractions (such as Charleston House, Newhaven Fort) and local towns and villages.

The SELEP GBF funding will now allow us to bring back in elements of the project that had to be taken out through cost saving, namely the refurbishment and kit out of the pump barn, to create a multi-use retail, exhibition, event space (total 133 sqm). This will be used as a 'Hub' to offer a sales outlet for small and micro businesses from across the National Park.

In addition, we will refurbish and enhance 3 dilapidated cottages to provide 3 high quality holiday lets and one flat providing accommodation for an onsite warden.

We will achieve green tourism accreditation and use of public transport will be promoted. We will incentivise visitors to travel sustainably by, for example, using shop discounts for people arriving by bus, bike or on foot and will work closely with other visitor attractions, such as the Beachy Head Centre and National Trust at Birling Gap, to create joint offers and experiences for visitors.

How this project has developed:

This project has developed in response to identified needs for improved visitor management, tourist information and infrastructure provision at visitor 'hotspots' in the National Park and across the Sussex Heritage Coast, of which Seven Sisters Country Park is part.

It also meets an organisational priority to establish a South Downs National Park operated Visitor Centre, which will act as a gateway to the National Park for visitors and locals alike. The South Downs National Park is currently the only National Park in England without a Visitor Centre. Other National Parks provide welcome and information points at key visitor locations – such as [The Sill](#) - meaning visitors can access high quality information about the National Park, receive a face to face welcome from staff and volunteers and be sign-posted to things to do, places to visit, accommodation and local food and drink. Establishing a Visitor Centre at Seven Sisters Country Park will significantly increase our face to face contact with visitors at the eastern end of the National Park – with expected footfall through the new Centre in the region of 200,000 people per year.

This project was developed in response to a significant, one off, opportunity. East Sussex County Council have owned and managed Seven Sisters Country Park since 1971 but are now disposing of much of their countryside estate due to budget constraints and changing priorities. In 2019 the SDNPA successfully bid to take on the management of Seven Sisters Country Park, transferring the freehold in July 2021. As we are not purchasing the site, this allows making a higher level of investment in the development of the visitor offer.

2.2. Logic Map

[Establish a Logic Map using information from Appendix E. This will provide a logical flow between inputs, outputs, outcomes and impacts for the scheme]

Inputs	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
<p>Grant Spend £200,000</p> <p>Matched Contributions Spend £1,700,000</p> <p>Leveraged Funding £275,000</p> <p>SDNPA Revenue Expenditure - £75,000</p> <p>SDNPA working capital £100,000</p>	<p>Safeguard 7.8 FTE (6 F/T and 4 (P/T) and an unknown number of local construction jobs.</p> <p>Create 6.5 FTE (2 F/T and 9 P/T) jobs.</p> <p>Create 1 x 1 bed flat for onsite warden.</p> <p>2,000 learners assisted per annum</p> <p>233 high foot fall retail space (72 in original plan with this late funding allowing us to add in 131)</p> <p>2 new superfast Broadband connection</p> <p>104 enterprises supported (4 onsite and 100 through the new retail space)</p> <p>4,523 annual reduction for the heat pump. We are unable to make an estimate for the electric boilers at this time.</p> <p>Increase in average spend from 38p to £3.90 per visitor (as assessed by MAI ARts and Heritage Commercial Dev. Consultant through their retail report)</p>	<p>14.3 Jobs</p> <p>1 Flat</p>	<p>n/a</p>



	Increase in footfall through the visitor centre from 65,000 to 100,000 in year one, rising thereafter.		
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2.3. Location description:



Seven Sisters Country Park

The huge chalk cliffs of the Seven Sisters (below) in East Sussex are one of the iconic images of England, globally recognised and voted one of the [top 20 great British views](#) in 2017. Designated and protected as part of the Sussex Heritage Coast (which also includes Beachy Head) and one of the top attractions in the South Downs National Park, they stand as a gateway to the country and have regularly appeared on film – from Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves and Atonement, to 2020 releases [Summerland](#) and [Hope Gap](#)



The Seven Sisters ©SDNPA Ann Katrin Purkiss.

Consequently, the 280ha Seven Sisters Country Park (SSCP) in which they stand is heavily visited, attracting over 500,000 visitors per year, including increasing numbers of international visitors, particularly Korean and Chinese, drawn especially by the location’s Harry Potter links and its appearance in a [video](#) by major Asian artist, Jay Chou, which has over 14 million YouTube views. In her letter of support, Sally Staples, Cultural Strategy Manager at ESCC, highlights that Seven Sisters is “*often the first and primary reason for a visit to the county of East Sussex, particularly for overseas visitors*”.

The Country Park also includes the striking meanders of the River Cuckmere - famously captured by Eric Ravillious (below) and a feature of many Geography textbooks – and is on the South Downs Way national trail, which runs from Eastbourne to Winchester and the new England Coastal Path. It is a popular place for many outdoor activities including walking, bird watching and paddle boarding.



Cuckmere Haven – within the Country Park - by Eric Ravilious, 1939.

The South Downs National Park

The [South Downs National Park](#) is the UK’s newest National Park, established in 2010 and stretching over 100 miles from Eastbourne to Winchester. It covers over 1600km² of England’s most valued lowland landscapes, shaped over millennia by the people who have lived and worked here. It is also the most populous National Park, with over 117k people living within the National Park and a further 2.2 million within 10km of its boundaries. Much of the National Park is only an hour’s travel time from Gatwick Airport or London.

The eastern part of the South Downs National Park, from Brighton to Eastbourne overlaps with the SELEP region, with Seven Sisters Country Park, the subject of this application, being one of the features of the region highlighted on the [SELEP Area Map](#) of economic assets at number 32, Cultural and Leisure.

The South Downs National Park Authority is responsible for keeping the National Park a special place and is a public body, core-funded by DEFRA. Our vision is for “Thriving communities in inspirational landscapes.”

2.4 Policy context:

This project meets the GBF priorities through a high ROI in the terms of jobs created relative to the investment, alongside the provision of local housing. In terms of how it meets the SELEP Economic Recovery and Renewal Strategy, please see the following table:

SELEP Strategic Priorities	SELEP Objectives	Project Objectives	Explanation
Business Resilience and Growth	Drive Trade and Growth in a post COVID19 and Brexit economy	1, 2 and 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancement to a county park that has seen increased use due to increasing



	To promote Greater Resilience in our places and support growth		<p>importance of outdoor space driven by COVID19</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High Foot Fall retail space for 100 local businesses • Forecast increase in average spend at centre from .38p to £3.90 • Increase in foot fall to the visitor centre from 65,000 to 100,000, to the benefit of local businesses • 4 onsite businesses supported through more dwell time on site and better site interpretation • Safe Guard / Create 14.3 jobs
Communities for the Future	<p>Drive Trade and Growth in a post COVID19 and Brexit economy</p> <p>To promote Greater Resilience in our places and support growth</p> <p>To put clean growth and climate change at the heart of what we do</p> <p>To promote greater resilience in our places and support growth</p>	1, 3 and 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updating and modernising the Seven Sisters Visitor Centre, one of the iconic landmarks in the South East, to provide a better experience for residents and tourists • Sustainable improvements including Air Source Heat Pumps contributing to a reduction in Carbon
Coastal Catalyst	<p>Drive Trade and Growth in a post COVID19 and Brexit economy</p> <p>To promote Greater Resilience in our places and support growth</p> <p>To improve digital and physical connectivity and capabilities</p> <p>To put clean growth and</p>	1, 2 and 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing digital gaps by providing two new faster broadband connections • Supporting local rural businesses through a local retail outlet. Enabling them to promote to national and international tourists • Through the local information provided at the visitor centre, signpost people to other rural attractions and businesses • Building a sustainable income stream to support an important ecological environment, within a

	climate change at the heart of what we do		protected landscape, contributing to the Net Zero ambitions.
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In addition, it meets SELEP local priorities (as stated through the RDPE programme) which include job creation alongside “Extension of the Tourist Season” and the need to “Develop Tourist attractions” and infrastructure. Please see as follows:

To increase the length of time and the amount of money spent by visitors in rural part of the SELEP area.

This project will increase the time and money spend at Seven Sisters Country Park and the South Downs National Park in general. In respect of the Country Park, the new Visitor Centre, public realm improvements and new information and interpretation provision have been designed to make the site much more welcoming and interesting, to maximise dwell time at the Visitor Centre. These improvements include, for example, clearer directional signage, heavier promotion of facilities (such as toilets) within the car parks and improvement to the Visitor Welcome (such as regularly updated chalk boards showing ‘What’s On’, welcome volunteers and improved lighting).

The ESCC Countryside Access Strategy notes that counters at the Visitor Centre recorded footfall of between 45,000 and 65,000 visitors per year. An independent retail report MAI - Arts & Heritage Commercial Dev Consultancy Services into the retail potential of the Seven Sisters Country Park Visitor Centre in 2019 gives a more optimistic figure of c150,000 visitors p/a, but this still equates to only 30% of footfall to the Country Park itself. There is therefore an enormous opportunity here to create a facility that will draw in more of the 500,000 visitors that already come to the Country Park each year.

Within the Centre and through the new interpretation and retail offer, we also aim to increase dwell time and anticipate this to result in a subsequent uplift in spend. The Retail Report commissioned also suggests that the forecast uplift of 16.5% conversion, at a £3.80 average spend, is realistic and could in fact be improved to 22% at £3.90. This is a vast improvement on the recorded average spend of 38p - the last recorded at this site before closure (this represents an increase of £3.52 per visitor). The planned retail offer, as supported by this report, will mainly feature local artisans, food, drink and gifts, meaning that a substantial proportion of the visitor spend will support small producers in the local rural economy. This is further supported by letters of support, such as that from Carl Valentine, Head of Transport and Operational Services at ESCC, notes that *“Seven Sisters Country Park has no shortage of visitors, but relatively few come by the visitor centre. This investment in the visitor centre will attract a much greater number of visitors to the visitor centre, providing them with local information and offering a new seasonal events programme as well as opportunities to engage with local food and drink producers and craftspeople.”*

We will also promote local producers through our interpretation, which champions the ways in which visitors can support the South Downs. For example, one of the points will encourage people to **Eat & buy local** - *Enjoying the food and drink produced locally helps to support our*

farmers and businesses. Why not try the world-famous Sussex sparkling wine from Rathfinny Estate or sample a refreshing beer at the Long Man Brewery.”

To build on the retail presence at the visitor centre and as highlighted in our Events and Marketing plan we will also host a series of seasonal events, such as Christmas Markets. These will encourage local and day visitors to return a number of times over the course of the year and provide further opportunities to create a step change in spend with local producers.

In addition, this project aims to increase time and spend in the local rural area through increased stays and further visits to local attractions. We know from the 2019 Visitor Survey that 59% of current visitors are either local or staying overnight, meaning that they have the time and capacity to visit other attractions nearby. A key part of the interpretation strategy is to highlight the other attractions in the local area, both via a large map, which will constitute a central piece of the interpretation, leaflets from local attractions and by training staff to recommend and advise those visitors who wish to further explore the local area.

Create sustainable new or existing rural visitor attractions to increase the range of activities available and extend the tourism season beyond the usual period of May to October.

This project will greatly increase the sustainability of Seven Sisters Country Park as a rural visitor attraction. Already lacking investment, with erratic opening hours and providing little of interest to visitors, the old Visitor Centre and toilets finally closed when COVID-19 struck, as there was no means of making the changes necessary to facilitate safe opening. This project will deliver seven day a week, year-round opening, closing only on Christmas Day. The new facilities will have longer opening hours from 9am-6pm April-September and 10am-4pm from October-March and will have a far higher level of accessibility.

The new facilities, with a focus on locally-produced items, will generate a sustainable source of income for Seven Sisters Country Park that will be re-invested in the Park’s ongoing development, alongside delivering income for local producers and makers.

Create new quality visitor accommodation at least 4* rating or equivalent.

Upgrade existing visitor accommodation where it will be above the current accreditation rating and at least 4* rating or equivalent accreditation rating.

The project will create 3 high quality self-catering lets alongside bunk house accommodation and the re-opening of camping spaces close to the South Downs Way national trail.

The discrete, sustainable and off-grid holiday offer at Foxhole Farm is within the Country Park and a few hundred metres towards the sea from the new Visitor Centre. Here, visitors will be able to stay at the heart of the Seven Sisters landscape, surrounded by nature, dark night skies and within a few minutes walk of the iconic cliffs and the South Downs Way.

Three vacant farm cottages will be restored to provide high-end holiday units. Adjacent to the cottages, an attractive traditional Sussex flint barn - which is currently only occasionally used for group camping on request - will be upgraded to provide continuous affordable accommodation for walkers, families and education groups.

Invest in events which focus on local culture, heritage, environment, food and drink and bring sustainable economic benefits to the area.

Our research demonstrates there is a strong demand for events at the site, with the majority of both users and non-users demonstrating an interest in additional events and activities.

The South Downs National Park Authority has a strong track record in events provision, with a dedicated Communications and Events team and programme in place to create and run unique activities, working with local providers.

Through our economic development and sustainable tourism work areas, we also have strong relationships with local rural businesses and attractions – for example, through [South Downs Food and Drink](#) and [Sussex Modern](#), giving us a wealth of contacts to draw on to develop and run events, using local providers and expertise.

Building on this, the newly employed Commercial Manager at Seven Sisters, Peter Cousin, previously led an outdoor leisure company and most recently has been working for the National Trust in the South West helping develop a commercial offer that supports its nature conservation ambitions.

Combining this experience, we will expand on our Draft Marketing and Events Plan developing a combination of core, topic-based and audience-based events, complemented by a strong digital marketing strategy.

Create sustainable year round jobs in tourism instead of seasonal work.

At present, Seven Sisters Country Park has a minimal staff presence. The old Visitor Centre has not opened in 2020 and the existing small toilet block has not opened since the beginning of lockdown. The existing park Ranger office is very occasionally occupied, but there is generally nobody on site to welcome or provide information to the public. Even before the impact from COVID-19, the visitor facilities were operated seasonally – with the barn opening for a few hours per day in high season and generally staffed by volunteers. Staff were not on site full-time and the two Ranger roles were part-time and focussed on land management, rather than being visitor facing.

The Foxhole cottages are currently dilapidated and uninhabited and the camping barn is only open on request, facilitating only a few groups each year. The new Visitor Centre, retail offer and holiday facilities will be open all year round creating new, year-round jobs.

In addition, the SELEP Rural Strategy 2015-2021 sets out SELEP's strategy to deliver continued economic growth whilst safeguarding natural capital and our vibrant rural communities. It highlights the importance of good stewardship of the environment – including the South Downs National Park - to our rural economy and the value of land-based business including tourism and viticulture. It sets out a number of strategic objectives and outcomes. This project particularly supports strategic objectives RE3 – Support the development of sustainable rural tourism and REn2 – Safeguard our natural assets, heritage and quality of life and will contribute towards others through the wider planned investment at Seven Sisters.

2.5 Need for intervention:

Run down visitor offer at Seven Sisters which does not meet the need of tourists and residents

Despite its popularity, the Visitor Welcome at Seven Sisters has not, for many years, met the standards expected for an internationally recognised landscape. The Park has been in County Council ownership since 1971, but increasing visitor demands and tighter Council budgets mean it is now in dire need of investment to meet the needs of current visitors and to provide a marketable tourism proposition.

An attractive, listed, former farmstead at Exceat, at the northern end of the Park serves as the main visitor arrival point, but buildings are dilapidated and most are now closed. A former threshing barn has acted as a visitor centre for many years, but is damp, dark and does not offer the facilities expected from a modern visitor centre, with a seasonal welcome desk, a few maps and a hotch-potch of information, some over 20 years old, set across split levels, making half the barn difficult to access for anyone with restricted mobility. The centre did not open in 2020 (formerly open April-September only) and the small toilet block lacks any disabled access and is wholly inadequate for current visitor numbers.

The need for this project has been identified in response to organisational, national and local drivers and local consultation including, most recently, user and non-user surveys undertaken in August/September 2020.

As a National Park Authority, we are bound by two Purposes and a Duty, laid out by law. These are to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area, to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park by the public and to seek to foster the social and economic wellbeing of the local communities within the National Park in pursuit of our purposes. Establishing a Visitor Centre in an iconic location within the National Park, with a high existing footfall will allow us to better deliver against our Purposes and Duty.

Enhance the visitor economy by providing local businesses opportunities to retail at a high foot fall, tourist, destination

Tourism is a vital part of the economy in the National Park, in 2018 accounting for 17% of employment (9,440 jobs). In 2018 the South Downs National Park attracted over 19 million visitors, 18.4 million day visitors and 641,900 staying overnight. These visitors contributed £436.81m GVA to the National Park, with staying visitors accounting for £125.99m (data produced using the [STEAM](#) tourism model). However, the visitor economy currently accounts for only 10% of businesses within the National Park and has potential for growth. Through this project we hope to provide wide benefits to the local economy by better signposting to other sites and through the provision of a dedicated retail space, for local crafts and produce, at one of the most popular tourist sites within the UK.

Lack of tourism accommodation within the South Downs National Park and lack of accommodation for local workers

This project also meets the need highlighted in the [Seaford Neighbourhood Plan](#), which highlights an unmet requirement for tourist accommodation in the town – the nearest to Seven

Sisters Country Park, through the expansion and enhancement of Foxholes Cottages which are located in the heart of the iconic Seven Sisters Country Park, but currently uninhabitable. In addition, through the provision of on-site accommodation for local workers, we are also addressing the challenges for workers to find local and affordable accommodation due to this area having one of the highest house prices in the county.

2.6 Sources of funding:

Fundraising for the project and other phases of work at Seven Sisters Country Park is being taken forward jointly by the SDNPA and SDNP Trust. We have secured £180,000 from South Downs National Park Community Infrastructure Levy funds towards work at Seven Sisters and £95,000 from Trusts and Foundations. We initially approached the National Lottery Heritage Fund to support this project and a wider programme including activities for under-represented audiences and education provision, which are priority interests for the NLHF. We submitted an EOI to the large, but highly competitive, Heritage Horizons scheme. This was not successful and only a very few schemes were taken forward nationally.

The additional funding from GBF will now allow us to bring forward projects which had previously been removed from our current plans in a cost saving exercise.

In the long term, both through income generated on site and further appeals through the South Downs National Park Trust, we hope to build on the current works providing an outside play area and dedicated outside learning space.

2.7 Impact of non-intervention (do nothing):

The SDNPA are fully committed to completing this project, however without support from the GBF we have to remove the aspects listed under your funding (133 sqm of additional retail space, enhance 3 high quality cottages and 1 flat for the local workforce), with resulting negative effects on the outcomes.

Without any intervention, the Seven Sisters country park would have continued to depreciate, the visitor centre would have remained closed, further reducing the limited offer to visitors. This would result in reduced local employment, reduced offering for Tourists and no retail opportunities for businesses.

Without the specific funding from the Get Building Fund we would not safeguard 7.8 jobs and would lose 6.5, we would lose 133 sqm of retail space resulting in nowhere for our 100 local food and drink businesses to exhibit, we would lose 1 broadband connection, one flat accommodation for local staff and only be able to deliver a minimal refresh of the cottages, offering the most basic of accommodation.

2.8 Objectives of intervention:

Project Objectives

1 – To conserve the historic fabric of Exceat farmstead, reviving the site to create an outstanding welcome for visitors, befitting an internationally recognised site in a National Park.

The project will breathe new life into the historic farmstead, greatly increasing visitor appeal and providing new, improved and more accessible facilities. We expect this to increase visitor dwell time, engagement and enjoyment, which we will measure using a variety of feedback methods. Increased accessibility will also help us reach more diverse audiences – both as general visitors and as attendees of the events and activities programme.

2 – To increase the through-put of visitors to the Visitor Centre, improving public engagement with the heritage of Seven Sisters Country Park and the wider landscape.

Extended opening times and more appealing facilities will draw more of the people who make up the 1 million annual visits to the Country Park to visit the Centre and learn about the heritage. We predict 150,000-200,000 people will visit the new Centre within 12 months of opening, monitored through visitor counters.

3 – To establish new income streams, allowing Seven Sisters Country Park to become financially sustainable in the long-term and facilitate increased investment in the Country Park and wider landscape over time.

The new facilities will be open 364 days per year and include retail, catering, accommodation and events provision. Income generated will initially support running costs, with any surplus generated (expected from year 3) invested into further site improvements, innovative and research-led interpretation and heritage projects.

	Problems / opportunities identified in Need for Intervention section		
	Run down visitor offer at Seven Sisters which does not meet the need of tourists and residents	Enhance the visitor economy by providing local businesses to retail at a high foot fall, tourist, destination	Lack of tourism accommodation within the South Downs National Park and lack of accommodation for local workers
1 – To conserve the historic fabric of Exceat farmstead, reviving the site to create an outstanding welcome for visitors, befitting an internationally-recognised site in a National Park	✓✓✓	✓✓✓	✓
2 – To increase the through-put of visitors to the Visitor Centre, improving public engagement with the heritage of Seven Sisters Country Park and the wider landscape.	✓	✓✓	✓
3 – To establish new income streams, allowing Seven Sisters Country Park to become financially sustainable in the long-term and facilitate increased investment in the Country Park and wider landscape over time.	✓✓	✓	✓✓

2.9 Constraints:

None. All of this work was in our original planning application, approved in 2019, but was taken out due to a reduced budget. We have contractors on site up until April and will be looking to extend their contract to complete these additional works.

As part of the legal transfer of the Seven Sisters Country Park from East Sussex County Council to the South Downs National Park we had to provide a robust case of evidence on why we were acquiring the site, and our proposals for the site to both Defra and MHCLG.

Members of the project team took part in meetings with both government bodies to answer queries about the transfer and future proposals for the country park. Both Defra and MHCLG were satisfied with our proposals and provided permission for the transfer to go ahead.

2.10 Scheme dependencies:

Business restrictions caused by COVID 19 may mean that long term growth is affected. This may have an impact on the part time roles delivered, learners and new businesses assisted.

2.11 Expected benefits:

This project will safeguard 7.8 FTE, (2 FTE being TUPE'd from ESCC to SDNPA and the remainder new roles employed at the transfer of the site) and create 6.5 FTE jobs (2 Wardens and a number of additional part time staff to facilitate the food and retail offer from opening in 2022)

The project will also result in a measurable increase in sales for local small businesses showcased in the visitor centre and through the creation of a multi-use retail, exhibition, event space (total 233 sqm). This will be used as a 'Hub' to offer an outlet for small and micro, sustainable businesses from across the National Park. The high footfall of customers at the location give these businesses the opportunity to reach a large audience.

Not only will this deliver for boosting the local economy but it will also improve the visitor experience at Seven Sisters Country Park as well as attracting visitors year round, ensuring that the whole site is financially sustainable.

These plans have been welcomed by local businesses, for example [Long Man Brewery](#), Director Stephen Lees says *"Having a permanent representation at the new visitor centre will give the brewery the boost that we need."*

With this additional funding we also propose to enhance our refurbishment of the 3 cottages, including splitting one of the cottages into 2 separate flats. This would result in 2 x 1 bed flats . One of the 1 bed flats and the 2 cottage would be refurbed to a high standard enabling them to be used as high quality holiday lets. The remaining flat would be refurbed to a basic standard to be offered as accommodation to a site warden who would manage both the holiday cottages and the neighbouring campsite and camping barn.

Wider benefits will be felt outside the South Downs National Park area too, with adjacent [1066 Country](#) attractions also being promoted from the Centre. Julie Ryan, Enterprise Director of [Herstmonceux Castle](#) felt the project would give a *"real boost"* to visitor numbers outside high season and noted the value of advertising at the Centre because the castle is in a *"somewhat isolated location"*.

Stewart Drew, Chair of 1066 Country and Director and CEO of the [De La Warr Pavilion](#) in Bexhill, sees the new Centre as benefitting his own business and *"as one of the mechanisms that will support the local economy and businesses in the region's post-COVID recovery."*

2.12 Key risks:



Risk of COVID-19 lockdown causing delays to project delivery	High	High	Discuss with contractor early on the approach for delay with lockdown/ delay/ costs
Main contractor insolvency	High	High	Undertake due diligence before appointing.
Difficulty obtaining materials due to COVID-19, supply chain and market demands	Medium	High	Identify early in the programme which materials might be on a long lead in. Contractor to regularly liaise with supply chain.
Construction costs significantly higher than expected due to volatile construction market	High	High	Detailed contractor discussions and contingency allowances. Use contract management for cost variations and scope change
Delay in appointing contractors affect ability to complete works by end of Sept 2022	High	Medium	Early engagement with contractors and tender prior to funding award to ensure contractor ready for April 2022.

3. ECONOMIC CASE

Smaller schemes (less than £2 million) are not required to provide a supporting AST, and do not have to calculate a BCR.

3.1. Options assessment:

Whilst an alternative location could have been chosen for a Visitor Centre in the National Park, Seven Sisters Country Park is already an extremely significant visitor attraction with a high existing footfall and clear potential for growth. It is of high importance in terms of its landscape, wildlife and heritage and it became available because ESCC wished to dispose of the asset to another organisation.

When ESCC announced their wish to dispose of the site, SDNPA had a number of options. Those included;

- 1). Allow the Country Park to be disposed of as ESCC saw fit, and rely on SDNPA's planning powers to control inappropriate development. The planning powers do not stretch to land management issues. This was the 'do nothing' option.
- 2). Work in partnership with like-minded bodies (SWT, NT, etc). to acquire the site
- 3). Lease the site from ESCC (they were open to lease or transfer)
- 4). Acquire the site and run it on the same basis as ESCC
- 5). Acquire the site and invest in the upgrading of all the buildings and facilities on the site.

3.2. Preferred option:

Option 1 was disregarded as it would not have enabled SDNPA to properly protect the site and a unique opportunity would have been lost. Option 4 was disregarded after an initial assessment of the site. It became obvious to SDNPA during initial visits to the site that the built infrastructure was run down, tired and in need of investment. Given the absence of capital investment in the site, the local management and staff were, in the opinion of SDNPA, managing the operation of the facility with care and commitment, and we did not consider that we could improve on this, with the current infrastructure in place. Option 3 was disregarded for a similar reason, in that a leasing arrangement would not have given SDNPA ownership of the freehold to the buildings that would have allowed us to borrow against the asset.

A joint approach to ESCC to acquire the Country Park, ideally with both Sussex Wildlife Trust and the National Trust (Option 2) was the favoured option of SDNPA. This would have allowed the three bodies to pool their resources, knowledge, experience and public profile to support the development of the Country Park. This proved not to be deliverable as both of the potential partner organisations had internal issues that prevented them from taking part in the partnership.

Option 5 was therefore pursued, informed and supported by the following research.

As part of the design process, a series of iterations were considered for the works, including a Do Nothing scenario and whether to do any works to the visitor centre, dairy barn or ranger offices. Considerations for the options included what layouts would work best for the buildings, commercial viability, sustainability and future plans for the Country Park and consideration of how people moved through the Exceat.

Following the two day consultation event in the Visitor Centre, which was extremely cold, the Project Board decided a new heating and lighting system would be required in the Visitor Centre.

We were also able to identify costs for replacing the existing lift in the Visitor Centre versus its removal with a new-cantilevered level floor. The Project Board therefore opted for the new Visitor centre layout including the levelled floor, new heating and lighting system and log burner to ensure a fully accessible Visitor Centre able to open 364 days a year.

Surveys and Consultation

In February 2020, we hosted two consultation events on site at Seven Sisters Country Park for local residents and stakeholders. These were advertised by posters in and around the Country Park, emails to key stakeholders and leaflets to local residents and included opportunities to chat to the project team, view architect's designs and comment on issues boards.

In August 2020 we commissioned business and sustainable tourism consultants [Matthews Associates](#) to carry out online and panel research to ascertain what current users and non-users of Seven Sisters Country Park would want from a Visitor Centre here, and what events and activities they would like to do.

We also carried out (by Zoom) direct consultation with Parish Council representatives as part of the Planning process. The findings have been incorporated into our plans and can be summarised as follows:

Seven Sisters Country Park Visitor Survey 2019

All visitors were asked what activities they planned to do during their visit to Seven Sisters Country Park. The most popular activity by far was to "go for a walk" (92% of all visitors). The second two most popular activities were "visit the café" and "go to the Visitor Centre". Overnight visitors were almost 4 times more likely to visit the café and 5 times more likely to go to the visitor centre than a local resident, highlighting the value of these facilities to visitor growth.

Local Resident and Stakeholder Consultation Events, February 2020

On 5th and 7th February 2020 SDNPA hosted two public consultation events at Seven Sisters Country Park, with 95 people attending on the 5th and 140 on the 7th. We displayed information boards around the room and invited people to talk to staff and leave feedback and comments on Post-It notes under a number of themes. We received a total of 377 comments, with the "getting around" board receiving the highest number of comments (118) and "landscape and environment" second highest at 85 comments.

The event showed strong demand for improvements to the site and feedback from the event was used to ground truth and influence the final designs as put forward for Planning Permission.

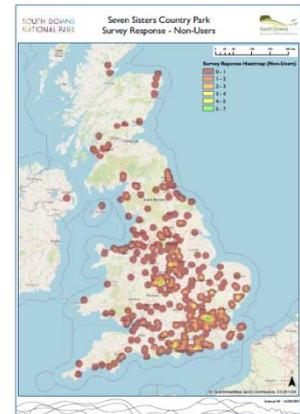


Survey of Users and Non-Users of Seven Sisters Country Park, August 2020

The heat map resulting from these surveys showed that users, as expected, have a higher density in Brighton and East Sussex but, the site also shows a strong existing appeal in Greater London, as well as pockets of users further afield.

Responses from non-users (see picture) demonstrate a strong market potential in West Sussex, Hampshire, the north of London, Home Counties and Birmingham/Midlands.

The survey gauged interest among those who had not visited before. The response was resoundingly positive with 96% responding yes and indicating potential for growth from the non-user market.



The survey also showed a strong interest on visiting the site in offers focused around local food, more information on what is available locally and seasonal events and activities.

Assessment approach:

At a very early stage, before submitting a proposal to ESCC to acquire the Country Park, SDNPA asked three questions;

- 1). Can SDNPA make a positive and significant contribution, in pursuit of its purposes and duty?
- 2) Can SDNPA do this in a way that is sustainable and does not create a long term call on the limited resources of the organisation?
- 3). Will SDNPA be able to work, as far as possible, in partnership with others?

To address those three questions, SDNPA examined the impacts of the proposed scheme on the following;

- For the Habitats and Landscapes
- For the people who visit the Country Park
- For the people who learn in the Country Park
- For the people who should visit the Country Park and currently don't
- For the local economy
- For SDNPA, in terms of a sustainable business model

3.3. Economic appraisal assumptions

Smaller schemes (less than £2 million) are not required to complete this section].

3.4. Costs:

The total capital cost of the scheme is estimated at £2.175million.

This includes acquisition costs of the site, surveys and architectural design, construction work and interpretation and signage on the site.

This will be funded as follows;

Public Sector Loan (SDNPA borrowing) £1million

Public Sector Funds (SDNPA reserves) £0.7million
 Public Sector Grants (CIL) £0.18 million
 Private Sector Grants £0.095 million
 SELEP Grant (Unsecured) £0.2million

3.5. Benefits:

Benefits		
For Whole Project	Dependent on the SELEP GBF funding	Calculation methodology
Create and Safeguard 14.3 FTE, 6.5 of which are dependent on the SELEP GBF funding.	6.5	Current and budgeted head count
Create 1 x 1 bed flat for onsite warden	Create 1 x 1 bed flat for onsite warden	Site plans
2,000 learners assisted per annum		200 learners per school month, approximately 1 school visit of 40 each week
233 high foot fall retail space	131	Site plans
2 new superfast Broadband connection	1	
104 enterprises supported	100	
4,523 annual reductions for the heat pump. We are unable to make an estimate for the electric boilers at this time.		
Increase in average spend from 38p to £3.90 per visitor (t)	Note – supported and maximised by the additional retail space	As assessed by MAI ARts and Heritage Commercial Dev. Consultant through their independent retail report
Increase in foot fall through the visitor centre from 65,000 to 100,000 in year one, rising thereafter.	Note – supported and maximised by the additional retail space	As assessed by MAI ARts and Heritage Commercial Dev. Consultant through their independent retail report

In addition, SDNPA examined the benefits, using the methodology in the original assessment, as follows;

For the Habitats and Landscapes

North Meadow (West Dean Brooks) - Create conditions suitable for breeding waders such as lapwing and other wetland species for instance reed and sedge warbler.

The Meanders - Improve visitor management, ensuring disturbance to wildlife is kept to the minimum. Inclusion of more reed bed habitats. The meanders, if managed more effectively, will attract larger numbers of waterfowl and waders by creating better conditions for feeding, breeding and roosting for these birds.

South of Foxhole - The saline lagoon could be expanded and ideally this should be alongside the creation of other scrapes and wet areas in the adjacent grassland. The islands in the lagoon could be improved to provide suitable roosting and nesting sites for wading birds and seabirds such as terns.

Chalk Grassland Management and Restoration - The vision for the remaining chalk grassland areas would be to bring them into excellent condition by reversing the invasion of scrub and implementing a partnership with Plumpton College to undertake conservation grazing, trailing a grazing regime on those areas to create authentic chalk grassland

For the people who visit the Country Park

Visitor centre open seven days a week and for twelve months of the year.

Creating a world class visitor experience.

Promoting local food, drink and crafts.

Creating a strong sense of arrival for visitors to the site by public transport, car, foot or bike.

Provide an improved online gateway through an improved website

For the people who learn in the Country Park

We will be working closely with the Sussex Wildlife Trust.

Engaging with a large schools audience, utilising the SDNP Travel Grant.

Promoting the learning resources on the SDNP Learning Zone.

Engaging families in discovering, exploring, conserving and sharing their experiences of the Country Park through the John Muir Award.

Continuing to use Forest Schools and Beach Schools to connect children with nature in this inspirational setting.

Working closely with Buzz Active to ensure that they can diversify their operations and also integrate closely with activities across the Country Park.

For the people who should visit the Country Park and currently don't

Ideal site for broadening participation.

Unlock potential to diversify audiences.

Realise health and wellbeing benefits.

Build on experience with community leaders, 'Miles without Stiles', Health and Wellbeing conference.

For the local economy

The proposal would create direct employment.

It would create opportunities for local businesses to work on-site and to engage with visitors.

SDNPA would sell locally sourced goods at any outlets in the Country Park and use it to showcase local crafts and produce.

While we are not aiming to increase overall visitor numbers to the Park, we hope that by increasing the number of things to do, visitors will stay longer and spend more in the Country Park and in the local area.

For SDNPA, in terms of a sustainable business model

SDNPA will manage the operations on the Country Park, through a wholly owned Trading Company. The capital investment in the Country Park means that the trading company will have a number of income streams; Car Parking, Visitor Centre Retail, Food and Beverage Retail, BPS Licence, and accommodation income from holiday cottages, bunk house, and camping. This will

provide funding to support the landscape management and visitor facilities, and make a sufficient return to SDNPA to allow it to service and repay the capital debt in future years.

Competition Considerations

Seven Sisters Country Park sits within the South Downs National Park, at the heart of the Sussex Heritage Coast downland, which stretches from Eastbourne to Seaford. Working from west to east, there are three countryside visitor hubs along this 8-mile stretch of open countryside, being Seven Sisters Country Park, Birling Gap Visitor Centre (owned by the National Trust) and the Beachy Head Countryside Centre (owned by Eastbourne Borough Council and operated by volunteers), indicated by the blue dots on the map below.



All three locations are on the route of the South Downs Way national trail and the new England Coast Path national trail. Both Birling Gap and the Beachy Head Centre offer parking and access to catering facilities – being a National Trust café and the Beachy Head Hotel, a separately operated gastropub. The National Trust also offer a range of events for members and visitors, including family activities. The Beachy Head Centre is lightly marketed as an eastern gateway to the South Downs National Park and includes an exhibition on downland heritage. Birling Gap also highlights downland heritage, with features on wildlife and shipwrecks and is marketed as ‘Birling Gap and the Seven Sisters’, being at the opposite end of the Seven Sisters cliffs to Seven Sisters Country Park itself.

Working with the SDNPA, Eastbourne Borough Council (EBC), the owners of the Beachy Head Centre, have just completed a Whole Estate Plan (WEP) for their 4,174 acre downland estate, which encompasses 1,211 acres of open access land. In producing the WEP it was calculated that the estate receives an estimated 940,911 visits per year. The detailed plan notes that the Beachy Head Centre does not currently meet the needs of visitors and they have subsequently made improvements to the visitor centre for Beachy Head. EBC are also looking to transform redundant farm buildings at Black Robin Farm, indicated by the red star on the map above, to further develop the visitor offer.

The National Trust's centre at Birling Gap is one of their most popular locations in the south east, with parking at weekends and in high season regularly spilling out of the car park and along the popular coast road in both directions towards East Dean and Beachy Head. People come here to visit the beach and its rockpools, walk the Seven Sisters and visit Beachy Head. Like Seven Sisters Country Park, it is a popular location with Asian tourists, drawn by the links to Harry Potter and Jay Chou. Squeezed between the coast road and the sea, the visitor centre, shop and café here are at great risk from coastal erosion – the café having already had to close its cliff-top terrace. Consequently, the National Trust too are planning a major investment in new visitor facilities. In due course, the centre will be moved back from the cliff edge and, whilst these plans were relatively well-developed pre-COVID, there may now be some delays due to organisational restructuring.

Whilst the three centres could be thought of as in competition to each other – being in close proximity on the same stretch of coastline with broadly similar offers and capital development plans – the three sites have all successfully welcomed large numbers of visitors, with varying levels of offer as investment allows, for many years and the SDNPA, National Trust and Eastbourne Borough Council in fact work collaboratively on the management of the Heritage Coast landscape as part of the Sussex Heritage Coast Partnership. A feature of this work is consolidating an approach to sustainable visitor management, as captured in the Sussex Heritage Coast Strategy and Action Plan 2016-20 to benefit landscape, heritage, wildlife, local communities, the rural economy and to improve the quality of visitor experience for over 1 million visitors per year. We do not believe this project will result in competition or displacement and in fact feel it will benefit all three centres and organisations, supported by the letter of support from EBC and the National Trust.

As the draw of Seven Sisters Country Park is intrinsically linked to its downland setting and the iconic cliffs themselves, it is not felt to be in competition with countryside visitor centres in other easily reached but different landscapes nearby, such as the Sussex Wildlife Trust's new centre at Rye Harbour to the east (45 minutes travel time, coastal shingle and riverside landscape in 1066 Country outside the National Park), RSPB Pulborough Brooks (1hr 15 mins travel time to the west in the Arun Valley, within the National Park, with a wetland wildlife focus), the small Ashdown Forest Centre (45 minutes to the north, outside the National Park with a heathland wildlife and heritage focus) or Bewl Water (1hr to the north, outside the National Park in the Weald, with a watersports and recreational cycling focus). Conversely, Seven Sisters offers the opportunity to signpost visitor to other attractions within the National Park and Sussex, that they might not otherwise visit, therefore helping to increase visitors to our neighbouring sites rather than diminish them.

On site at Seven Sisters Country Park

There are currently three other organisations operating on site at Seven Sisters Country Park being: Buzz Active (educational watersports provider), Sussex Wildlife Trust (operating educational nature activities for children and families in the Country Park) and Saltmarsh Farmhouse café and B&B. These are discrete offers that do not compete with plans for a Visitor Centre, new toilets and improved public realm. Indeed all three businesses will directly benefit from the project.

The wider rural visitor offer

Away from countryside visitor centres, looking wider afield at businesses with which Seven Sisters Country Park might compete, we focused particularly on the rural visitor offer in the area between Eastbourne, Seaford, Newhaven and Lewes, roughly taking the South Downs National Park northern boundary, which broadly follows the A27, as our northern edge and the sea as the southern. We considered the area in the pink polygon below, with the red and yellow boundary being the National Park boundary and the blue dot indicating Seven Sisters Country Park.



Both locals and visitors tend to use the east-west routes of the Brighton-Eastbourne/Seaford railway, the A27, A259 and the scenic drive that loops around the Sussex Heritage Coast headland to travel through this area. The north-south main roads (the A26 and A22) are to the eastern and western edges of the area, with otherwise mainly small lanes running north-south. Public transport is also more limited north-south, with exploration by bus focused on the coastal and downland strip. The Low Weald to the north of the National Park here has a different character, being flat and less populous, with scattered small settlements and very limited visitor attractions. It is less visited for countryside activities than the Downs to the south or the heathland and woodland of Ashdown Forest and the High Weald further north. To the north and east of Eastbourne, we reach 1066 Country, a well-marketed, distinctly different offer for visitors from the South Downs landscape, outside the National Park, with the landscape character of the Weald and added visitor attractors related to the Battle of Hastings and cultural history. We therefore did not consider popular visitor sites in 1066 Country such as Herstmonceux Castle and Herstmonceux Science Centre as competitors, having distinct offers of their own. We have received letters of support from the above, echoing this view and highlighting the potential for our project to raise the profile of the area and drive visits to other local attractions, particularly out of season. Julie Ryan, Enterprise Director of Herstmonceux Castle, 30 mins drive from Seven Sisters, said: “the Herstmonceux estate is in a somewhat isolated location on the edge of the Pevensey Levels and as such would certainly benefit from the potential ‘shop window’ offered by a new enhanced Visitor Centre promoting local events and attractions.”

We did not consider competition with businesses in urban settings in Brighton, Lewes, Seaford and Eastbourne. We also focused on businesses that would appeal to the same audiences as Seven Sisters. Therefore we did not consider either Drusillas Park or Knockhatch as being competitors, as whilst they are popular outdoor attractions very local to Seven Sisters and there would be some overlap with the younger family audience, there are distinct differences in the offer – in that the wildlife on site is in captivity and both attractions have a theme park feel. Both will be signposted from the new facilities at Seven Sisters as part of the local information provision.

Newhaven Fort is an important coastal visitor attraction within the research area and tells some of the heritage story of the local area, however, along with Seaford Museum, the other coastal built heritage attraction in the area, it offers the opportunity to explore extant military heritage and has no countryside offer, therefore we feel these are complementary offers that our site will not compete with. Both will be signposted from the new Visitor Centre. Mike Wright, Honorary Secretary of Seaford Museum and Heritage Society, in his letter of support says that “The Seven Sisters Country Park is vital to the economy and well being of the area, particularly Seaford, and a visitor centre is an integral part of the visitor experience. The Society fully supports this application.” He highlights the value of drawing visitors to the area for his own museum and wider benefits for the economy of Seaford itself.

We also did not specifically consider competition with sit-down cafes and other eateries because there is existing sit-down catering on site already (Saltmarsh Café) that will remain and no sit-down catering is proposed in this application, or for this phase of redevelopment at Seven Sisters Country Park. We will also signpost visitors to local pubs, cafes and tea gardens from the new Visitor Centre.

We concluded that there were no other locations within the research area providing the same offer as Seven Sisters Country Park.

We investigated the issue of competition in regard to retail and events further in relation to 4 locations, being: Firlie Place, Charleston House, Friston Forest, and Rathfinny Wine Estate. We concluded there was no risk of drawing trade from these locations.

3.6. Local impact:

This project aims to increase time and spend in the local rural area through increased stays and further visits to local attractions. We know from the 2019 Visitor Survey that 59% of current visitors are either local or staying overnight, meaning that they have the time and capacity to visit other attractions nearby. A key part of the interpretation strategy is to highlight the other attractions in the local area, both via a large map, which will constitute a central piece of the interpretation, leaflets from local attractions and by training staff to recommend and advise those visitors who wish to further explore the local area. The South Downs National Park hosts a rich range of local rural attractions to which we will signpost visitors, further supporting the local rural economy. These include Dovecote Farm, Charleston Farmhouse, Beachy Head and Birling Gap, alongside nearby historic villages, such as East Dean and Alfriston, which are attractions in their own right and the unspoilt seaside town of Seaford. This potential is recognised in the letter of support from the CEO of Tourism South East who says “We are also encouraged by the project’s ambition to interpret, signposting and the opportunity to provide local producers, artists, and local events access to a visitor wider market. The project envisages the encouragement of visitors to explore the area and spread the economic benefits of their spending to the wider area. Visitors and locals should therefore be motivated to stay longer, explore the wider area, and take part in outdoor activities. This is of huge importance as part of a robust regional recovery.”

Longer term, through our work with Discover England, we will develop a range of bookable activities, available from the Seven Sisters site, that will take people on a tour of the local area. The plan for these tours is that they will provide transport to a variety of sites, including those listed above (Alfriston, Rathfinny and Charleston). This will enable those visitors who may have come by train or be staying locally, to visit those sites which may have not been accessible to them otherwise.

Letters of Support for this project have been provided by the following:
LIST REDACTED

3.7. Economic appraisal results:

Smaller schemes (less than £2 million) are not required to complete a quantified economic appraisal but are required to include a Value for Money rationale.]

	DCLG Appraisal Sections	Option 1 relative to status quo (Do Something)	Option 2 relative to status quo (Do Minimum)
A	Present Value Benefits [based on Green Book principles and Green Book Supplementary and Departmental Guidance (£m)]		
B	Present Value Costs (£m)		
C	Present Value of other quantified impacts (£m)		
D	Net Present Public Value (£m) [A-B] or [A-B+C]		
E	'Initial' Benefit-Cost Ratio [A/B]		
F	'Adjusted' Benefit Cost Ration [(A+C)/B]		
G	Significant Non-monetised Impacts	<p><i>[Please provide details of the non-monetised impacts of the scheme. Please note that, where monetisation is not possible, a qualitative assessment of the potential impacts should be carried out and presented in the Business Case submission.</i></p> <p><i>The DCLG Appraisal Guidance provides additional details regarding the use of multi-criteria analysis (MCA) on page 25 or switching values to capture the significance of such impacts on page 26]</i></p>	
H	Value for Money (VfM) Category	<p><i>[A VfM category should be produced for each spending option. The VfM should be based on the overall assessment of both monetised and non-monetised impacts. The VfM category will ultimately represent a judgment based on the size of the monetised benefits relative to the monetised costs (the BCR) and the potential significance of non-monetised impacts. Additional guidance can be found on page 28 of the DCLG Appraisal Guidance]</i></p>	
I	Switching Values & Rationale for VfM Category	<p><i>[Sensitivity analysis can be used to identify a 'switching value' particularly with respect to additionality]</i></p>	
J	DCLG Financial Cost (£m)		
K	Risks		
L	Other Issues		

4. COMMERCIAL CASE

The commercial case determines whether the scheme is commercially viable and will result in a viable procurement and well-structured deal. It sets out the planning and management of the procurement process, contractual arrangements, and the allocation of risk in each of the design, build, funding, and operational phases.

4.1. Procurement options:

SDNPA is part of the public sector and therefore any procurement has to take place within the public sector procurement rules set out in Public Contract Regulations 2015. The main options for SDNPA were to utilise an existing framework contract from one of our neighbouring local authorities or to conduct a stand-alone procurement exercise. If the latter, we had to consider the option of using the open or restricted routes to market.

We also had the option of using a traditional procurement route or a design and build contract of some description.

4.2. Preferred procurement and contracting strategy:

SDNPA decided to use a stand alone contract rather than attempt to utilise an existing framework. The construction contract was estimated at £1.6million, which for SDNPA is a significant contract but is small in terms of a County Council. County Council frameworks are geared towards larger value construction contracts and we were concerned that we would not achieve the right supplier fit or indeed any real interest using this route.

SDNPA also decided to use the restricted route – a two-stage process involving contractor pre-qualification by means of a selection questionnaire. This was mainly because of the uncertainties in the market at this time; we were concerned that a large number of contractors might bid in an open process. Not only would this stretch our own resources in evaluation but would also take contractor resource for a statistically small chance of success.

SDNPA opted for a traditional construction contract rather than design and build or early contractor involvement, mainly due to our own lack of experience and sophistication in managing this sort of contract.

4.3. Procurement experience:

SDNPA does have experience in managing works contracts, having managed a number of capital projects extending Cycle and Walking Routes in the Park. In addition, the Authority has experience in larger construction contracts through the refurbishment of the organisation's HQ in 2013. In this case we did use a local authority framework contract, which was probably too complex for our requirements, and also attracted only two bidding contractors.

4.4. Competition issues:

The competition at selection and award stage was positive and there were no issues at that point. However, the main contractor has experienced supply chain issues, which have affected particularly the timing of the contract, although the overall timeline has not moved too much.

4.5. Human resources issues:

The main human resource issues we encountered were the staff on-site at SSCP, who transferred to SDNPA under TUPE on the acquisition of the site. SDNPA recognised that the knowledge and experience of those staff was extremely valuable and sought to maintain positive dialogue with them during a protracted transfer process.

4.6. Risks and mitigation:

In terms of the construction contract, the risk is shared between the contractor and the client, with price movement risks largely accepted by the contractor and any material risks in changes to the contract lying with the client.

In the wider scheme, the overall risk lies with and is accepted by SDNPA. A risk register is kept and is updated regularly in line with our corporate risk strategy.

4.7. Maximising social value:

Social value was included in the criteria for the award of this contract, with a score of 10% allocated to this criteria. In response to this the main contractor has undertaken to;

Contribute towards the development of a strong and competitive local economy by having a locally sourced supply chain.

Develop an Employment and Skills Plan to establish employment, apprenticeship, work experience, upskilling and training opportunities.

Support health, wellbeing and independence of local residents, by contributing time from the delivery team and supply chain partners to carry out voluntary work within the country park in support of the Walks Around Britain 2 minute path clean initiative and also donate labour and materials to other initiatives in the country park.

Other targets have been set for the construction project, involving carbon emissions, waste water usage and sustainable timber.

5. FINANCIAL CASE

The Financial Case determines whether the scheme will result in a fundable and affordable Deal. It presents the funding sources and capital requirement by year, together with a Quantitative Risk Assessment (QRA), project and funding risks and constraints. All costs in the Financial Case should be in nominal values¹.

The profile of funding availability detailed in the Financial Case needs to align with the profile of delivery in the Commercial Case.

5.1. Total project value and funding sources:

Public Sector Loan (SDNPA borrowing) £1million
Public Sector Funds (SDNPA reserves) £0.7million
Public Sector Grants (CIL) £0.18 million
Private Sector Grants £0.095 million
SELEP Grant (Unsecured) £0.2million

The latest approved business case for the operation of SSCP, following the capital investment in the refurbishment, anticipates an annual expenditure of £[REDACTED] (at 2020 price base). This will be funded from income generated within SSCP (from retail in the Visitor Centre, food retail at two outlets, parking, rentals, and accommodation) that will reach £[REDACTED] (at 2020 price base) after 4 years. It is anticipated that revenue on the site will cover operating costs in year 2. SDNPA will meet the costs from revenue in years 0 and 1. Sensitivity Analysis has been carried out, both in terms of visitor numbers / spend and on timings.

SDNPA undertook a significant amount of preliminary work, prior to acquiring Seven Sisters CP, including structural surveys and valuation of all buildings, business case support from consultants, visitor survey work, etc. Those are all regarded as sunk costs and have been met from a revenue budget set aside by SDNPA for this purpose. As this project is already underway and budgets are based on current contract and tenders, the costs are largely fixed meaning we do not believe there is a need to include Optimism bias in our figures.

In terms of contingency, [REDACTED]% is included within the current figures and the SDNPA has agreed to allocate a further [REDACTED]% from reserves should it be necessary.

The possible impact of inflation has been considered (2021 inflation on construction materials is already factored in to the capital costs) and while wage inflation in particular will have an impact on future operating costs, the income sources on the site are considered to be relatively inelastic in terms of demand, with the exception of retail in the visitor centre, and should therefore be able to continue to meet the operating costs of the site.

¹ Nominal values are expressed in terms of current prices or figures, without making allowance for changes over time and the effects of inflation.

Itemised business plan – tables redacted

Note: This is the business plan for the Trading Company. The £[REDACTED] Operating Fee would be payable to the Authority each year, to cover client costs. SDNPA will continue to be responsible for the maintenance of the fabric of the buildings on the site. An annual maintenance budget of £[REDACTED] is included in the Operating Fee. The operating fee also includes the cost of servicing the capital debt incurred by the construction works above.

5.2. SELEP funding request, including type (LGF, GPF, GBF etc.):
£200k from the GBF

5.3. Costs by type:

Cost type	Expenditure Forecast				
	20/21 £000	21/22 £000	22/23 £000	23/24 £000	Etc.
Capital [For example by stage, key cost elements for construction, and other cost elements such as contingency, overheads and uplifts]		£1,975,000	£200,000		
Non-capital [For example revenue liabilities for scheme development and operation]		£75,000	£100,000		
QRA					
Monitoring and Evaluation*					
Total funding requirement		£2,050,000	£300,000		
Inflation (%)					

Monitoring will be managed through the SDNPA's core team grant funded by DEFRA

5.4. Quantitative risk assessment (QRA):
The costs have by this stage all been subject to competitive tender. A copy of the SDNPA risk register for the project is included

5.5. Funding profile (capital and non-capital):

Funding source	Expenditure Forecast					
	19/20 £000	20/21 £000	21/22 £000	22/23 £000	23/24 £000	24/25 £000
SDNPA			£1,700,00			
Grant funded			£275,000	£200,00		
Non-capital source SDNPA Revenue Expenditure			£75,000			
Non-capital source SDNPA Working Capital provided to Operating Company - break even by year 22				£100,000		
Total funding requirement			£2,050,000	£300,000		

5.6. Funding commitment:

Dear Colleague

In submitting this project Business Case, I confirm on behalf of the South Downs National Park Authority that:

- The information presented in this Business Case is accurate and correct as at the time of writing.
- The funding has been identified to deliver the project and project benefits, as specified within the Business Case. Where sufficient funding has not been identified to deliver the project, this risk has been identified within the Business Case and brought to the attention of the SELEP Secretariat through the SELEP quarterly reporting process.
- The risk assessment included in the project Business Case identifies all substantial project risks known at the time of Business Case submission.
- The delivery body has considered the public-sector equality duty and has had regard to the requirements under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010 throughout their decision-making process.
- This should include the development of an Equality Impact Assessment which will remain as a live document through the projects development and delivery stages.
- The delivery body has access to the skills, expertise and resource to support the delivery of the project.
- Adequate revenue budget has been or will be allocated to support the post scheme completion monitoring and benefit realisation reporting.
- The project will be delivered under the conditions in the signed LGF Service Level Agreement or other grant agreement with the SELEP Accountable Body.
- I note that the Business Case will be made available on the SELEP website one month in advance of the funding decision being taken, subject to the removal of those parts of the Business Case which are commercially sensitive and confidential as agreed with the SELEP Accountable Body.

Yours faithfully,

SRO Director Level

Trevor Beattie

S151 Chief Finance Officer

Nigel Manvell

5.7. Risk and constraints:

There are none as all the funding is now secured and in place, planning approval has been secured and no future land purchase is necessary.

6. MANAGEMENT CASE

6.1. Governance:

A governance structure has been set up to manage the construction project. This governance will be continued for the proposed extension work. The structure uses a PRINCE 2 project management model and includes a Project Board that is chaired by the South Downs National Park Authority CEO, Trevor Beattie (Project Executive) and includes appointed members from the SDNPA, including the chair of the NPA, as well as project officers such as the project manager, head of finance and head of governance.

The Project Board meets monthly and all meetings have formal agendas and are minuted. The Project Manager (Liz Gent) reports back to the Policy and Resources Committee every quarter on project progress.

Role and responsibilities of Project Board

1. The Executive is responsible for the Business Case
2. The Executive is the key spokesperson and chair of the Project Board
3. The role of the Project Board is to be accountable for success or failure of the project in terms of business, user and supplier interests.
4. Provide unified direction to the project
5. Provide the resources and authorise funds for the project within the designated authority from the NPA
6. Ensure effective decision making
7. Provide visible and sustained support for the Project Manager
8. Ensure effective communication both within the project team and external stakeholders
9. Ensuring all communications from the Project Board follow the project communications plan.

For the purposes of this bid the Project Sponsor would be Trevor Beattie, and the Senior Responsible Officer would be Liz Gent/ Alan Brough.

Liz Gent as project manager oversees the project delivery of the construction project, when there are risks, issues for discussion or changes to be agreed such as scope or contingency approval; these are taken to the project board every month. The project executive as CEO has the overarching decision making role and is advised by the project board. As the SDNPA has specific governance rules, the CEO is the only person with delegated powers of authority and therefore the ultimate decision rests with them.

6.2. Approvals and escalation procedures:

The scope of the project was agreed through our Project Board and NPA. This included the aspirations of an improved visitor centre offer at Exceat and high quality holiday accommodation at Foxholes. These work packages were reduced due to budget restrictions and excluded from our existing contractors scope through cost engineering. Therefore, the proposed extension capital work this award would fund has already been given approval through our internal process. The Foxhole cottage proposals already have planning permission. The detailed scope will be agreed by the Project Board through the appointment of a contractor to carry out these new works. The Project Board meets monthly and will track the progress of the works and deal with any issues as they arise.

A quarterly progress report is fed back to the NPA via the Project Manager with any issues in costs and programme identified. Any changes in scope or cost variations from the contractors would be managed through the contract management process.

6.3. Contract management:

The work will be delivered as a new contract awarded through the appointment of a contractor using our internal procurement processes. The contract will then be managed by the overall Project Manager, Liz Gent, and overseen through the finance and procurement officer Alan Brough. This is all overseen by the Project Executive (Sponsor) and the Project Board to ensure the project meets the specified outcomes, budget and programme for delivery.

6.4. Key stakeholders:

As part of our Phase 1 works we conducted two drop in consultation events with the local community of Seven Sisters. We have held parish workshops and developed a new website for Seven Sisters, and as part of the construction activities the contractor is issuing newsletters and twitter updates on the activities.

The key stakeholders for the project include:

- Buzz Active- SSCP watersports providers on the Cuckmere.
- The Granary Barn- bike hire facilities at SSCP.
- Saltmarsh- SSCP café and B&B.
- The Trading Company- commercial arm of SDNPA responsible for managing key parts of the SSCP site such as mobile catering, visitor centre, staff etc.
- SSCP Stakeholder Advisory Group- this includes representatives from ESCC, Sussex Wildlife Trust, the South Downs Trust and Parish Councils.

Furthermore there is a stakeholder engagement plan which identifies 47 stakeholders, key relationship managers and a timeline and format for them to be provided with updates.

We also have a comprehensive communication and engagement plan as part of the project, and would look to expand this to ensure events and communications reflect the extended work proposed in this project.

6.5. Equality Impact:

The project of which this funding forms a part, includes several proposals to improve access and equality at SSCP to both visitors and staff. This includes a new ramp access to the staff offices, new raised flooring to create a level visitor centre floor and remove the need for lift access; improved toilet facilities including changing facilities, disabled toilets, safeguarded toilet facilities and a changing places toilet facility.

Improved variation of catering facilities for visitors addressing the different needs of the visitor including a mobile catering unit and a level access grab and go.

An EqIA will be developed as part of the project delivery and evaluation work.

6.6. Risk management strategy:

A detailed risk register has been developed for our construction project. This extension project would also have its own risk register once the scope and detailed works programme has been identified with the contractor. The Project Manager will discuss the risk register with the Project Board and agree mitigation where possible.

Some of the potential normal building risks are less significant for the extensions works as we have already been undertaking other works on these buildings, i.e. discovery risks like asbestos, electrics, damp etc. are extremely unlikely.

The key initial risks for the extension project have been identified as:

1. Construction costs significantly higher than expected due to current volatile climate of materials, supply chain and resources in construction projects- we would mitigate this with detailed contractor discussions at the project start, identifying contingency for the works and close contract management for cost variations and scope change.
2. Risk of COVID 19 lockdown causing delays in delivery of project- we will mitigate by working with contractors to agree contingency plans and phasing of works.
3. Delay in appointing contractors to complete project extension works means unable to complete by September 2022. Mitigation through advance contractor discussions prior to confirmation of funding to agree timetable of works and contingency plans and ensure suitable contractor in place to start works immediately on funding award.

6.7. Work programme:

December 2021-February 2022 – Advance design work for Phase 2 (RIBA stage 4): detail scope of works, construction drawings and preparation of tender for contractors.
– March - April 2022- 4 week tender, and hopefully successful confirmation of funding
April 2022 Tender award to contractor, minimise mobilisation period to 2 weeks maximum.
May –September 2022 works underway on site.
End September 2022 completion of works.

6.8. Previous project experience:

Liz Gent CIWEM, Project Management Lead A chartered member of the Institute of Water and Environmental Management and PRINCE2 qualified Project Manager, Liz has over 18 years' experience working in project delivery for both the private and public sector. Her role includes programme management and overview of all projects delivered within the National Park. Liz has been managing the transfer of ownership and pre-construction planning phase of the Seven Sisters Country Park project. This includes managing a team of specialists and sub-consultants to co-ordinate a planning application, as well as considering all the new policies and staffing required to operate the Country Park.

Mark Alden, Enterprise Development Lead is managing the capital works programme that is the subject of this funding application. Mark has a Masters Degree in Town Planning and over 20 years' experience in managing construction projects in both the private and public sector as a company Director in the construction industry.

Giles Pritchard, RIBA, Architect is the project architect and Director of [Pritchard Architecture](#), a heritage led design studio focusing on conservation, alteration and new design within the context of a heritage setting. He has 20 years' experience as a Specialist Conservation Architect repairing and adapting many listed buildings and scheduled monuments. Several of his projects have won awards and been published and commended widely.

Alan Brough, Head of Business Services will oversee the financial aspects of the contract and lead on financial management. Alan is a qualified management accountant (ACMA) and has managed the financial aspects of numerous contracts including the construction of the Centurion Way, in West Sussex and the Egrets Way in East Sussex. Alan has a Masters Degree in Procurement Management and is a professional member of the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply. He will oversee the procurement and contract management processes for the construction contract.

Peter Cousin has a strong background in outdoor leisure, having run an outdoor activities company before moving into visitor experience and commercial development with the National

Trust in the west of England. Peter grew up locally to Seven Sisters Country Park, regularly canoeing on the river Cuckmere here.

6.9. **Monitoring and evaluation:**

6.91 Logic Map.

Objectives	Inputs	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
<p>1) To conserve the historic fabric of Exceat farmstead, reviving the site to create an outstanding welcome for visitors, befitting an internationally recognised site in a National Park.</p> <p>2) To increase the through-put of visitors to the Visitor Centre, improving public engagement with the heritage of Seven Sisters Country Park and the wider landscape.</p> <p>3) To establish new income streams, allowing Seven Sisters Country Park to become financially sustainable in the long-term and facilitate increased investment in the Country Park and wider landscape over time.</p>	<p>Grant Spend £200,000</p> <p>Matched Contributions Spend £1,700,000</p> <p>Leveraged Funding £275,000</p> <p>SDNPA Revenue Expenditure - £75,000</p> <p>SDNPA working capital £100,000</p>	<p>Safeguard 7.8 FTE (6 F/T and 4 (P/T) and an unknown number of local construction jobs.</p> <p>Create 6.5 FTE (2 F/T and 9 P/T) jobs.</p> <p>Create 1 x 1 bed flat for onsite warden.</p> <p>2,000 learners assisted per annum</p> <p>233 high foot fall retail space (72 in original plan with this late funding allowing us to add in 131)</p> <p>2 new superfast Broadband connection</p> <p>104 enterprises supported (4 onsite and 100 through the new retail space)</p> <p>4,523 annual reduction for the heat pump. We are unable to make an estimate for the electric boilers at this time.</p> <p>Increase in average spend from 38p to £3.90 per visitor (as assessed by MAI ARTs)</p>	<p>14.3 Jobs</p> <p>1 Flat</p>	<p>n/a</p>



		<p>and Heritage Commercial Dev. Consultant through their retail report)</p> <p>Increase in foot fall through the visitor centre from 65,000 to 100,000 in year one, rising thereafter.</p>		
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7. DECLARATIONS

<p><i>Has any director/partner ever been disqualified from being a company director under the Company Directors Disqualification Act (1986) or ever been the proprietor, partner or director of a business that has been subject to an investigation (completed, current or pending) undertaken under the Companies, Financial Services or Banking Acts?</i></p>	<p>No</p>
<p><i>Has any director/partner ever been bankrupt or subject to an arrangement with creditors or ever been the proprietor, partner or director of a business subject to any formal insolvency procedure such as receivership, liquidation, or administration, or subject to an arrangement with its creditors</i></p>	<p>No</p>
<p><i>Has any director/partner ever been the proprietor, partner or director of a business that has been requested to repay a grant under any government scheme?</i></p>	<p>No</p>

**If the answer is "yes" to any of these questions please give details on a separate sheet of paper of the person(s) and business(es) and details of the circumstances. This does not necessarily affect your chances of being awarded SELEP funding.*

I am content for information supplied here to be stored electronically, shared with the South East Local Enterprise Partnerships Independent Technical Evaluator, Steer, and other public sector bodies who may be involved in considering the business case.

I understand that a copy of the main Business Case document will be made available on the South East Local Enterprise Partnership website one month in advance of the funding decision by SELEP Accountability Board. The Business Case supporting appendices will not be uploaded onto the website. Redactions to the main Business Case document will only be acceptable where they fall within a category for exemption, as stated in Appendix G.

Where scheme promoters consider information to fall within the categories for exemption (stated in Appendix G) they should provide a separate version of the main Business Case document to SELEP 6 weeks in advance of the SELEP Accountability Board meeting at which the funding decision is being taken, which highlights the proposed Business Case redactions.

I understand that if I give information that is incorrect or incomplete, funding may be withheld or reclaimed and action taken against me. I declare that the information I have given on this form is correct and complete. Any expenditure defrayed in advance of project approval is at risk of not being reimbursed and all spend of Getting Building Fund must be compliant with the Grant Conditions.

I understand that any offer may be publicised by means of a press release giving brief details of the project and the grant amount.

<i>Signature of applicant</i>	
<i>Print full name</i>	Trevor Beattie
<i>Designation</i>	CEO

8. APPENDIX C – RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

Description of Risk	Impact of Risk	Risk Owner	Risk Manager	Likelihood of occurrence (Very Low/ Low/Med/ High/ Very High) (1/2/3/4/5) *	Impact (Very Low/ Low/ Med/ High/ Very High) (1/2/3/4/5) **	Risk Rating	Risk Mitigation	Residual Likelihood/Impact Scores
Risk of COVID-19 lockdown causing delays to project delivery	Local and National lockdown may affect availability of staff for contractor, supply chain and project manager or project leads leading to delays in decision making or work and deliveries.	SSCP and Contractor	Project Board	Medium	High	12	Discuss with contractor early on the approach for delay with lockdown/ delay/ costs	Impact reduced to Medium so risk rating reduced to 9
Main contractor insolvency	Impact on programme as would need to go back out to tender, potential cost risk.	SSCP	Project Board	Low	High	8	Undertake due diligence before appointing.	Impact reduced to Medium so risk rating reduced to 6

Difficulty obtaining materials due to COVID-19, supply chain and market demands	Impact on delivery and programme.	SSCP and Contractor	Project Board	Medium	High	12	Identify early in the programme which materials might be on a long lead in. Contractor to regularly liaise with supply chain.	Impact reduced to Medium so risk rating reduced to 9
Construction costs significantly higher than expected due to volatile construction market	Reduced scope to fit scope of works to funding budget.	SSCP and Contractor	Project Board	High	Medium	12	Detailed contractor discussions and contingency allowances. Use contract management for cost variations and scope change	Reduced likelihood to Medium, so risk reduced to 9
Delay in appointing contractors affect ability to complete works by end of Sept 2022	Impact on delivery within funding timescales. Delayed opening of accommodation in Foxholes.	SSCP	SSCP Procurement and Project Board	High	High	16	Early engagement with contractors and tender prior to funding award to ensure contractor ready for April 2022. Pump Barn isn't proposed to open until April 2023 so this would be unaffected.	Reduced likelihood and impact to Medium so risk reduced to 9

* Likelihood of occurrence scale: Very Low (1) more than 1 chance in 1000; Low (2) more than 1 chance in 100; Medium (3) more than 1 chance in 50; High (4) more than 1 chance in 25; Very High (5) more than 1 chance in 10.

** Impact scale: Very Low (1) likely that impact could be resolved within 2 days; Low (2) potential for a few days' delay; Medium (3) potential for significant delay; High (4) potential for many weeks' delay; Very High (5) potential for many months' delay

Please note, not all sections of the table may require completion.

9. APPENDIX – GANTT CHART

Tasks	Start date	Finish date	2021					2022									
			Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct
SSCP Design and cost optioneering for Phase 1 scope	September 2019	July 2020 - COMPLETED															
Planning Application	March 2020	October 2020 COMPLETED															
SSCP Ownership	June 2019	July 2021 COMPLETED															
Phase 1 construction	August 2021	April 2022															
Phase 2 Detailed scope of works and Tender preparation	Dec 2021	Feb2022															
P2 Contractor Tender Period	Feb 2022	March 2022															
Award Notice	Feb2022	March 2022															
P2 Contractor Award and mobilisation	March 2022	April 2022															
P2 Contractor on site	May 2022	September 2022															
Completion all works	September 2022	September 2022															
Final Evaluations	October 2022	October 2022															



10. APPENDIX G - CATEGORIES OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

There is a clear public interest in publishing information and being open and transparent. But sometimes there is information which we can't publish because it would cause significant harm to the Council - for example by damaging a commercial deal or harming our position in a court case. Equally sometimes publishing information can harm someone who receives a service from us or one of our partners.

The law recognises this and allows us to place information in a confidential appendix if:

*(a) it falls within any of paragraphs 1 to 7 below; and
(b) in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.*

- 1. Information relating to any individual.*
- 2. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.*
- 3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)*
- 4. Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.*
- 5. Information in respect of which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained in legal proceedings.*
- 6. Information which reveals that the authority proposes— (a) to give under any enactment a notice under or by virtue of which requirements are imposed on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction under any enactment.*
- 7. Information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime.*