Herstmonceux Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2014 - 2027

Pre Submission Plan

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November 2013
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Foreword

Dear Parishioner

The Localism Act 2011 gave more power to parish councils to create a Neighbourhood Plan, which determines what services are required by residents and also gives them an opportunity to influence the development of the area they live and work.

A Public Meeting of parishioners in October 2012 indicated strong support for a Neighbourhood Plan for Herstmonceux Parish. A Steering Group was formed of seven parish councillors and eleven parishioners to undertake the process of creating a Plan.

When completed, Herstmonceux Parish Neighbourhood Plan will become a statutory planning document carrying significant weight in informing local planning decisions. It will also include policies for the management of development in the parish.

The professional services of Action in Rural Sussex with a retained Planning Consultant, rCOH Ltd, are supporting Herstmonceux Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

This Pre-Submission Plan contains the draft policies of the Neighbourhood Plan and you are invited to comment on them.

Your comments will be collated and recorded and the information used to inform any possible changes to the Plan. Information about the Steering Group Meetings after the end of the Consultation period will be advertised on the parish web site and on parish notice boards.

Please take this opportunity to comment on the proposals for the future of Herstmonceux Parish.

It's your Parish - It's Your Future!

Bill Gower
Chairman of Herstmonceux Parish Council
## List of Policies

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1. Introduction

Purpose

1.1 Wealden District Council (WDC), the local planning authority, designated a Neighbourhood Area for the whole of the parish of Herstmonceux in February 2013 for the purpose of enabling Herstmonceux Parish Council to prepare the Herstmonceux Parish Neighbourhood Plan (HPNP) (see Plan A).
1.2 The parish of Herstmonceux is located in the south-eastern area of Wealden District within East Sussex. It is largely situated around the main A271 road which runs between Ninfield and Bexhill in the east and Hailsham in the west. Predominantly rural in nature, the parish contains the settlements of Herstmonceux, Windmill Hill and Cowbeech. The parish is served six days a week by an hourly bus service (until 7pm) between Hastings and Eastbourne.

1.3 The Herstmonceux Parish Neighbourhood Plan (HPNP) is being prepared in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 and the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the European Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment 2001.

1.4 The purpose of the Pre-Submission Plan is to set out specific policy proposals for the parish and to consult statutory stakeholders and the local community.

Neighbourhood Development Plans

1.5 The HPNP is amongst the first Neighbourhood Development Plans prepared in England since the 2011 Localism Act. The National Planning Policy Framework states:

“Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need. Parishes … can use neighbourhood planning to set planning policies through neighbourhood plans to determine decisions on planning applications; and grant planning permission through Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders for specific development which complies with the order (para.183).

Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community. The ambition of the neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area. Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. To facilitate this, local planning authorities should set out clearly their strategic policies for the area and ensure that an up-to-date Local Plan is in place as quickly as possible. Neighbourhood plans should reflect these policies and neighbourhoods should plan positively to support them. Neighbourhood plans and orders should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies (para.184).

Outside these strategic elements, neighbourhood plans will be able to shape and direct sustainable development in their area. Once a neighbourhood plan has demonstrated its general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and is brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the Local Plan for that neighbourhood, where they are in conflict. Local planning authorities should avoid duplicating
planning processes for non-strategic policies where a neighbourhood plan is in preparation (para.185)”.

Sustainability Appraisal & Strategic Environmental Assessment

1.6 The local planning authority requires the HPNP to be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) under the EU Directive 2001/42. This requires the plan to assess the effects of its policies and proposals during its preparation against a series of environmental objectives.

1.7 The Scoping Report of the SEA has been consulted upon and a draft SEA is published alongside this Pre-Submission Plan for consultation. A final SEA will be published with the Submission Plan for examination. In addition, showing how the plan “contributes to the achievement of sustainable development” is one of the ‘basic conditions’ of the 1990 Act and therefore a requirement of the HPNP.

1.8 As such, the HPNP will help to achieve sustainable development by ensuring that its development policies and proposals will meet the needs of people living and working in the Parish, while at the same time helping to ensure that any adverse environmental impact is minimised. The ongoing consideration of the sustainability objectives of the plan will enable alternative options for those policies and proposals to be compared and evaluated.

The Plan Preparation Process

1.9 The process of preparing and seeking final adoption of the HPNP is in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan Regulations 2012 and has been agreed by the Parish Council. The intention of the Parish Council is to submit the HPNP to WDC for approval and then for independent examination in the spring of 2014.

1.10 The process up to submission comprises these main stages:

- A State of the Parish Report – this report summarises the evidence base of the HPNP
- A Pre-Submission HPNP – this report comprises the vision, objectives, policies, a proposals map and the draft SEA for a statutory six week public consultation period
- Submission HPNP – this report will take into account the representations received on the Pre Submission Plan during the public consultation period and will amend as necessary its content for submission to the local planning authority

1.11 Thereafter, the HPNP will be subject to independent examination and, if successfully examined, will be put to a local referendum. A majority vote will lead to the HPNP becoming part of the development plan for the parish to manage future development decisions alongside the Wealden District Plan and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
Consultation

1.12 The Parish Council has consulted the local community extensively over the past 18 months. Groups of local residents have met to review and agree which issues should be addressed by the plan. There has also been a community and housing needs survey of every household to obtain the fullest view of local community concerns, needs and wants from the plan. The housing needs survey is available on www.wealden.gov.uk

1.13 The Pre-Submission HPNP, including the Draft SEA, has been approved by the Parish Council’s Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to be published for public consultation for an eight week period commencing 29 November 2013 and ending on 24 January 2014.

1.14 Copies of the plan can be viewed at:
   - www.herstmonceuxparish.org.uk
   - www.wealden.gov.uk
   - Hailsham Library
   - Herstmonceux Village Information centre
   - Herstmonceux Village Hall
   - Contact the Parish Clerk - 01323 833312 or clerk@herstmonceuxparish.org.uk

1.15 Comments should be sent to: Mrs J McInnes, Parish Clerk, Herstmonceux Village Hall, Hailsham Road, Herstmonceux, East Sussex BN27 4JX or to clerk@herstmonceuxparish.org.uk

1.16 Details of how to access the consultation documents have been sent to every household in the parish.
2. State of the Parish

An Introduction to the Parish of Herstmonceux

2.1 The parish of Herstmonceux is located in the south-eastern area of Wealden District within East Sussex. It is largely situated around the main A271 road which runs between Ninfield and Bexhill in the east and Hailsham in the west. Predominantly rural in nature, the parish contains the settlements of Herstmonceux, Windmill Hill and Cowbeech. The parish is served six days a week by an hourly bus service (until 7pm) between Hastings and Eastbourne.

2.2 The unique name of the parish stems from the joining through marriage of the local de Herste family within the French Norman De Monceux family. It is perhaps best known locally for Herstmonceux Castle, which also housed the Royal Greenwich Observatory up until 1990, and which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and Historic Park & Garden.

2.3 The parish possesses a diverse set of landscape, being primarily located within the Low Weald, its northern part is within the High Weald AONB, whilst its southern tip falls within the Pevensey Levels RAMSAR (the international treaty for the conservation and sustainable utilisation of wetlands, agreed 1971 in Ramsar, Iran) site and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). It also contains a number of areas of historic woodland.

Plan B: Old Map of Herstmonceux Parish
2.4 Relative to its population size, the parish benefits from:

- A range of shops, pubs, restaurants and businesses
- A Church of England church, a Free Church and a Friends' Meeting House
- Herstmonceux Church of England Primary School with over 200 pupils on the roll and Herstmonceux Pre-school
- Health Centre (a new Health Centre which will improve and extend the existing facilities which will open on 6 January 2014 and outreach surgery from Collington Surgery, Bexhill on sea
- Fire Station
- A modern village hall
- Recreation areas for cricket, bowls, football, tennis, stoolball, multi games area, skateboard park and children's playground
- Village green
- Village Information Centre
- Over 40 local clubs and interest groups for all ages
- Tourist attractions: Herstmonceux Castle (Bader international Study Centre - part of Queen's University, Canada), Observatory Science Centre including four original Royal Greenwich Observatory telescopes, Listed Windmill
- Twinning Association with Varengeville sur mer in Normandy
- Active Parish Council
- Parish web site www.herstmonceuxparish.org.uk with information about businesses, services, clubs and societies
- Local Post Offices at Herstmonceux and Windmill Hill

Selected Parish Statistics

2.5 The following statistics are drawn from a variety of sources, most especially work undertaken by the Neighbourhood Plan Demographics work group and were published in the State of the Parish Report published by the Parish Council in May 2013.

Demographics

2.6 The usual resident population of the parish is 2,613 people (1,241 male, 1,372 female). Of these:

- People aged 15 and under (17% of parish population compared to 18% across the District and 19% across England)
- People aged 16 to 64 (58% of parish population compared to 59% across the District and 65% across England)
- People aged 65 and over (24% of parish population compared to 23% across the District and 16% across England)

Economic status of residents

2.7 Of the 2,613 usual residents of the parish, 1,850 were aged between 16 and 74.

- 1,312 (71%) of whom are economically active:
  - 573 were Employed full-time (44%)
o 286 were Employed part-time (22%)
o 375 were Self-employed (29%)
o 32 were Unemployed (2%)
o 46 were Full-time students (4%)

• 538 (29%) of whom are economically inactive:
o 326 were Retired (61%)
o 70 were Students (13%)
o 71 were Looking after home or family (13%)
o 49 were Long-term sick or disabled (9%)
o 22 were classified as Other (4%)

Occupations

2.8 Of the 1,275 residents in the parish in employment and aged between 16 and 74:
o 15% were Managers, Directors and Senior Officials (compared to 14% across the District).
o 17% were Professional Occupations (compared to 17%).
o 13% were Associate Professional and Technical Occupations (compared to 14%).
o 12% were Administrative and Secretarial Occupations (compared to 11%).
o 17% were Skilled Trades Occupations (compared to 14%).
o 10% were Caring, Leisure and Other Service Occupations (compared to 10%).
o 6% were Sales and Customer Service Occupations (compared to 7%).
o 4% were Process, Plant and Machine Operatives (compared to 5%).
o 8% were Elementary Occupations (compared to 8%).

Qualifications & Skills

2.9 Of the 2,158 usual residents in the parish aged 16 and over:
o 22% possessed no qualifications (compared to 20% across the District).
o 27% possessed Level 4 and above qualifications (compared to 29%).

Housing Types

2.10 There are 1,188 dwellings located within Herstmonceux Parish:
• 43% of dwellings were Detached (compared to 22.3% England)
• 33% of dwellings were Semi-detached (compared to 31%)
• 13% of dwellings were Terraced (compared to 25%)
• 7% of dwellings were Flats/apartments (compared to 22%)

Housing Tenures

2.11 There are 1,129 households located within Herstmonceux Parish:
• 44% were Owner-occupied households, owned outright (compared to 31% England)
• 34% were owned with a mortgage or loan (compared to 33%).
• 1.1% were Shared Ownership (compared to 0.8%).
• 5% were Social Rented from Council (compared to 9%).
• 3% were Social Rented Other (compared to 8%).
• 10% were Privately rented – by landlord or letting agency (compared to 15%).

Transport

2.12 10% households had no car or van (compared to 12% across District and 26% across England). 50% households had 2 or more cars or vans (compared to 48% and 32%)

Health

2.13 The 2,613 usual residents of Herstmonceux Parish were classified as having the following health status:
  o 49% were in Very Good health (compared to 48% across District and 47% across England)
  o 33% were in Good health (compared to 35% and 34%)
  o 13% were in Fair health (compared to 13% and 13%)
  o 4% were in Bad health (compared to 4% and 4%)
  o 1% were in Very Bad health (compared to 1% and 1%)

Biodiversity & Landscape

2.14 The northern portion of the Parish falls within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The southern portion of the Parish falls within the Pevensey Levels RAMSAR site and Site of Special Scientific Interest and Herstmonceux Park which is classified as a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The Parish contains no local nature reserves. The Parish contains multiple areas identified by Natural England as Priority Habitats. These are primarily Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland and are subject to Habitat Action Plans.

Heritage

2.15 The Parish contains a large number of Grade II listed buildings and structures including:
  o Allfrey House, Windmill Hill
  o Appleshaw, Herstmonceux
  o Arnocks and Arnocks Cottage, Gardner Street, Herstmonceux
  o Barclays Bank and Bank Flat, Herstmonceux
  o Barn at Cherry Croft Farm, Lower Road, Herstmonceux
  o Batchelors and the Garden Wall to the East, Cinderford Lane, Herstmonceux
  o Beadles Cottage, Cowbeech
  o Bedlam Green, West End, Herstmonceux
  o Bellevue and Perrywinkle Cottage, Gardner Street, Herstmonceux
  o Blackford Farmhouse, Herstmonceux
Herstmonceux Parish Neighbourhood Plan: Pre Submission Plan, November 2013

- Broyles Cottage, Herstmonceux
- Buckwell Place, Herstmonceux
- Carriers, West End, Herstmonceux
- Carter's Corner Farmhouse, Herstmonceux
- Chapel Cottage, Cowbeech
- Cherry Croft, Church Road, Herstmonceux
- Chesnut Cottages, Herstmonceux
- Chilsham Green Farmhouse, Chilsham Lane, Herstmonceux
- Church Farmhouse, Church Lane, Herstmonceux
- Cleavers Lyng, Church Road, Herstmonceux
- Comphurst, Comphurst Lane, Herstmonceux
- Corner Cottage, Herstmonceux
- Cotoneaster, Gardner Street, Herstmonceux
- Court Horeham, Hammer Lane, Herstmonceux
- Courtlands Farmhouse, Herstmonceux
- Cowbeech Farmhouse, Herstmonceux
- Deudney's Farmhouse, Herstmonceux
- East Lodge, Chapel Row, Herstmonceux
- Elm Cottage, Herstmonceux
- Elm Tree House, Gardner Street, Herstmonceux
- Eversley, Gardner St, Herstmonceux
- Field House and Field Cottage, Herstmonceux
- Gainsborough Cottage, Herstmonceux
- Ginger Green Farmhouse, Herstmonceux
- Herstmonceux Castle, Herstmonceux
- Herstmonceux Congregational Church, Herstmonceux
- Herstmonceux Place (Grade I)
- Herstmonceux Science Centre, Bradley Road, Herstmonceux
- Higham House and Higham Cottage, Herstmonceux
- Hollies, Butler’s Lane, Herstmonceux
- Hormes House, Herstmonceux
- Lime-End Farmhouse, Herstmonceux
- Little Butlers, Church Road, Herstmonceux
- Little Manor, Herstmonceux
- London Cottage, Gardner Street, Herstmonceux
- Meadow Cottage, West End, Herstmonceux
- Mill House, Herstmonceux
- Milland Cottages, Church Road, Herstmonceux
- Milland Farmhouse, Church Road, Herstmonceux
- Miller’s House, Herstmonceux
- Moieties, Cowbeech
- Monk’s Rest, Herstmonceux
- Old School House, Comphurst Lane, Herstmonceux
- Pastures, Chapel Row, Herstmonceux
- Pernes, Chapel Row, Hertmonceux
- Rays Cottage The Old Bakehouse, Herstmonceux
- Rose Cottage, Chapel Row, Herstmonceux
- Stunt’s Green Farmhouse, Chilsham Lane, Herstmonceux
2.16 There is a limited variety of independent retailers and service providers based in the parish, which reflects its small population size. This includes:

- Two post offices
- Grocery shops
- Pharmacy
- Four pubs, restaurants and catering services
- Delicatessen
- Trug makers and cabinet makers
- Hairdressers
- Beauty salons
- Florist
- Pet supplies
- Garden centres/garden services
- Estate agents
- Agriculture and orchards
- Farm shop
- Acupuncture and podiatry clinics
- Regional main car dealership and local car service facilities
- Agricultural suppliers and engineers
- Refrigeration services
- Fishing lakes
- Builders and building services
- Bed and breakfast providers
- Numerous independent sole traders offering a variety of services
- Home workers
- Tourist attractions: Herstmonceux Castle (Bader international Study Centre for approximately 200 students - part of Queen's University, Ontario, Canada), Science Centre, Listed Windmill
• The adjoining parish (forming part of the settlement of Windmill Hill) has PGL, a national activity centre for 400 children and young people

Community Views

2.17 Since the launch of the HPNP, the Steering Group has established a number of Focus Groups and arranged drop-in sessions for the community to learn more about the Neighbourhood Plan and to express their opinions on the future of the Parish.

2.18 An extensive overview of the consultations is included in the State of the Parish report. The report also included a summary of the key issues for the parish:

Strengths of the Parish

• Attractive, historic parish settlements with critical mass of key shops and services
• Reasonable proximity to major centres of employment but primarily by car
• Good local community identity and spirit with many active societies
• High quality surrounding landscape
• Reasonably high skilled and qualified workforce
• Village hall and new health centre facilities

Weaknesses of the Parish

• Poor traffic management through Herstmonceux village centre
• Inadequate bus services connecting to major employment centres, surrounding villages and shops
• Poor access to superfast broadband services

Opportunities for the HPNP

• To bolster the strengths of the parish in respect of shaping the future use and development of land
• To shape and control future planning decisions by refining District-wide policies to suit the parish’s own circumstances
• To secure planning-related funding to invest in supporting infrastructure
• To maximise the benefits of new housing in the parish to meet both local affordable needs and the demands in the open market for specific housing types and tenures
• To identify viable community assets to protect from inappropriate development proposals
• To provide and improve facilities for young people, older people and people with disabilities.
Challenges for the HPNP

- To identify suitable and acceptable sites to deliver 70 dwellings, with an emphasis on meeting local demand and need
- To use the plan to achieve non-land use planning goals like better traffic management and an improved public transport network

Developments

2.19 There have been a number of small housing developments in the parish in the past 10 years. In addition, a new health centre is under construction adjacent to Herstmonceux Village Hall, which is expected to be completed by January 2014. A planning application for 30 homes on land to the rear of James Avenue in Herstmonceux was refused permission in early April 2013.

2.20 The Wealden Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) was published in 2010. This document provides an overview of land in the district with the potential for housing development in the short and medium-to-long terms. The District Council has reviewed each site submitted by considering its availability, developability and deliverability.

2.21 The report assessed nine sites in the parish in accordance with WDC’s adopted assessment methodology. Two sites – at Lime Roughs in Herstmonceux and off Victoria Road at Windmill Hill – were assessed as being potentially suitable for housing development. The remaining seven sites were not assessed as suitable for the reasons given.

Planning Policy Context

2.22 The parish is part of the Wealden district, the East Sussex County and partially lies within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Each of these administrations has adopted and emerging policies and proposals that have a significant influence over the strategy and detailed content of the HPNP.

2.23 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published by the Government in 2012 is also an important guide in preparation of local plans and neighbourhood development plans. At examination, the submitted HPNP must demonstrate that is consistent with the policies and intent of the NPPF.

2.24 The development plan for Wealden currently comprises the 2012 Wealden Core Strategy Local Plan and the saved policies of the adopted 1998 Wealden Local Plan. The HPNP must be deemed by WDC to be in general conformity with the development plan.
Wealden Local Plan 1998

2.25 Although now some years old, many of the adopted Local Plan policies have been saved and are regularly used to determine planning applications in the district. Of particular relevance to the HPNP are the following policies:

- GD1 – proposals inside the development boundary
- GD1 – proposals outside the development boundary
- EN2 – development pattern
- EN6 – the High Weald AONB
- EN8 – the Low Weald
- EN18 – open space within settlements
- HG5 – housing type mix
- BS7 – existing village businesses

Wealden Core Strategy Local Plan 2013 - 2027

2.26 The Wealden Core Strategy Local Plan (WCSLP) was adopted by WDC in November 2012 and provides an overall strategy for development in Wealden over the plan period up until the 2027.

2.27 It establishes the purpose of the plan thus:

“Unlike other Districts, Wealden is not dominated by any one of its towns and overall it is a District of many centres. The towns generally serve the local population, with interactions between smaller settlements and towns and between the towns themselves. Any significant change to this settlement pattern has the potential to change the way in which the settlements co-exist, and the vibrancy of our main towns.

The challenge for the Wealden Core Strategy Local Plan (WCSLP) is to focus growth where it is most accessible and sustainable, whilst maintaining the balance between rural settlements and larger service centres, ensuring that the facilities and services within the towns are supported for the wider community. Our spatial strategy must recognise that some of our settlements, while having limited opportunities to accommodate significant growth, could support some development to meet the needs of the community. However, in other settlements, in less sustainable locations, additional growth will simply encourage more travel and out commuting and the potential for increasing social inequality.”

2.28 The WCSLP proposes “the future allocation of development and growth is based upon the attributes and constraints of settlements”. It proposes a settlement hierarchy that identifies Herstmonceux as a ‘Local Service Centre’, i.e. “a settlement that has a more limited supply of social and economic infrastructure including employment upon other centres to meet a broad range of needs with some form of accessibility to those centres.” It also identifies Windmill Hill as a Neighbourhood Centre, i.e. “a settlement with limited, basic or no facilities but with access to another
centre, or a settlement with facilities but poor accessibility or access only to a service or local centre.”

2.29 The WCSLP also addresses the provision of development boundaries, in accordance with the spatial strategy. Development boundaries are used to define built up areas (within the development boundary) and the countryside (outside the development boundary). In principle development in the countryside is subject to greater restrictions, to preserve the character of the rural area. Development inside the development boundary is subject to a number of design and land-use controls but allows the development of not only housing but retail, employment, leisure, recreation and community facilities including doctors surgeries.

2.30 For Herstmonceux, the development boundary is retained to allow the market, subject to certain controls, to provide for the amenities required for a community. Wealden District Council would consult residents and require evidence of the need for any future extension of the development boundary. The development boundary at Windmill Hill has been removed.

2.31 The strategy then translates that vision into a series of spatial planning objectives, the most relevant to the HPNP are:

• SPO1 - we will help manage countryside resources and assist in the development of the rural economy whilst protecting and enhancing recognised biodiversity and geodiversity attributes, in particular we will protect the internationally important sites of the Pevensey Levels and Ashdown Forest and other designated areas of bio and geo-diversity. We will also protect, and will work with others to enhance and manage, the distinct landscapes of the District, particularly, but not exclusively, those nationally designated.
• SPO2 - we will ensure that the intrinsic quality of the historic environment is protected and that Wealden’s environmental, heritage and cultural assets are used appropriately to encourage suitable tourism development and support inward investment
• SPO3 - to help address the need for homes, to ensure the economic prosperity of the District and to support its residents and the changing requirements of residents in terms of size, type, tenure and location of homes, whilst protecting our valued environment we will provide for at least 9440 homes within Wealden from 2006 to 2027 … the majority of new housing will be accommodated within, or as sustainable extensions to, existing towns, while allowing for limited growth within those villages capable of accommodating development in a sustainable fashion
• SPO8 - we will maintain and where appropriate enhance through the encouragement of growth, the effective network of villages that will continue to support the day to day needs of our rural communities, and which will accommodate some additional growth where this would be sustainable
• SPO13 - we will encourage the development of high quality, safe and attractive living environments for communities in both towns and villages, while promoting local distinctiveness through good design in all new development. We want future built development to create spaces and places which are sustainable, distinctive and durable- places where people will want to live. These will be expected to make a real contribution to addressing climate change issues and addressing the needs of our ageing population
• SPO15 - we will ensure, with our partners that the spatial strategy’s infrastructure requirements are clearly identified and will work with partners to ensure that this is provided at the right time to support development. New development will be expected to contribute to strategic and local infrastructure requirements, through both on site facilities and financial contributions for off-site works. In some cases development will require to be phased to ensure delivery of necessary infrastructure to support proposed growth

2.32 The WCSLP proposes a series of spatial strategy policies, the most relevant of which to the HNP are as follows:

• WCS6: Rural Areas Strategy – this requires the HNP to allocate land for at least 70 new homes in the village of Herstmonceux
• WCS8: Affordable Housing – this sets out the requirements of developments to provide affordable homes
• WCS9: Rural Exception Affordable Housing – this provides for affordable housing schemes outside development boundaries to meet identified local housing need
• WCS13: Green Infrastructure – this establishes the importance of protecting existing green spaces and provides spaces within new development

3. Vision & Objectives

Vision Statement for 2027

3.1 The Neighbourhood Plan establishes a vision of the parish in 2027 and identifies a series of objectives through which the vision will be achieved by the Plan. The suggested vision takes account of the issues and objectives of the Village Plan and consultations on the NP:

“In 2027 the Parish of Herstmonceux remains a beautiful part of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and of the Low Weald. The population of the village of Herstmonceux has grown to sustain its success as a Local Service Centre in this part of Wealden.

Windmill Hill and Cowbeech have benefited from small-scale housing developments to meet their village needs. The windmill is a popular tourist
attraction in Windmill Hill and the village now has its first public open space. Cowbeech now has a community-owned village shop.

The range of housing types and tenures built since 2014 have significantly reduced the local need for affordable homes and have met the demand for the types of homes suited to local households. The demand of local people to build their own homes and stay in the parish has been met. Local people now control the supply of many affordable houses and other precious community assets in the parish.

A greater supply of housing, access to superfast broadband services and the creation of new employment opportunities have together meant that the local working population is less dependent on commuting than in 2014. Herstmonceux village centre now has a larger number and wider range of shops and services than in 2014 and a thriving local business scene. Its community and sports facilities have also greatly improved in that time.

Development and change in the parish has avoided its most sensitive landscapes, habitats and cherished open spaces, which have had stronger protection for the enjoyment of the local community. The design of new buildings has conserved the character of the parish in the High Weald and the Low Weald.”

Objectives & Measures

3.2 The identification of objectives commenced through assessments of assets and issues during discussions of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee and work groups. This continued through debate at the focus group. The HPNP Objectives are based upon the identified issues and other known data sources and set out what the community wants to achieve in order to help realise the vision.

3.3 The following objectives have been identified:

1. To contribute to meeting the demand for new homes in Wealden and in the parish, but especially those local people in housing need, those wanting to move to more suitable accommodation and those wanting to build their own home
   • Number of new homes built
   • Number of new homes built and owned to meet local affordable needs
   • Number of new ‘custom build’ homes

2. To accommodate development and change without undermining the natural beauty of the landscape
   • Percentage development affecting the most sensitive landscapes

3. To build and maintain the commercial viability and vitality of Herstmonceux village centre
   • Number of village centre uses (A1, A2, A3, A4, A5 and B1a)
4. To improve the range and quality of local community services and facilities
   • Number of community facilities

5. To encourage and enable the local community to pursue healthy lifestyles
   • Hectares of new public open space
   • Hectares of Local Green Space designated

3.4 The objectives cover a range of economic, social and environmental issues that together provide a basis on which the sustainability performance of the HPNP can be judged. They reflect the nature of the parish and the direction the local community wants the HPNP to take. They also respond to the planning policy context of the Wealden development plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

**Monitoring & Review**

3.5 The HPNP will be monitored by the local planning authorities and Herstmonceux Parish Council on an annual basis as part of the Wealden Annual Monitoring Report. The objectives and measures will form the core of the monitoring activity but other data collected and reported at a parish level relevant to the plan will also be included.

3.6 It is expected the HPNP will be formally reviewed on a five-year cycle or to coincide with the review of the Wealden District Plan if this cycle is different.

**4. Policies & Proposals**

4.1 The Herstmonceux Parish Neighbourhood Plan (HPNP) contains a series of policies and proposals, the successful delivery of which during the plan period will achieve the community’s vision for the parish. In addition, the saved policies of the Wealden Local Plan (WLP), and the policies of WCSLP will be used by the local planning authority to consider and determine planning applications.

4.2 Each policy is numbered and is followed by a short explanation and justification, including a reference to the relevant key evidence (which is listed in Appendix A).
General Policies

Policy 1: The Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

Planning applications which accord with the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan will be approved, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Planning permission will also be granted where relevant policies in the Neighbourhood Plan are out of date or silent unless:

i. other relevant policies in the Development Plan for Wealden indicate otherwise;

ii. or any adverse impacts of the proposal would significantly and demonstrably outweigh its benefits when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole;

iii. or specific policies in the Framework or other material considerations indicate that development should be restricted.

Herstmonceux Parish Council will take a positive approach to its consideration of development proposals as a consultee on planning applications. The Parish Council and the local planning authority will seek to work with applicants and other stakeholders to encourage the formulation of development proposals that can be approved.

(Conformity Reference: WCSLP policy WCS14 and NPPF, paragraph 14)

4.3 This policy incorporates the key principle from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and of Policy WCS of the WCSLP into the HPNP. Where planning applications are to be considered against the policies of this plan then this policy will underpin the approach the Parish Council, when consulted on planning applications, and local planning authority will adopt in delivering sustainable development in the parish.

Policy 2: A Spatial Plan for the Parish

The Neighbourhood Plan directs future housing, economic and community-related development within the parish primarily to the settlement of Herstmonceux village to bolster its role as a Local Service Centre. Development proposals may also be acceptable at Windmill Hill and Cowbeech but these must only address identified local need and deliver community benefit.

(Conformity Reference: Wealden Core Strategy Local Plan WCS1 and WCS6 and NPPF paragraphs 17, 109, 115 and 116)

4.4 This policy establishes the principal spatial strategy for the HPNP in directing future development to Herstmonceux village as the Local Service Centre serving the parish. It also acknowledges the smaller settlements at Windmill Hill and Cowbeech.
4.5 Herstmonceux lies mainly to the north of the A271 some 4 miles east of Hailsham. The village has a wide range of services and facilities that serve the local community as well as surrounding settlements. The population is estimated at 1,100 persons. Policy WCS6 of the development plan defines the village as a local service centre.

4.6 Post-war housing estates which helped meet the housing demand generated by the Royal Greenwich Observatory at Herstmonceux Castle, have consolidated and extended the historic core of the village situated at the junction of West End and Gardner Street, and along Gardner Street to the east. Here, a number of buildings are listed as being of special architectural or historic interest. Local shops and services are boosted by tourist attractions in the village and the surrounding area. These and other businesses are important providers of employment and assist the vitality of the village.

4.7 The HPNP policy accords with saved development plan policy EN2 on patterns of sustainable development, which seeks to maintain the existing settlement pattern and ensure that major new developments generating significant travel movements are located efficiently in relation to existing development and to public transport. It expects new housing will be accommodated within, or as sustainable extensions to, existing towns, while allowing for limited growth within those villages capable of accommodating development in a sustainable fashion.

4.8 The smaller settlements of Windmill Hill and Cowbeech also have local services, albeit limited to two pubs, a farm shop and a village shop between them. The HPNP is keen not to prevent all development in these locations and so this policy supports positive proposals for development provided they are responding to a demonstrable local need (e.g. affordable, including shared ownership, and custom-build housing) and they will deliver a community benefit.

4.9 Beyond the three settlements the High Weald AONB and the Low Weald open countryside is not suited to anything other than proposals that can be justified against the development plans.

**Housing Policies**

**Policy 3: Housing Supply**

_The Neighbourhood Plan provides for the development of up to 100 homes in the plan period according to the following criteria:_

_I. each site allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan for housing development makes provision for a reasonable proportion of dwellings of a type and size suited to meeting the demand or need of older households wishing to downsize and ‘first time buyer’ households; and_

_II. the site is in close proximity to the village centre of Herstmonceux, as defined by Policy 9 and as shown on the Proposals Map, in an area of_
relatively lower landscape sensitivity and is capable of delivering significant community benefit; or

III. the site qualifies as a rural exception affordable housing site in accordance with Policy WCS9 of the development plan; or

IV. the site offers an opportunity to reuse previously-developed land to deliver dwellings within the development boundary of Herstmonceux as defined by Policy WCS6 of the development plan or otherwise within the settlement boundary of Windmill Hill or Cowbeech.

The Neighbourhood Plan will not support proposals for housing development outside the development boundary of Herstmonceux unless specific provision has been made in the plan or unless they are consistent with Policy GD2 of the development plan.

(Conformity Reference: Wealden Local Plan Policy GD2, Wealden Core Strategy Local Plan policy WCS6, WCS9 & NPPF paragraphs 47, 48, 50, 54)

4.10 This policy establishes a total level of housing supply for which provision will be made and the means by which this total will be provided for in the HNP.

4.11 The policy makes provision for up to 100 homes to be built in the parish over the plan period. This is a positive response to development plan policy WCS6 that requires the HPNP to allocate at least 70 homes in the village of Herstmonceux over the full plan period. It also plans positively for additional housing elsewhere in the parish.

4.12 The total housing number is derived from aggregating the number of homes proposed in the HPNP for each of the sites it allocates, which are the only sites that meet the criteria of this policy. The criteria have been established to strike the right balance between meeting the obligations of the development plan, contributing to achieving sustainable development and reflecting the scale of development that will be acceptable to the local community. This level of housing provision also reflects the 2010 WDC Housing Needs Assessment, which identified a need for 3 affordable homes per annum in this parish, i.e. 39 homes over the plan period to meet the needs of the local community.

4.13 The first policy criterion responds to the Wealden Housing Market Assessment and to the HPNP Community Survey available at www.herstmonceuxparish.org.uk. This shows that across the district there will be a growth in numbers in the older age groups (from age 50 and above) and in the number of single-person households. The relationship between household size and the type and size of dwelling is not a straightforward one. For those single or couple households that can afford to buy their own home it should not be assumed that they will want a small flat or house.

4.14 However, the Community Survey of the HPNP indicates a desire for smaller dwellings (i.e. 2-3 beds) in semi’s or terraces to suit the needs of older households within and outside the parish wishing to downsize from larger properties (thus
making available a stock of this type of property) and of local first time buyers. Each site allocated for housing development in the HPNP should be capable of delivering a reasonable proportion of such housing types as part of its open market and/or affordable provision.

4.15 There are no suitable and available sites for this scale of development within the defined development boundary of the village. The second policy criterion therefore establishes the means by which land outside the development boundary is selected for allocation elsewhere in the HPNP. Together, these means will conserve the character and high quality landscape setting of Herstmonceux.

4.16 The first favours land that is in close proximity to the village centre (and not necessarily immediately adjoining the development boundary, which is very tightly drawn to the existing settlement edge). This will encourage new households to use the village facilities and not have to use private cars. It also means development will be closely relate to the established settlement form, rather than be exposed in the landscape.

4.17 The second favours land that is to the south of the village where the landscape capacity is regarded as relatively less sensitive to the impact of development. The Wealden Landscape Character Assessment of 2009 assessed the land to the south (in Area A) as having moderate capacity to accommodate change. It considered the “lower land has good capability … with higher central area kept as (open space) with adjacent recreation good … area close to village has particular potential village related but open to views to North of High Weald”. By contrast the land to the west and north of the village (Areas B, C and E) was considered to have no or low capacity to accept change.

4.18 The third favours land on which proposals are capable of delivering significant community benefit aside from the supply of new open market and affordable homes. This responds to the desires of the community to leverage value from development proposals to be supported by the HPNP. Such proposals have to be directly related to the scheme, as restated in the Community Infrastructure Levy regulations. In which case, those that are capable of meeting this requirement will help address past problems or new opportunities to improve community infrastructure in the village.

4.19 The third criterion responds directly to the Housing Needs Assessment. The allocation of 70 homes at Herstmonceux will deliver 24 affordable homes (i.e. 35% of total dwellings) in accordance with development plan policy WCS8. This is insufficient to meet the assessed need of the parish over the plan period. In which case, the policy favours allocating land for rural exception affordable housing in accordance with the provisions of development plan policy WCS9.

4.20 The fourth criterion provides for proposals to reuse ‘brownfield’ land within the three main settlements; in the case of Herstmonceux, this is defined by the development boundary of development plan policy WCS6. The criterion only relates
to proposals to be made by the HPNP, not ‘windfall’ sites more generally, which will not fall within the scope of this policy.

**Policy 4: Lime Cross, Herstmonceux**

The Neighbourhood Plan allocates land at Lime Cross, Herstmonceux, as shown on the Proposals Map, for housing development for up to 70 dwellings, provided:

I. at least 35% of the dwellings are affordable;
II. a planning obligation is agreed to secure a financial contribution to the improvement of, and road access to, the sports and recreational facilities at Herstmonceux Sports Ground, as proposed by Policy 10;
III. a planning obligation is agreed to deliver at least 50% of the affordable housing requirement by the Herstmonceux Community Land Trust, as proposed in Policy 16;
IV. a planning obligation is agreed to deliver at least 6 open market dwellings as custom build homes by the Herstmonceux Community Land Trust, as proposed in Policy 16;
V. a planning obligation is agreed to secure a financial contribution to the Village Centre improvements proposed in Policy 9; and
VI. the design and specification of the scheme accords with the relevant policies of the development plan.

(Conformity Reference: Wealden Local Plan GD1, GD2, EN1, EN2, EN8, LR1, LR7; Wealden Core Strategy Local Plan WCS6, WCS8, WCS9 and WCS13 and NPPF paragraphs 47, 50, 55, 58 and 75)

4.21 This policy allocates land for housing development on land at Lime Cross, in close proximity to the Herstmonceux Village Centre. As a result, the village development boundary defined in Policy WCS6 of the Wealden Local Plan will be amended to incorporate the site and relevant adjoining developed land within it.

4.22 The site is allocated on the basis that it is the only site assessed in the Herstmonceux Neighbourhood Plan Site Assessments Report (HNPSAR) as meeting all the criteria of Policy 3 of the HNP. The policy achieves the WCSLP housing supply requirement of 70 dwellings up to 2027.

4.23 However, the policy makes the allocation dependent on a number of provisions being made by the development scheme in due course, in order to ensure the scheme is acceptable in this location, which is outside of the defined development boundary. These provisions, which will be secured through a planning obligation using a Section 106 Agreement, are considered reasonable and will not undermine the viability of a future scheme.

4.24 The provisions will help secure the long-term future and improvement of valuable community facilities at the adjoining Sports Field, as proposed by Policy 10, and will ensure road access to the busy A271 road is improved. The scheme will not
be required to provide formal recreation facilities on site in lieu of this contribution, but it will be expected to meet the requirements of saved development plan policies LR1, LR3 and LR5 and of policy WCS13 in respect of other on site green infrastructure provision.

4.25 Given the importance of securing a strong functional as well as visual relationship between the land and the village centre, they will also contribute to bolstering the centre, as proposed in Policy 9, to sustain the role of the village as a viable Local Service Centre.

4.26 Importantly, the allocation provides an opportunity, along with Policy 5 of the HNP, to deliver affordable homes to meet local housing need throughout the lifetime of the plan period, using a Community Land Trust (CLT). The policy proposes that at least 50% of the total affordable housing, i.e. 12 dwellings, are delivered by the CLT proposed in Policy 16. In doing so, the CLT will be able manage the phasing and nature of this component of the scheme to best suit the circumstances throughout the period to 2027. The remaining affordable housing may be delivered in the conventional way to help meet the wider need for affordable housing in Wealden.

4.27 The policy also requires the CLT to be responsible for managing the deliver at least 6 of the open market homes as self-build (or 'custom build') homes, either as individual plots or as a community scheme. Although the objectively assessed demand for housing in Wealden did not assess self-build as a distinct category, the NPPF (paragraph 50) encourages the provision of land for this purpose in development plans and the Community Survey undertaken for the HPNP indicates a keen interest in the parish.

4.28 The proposed sub-division of this large site in this way enables the HPNP to respond to the desire of the community (expressed in the Community Survey) for smaller developments rather than conventional 'housing estates'. The details of how the main site developer and the CLT will agree the land requirements and legal arrangements to make this provision will be determined in due course. At this stage, there are no known physical constraints of the land - e.g. site shape or topography - that will make it difficult to achieve in practice. However, provision is made in Policy 15 of the HPNP for the making of a Community Right to Build Order in relation to the land acquired by the CLT for this purpose.

4.29 The design of the development scheme will need to make provision for these proposals and meet the requirements of the adopted Wealden Design Guide. This ensures that no development will be allowed near the ridge line of the land towards the boundary with the Recreation Ground and the relationship of the development with existing adjoining residential properties on Gardner Street and on Chapel Row will need to be carefully managed. The scheme should also maintain the routes of existing public rights of way across the site.
Policy 5: Strawberry Field, Windmill Hill

The Neighbourhood Plan allocates land at Strawberry Field, Windmill Hill, as shown on the Proposals Map, for housing development up to 20 dwellings, provided:

I. the scheme comprises only affordable housing to meet identified local need as required by Policy WCS 9 of the development plan, with the exception of no more than one private dwelling;

II. a planning obligation is agreed to deliver all of the affordable housing by the proposed Herstmonceux Community Land Trust, as proposed in Policy 16;

III. the scheme provides for a car park for the use of The Windmill tourist attraction opposite the site and satisfactory pedestrian access from the car park to the attraction, with both the car park and access works being completed prior to the occupation of any dwelling; and

IV. the scheme provides for an accessible, informal public open space for the benefit of the community of Windmill Hill.

(Conformity Reference: Wealden Local Plan GD2, EN2, EN8, TM1, LR5; Wealden Core Strategy Local Plan WCS9 & NPPF paragraphs 50 and 54)

4.30 This policy allocates land at Strawberry Field on the southern edge of Windmill Hill for a rural exception affordable housing scheme and for other community and tourism benefits.

4.31 The site has a long frontage to the A271 Gardner Street at Windmill Hill. The village is essentially residential in character, and recent development has been contained within the triangle of roads formed by the A271, Victoria Road and Joe’s Lane. The location of the village on the crest of a ridge affords extensive views to the north-east across the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Development within the main body of the village is fairly consolidated and is mainly single storey. South of the A271, the landscape is open in character with views over undulating countryside of high scenic value towards the South Downs.

4.32 The prominent windmill, which gives the village its name, is situated opposite the Strawberry Field site. The windmill, a Grade II listed building, is of both historic and scenic importance. The building had fallen into disrepair but with the help of Lottery Grant aid it has now been made structurally sound and is now open to the public. The Windmill Hill Windmill Trust has plans to undertake further works to increase its appeal as a visitor attraction.

4.33 The District Council’s Housing Needs data shows the demand from local households in the parish, including Windmill Hill, for affordable housing. There are no available sites in the settlement boundary – there is no longer a defined development boundary here. This site, on the south facing slope of the village, but with a considerable existing landscape buffer on all sides, is the only land adjoining the village that is suited to housing development.
Given the location and the provisions of development plan policies GD2 and WCS9, it is proposed to allocate the site primarily as a rural exception affordable housing site for up to 19 dwellings. It is proposed that the dwellings will be developed over the full plan period by the Community Land Trust proposed in Policy 16 of the HNP. This will enable the housing provision to be targeted at meeting local housing need in perpetuity in line with policy WCS9.

The policy proposes that one open market dwelling is provided for the benefit of the landowner, who wishes to occupy a new building on the land. In order for this policy to be possible, this is deemed acceptable, although an occupancy condition may be imposed on that dwelling, whereby its future sale is restricted to that household or to the Trust.

The policy also requires that a car park is provided on the site for the benefit of The Windmill tourist attraction.

**Policy 6: Land at Cowbeech**

*The Neighbourhood Plan will support proposals for the redevelopment of commercial land at Cowbeech for up to 10 dwellings, as shown on the Proposals Map, provided:*

I. the scheme comprises all the land shown on the Proposals Map and not just one of the two current commercial occupiers;

II. the scheme comprises at least 50% affordable housing to meet identified local need;

III. no dwellings are occupied until the employment provisions of Policy 7 of the plan have been implemented;

IV. the scheme makes provision for one A1 shop unit to serve as a village shop for Cowbeech, with satisfactory provision for car parking; and

V. a planning obligation is agreed to deliver all of the affordable housing and the A1 shop unit by the Herstmonceux Community Land Trust, as proposed in Policy 16.

(Conformity Reference: Wealden Local Plan GD2, EN2, EN8, EN27, BS7, BS9; Wealden Core Strategy Local Plan WCS8 & NPPF paragraphs 22, 28 and 50)

This policy provides support for future proposals to redevelop the existing commercial land at Cowbeech for housing development and a new village shop if the whole site becomes available.

This commercial land, comprising two separate businesses in different land ownership, forms the southern boundary of the small, linear settlement of Cowbeech, which adjoins the High Weald AONB boundary to its east but falls within the Low Weald. A commercial use of the land has been established for many years.
4.39 It is known that one of the two businesses wishes to relocate within the local area to a site that is capable of allowing the business to expand. It is possible that the other business may choose to do the same within the plan period. If this happened, then it is unlikely one or more new commercial uses will seek to occupy the land.

4.40 The saved development plan policy BS7 seeks to retain business land and premises in villages, which provide important opportunities for local employment. The HNP presents a timely opportunity to plan for the long term future of the land. Cowbeech is not a suitable location for commercial uses, given its distance from the strategic highway network and rural character.

4.41 A comprehensive redevelopment scheme providing new housing, whereby at least 50% of the site will be affordable housing, together with a small village shop, will enable Cowbeech to meet local housing need and to benefit again from a community facility. To be acceptable in planning terms, a scheme must comprise the whole site, not just one part. Although a 100% rural exception site approach would normally make such a scheme acceptable, the businesses will need to realise some residual value from the scheme to support a viable relocation project, hence a requirement for only half of the total number of dwellings to be affordable housing and to be delivered by the Community Land Trust proposed in Policy 16 of the HPNP.

4.42 Further, in return for supporting a housing scheme at this exceptional location, the policy requires the provision of a small village shop unit as part of the scheme, which will also be transferred to the Trust to own and operate. There is a strong tradition, and a long track record of success, in Sussex of small, community-run village shops in communities like Cowbeech.

4.43 Finally, the policy requires that the implementation of this policy is dependent on the prior implementation of Policy 7 of the HPNP. Although not within the direct control of the owners of the commercial uses in Cowbeech, the proposals of that policy are considered realistic in terms of the market attractiveness to investors and occupiers. The land is suited in planning terms to the requirements of the Cowbeech businesses, although this policy does not oblige such a move. There is no need for housing at Cowbeech to come forward early in the plan period and the businesses make take some years to share a common purpose in this respect and to resolve their relocation needs. The policy simply ensures that the loss of employment land and rural jobs that will result is more than compensated for by the delivery of jobs through other provisions of the HPNP.
Commercial Policies

Policy 7: Collins Garage, Hailsham Road

The Neighbourhood Plan will support proposals at Collins Garage, as shown on the Proposals Map, for B1, B2, B8 and other employment-based sui generis (without classification) use development, provided:

I. the type, scale and operational requirements of the use are suited to the site;
II. the development uses the existing site access to Hailsham Road; and
III. provision is made for significant landscape works to the eastern and southern boundaries of the site.

The Neighbourhood Plan will resist proposals for any A1 retail or C3 dwelling use of the site.

(Conformity Reference: Wealden Local Plan GD2, EN8, EN14, BS7, BS9, TR3 and NPPF paragraphs 21 and 22)

4.44 This policy provides support for future proposals at Collins Garage, on Hailsham Road south of Herstmonceux to deliver new employment opportunities in the parish.

4.45 The site has been a successful car showroom and garage for many years and one of the most important local employers in the parish. It lies well outside the defined development boundary of Herstmonceux but on the A271 Hailsham Road south west of the village. There is land in the ownership of the garage that lies to its immediate east with a frontage to the road and that is accessible via the existing site access.

4.46 Provided the developable area avoids land immediately adjoining the eastern boundary with the homes to the east of the site and towards the southern boundary of the open Low Weald countryside, the site is considered suitable in principle to new business and other uses that will generate local employment opportunities.

4.47 In which case, the policy is in accordance with saved development plan policy BS9 controlling the expansion of rural businesses, whereby there would be no adverse effect on the landscape or on the character of open countryside and would not detract from the rural environmental qualities by virtue of the use of the site or traffic generation.

4.48 It is proposed in Policy 6 of the HPNP that its implementation is dependent on the prior implementation of this policy. This is to ensure that the HPNP can deliver at the very least a neutral outcome in terms of jobs in the parish. The land at Collins Garage is suited in planning terms to the relocation of one or both of the commercial uses in Cowbeech that are the subject of Policy 6, though the HPNP does not oblige either use to do so. The land may also be capable of accommodating more jobs than
may be lost at Cowbeech, thus delivering a net positive employment outcome of the HPNP.

**Policy 8: Broadband**

*The Neighbourhood Plan will support proposals to provide access to a super-fast broadband network to serve the village and other properties in the countryside. In doing so, it will require the location and design of any above-ground network installations to be sympathetically chosen and designed to reflect the character of the local area.*

*(Conformity Reference: NPPF paragraph 42 & 43)*

4.49 This policy encourages proposals to install a superfast broadband network infrastructure to serve the whole parish and accords with the NPPF. Where the network requires above ground installations requiring planning consent, then the Plan requires their location and design to reflect the importance of heritage assets and sensitive landscapes.

**Policy 9: Herstmonceux Village Centre**

*The Neighbourhood Plan defines the Herstmonceux Village Centre as shown on the Proposals Map to bolster the role of the village as a Local Service Centre.*

Within the centre, the Neighbourhood Plan will:

I. support proposals to create new village centre-related commercial uses, provided they are proportionate in size to the centre;

II. resist proposals for redevelopment or for a change of use that will result in the loss of existing units in a village centre-related commercial use to a dwelling use; and

III. require proposals for development on land that is not in a village centre-related commercial use to justify why such a use is not suitable or viable prior to the consideration of its use for another purpose.

Proposals to improve the appearance of the centre and to improve traffic management in the centre will also be supported.

*(Conformity Reference: Wealden Core Strategy Local Plan WCS6 and NPPF paragraphs 18 & 23)*

4.50 This policy defines the Herstmonceux Village Centre for the purpose of applying specific development management provisions.

4.51 The boundary has been defined to reflect the core of the centre around the junction with West End and extending south-east along Gardner Street. Within this core area is the concentration of the current village centre-related commercial uses (defined for the purpose of this policy as use classes A1 A2, A3, A4 and B1(a) in the
current Use Class Order). Although there are also dwellings within the boundary, they are in a minority and, in any event, are characteristic of smaller village centres on main roads in Wealden.

4.52 The village centre has a critical mass of commercial units and activity that together justify the designation of Herstmonceux as a Local Service Centre in development plan policy WCS6, serving its own population and the dispersed population of the wider rural parish and beyond. It is crucial, therefore, that the existing village centre-related commercial uses, which all have a frontage to the ‘High Street’ (Gardner Street) in the centre, are protected from a change of use to a dwelling use, where either a planning application or application for prior approval has been submitted. The centre is not a failing suburban or edge of urban centre, secondary shopping area. Its continued viability and vitality as a village centre will play a major role in preserving the identity of the village.

4.53 There are opportunities to redevelop previously used land on the south side of the centre, notably the former warehouses behind the present ‘Village Store’. Where such opportunities arise, the policy supports the principle of creating new retail and commercial uses suited to a village centre location, provided they are of scale that is proportionate to the size of the centre. Given that support, the policy requires of proposals that do not make such provision to justify why a village centre-related commercial use is neither suitable nor viable before other uses are considered.

4.54 Finally, the policy encourages the recently formed association of businesses in and around the centre to invest in improving the appearance of the centre for regular customers, visitors and tourists. Policy 4 of the HNP makes specific provision for a financial contribution towards the improvement of the centre, which may also include measures to improve traffic management and on street car parking availability, in which the local highways authority should be engaged.

Community Facility Policies

Policy 10: Herstmonceux Sports Field

The Neighbourhood Plan supports proposals on the Sports Field, as shown on the Proposals Map, for the improvement of the sports pavilion, for the relocation of the Bowls Club and for a new Scout Hut as proposed in Policy 11, provided the existing road access to A271 Gardner Street is closed and a new road access is created on to the access road to the Lime Cross housing allocation in Policy 4.

(Conformity Reference: NPPF paragraphs 69 and 70)

4.55 This policy provides support to proposals to improve the quality and range of community, sports and recreation facilities at the Sports Field.

4.56 A planning consent for a new bowls club at the Sports Field will lapse in 2014. However, the consent relates to a location on the field that may compromise
achieving a new road access from the proposed Lime Cross housing allocation site to replace the existing access directly on to the A271 Gardner Street. The policy makes clear the continued support for proposals to improve and widen the range of community facilities in this location. Policy 4 of the HNP also provides for a financial contribution to be secured from the Lime Cross scheme.

**Policy 11: Herstmonceux Bowls Club**

*The Neighbourhood Plan supports proposals to relocate the Bowls Club from the Recreation Ground, as shown on the Proposals Map, and to reuse the land for community benefit.*

(Conformity Reference: NPPF paragraph 70)

4.57 This policy supports proposals to relocate the Bowls Club from its current site on the Recreation Ground in line with Policy 10 and to continue to use the land, which is owned by the Parish Council, for community benefit.

4.58 There are many potential uses to which the land may be reused for the benefit of the community or the land may be returned to public open space as a part of the Recreation Ground.

**Policy 12: Assets of Community Value**

*The Neighbourhood Plan proposes that the Local Planning Authority designates the following buildings as Assets of Community Value as a result of their acknowledged importance to the life and enjoyment of the local community:*

i. The Merrie Harriers PH, Cowbeech
ii. The Woolpack Inn PH, Herstmonceux
iii. The Brewers Arms PH, Herstmonceux
iv. The Horseshoe Inn PH, Windmill Hill
v. The Post Office, Gardner Street, Herstmonceux
vi. The Post Office, Windmill Hill
vii. The windmill at Windmill Hill
viii. Herstmonceux Village Information Centre
ix. Herstmonceux Castle
x. Herstmonceux Science Centre
xi. The Truggery

*Proposals that will enhance the viability and/or community value of the assets will be supported. Otherwise, proposals that result in either the loss of the asset or in significant harm to the community value of an asset will be resisted, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the operation of the asset, or the ongoing delivery of the community value of the asset, is no longer financially viable.*
The Neighbourhood Plan proposes the inclusion of these sites on the local planning authority’s register of Assets of Community Value in order to provide the Parish Council or other community organisations within the parish with an opportunity to bid to acquire the asset on behalf of the local community once placed for sale on the open market.

(Conformity Reference: NPPF paragraph 70)

4.59 This policy serves two purposes. Firstly, it requires proposals to change the use of a designated asset to clearly demonstrate that all reasonable steps have been taken to retain its present use and its community value as a viable concern. Secondly, if that test has been met then it provides an appropriate community organisation, including the Parish Council, with a right to submit a proposal to the land vendor to acquire the asset under the Community Right to Buy regulations.

4.60 The Localism Act 2011 defines an ‘Asset of Community Value’ as “a building or other land is an asset of community value if its main use has recently been or is presently used to further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community and could do so in the future”. The Localism Act states that “social interests” include cultural, recreational and sporting interests.

4.61 All the assets selected are considered to be buildings and land of some considerable longstanding in the local community and with which local people have a strong affinity.

Policy 13: Local Green Spaces

The Neighbourhood Plan designates the following locations as Local Green Spaces:

i. Recreation Ground, Herstmonceux, as shown on the Proposals Map
ii. Fiennes Road, Herstmonceux, as shown on the Proposals Map
iii. Lime Cross Recreation Area, as shown on the Proposals Map
iv. New public open space, Lime Cross, Herstmonceux (following the implementation of Policy 4)
  v. New public open space, Strawberry Field, Windmill Hill (following the implementation of Policy 5)

Proposals for any development on the land will be resisted.

(Conformity Reference: Wealden Core Strategy Local Plan 2013 policy WCS13 & NPPF paragraphs 69, 76, 77, 78, 79 and 109)

4.62 This policy will enable a number of important green spaces in the parish to be protected from development in accordance with the NPPF. In each case, the green spaces are an integral part of the village and are therefore regarded as special to the local community.
4.63 The NPPF sets out the following criteria for designating Local Green Spaces (para.77):

“The Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. The designation should only be used:
• where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
• where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty,
• historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
• where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.”

4.64 The Recreation Ground is a very popular open space in Herstmonceux village and the largest such publically accessible space in the parish. It lies in close proximity to the main population of the parish and is cherished by local people for its recreational value and beauty and for the tranquillity of some areas on its eastern edge. The new public open space expected as part of the housing allocation at Lime Cross may provide an opportunity to extend this Local Green Space and this has been identified too.

4.65 Similarly, the open space at Fiennes Road is of special importance to residents on the western side of the village. It is used for informal recreation as an important break in the housing development in this area.

4.66 Finally, the new public open space proposed as part of the Strawberry Field housing allocation will become a prized and unique, accessible open space asset for Windmill Hill. Its character will be more tranquil than the wider open countryside that surrounds it.

5. Delivery Principles & Policies

Introduction

5.1 The HPNP will be implemented through a combination of the local planning authority’s consideration and determination of planning applications for development in the parish and through steering public and private investment into a series of infrastructure projects contained in the plan.

Development Management

5.2 Most of the policies contained in the HPNP will be delivered by landowners and developers responding to its proposals for encouraging and managing development. In preparing the Plan, care has been taken to ensure, as far as possible, that these proposals are achievable.

5.3 Whilst the local planning authority will be responsible for development management, the Parish Council will also use the HPNP to frame its representations
on submitted planning applications. It will also work with the authority to monitor the progress of sites coming forward for development.

**Policy 14: The Design of Development**

*The Neighbourhood Plan requires all development proposals to demonstrate their design has positively responded to the adopted Wealden Design Guide.*

(Conformity Reference: Wealden Local Plan EN27 and NPPF paragraphs 56 and 58)

5.4 This policy requires all development proposals to reflect the design guidance for the Low Weald contained in the adopted Wealden Design Guide of 2008. This defines the design elements that contribute significantly to the local distinctiveness, in the case of this parish, the Low Weald character area. As such, the policy conforms to saved development plan policy EN27 on the layout and design of new development by helping define the essential local characteristics.

5.5 Although not covered by a national landscape designation, the Low Weald is an area of generally attractive countryside. The underlying geology is essentially the softer Wealden clays, with small sandstone ridges and outcrops on the fringes of the High Weald. The landscape is generally more open than the High Weald, becoming flatter towards the Downs.

5.6 As with the other character zones, buildings initially drew on local sources for their materials. This palette broadened, however, with the coming of the railways in the mid-nineteenth century, which gave access to a wider range. Materials used here include:

- Timber framing, originally with wattle-and-daub infill panels
- Stone of varying quality and colour, normally square-cut (but not always)
- Local orange/red brick, normally laid in English or Flemish bond
- Blue/grey burnt brick headers, often used to form patterns
- Coursed flint (both knapped and unknapped)
- Lime render (limewashed), sometimes marked out to imitate stone
- Handmade orange/red clay plain tiles for roofs and vertical hanging
- Mathematical tiles (particularly in Uckfield) over timber framing
- Feather-edged weatherboarding, often black (pitch) for agricultural use

**Policy 15: Community Right to Build Order**

*The Neighbourhood Development Plan proposes to make a Community Right to Build Order for the development of custom build and affordable homes as part of the housing allocation of Policy 4, in accordance with the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.*
5.7 The Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 provide for the means to obtain deemed planning consent for proposals from eligible community organisations for specific sites and schemes. To obtain deemed consent a Community Right to Build Order must be granted to the eligible organisation following a proposal that is considered valid by the local planning authority and a successful referendum vote.

5.8 It is proposed to make an Order in respect of the HPNP policy 4. The Plan is viewed as a timely and suitable means by which part of the provisions of that policy can be formulated and consulted upon within the context of other land use planning and development issues in the parish. The beneficiary of the Order, if made, will be the proposed Community Land Trust, the proposal for which the site developer has expressed an interest in discussing further with the Parish Council during the preparation of the HPNP.

5.9 The specific purpose of making the Order is to enable the affordable homes proposed to be delivered by the Trust to be exempt from leaseholder enfranchisement. This will mean that those homes will remain affordable in perpetuity. However, the Order will also demonstrate the commitment of the HPNP to delivering significant and wide range of community benefits.

5.10 At this stage, the precise details of the Order are not yet known. It is most likely the Order will make an outline planning consent, with all matters reserved, for the delivery of the custom build homes and part of the affordable homes requirement of the larger scheme allocated in the plan. The intention is to use the public consultation period of the Pre Submission Plan to test local opinion on the key principles of the proposal, alongside the proposal to allocate land at Lime Cross. If generally favourable, then the detailed description of the Order and its documentation will be completed so that it accompanies the HPNP for examination at the same time. The Order will then be subject to the same examination by an independent examiner as the Submission HPNP and will be the subject of a separate question on the referendum.

5.11 The benefit of the Order will be to expedite the implementation of policy 4 of the plan, thereby providing confidence to the local community that the proposals will be delivered in the ways proposed in the plan.

Policy 16: Herstmonceux Community Land Trust

The Neighbourhood Plan proposes the formation of a Herstmonceux Community Land Trust as a community-controlled and owned organisation for the purpose of acquiring, developing and holding land and property assets in the Parish of Herstmonceux. It is proposed the Trust will help implement policies 4, 5 and 6 of the Plan.
5.12 This policy proposes the formation of the Herstmonceux Community land Trust (CLT) in order to help implement policies in the HPNP.

5.13 CLTs are increasing popular mechanisms in the UK for enabling local communities to develop land and property. The key features of a CLT are:

- Community-controlled and community-owned - a CLT is set up by the community and for the community. The members of the CLT control it and the assets can only be sold or developed in a manner that benefits the local community. If the CLT decides to sell the asset, the cash realised is protected by an asset lock and is re-invested into something else that the trust’s members think will benefit the local community.
- Open democratic structure - people who live and work in the defined local community, including occupiers of the properties that the CLT owns, must have the opportunity to become members of the CLT. The CLT should actively engage members of the community in its work and ensure that they remain engaged in the development and operation of the CLT.
- Permanently affordable housing or other assets - this is a crucial defining feature of a CLT. A CLT will endeavour to keep the homes or assets permanently affordable.
- Not for profit - all CLTs are not for profit and any profits generated by the CLT cannot be paid by way of dividend or otherwise to its members but must be used to further the community's interests.
- Long-term stewardship - a CLT does not disappear when a home is sold or let but has a long-term role in stewarding the homes. In some cases they will remain the landlord of the rental homes or will retain an element of unsold equity in the homes. At the least, the CLT will retain the freehold.
- More information about CLTs is available at www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk

5.14 The Parish Council will be exploring the potential of establishing a new CLT during the completion of the HNP with the aim of incorporating the organisation once the HPNP is made. Action in rural Sussex (AirS) has formed an ‘umbrella’ CLT for the whole of Sussex to encourage and enable new, locally-based CLTs to be formed. It will be working with the Parish Council to engage the local community in developing this proposal.

5.15 A CLT is considered to be an especially suitable means by which the HPNP can deliver affordable housing to meet the current and long term needs for housing of households in the parish. Local control, and a not-for-profit legal status, will enable local people to build and maintain homes, both affordable and custom build, that will directly address a key problem in the parish. The land proposed in policies 5 and 6 will qualify for leaseholder enfranchisement exemption status, allowing the homes to remain affordable in perpetuity. The use of an Order to implement part of policy 4 will allow the exemption for the same purpose.
5.16 The outcome of this policy is a new CLT managing the phasing, delivery and management of up to 36 dwellings in the parish during the plan period. It may have acquired the new village shop in Cowbeech conditionally proposed in policy 6 and may go on to acquire other assets in the parish.

5.17 In the event that a CLT is not formed in due course, then the Parish Council will seek to achieve the same housing objectives through other appropriate means, e.g. with a housing association partner.

Infrastructure Projects

Policy 17: Infrastructure Investment

The Neighbourhood Plan proposes the following projects for investment of future Community Infrastructure Levy funding allocated by the local planning authority:

i. Improvements to Herstmonceux Village Centre, in pursuit of Policy 9

ii. Community Land Trust capital programme, in pursuit of Policy 16

(Conformity Reference: Wealden Core Strategy Local Plan 2013 policy WCS7 & NPPF paragraphs 17, 175 & 184)

5.18 The policy identifies a series of local infrastructure projects that will be prioritised for investment from the forthcoming Wealden Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

5.19 The CIL will replace the pooling of S106 agreement financial contributions in 2014, which will be charged on qualifying residential and commercial development. At least 25% of the levy collected by Wealden District Council from development in the Parish will be invested in the Parish.
## APPENDIX A: EVIDENCE BASE

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<tr>
<td>Herstmonceux Parish Plan (2008)</td>
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<td>Herstmonceux Neighbourhood Plan Community Survey (2013)</td>
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<td>Herstmonceux Neighbourhood Plan Focus Group Reports (2012/13)</td>
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<td>Herstmonceux Community Profile (2012)</td>
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<td>Wealden DC Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2010)</td>
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<td>Wealden DC Green Infrastructure Report (2012)</td>
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<td>High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan (2009)</td>
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<td>Eastbourne &amp; Wealden Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2008)</td>
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