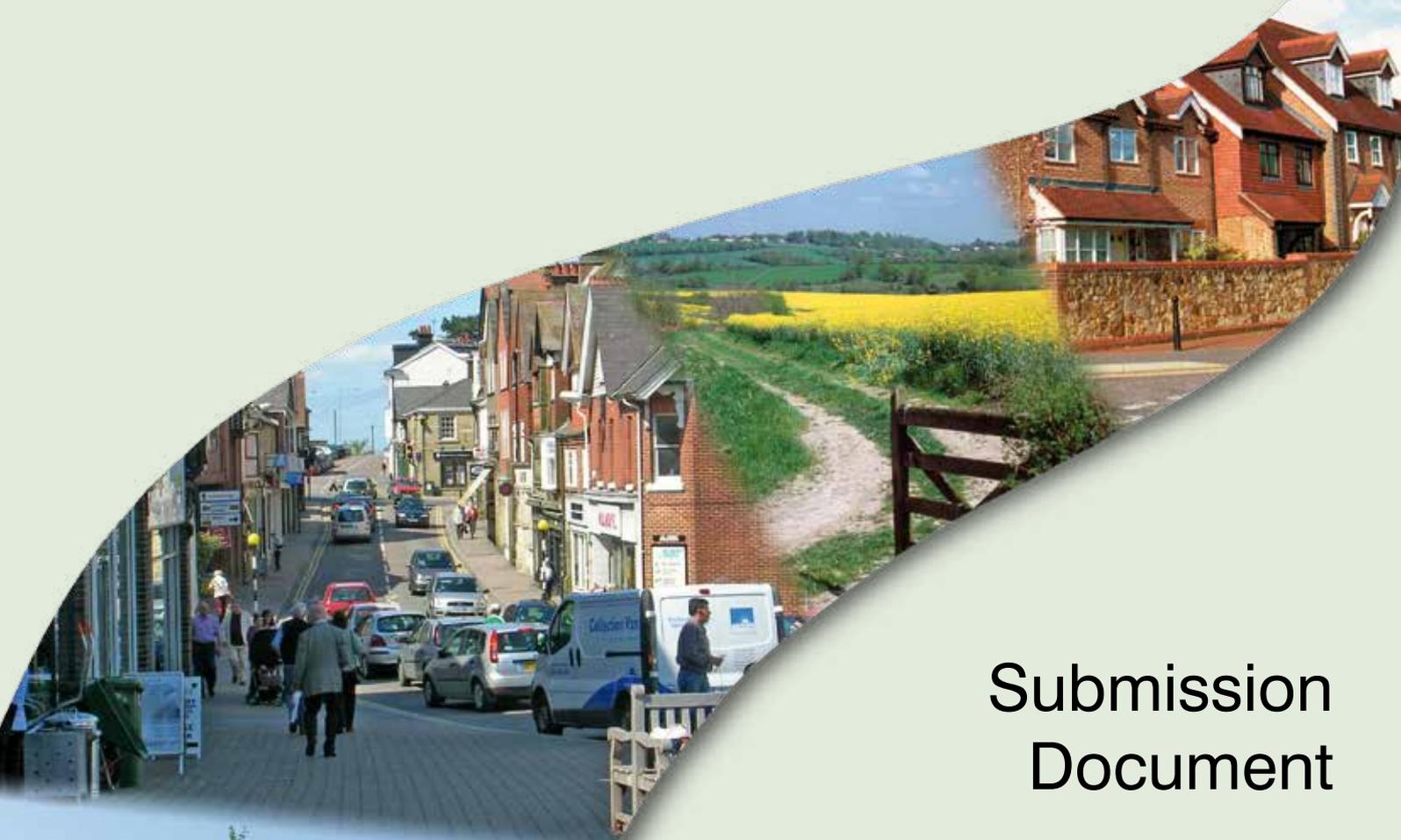


Wealden Local Plan

Neighbourhood Planning and Masterplans Background Paper



Submission
Document




Wealden
District Council

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Contents

1 Introduction

1.1 The Council has prepared a series of Background Papers to accompany the Wealden Local Plan. The papers cover a range of issues and provide technical and detailed information, derived from a number of our specialist studies, or summaries of relevant work undertaken by others which inform the strategy and policies contained within the Wealden Local Plan.

1.2 This Background Paper sets out the local context in relation to neighbourhood planning, includes a summary of the neighbourhood planning visioning and master-plan work that has been undertaken by Parish and Town Councils across the District to date and provides information on how relevant policy guidance has been used to inform the Wealden Local Plan objectives and policy in relation to neighbourhood planning.

1.3 The format of this Background Paper is set out as follows;

- Section 2 sets out the local context in relation to neighbourhood planning;
- Section 3 provides a summary of the neighbourhood planning work that has been undertaken by Parish and Town Council's across the District to date.
- Section 4 provides a summary of the master- plan work undertaken by Parish and Town Council's across the District to date;
- Section 5 sets out the background to the policy development for the Wealden Local Plan including the proposed policy for Neighbourhood Development Plans.

1.4 The planning system has undergone significant reform through the Localism Act (2011) with its inclusion of neighbourhood planning which empowers local communities to shape and manage development in their local area through producing a Neighbourhood Development Plan, a Neighbourhood Development Order, or a Community Right to Build Order. Once adopted, these documents are statutory plans and operate alongside the statutory Local Development Plans prepared by the Local Planning Authority. **1.5** The Localism Act is reflected in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which was updated in July 2018 and sets out requirements for incorporating neighbourhood development plans within local planning documents.

1.5 The purpose of this background document is to explain the role of neighbourhood planning, the national policy framework and how this has influenced the development of policies within the Wealden Local Plan and to provide a summary of the neighbourhood planning and master plan work being undertaken within the District.

1 Introduction

2 Context

2.1 Town and Parish Councils are well placed to represent local views and identify issues and options. As part of the early stages in the development of the Wealden Core Strategy Local Plan (2013), Town and Parish Councils were encouraged to consider the vision for and future of their local area, through completion of a parish template. Many of the Town and Parish Councils continued this exercise through preparing visions and master plans to shape future development in their local areas. This work engaged local stakeholders and the community in helping build consensus about the future needs of an area and identify priorities for action. A background document (Background Paper number 7) summarising the master plans and vision documents prepared at this time was compiled to support the Wealden Core Strategy Local Plan which was adopted in 2013. A brief summary of this master plan work is set out in section 5 below.

2.2 Neighbourhood planning legislation came into effect in April 2012 which has enabled Town and Parish Councils to further develop their visions and master-plans. Elements of the master planning and visioning exercises outlined in this document may form the basis of or will include similar elements in some of the Neighbourhood Plans that are currently being prepared.

2.3 It is the role of Wealden District Council to advise and provide assistance to town or parish councils who are producing a neighbourhood plan. This includes sharing evidence and information and ensuring that a neighbourhood plan supports strategic development needs and plans positively to support local development. Where a neighbourhood plan is not underway community aspirations or needs can still be met through other ways such as incorporating proposals in the Wealden Local Plan or through other mechanisms such as consultation on development proposals. Either way, Wealden District Council is keen to deliver through its Local Plan a shared vision that delivers community aspirations.

2.4 A number of town and parish Councils are currently progressing Neighbourhood Plans, some of which are based on master planning or visioning documents prepared previously. A summary of plans prepared by Town and Parish Councils within the District is shown in the table below.

Table 1 Summary of Town and Parish Council Plans

| Town/ Parish | Masterplan or vision statement | Date | Undertaking a NDP/ NDP Area designated | Neighbourhood Plan stage |
|--------------|--------------------------------|------|--|--------------------------|
| Crowborough | Yes | 2010 | Yes (06/2014) | Withdrawn |
| Uckfield | Yes | 2009 | Yes (06/2014) | Draft plan preparation |

| Town/ Parish | Masterplan or vision statement | Date | Undertaking a NDP/ NDP Area designated | Neighbourhood Plan stage |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|------|--|--|
| Hailsham | Yes (with Hellingly) | 2008 | Yes (08/2016) | Regulation 14 consultation complete |
| Hellingly | Yes (with Hailsham) | 2008 | Yes (11/2015) | Regulation 14 complete |
| Polegate | Yes | 2010 | No | Considering neighbourhood plan |
| Heathfield | Yes | 2008 | No | No |
| Horam | Yes | 2016 | No | No |
| Maresfield | No | n/a | Yes (11/2012) | Draft plan preparation |
| Herstmoncuex | No | n/a | Yes (02/2013) | Positive referendum (05/2018) but not adopted by WDC |
| Hartfield | No | n/a | Yes (12/2013) | Draft plan preparation |
| Hadlow Down | No | n/a | Yes (06/2016) | Draft plan preparation |
| Frant | No | n/a | Yes (04/2017) | Draft plan preparation |
| East Hoathly with Halland | No | n/a | Yes (07/2017) | Draft plan preparation |
| Wadhurst | No | n/a | Yes (11/2017) | Draft plan preparation |

2.5 A summary of the Neighbourhood Plans being progressed within the District and a summary of the visioning and masterplan work to date and key local issues highlighted through these documents is set out sections 4 and 5 below.

3 Neighbourhood Development Plans

3.1 National planning policies are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (DCLG, 2018). The most pertinent aspects of the NPPF in relation to neighbourhood planning are;

- Neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans or spatial development strategies; and should shape and direct development that sit outside of these strategic policies (paragraph 13)
- Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan (paragraph 29)
- Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies (paragraph 29).
- Neighbourhood planning groups should consider the opportunities for allocating small and medium sized sites suitable for housing in their area (paragraph 69)

3.2 The National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) reiterates many of the objectives set out in national policy, and in particular states that;

“neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area. They are able to choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built, have their say on what those new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be provided, and grant planning permission for the new buildings they want to see go ahead. Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community where the ambition of the neighbourhood is aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area”

3.3 A neighbourhood plan should support the strategic development needs set out in the Local Plan and plan positively to support local development (as outlined in paragraph 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework). Neighbourhood development plans must be based on the broad principles, policies and allocations contained within the adopted Local Authority Development Plan documents and must go through a prescribed process of screening, public engagement and consultation and a public referendum before it can be adopted. A neighbourhood plan attains the same legal status as the Local Plan once it has been approved at a referendum. At this point it comes into force as part of the statutory development plan. Applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise (paragraph 6, NPPG).

3.4 A brief summary of each neighbourhood development plan in progress to date is outlined below.

Maresfield Neighbourhood Plan

3.5 The application for the designation of the area of the Maresfield Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to Wealden District Council on the 25th June 2012. The application was formally approved by Wealden District Council for the purposes of Neighbourhood Planning on the 14th November 2012.

3.6 The Parish Council has established a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and several working groups to engage with the community and progress a number of evidence studies across the Neighbourhood plan area.

3.7 In developing its Neighbourhood Plan, Maresfield Parish Council has indicated:

“Our Vision is to produce a Plan which is led and supported by the community that offers real power, choice and influence in relation to development, to safeguard the future of our three distinctive villages as thriving rural communities and ultimately deliver the shared vision of the whole Parish”.

3.8 The parish council are currently preparing a draft Neighbourhood Plan.

Herstmonceux Parish Council

3.9 The application for the designation of the area of the Herstmonceux Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to Wealden District Council on the 2nd November 2012. The application was formally approved for the purposes of Neighbourhood Planning by Wealden District Council on the 6th February 2013.

3.10 Consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan took place between 29th November 2013 and 24th January 2014. A second stage of consultation took place between 19th March 2017 and 19th May 2017. Herstmonceux Parish Council formally submitted the Herstmonceux Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documents to Wealden District Council, which were formally accepted on 21st October 2017, and the six week public consultation took place between 25th September 2017 and 6th November 2017.

3.11 Eight representations were received which were forwarded to an Independent Examiner, John Slater, BA (Hons), DMS, MRTPI, to consider. The final report was received by the Council on 6th February 2017, which set out a number of modifications to the plan to ensure its statutory compliance.

3.12 A Portfolio Holder Decision was made on 21st February 2018 to proceed with the referendum stage of the process, subject to the modifications made by the Examiner. The referendum took place on 3rd May 2018. The referendum had a 28.5% turnout and 83.88% voted in favour of the plan.

3.13 Just prior to the Referendum on 12th April 2018, a significant European court judgement regarding the interpretation of the HRA Directive was published⁽¹⁾. The

1 Judgement of the European Court of Justice (CJEU) 12th April 2018; *People Over Wind and Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta* (C-323/17).

Judgement relates to the interpretation of the HRA Directive. The Judgement as well as advice received from Natural England has necessitated an appropriate assessment to be undertaken to meet the requirements of the Habitats Regulations. This work is currently being undertaken and it is anticipated that this will be completed early in 2019. The current status of the plan in accordance with the NPPG is that a neighbourhood plan comes into force as part of the statutory development plan once it has been approved at referendum (paragraph 64).

The Herstmonceux Neighbourhood Development Plan

3.14 The Herstmonceux NDP provides a vision for the Parish and a total of 14 planning policies that would cover the plan area. The vision included within the Herstmonceux NDP is as follows:

‘The vision for Herstmonceux Parish is to maintain and protect its rural character whilst keeping it relevant, attractive and economically viable for future generations.’

3.15 The planning policies seek to deliver the above vision statement. The planning policies within the Herstmonceux NDP are summarised below.

Policy 1: A Spatial Plan for the Parish

This policy confirms support for all development proposals within the area covered by the Herstmonceux NDP, subject to the conditions set out within this policy being met. The conditions include: having regard to the High Weald AONB setting, and should the Herstmonceux NDP be subject to review, the policy confirms that proposals must be in conformity with the Local Plan and adverse effects must not outweigh any benefits, amongst other matters.

Policy 2: Local Green Spaces

This policy identifies a total of five sites within the Herstmonceux Parish, as defined on the proposals map, and designates them as Local Green Spaces. In addition, the policy supports sustainable links to the aforementioned Local Green Spaces, resists development proposals on Local Green Spaces and confirms that any such proposals would be subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment.

Policy 3: Herstmonceux Castle and Grounds

This policy supports development proposals for the purposes of tourism, recreation, leisure and education within Herstmonceux Castle and Grounds providing certain criteria are met including a requirement for development as relevant to the policy being subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment.

Policy 4: Resisting the Loss of Employment Locations

This policy confirms resistance to the loss of units currently in B1, B2, B8 and Sui Generis use classes, unless the conditions listed within the policy can be met. Additionally, the policy lists a total of 18 employment sites to be retained. The policy

supports the improvement and enhancement of the sites subject to meeting certain criteria. This includes a requirement for development as relevant to the policy being subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment

Policy 5: Retail Development in the Parish

This policy sets out three criteria relevant to retail development proposals within the Herstmonceux NDP Area. There are three elements/criteria to the policy. The policy confirms that any such development proposals would be subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment.

Policy 6: Sports, Leisure and Recreation Facilities in Herstmonceux Parish

This policy is designed to protect existing areas within the Parish used for sports, leisure and recreational activities (as identified on the accompanying Proposals Map). The policy confirms that development of these areas will be resisted wherever possible and sets out criteria that must be met by any new sport, leisure or recreation buildings. In addition, the planning policy confirms support for development that is in keeping with the character of the area and proposals for three identified sites within the Parish. The policy confirms that any development proposals will be subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment.

Policy 7: Redevelopment of the former public toilet site, Herstmonceux

This policy confirms support for the non-residential development of the former public toilet site as identified on the proposals map, should it become available. In addition, the policy confirms support for the site to be fully developed into an accessible public toilet and two individual office units. The planning policy also states that A1, A3 or B1a or community uses would be considered alongside the new public toilet and that any development as set out in the Policy would be subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment.

Policy 8: Refurbishment and extension to the car park at Herstmonceux Recreation Ground

This planning policy confirms support for the refurbishment and extension of the car park at Herstmonceux Recreation Ground and the access road, subject to meeting the Habitats Regulations and the seven criteria set out within the policy.

Policy 9: Rights of Way in Herstmonceux Parish

This policy confirms support for the creation of new Rights of Way that links the Parish to the surrounding countryside and states that access to existing Rights of Way should be available from any new developments within the Parish.

Policy 10: Creation of new shared access from Windmill Hill to Herstmonceux

This planning policy confirms that the Herstmonceux Parish Neighbourhood Plan will work with local residents and groups to create a safe network of routes from

Windmill Hill to Herstmonceux. This policy also confirms that such proposals would need to show details of hard and soft landscaping and how such proposals would fit into the surrounding landscape. Finally, the policy confirms that proposals would be subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment.

Policy 11: Mobile Phone Connectivity and Broadband

This policy confirms support for any proposals that seek to improve mobile phone connectivity and extend superfast broadband within the Parish. Additionally, the policy gives preference to providing 2G, 3G and 4G coverage and if new installations are required, existing masts, buildings and other structures should be used wherever possible.

Policy 12: The Design of Development in the Parish

This planning policy relates to the design of any development proposals within the Parish of Herstmonceux. It sets a total of 12 criteria that must be taken into account for new development proposals. The criteria includes ensuring that development respects and enhances the surrounding landscape, the provision of suitable car parking and incorporating sustainable drainage systems with suitable maintenance regimes to minimise flooding and the impact of climate change, amongst other matters.

Policy 13: Windfall Sites

This planning policy confirms support for development proposals on windfall sites that meet the eight criteria set out in the policy. The policy confirms that any development proposed would be subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment

Policy 14: Older People's Housing Needs

This planning policy confirms support for proposals that provide for a range of housing suitable for older people with a mixture of tenures. The policy confirms that any development as set out in this policy would be subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment.

Hartfield Neighbourhood Development Plan

3.16 The application for designation of the area of the Hartfield Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to Wealden District Council on the 2nd September 2013. No responses were received following consultation. The application was formally approved for the purposes of Neighbourhood Planning by Wealden on the 4th December 2013.

3.17 The Hartfield Neighbourhood Planning group has established a Steering group to engage with the community and progress a number of evidence studies. This work will support the final submission of the plan to Wealden District Council. Details of the Neighbourhood Plan can be found on the parish council's website:

<http://www.hartfieldonline.com>

3.18 A number of vision statements have been put forward by the Neighbourhood Planning group following the community consultation for consideration. These include:

"A Parish where young people want to and are able to afford to live or move into, with jobs to keep them here and activities for them to participate in"

"A Parish where elderly residents are suitably provided for with appropriate accommodation and facilities"

"A village with a Post Office"

"A distinct and independent village / Parish"

"A vibrant, thriving, sustainable, invigorated community with local facilities (such as shops, pubs, a school and playschool, church, sports facilities and bus service), as well as a diverse range of housing and business units, undergoing sustainable growth"

"A Parish with fast broadband to attract and meet the needs of residents and businesses"

"A Parish incorporating and surrounded by a beautiful, green, well-protected environment".

3.19 Following a Neighbourhood Plan consultation event, a number of areas were identified as potential areas for the Neighbourhood Plan to address. These areas include:

Housing

An apparent "gap" between demand and supply of certain types of housing – e.g. there is a shortage of lower cost homes for first time buyers to purchase and with an ageing population we also have a lack of suitable housing that people can move to as they plan for their retirement.

Business and Employment

A desire to maintain and support local employment

Tourism

A need to explore through further consultation, whether a growth in tourism should be encouraged or discouraged, and whether specific policy is required.

Hartfield Parish Design Guide (and Conservation Area Policy)

A need to influence the design of new buildings and possibly develop specific design policy for Hartfield parish and for the village Conservation Area, complementing the existing Wealden Design Guide.

Local Facilities and Assets

A need to identify and protect Assets of Community Value

Car Parking

A need to explore further whether there is sufficient car parking in the parish (and particularly in Hartfield village) to meet day to day demand as well as for village events.

3.20 These are the key areas that will be explored further through the development of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Uckfield Neighbourhood Plan

3.21 The application for the designation of the area of the Uckfield Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to Wealden District Council on the 3rd October 2014. One response was received to the consultation on the plan area which took place between the 17th March and the 28th April 2014. The application was formally approved for the purposes of Neighbourhood Planning by Wealden on the 13th June 2015.

3.22 The Uckfield Neighbourhood Planning group has established a Steering group to engage with the community and progress a number of studies around the themes of housing, social infrastructure, environment, transport, retail and economy. Several community engagement events have taken place during 2016 and 2017 and this work is being used to prepare the first draft of the Neighbourhood Plan.

3.23 Details of the Neighbourhood Plan can be found on the Town Councils website: <https://uckfieldplan.co.uk/>

3.24 The Uckfield Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has put together the following Vision Statement for the future of Uckfield, which it has asked the community to comment upon.

- Uckfield is our town.
- It will continue to be vibrant with the character of a small market town and a strong sense of community;
- this will be shared by the majority of people living in Uckfield;
- People of various backgrounds, qualities and interests will be valued, and their thoughts respected without discrimination;
- Education will be encouraged and catered for across all age groups;
- Our open spaces and green environment will be safeguarded and valued; There will be access to a wide variety of leisure and recreational activities;
- Green technology will be embraced and all future development will give high priority to sustainability;
- Our town will be open to sensitive growth and development; it will not be averse to change;
- There will be an entrepreneurial spirit in which businesses will flourish; Our town will provide opportunities for each and every one of its resident

3.25 The Steering group has set up a number of thematic focus groups to explore and put forward policies in relation to:

- Housing;
- Social Infrastructure;
- Environment;
- Transport; and
- Retail and economy.

3.26 These areas will be explored further through the development of the neighbourhood plan.

Crowborough Neighbourhood Plan

3.27 The application for designation of the area of the Crowborough Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to Wealden District Council on the 10th March 2014. The application was formally approved for the purposes of Neighbourhood Planning by Wealden on 5th June 2014.

3.28 At the Full Council meeting on 19th January 2016 the Town Council decided not to continue with a Neighbourhood Plan for Crowborough and instead to update the current vision document upon which the Neighbourhood Plan proposals were based. This announcement can be found on the Town Council's website:

<http://www.crowboroughtowncouncil.gov.uk/council/neighbourhood-plan>.

3.29 The vision document that will be reviewed is outlined in further detail in section 5 below.

Hellingly Neighbourhood Plan

3.30 The application for the designation of the area of the Hellingly Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to Wealden District Council on the 17th July 2015. The application was formally approved for the purposes of Neighbourhood Planning by Wealden District Council on the 5th November 2015.

3.31 Hellingly Parish Council has established a Neighbourhood Planning Steering group to engage with the community and progress the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan. A number of evidence studies have been completed focussing on the four key settlement areas; Hellingly Village, Lower Horsebridge, Lower Dicker and Roebuck Park. These studies include business, environment, community and farming. A draft Neighbourhood Plan was published for consultation between 1st December 2017 and 26th January 2018 together with ten topic papers. The Parish Council are currently preparing the submission Neighbourhood Plan and supporting documentation assessing the responses to the consultation before progressing to the next stage in the plan preparation. Details of the Hellingly Neighbourhood Plan can be found on the parish council's website: <http://www.hellingly-pc.org.uk/council/neighbourhood-plan>

3.32 As part of the NDP process, Hellingly Parish Council have published a revised pre submission draft Neighbourhood Plan (March 2018) which includes a vision, 20 planning policies and 17 recommendations that would cover the plan area and, if adopted, be used in the determination of planning applications within the plan area. The vision included within the Hellingly NDP is as follows:

‘that the growth proposed for Hellingly Parish within the emerging Wealden Plan will have been successfully delivered, with all appropriate supporting infrastructure and in the most suitable locations locally. Hellingly will remain an essentially rural parish providing a green and accessible lung for the growing town of Hailsham’.

3.33 The neighbourhood plan sets out two broad aims to meet the vision set out above. These are:

- To protect the rural character of the area, and
- To retain the separate character and identity of the four main settlements in the Parish (Hellingly Village, Lower Horsebridge, Lower Dicker and Roebuck Park).

3.34 These objectives form the basis of the development of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Hellingly NDP includes a number of planning policies that seek to deliver on both the vision statement and objectives outlined above. A summary of these policies is set out below.

Policy HNDPE

This planning policy confirms the protection for Ashdown Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA), Pevensey Levels Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Ramsar site and Lewes Downs Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

Policy HNNDP1 – Area of Locally Valued Landscape

This planning policy confirms the protection of the Hellingly Locally Valued Landscape Area by only allowing development that would not have a detrimental impact upon the area and/or could be appropriately mitigated. Additionally, the policy lists five criteria that must be met by any development proposals, including the need to protect long distance views of the South Downs and the need to minimise the potential for light trespass and glare, amongst other matters.

Policy HNNDP 2 – Local Green Space

This planning policy seeks to protect local green spaces within the Parish from development and encourages opportunities for increased enjoyment and accessibility to these spaces. Additionally, the policy confirms that development resulting in the loss of green spaces will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that the area is no longer used or an equivalent site within the Parish can be provided.

Policy HNNDP 3 – Areas of Critical Flood and Drainage Concern

This planning policy seeks to resist development within Areas at Risk of Flooding, as identified on the proposals map, unless the benefits of development outweigh the flood risk and the flood risk can be mitigated. The policy also requires that, where development is permitted within a flood risk area, a sustainable drainage scheme, with suitable maintenance, will be required and that the proposals will be required to demonstrate that there will be no flood risk to neighbouring land.

Policy HNPD 4

This planning policy seeks to minimise flood risk within the Parish, firstly by requiring flood risk assessments to assess run-off from a variety of surfaces. In addition, the policy seeks to resist land raising within new developments and where land raising is proposed, it states that mitigation will be required and will need to satisfy a variety of organisations, including the Local Planning Authority and East Sussex County Council as the flood authority.

Policy HNPD 5 – Green and Blue Infrastructure

This planning policy states that development proposals must maintain and enhance existing green and blue infrastructure, to ensure the integrity of existing wildlife corridors and community amenity value

Policy HNPD 6 – Biodiversity

This planning policy seeks to protect and enhance biodiversity within the Parish.

Policy HNPD 7 – Rural Economy

This policy supports the development of agricultural and other land based rural businesses, subject to such proposals demonstrating that they are economically, socially and environmentally sustainable and that they can provide suitable access, well-designed buildings and not adversely affect the surrounding landscape.

Policy HNPD 8 – Isolated New Dwellings

The planning policy relates to proposals for new dwellings within the countryside and relevant special circumstances where such development could proceed, such as where there is an essential need to live at or near the place of work to support a rural employment use.

This draft planning policy does not allocate specific land for such development within the Hellingly NDP area.

Policy HNPD 9 – Housing Type

This planning policy states that where appropriate, new residential development coming forward, if agreed in principle under the Wealden Local Plan, should provide for a higher percentage of homes for the elderly, starter homes or shared ownership, especially homes which are 2-3 bedrooms or less.

Policy HNDP 10 – Sustainable Transport

This planning policy requires that any new residential development will be required to provide electric vehicle charging points at a rate of one charging point per dwelling, apart from flats without an allocated parking space whereby provision for communal charging points should be made.

Policy HV1

This policy states that new development must clearly demonstrate how the design of proposals will conserve and contribute to the defining settlement characteristics and appearance of the designated Hellingly Village Character Area. The policy sets out a total of seven criteria that must be met by any development proposals.

Policy HV2 – Specific Design Criteria Hellingly Village

This draft planning policy states how new development must meet a number of specific design criteria within the Hellingly Village area. This includes the retention of existing features and materials, as well as design criteria for new development.

Policy LHB1

This policy states that new development must clearly demonstrate how the design of the proposal will conserve and contribute to the defining settlement characteristics and appearance of the Lower Horsebridge Character Area. The policy lists a total of eight criteria that must be met by any new development proposals.

Policy LHB2 – Specific Design Criteria – Lower Horsebridge

This policy relates to the proposed design criteria of all new development in the Lower Horsebridge area and sets out a total of seven criteria that must be met by any development proposals. In summary, this policy outlines the expected requirements for the design of new development in Lower Horsebridge.

Policy LD1

This planning policy relates to the preservation and enhancement of the Lower Dicker Character Area in relation to proposed new development. Preservation and enhancement methods include: supporting designated heritage assets, respecting the rural character of the settlement and using locally sourced materials for the construction of new development. The policy does not allocate land for development.

Policy LD2 – Specific Design Criteria – Lower Dicker

This planning policy relates to the proposed design criteria of all new development in the Lower Dicker Character Area. In summary, this policy outlines the expected requirements of the design of new development in Lower Dicker in the form of six design criteria and does not allocate land for development.

Policy RP1

This planning policy relates to the preservation and enhancement of Roebuck Park in relation to proposed new development. Such preservation and enhancement methods demonstrating that development will retain existing views over woodland, parkland and buildings within the Parish, not negatively impact the parkland setting and support the provision of local facilities. In summary the policy aims to ensure that new development does not adversely impact upon Roebuck Park and the policy does not allocate land for development.

Policy RP2 – Specific Design Criteria – Roebuck Park

This policy relates to the proposed design criteria of all new development within Roebuck Park and sets out four criteria that must be met by development proposals. In summary, this policy outlines the expected requirements of the design of new development in Roebuck Park and does not allocate any land for development.

Policy LHA1

This planning policy relates to the protection of local heritage assets in the Hellingly Parish. It seeks to ensure that all new development in the Hellingly Parish respects existing Local Heritage Assets by preserving, conserving and enhancing them. New developments that are judged to significantly alter or affect local heritage assets, through either demolition or substantial redevelopment will be refused, whilst new developments that enhance local heritage assets through restoration or conversion will be supported

Hailsham Neighbourhood Plan

3.35 The application for the designation of the area of the Hailsham Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to Wealden District Council on the 31st March 2016. The application was formally approved for the purposes of Neighbourhood Planning by Wealden on the 19th August 2016.

3.36 Hailsham Town Council has established the Hailsham Neighbourhood Planning group and a Neighbourhood Planning Committee to engage with the community and progress a number of studies principally around the provision of housing and infrastructure. Details of the Neighbourhood Plan can be found on the parish council's website: <http://www.hailsham-tc.gov.uk/neighbourhood-planning/>.

3.37 A draft Neighbourhood Plan was published for consultation between 25th November 2017 and 26th January 2018. The Parish Council are currently preparing the background documents to support the draft Neighbourhood Plan and assessing the responses received before progressing with the next stage in the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan.

3.38 As part of the NDP process, Hailsham Town Council has published a vision for the town, nine objectives for the plan area, and a number of planning policies and projects

that would cover the plan area and, if adopted, be used in the determination of planning applications within the plan area. The vision included within the HNBP is as follows:

'By 2028 Hailsham will be recognised as a destination for leisure, shopping and culture. It will have embraced and harnessed its growth potential and benefitted from the necessary infrastructure to support and retain its strong sense of community, civic pride and social wellbeing. Hailsham will be established as a balanced, well-proportioned and prosperous town offering its residents a high quality of life.'

The town centre will be an appealing and pleasant retail and leisure destination which attracts visitors from far and wide (many via public transport from rail services at Polegate) into the unique historic market town served by modern and desirable facilities and amenities. Growth will deliver excellent schooling choices and new further education opportunities, good medical provision and care services.

An improved core retail area will support a diverse mix of independent and national shops and businesses bringing with it strong employment prospects for the town. A network of enhanced and connected green spaces, centred around the cuckoo trail will support an active and healthy community. The wetlands remain an asset of recreation and well-being for the community of Hailsham. Together with improvements to pedestrian and cycling links across the town, Hailsham residents will benefit from a safe and healthier alternative to car based travel.'

3.39 There are nine objectives listed within the HNBP to fulfil the vision statement above that states the following:

- Development delivers the necessary facilities and infrastructure in accessible locations for existing and new communities alike.
- Existing pedestrian and cycling routes are preserved and enhanced. The Cuckoo Trail will be improved as a multi-functional route for tourism, travel and recreation, further linking Hailsham to its surrounding communities.
- New developments will create well connected, attractive cycling and pedestrian routes, providing seamless integration with the existing urban areas and public green spaces to encourage a reduction in car based travel.
- Existing habitats and green infrastructure networks are protected and enhanced through sensitive development to encourage local habitat improvement and creation.
- The character and setting of Hailsham's conservation area, statutory listed buildings and locally listed buildings are protected by fostering a high-quality design approach which promotes design innovation and reinforces the distinct local character areas of Hailsham.
- Improve local air quality and provide reductions in carbon emissions by supporting local renewable energy generation.
- Encourage the appropriate redevelopment of previously developed land to help meet housing need and encourage the regeneration of Hailsham Town Centre.

- Protect and encourage the development of retail and commercial spaces which meet identified local need, to support new and existing small businesses and local retailers whilst also attracting inward investment into Hailsham.
- Support existing retailers in Hailsham and encourage a diversification of the retail and leisure offers in the town to attract new shoppers and visitors.

3.40 The Hailsham NDP includes a number of planning policies that seek to deliver on both the vision statement and objectives outlined above. A summary of these policies is set out below.

Policy HAIL HRA 1: Habitats Regulations

This draft policy relates to the habitat regulations and confirms that development within the Hailsham NDP area, including any relevant projects identified in the NDP, will initially be required to demonstrate that there will have no likely significant effect alone or in combination with other plans and projects upon the Ashdown Forest SAC and SPA; the Pevensey Levels Ramsar Site and SAC; or the Lewes Downs SAC. It also notes that any proposals for development must be accompanied by information to allow the competent authority to complete a full Habitat Regulations Assessment of the impacts of the development.

Policy HAIL D1: High Quality Design

This draft policy relates to the general design criteria of all new development within the Hailsham NDP area and does not allocate land for development. In short, this policy outlines the expectations of the Town Council in terms of the design of new development.

Policy HAIL D2: Small Scale Residential Development and Householder Extensions

This draft policy provides support for planning applications on small-scale and infill development involving the reuse and redevelopment of redundant and underutilised land and buildings within the built-up area of Hailsham.

Policy HAIL D3: Innovation and Variety

This draft policy relates to the support of innovative and bespoke design solutions for new development proposals, particularly residential schemes. This policy does not allocate land for development.

Policy HAIL D4: Design for Self and Custom Build Homes

This draft policy relates to the design of self and custom build homes and sets out a requirement as to when design codes should be used. This policy does not allocate land for development.

Policy HAIL D5: Residential Car Parking Design

This draft policy relates to residential car parking design and outlines the expectations of the Town Council when it comes to considering the visual impact of car parking and associated infrastructure within residential areas as relevant to new housing development. This policy does not allocate land for development.

Policy HAIL AT1: Active Travel

This draft policy confirms that all applications for new development are encouraged to demonstrate how they support active transport travel through the delivery of walking and cycling routes that reduces the reliance on vehicular movement. This is a generalised policy and does not allocate land for new development but does refer to a number of proposals for development where this would improve travel networks.

Policy HAIL AT2: The Cuckoo Trail

This draft policy relates to the Cuckoo Trail and confirms that proposals for development that enhance the quality of the Cuckoo Trail and that provide scope to reconnect missing links will be supported. Such projects may include the enhancement of walking and cycle networks, lighting and the creation of 'active frontages' along the Cuckoo Trail through development along its route. However, this policy does not specifically allocate land for new development.

Policy HAIL AT3: Public Transport

This draft policy relates to public transport and sets out criteria where support for public transport proposals would be given. In addition, the draft policy states that proposals for major growth and development on the edge of Hailsham will be expected to accommodate routes for bus services, integrating with existing routes. The draft policy does not specifically allocate land for new development, but rather establishes what the Town Council seeks from proposals for growth and development.

Projects HAIL AT1: Active and Sustainable Travel Projects

This draft policy does not allocate land for new development, but does outline the Town Council's intentions that they wish to work closely with both the District Council and County Council to deliver high quality public transport services between Hailsham Town Centre, Polegate railway station and Eastbourne town centre. There are a number of other projects that are summarised within the policy. These include the development of a town centre wide cycle strategy and public right of way improvements, including new wayfinding. These projects would similarly require support from other statutory bodies. The draft policy also sets out that support will be given to the creation of a possible new hub along the Cuckoo Trail including a new visitor centre and associated infrastructure

Policy HAIL GS1: Natural and Amenity Green Space

This draft policy relates to natural and amenity green spaces and confirms that support will be given to proposals for new development where it seeks to provide good quality greens spaces, be it wildlife habitats, amenity spaces or even public spaces, where appropriate. However, the policy does not specifically identify any new natural or amenity green spaces within the Hailsham NDP.

Policy HAIL GS2: Open Space within Major Development Areas

This draft policy states that open space should be provided within all major development schemes in Hailsham, where this is appropriate in line with the guidance and standards contained in the Wealden District Council Open Space, Sports and Recreation Assessment 2016-2028, or any later standards that may be adopted in the new Wealden Local Plan. The draft policy does not specifically allocate land for new development, but rather establishes what the Town Council seeks from more strategic development in terms of open space.

Projects HAIL GS1: Natural and Amenity Green Space

This draft policy states the Town Council will seek to improve the quality of all existing amenity and natural green spaces across the NDP area. In addition, the Town Council also seeks to work with the District and County Council to explore how underused green spaces might be better used (i.e. increase biodiversity value, new wildlife habitats).

Policy HAIL GS3: Pevensey Levels

This draft policy specifically relates to the Pevensey Levels SAC/Ramsar site¹⁹ and confirms that development adjacent to the Pevensey Levels will need to demonstrate that there are no detrimental impacts on the setting and quality of the Pevensey Levels. The draft policy provides that all applications will be subject to a HRA.

The policy sets out that any development adjacent to the Pevensey Levels will be required to provide green space along the non-built up edge of the growth area, creating an area of natural green space to be protected for biodiversity and ecological purpose. It notes that such provision should not result in any additional recreational pressures on the SSSI. This draft policy does not provide a quantum or specific location of development within the policy.

Policy HAIL EMP1: Providing for a Mix of Employment Opportunities

This draft policy supports employment development within the built-up area boundary of Hailsham, or as part of major new development schemes. The policy notes that proposals which diversify the business offer within main employment areas (for B1, B2 and B8) uses are supported. The policy also welcomes opportunities to provide flexible employment space and support small and medium businesses in the town centre and existing employment areas and requires any new business related development to improve the quality of the environment. The draft policy also requires

for new employment proposals to be subject to a set of criteria including design, landscape and traffic impact assessments.

Policy HAIL CF1: Community Facilities

This draft policy states that both the enhancement and provision of additional community facilities will be supported subject to a set of criteria. It notes that the loss of existing community buildings (Use Class D1) will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that demand within the locality for the facility no longer exists or that suitable alternative provision is made elsewhere. The policy does not specifically allocate land for community uses.

Policy HAIL TOU1: Tourism

This draft policy relates to the improvement of existing tourist facilities, attractions, accommodation and infrastructure and sets criteria where such development would be acceptable. In addition, the policy confirms that the loss of tourist facilities to other uses will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that the tourist facility is no longer viable (having been marketed for 12 months) or it is demonstrated that the proposed alternative use would provide equal or greater benefits for the local economy and community.

Policy HAIL AQ1: Charging Points for Electric Vehicles

This draft policy does not allocate land for new development, but does seek to promote charging points for electric vehicles where new development includes public car parking. In addition, the policy identifies that for new housing development, there should be at least one electrical vehicle charging point for each dwelling house and for flatted development, which has allocated car parking spaces. For flatted development which does not have allocated car parking, the policy suggests that provision should be made for shared communal charging points.

Policy HAIL AQ2: Sustainable Design and Construction

This draft policy does not allocate land for new development, but seeks to promote sustainable construction techniques for all new development that comes forward in any case.

Policy HAIL AQ3: High Energy Efficient Buildings

This draft policy states that development proposals which demonstrate that the proposed buildings have a net emission rate of zero or below or alike will be considered favourably subject to other policies.

Policy HAIL AQ4: Renewables

This draft policy supports new developments for renewable energy schemes, although such proposals would be required to demonstrate that they do not have a significant adverse effect on landscape and townscape character, biodiversity, heritage or

cultural assets or amenity value. This is a criteria based policy and does not specify a type, quantum or location for a renewable energy scheme.

Policy HAIL SD1: Development Frameworks

This draft policy confirms that applicants for major development schemes on the edge of Hailsham are encouraged to prepare ‘development frameworks’ for approval by the Town Council prior to the submission of a planning application. The ‘development frameworks’ are to contain comprehensive information on the scheme including infrastructure provision, the mixture of uses for the scheme, the design of the development (density, typology etc.) and a programme of community consultation. The ‘development framework’ is intended to influence the form of strategic development on the edge of Hailsham, albeit, not its specific location or quantum.

Policy HAIL SD2: Design Principles

This draft policy confirms that applicants for any major development scheme, including those to the edge of the existing built-up area of Hailsham, should meet a number of design principles. This is a criteria based policy and does not specify a type, quantum or location for any major development scheme.

HAIL SD3: Design Codes and Quality

This draft policy confirms that the Town Council encourages the production of ‘design codes’ for any major development proposals in its area. The draft policy does not allocate land for new development.

Policy HAIL TC1: Hailsham Town Centre

This draft policy seeks to support a wide range of town centre uses within the Hailsham town centre that includes retail, leisure, entertainment, office, community facilities and arts, culture and tourism development. Furthermore, planning applications for residential development are also supported in the town centre, particularly where they comprise part of a mixed-use development scheme. The draft policy also provides a number of criteria for new development that would be required as part of a town centre development proposal.

Policy HAIL TC2: Town Centre Design Principles

This draft policy relates to all proposed development within Hailsham town centre and outlines a number of design criteria that expresses the expectations of the Town Council when it comes to consider town centre proposals. The draft policy does not allocate land for new development.

Policy HAIL TC3: Town Centre Heritage Assets

This draft policy relates to town centre heritage assets and states that any new development or other improvements in the town centre should be undertaken with

a view to preserve and enhance the town centres heritage assets (including listed buildings, the town centre conservation area and locally listed buildings)

Policy HAIL TC4: Town Centre Car Parking

This draft policy confirms that development should not result in an overall loss of public car parking in the town centre. The draft policy also supports the rationalisation of surface car parking and offers criteria for decked car parking proposals.

Policy HAIL TC5: Shopfronts

This draft policy relates to the design of new shopfronts and other commercial properties in Hailsham town centre and is a general criterion based policy expressing the expectations of the Town Council when it comes to consider such development proposals.

Policy HAIL TC6: Streets and Spaces in the Town Centre

This draft policy supports planning applications that contribute to an enhanced movement network for pedestrians and cyclists, and improved access by public transport. The draft policy also seeks to enhance the public realm. There are no specific proposals for development within this policy.

Policy HAIL P1: Community Infrastructure Levy

This draft policy sets out the projects for which the monies payable to the Town Council from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) shall be directed towards.

Hadlow Down Neighbourhood Plan

3.41 The application for designation of the area of the Hadlow Down Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to Wealden District Council on the 22nd January 2016, for the purposes of establishing a Community Right to Build Order to build a new community and re-develop the existing village Hall site for affordable housing. The application was formally approved for the purposes of Neighbourhood Planning by Wealden District Council on the 23rd June 2016.

3.42 The Community of Hadlow Down have a long held vision to build a new community centre. The result of the pre-feasibility study indicated that one of the ways forward was for the Parish Council to apply for the Hadlow Down Parish to become a Neighbourhood Area, which would then allow the Hadlow Down Community Centre Committee (HDCCC) who are leading on the project, to proceed with a Community Right to Build Order (CRBO).

3.43 The community and Parish have identified the need for a new Community Centre to replace the existing Village Hall. After a number of consultations exercises, it was decided that the Community Centre should be combined with the sports pavilion and relocated on the playing field.

3.44 The Parish Council submitted a planning application on 27th December 2017 for the demolition and redevelopment of the community centre site. This application was approved on 1st May 2018.

Frant Neighbourhood Plan

3.45 The application for designation of the area of the Frant Parish Council Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to Wealden District Council on the 16th November 2016. The application was formally approved for the purposes of neighbourhood planning by Wealden District Council on 25th April 2017.

3.46 The aims and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan focus on the provision of sustainable development in line with the National Planning Policy Framework document. The particular aim of the plan is to focus on the key policy areas of community, housing, natural environment, built environment and transport, in such a way as to ensure 'growth caters for the needs of the current generation while ensuring that future generations are not negatively impacted.'

3.47 These areas will be explored further through the development of the neighbourhood plan.

East Hoathly with Halland Neighbourhood Plan

3.48 The application for the designation of the area for the East Hoathly with Halland Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to Wealden District Council on the 22nd June 2017 and the application was formally approved for the purposes of Neighbourhood Planning by Wealden on 15th August 2017.

3.49 The East Hoathly with Halland Parish Council set up a Steering Group to engage with the community and progress the Neighbourhood Plan. This initial engagement is currently on going with a view to publishing a draft Plan in 2019. Further information relating to the progress of the neighbourhood plan can be found on the Parish Council's website; <http://www.easthoathlywithhalland.org.uk/index.html>

Wadhurst Neighbourhood Plan

3.50 The application for the designation of the area for the Wadhurst Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to Wealden District Council on the 3rd October 2017 and the application was formally approved for the purposes of Neighbourhood Planning by Wealden on 8th November 2017.

3.51 Wadhurst Parish Council has set up a Steering Group to engage with the community and progress the Neighbourhood Plan. This initial engagement is currently on going with a view to publishing a draft Plan in 2019. Further information can be found on the Parish Council's website: <https://wadhurst-pc.gov.uk/wadhurst-neighbourhood-plan-website-2018/>

4 Masterplans/Vision documents

4.1 Masterplans/vision documents and Neighbourhood Plans can take a variety of forms depending on the context in which the plan is to be used and what the parish or community want to achieve. However, in general terms both processes seek to establish principles of how a place may change over a period of time, physically, economically and socially. One of the main differences between Masterplans/ vision documents is the process for production, content and their overall status.

4.2 The benefit of producing a masterplan or Neighbourhood Plan/Vision document is that it gives local people a share in the decisions as to what their town/village/area should look like and to help guide its future development. This provides an opportunity for the community to set out a vision of what is important to it, how new development can best be fitted in, the design and quality standards it should meet, how to preserve valued local features and to map out the facilities and services that the community need and want to safeguard for the future.

4.3 None of the masterplans or vision documents that have been prepared by Town and Parish Councils are adopted by Wealden District Council as Supplementary Planning Document's (SPD's), however, the documents have been considered as part of the development of the Wealden Local Plan as well as previous Local Plan documents including the Core Strategy Local Plan.

4.4 The development of masterplans/or vision documents are not constrained in the same way as Neighbourhood Plans, but generally include consultation with the community. For aspirations to be taken forward into policy and be adopted as part of the Local Planning document, either the content of the masterplan has to be incorporated into the plan or taken forward as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). For the later, an SPD should only be used where necessary and clearly justified. SPDs do not have the same weight as a Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan but they are subject to public consultation and are taken into account as a material consideration in dealing with planning applications.

4.5 Below a brief summary of each masterplan is outlined below.

Uckfield Town Centre Visioning Document

Background

4.6 Uckfield was the first of Wealden's towns to begin work on a town masterplan. The initiative derived from the Town Councils "Uckfield design day", Wealden District Council's early work on the Local Development Framework and from the acknowledgment that there are specific spatial challenges inherent to Uckfield. These reflect the way in which parts of Uckfield have been developed in the past, and because the town is expected to grow in the future. Local recognition was given to the masterplan process to help address challenges and to help manage future growth of the town in a coordinated way.

The Aim of the Approach

4.7 The aim of Uckfield's Town Masterplan was to develop a strategy for the town which will provide a framework for future decisions, and with the purpose of revitalising, regenerating and improving the area, thus creating a more sustainable community. Some of the regeneration initiatives such as the improvements to Uckfield Town Centre are currently underway. The vision, objectives and ideas presented in the Master plan have influenced the direction and policy in the emerging Wealden Local Plan.

Who is Involved?

4.8 As key landowners within the town, an Uckfield Town Centre Steering Group was set up made up of representatives from East Sussex County Council, Wealden District Council, Uckfield Town Council and the East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (each a landowner in the town). The purpose of the group is to oversee the production of a masterplan through partnership working, with the aim of enhancing and improving the town.

The Plan Process

4.9 Work on the masterplan began in December 2006 when the Town Council produced a community questionnaire which was sent to every household in Uckfield. In addition, a "Vision for Uckfield" Design Day was held which was jointly organised and run with the Royal Institute of British Architects. The purpose of the design day was to gain people's views on how they would like to see Uckfield and the surrounding area develop, present the results of the community questionnaire, and explore Uckfield's potential for improvement.

4.10 Following this initial public consultation, Uckfield Town Council produced a proposal document for a town masterplan. The report outlined a vision, draft objectives and themes for the future of the town and identified a number of initiatives that would support the identified key proposals. The proposal report was agreed by the steering group and Town Council in August 2007.

4.11 Work on the plan has continued and more recently GVA Grimley (Planning Consultants) have been instructed by the Uckfield Town Centre Steering Group to further develop a masterplan for Uckfield looking especially at design concepts to enhance the urban fabric and grain of the town. Further public consultation was undertaken to take the masterplan into its next stage. This was in the form of a further community questionnaire and open days which were held towards the end of 2008 and 2009. The purpose was to generate and investigate a number of proposed scenarios for the future development of the town.

4.12 In October 2009, a more detailed masterplan was finalised and approved by the Town Council. Should you wish to view the latest plan document or gain further information then you may do so via the Uckfield Town Centre website at: www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk.

The Vision for Uckfield

Summary of Key Issues, Challenges and Needs

4.13 The vision for the future of Uckfield town centre is that of a contemporary market town with an ‘up-market’ image known for its successful and varied shopping facilities and commercial opportunities, offering an attractive and welcoming environment, maintaining its own distinctive identity and acting as a hub for surrounding towns and villages.

4.14 The plan introduces a number of objectives and details how the objectives may be achieved. In summary the plan introduces a mixture of regeneration and new development to improve the town centre. This includes the following:

Aims and objective

Active and Attractive Mixed - Use High Street

4.15 The revival of Uckfield’s High Street is seen to be especially important. This will be achieved by enhancing and maintaining the High Street through a number of initiatives including redevelopment, investment in the public realm and a reduced impact of cars and parking.

New Civic Square and Development

4.16 This includes creating a new landmark, creating better linkages between the High Street and Luxford's Field, a new civic centre, additional buildings including replacement community buildings and public art.

Luxford's Field

4.17 Improvements to Luxford's Field including landscaping, the provision of trees and the relocation of the playground close to the Civic Centre.

Residential Neighbourhood

4.18 The plan promotes its town centre for residential use advocating a high quality and well-designed neighbourhood including a mixture of housing types and associated car parking.

New and Expanded Retail on Bell Farm Road

4.19 Uckfield would like to see the regeneration of Bell Farm Road to include a range of retail types with parking and servicing and for an attractive and active street facade.

Employment, Leisure and Community

4.20 In relation to employment, a new office development located west of the expanded detail area would be supported. Uckfield would also like to see additional multi-use spaces for a range of recreation and sport uses and the redevelopment of the school.

Next Steps

4.21 Following approval of this initial master-plan setting out a vision and design concept for the town, the partnership of the Town Council, East Sussex County Council, Wealden and East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service employed consultants to specifically test the viability and delivery of this with potential investors and developers. Currently this work is ongoing but is intended to provide a clear direction as to what may be able to be achieved towards the priorities set out in the master-plan itself. These include the provision of necessary infrastructure and a solution to the issue of traffic congestion within the town.

Crowborough Town Centre Visioning Document

Background

4.22 Crowborough Town Council established a visioning group in April 2008. The aim of the visioning group was to produce, through partnership working and community involvement, ideas and proposals to help guide the revitalisation and redevelopment of the town over the next 20 years. The visioning group was made up of a number of representatives from Crowborough Town Council, East Sussex County Council, Wealden District Council, the Crowborough Partnership (a local business network) and a number of other organisations and community groups.

4.23 The culmination of partnership working, a number of community workshops, on-line surveys and public consultation, was the publication in November 2010 of the Crowborough Town Centre Visioning Document - 'Top of the Weald - A vision for Crowborough 2010–2030'.

4.24 The Vision document formed the basis of the Neighbourhood planning application submitted by Crowborough Town Council. In January 2016 however, as highlighted above, the Town Council decided not to pursue the Neighbourhood Plan but to update the Vision document. This work is being progressed however many groups, organisations and individuals will be involved with delivering the aims of the Vision.

4.25 You can access the Crowborough Town Centre Visioning Document via the Crowborough Town Council website through this link:

<http://www.crowboroughtowncouncil.gov.uk/council/a-vision-for-Crowborough>

The Vision for Crowborough

4.26 The vision document outlined, that by 2030 Crowborough will be:

'A vibrant, attractive and inviting town with a strong community spirit at its heart. A town in touch with its past, looking to the future and protective of its outstanding heritage and natural surroundings'.

Aims and Objectives

4.27 The latest visioning document builds on its draft version and outlines eight strategic aims, describes ways in which the key vision can be achieved and identifies short term (1 - 4 years) and medium to long term (5 - 20 years) priorities. Work is continuing to further

these aims. The vision for Crowborough and eight key aims and associated priorities are described below.

Aim 1 - A thriving and dynamic town centre serving the needs of the community and appealing to visitors

4.28 In the short term, the priorities are to pedestrianise the High Street to reduce traffic congestion and to give the town centre a 'makeover' to create a safe, clean and attractive environment.

4.29 In the medium and long term, priorities include the regeneration of the High Street, an improved night time economy, a regular weekend market and the creation of a community focal point.

Aim 2 - A commitment to preserving and enhancing Crowborough's natural and built environment

4.30 In the short term Crowborough will prioritise the production of an inventory of existing green spaces in the town, increase the amount of green spaces and preserve existing green spaces and assets. Also, the design principles as set out in the Wealden Design Guide will be supported.

4.31 In the medium term, priorities include protecting and enhancing the natural environment and cultural heritage, reducing carbon emissions and promoting recycling to increase the sustainability of the town. The production of an active strategy to increase the amount of land available for recreational use is also a priority.

Aim 3 - A distinctive visitor destination with a wealth of accessible cultural treasures

4.32 In the short term Crowborough would like to achieve its aim by promoting and branding Crowborough as a tourist destination, updating its tourist information service and publications, enhancing the towns gateways and providing relevant signage and supporting new and existing festivals and events.

4.33 In the medium to long term, priorities include the provision of a mix of new tourist accommodation and building on existing tourist attractions.

Aim 4 - A high quality, integrated transport network for the town

4.34 In the short term priorities include the creation of a traffic management plan to help with movement in and around the town, increased accessibility, directional signage and the promotion of public transport options to reduce car reliance.

4.35 In the medium to long term, priorities include better public transport links and restructured timetables, the continuation of free car parking, an investigation into the provision of a new transport hub close to the town and improving the area around Crowborough rail station.

Aim 5 - A confident and resilient business community working in partnership with the wider community

4.36 Short term priorities include supporting and attracting small businesses in/to the town, building on and expanding on the existing business network, investigating the potential to create a 'business centre and prioritising the creation of new employment opportunities for young people.

4.37 In the medium to long term, priorities include building on Crowborough's geographical position as a local service centre, increasing employment in tourism and ensuring that new development contributes to the creation of a sustainable community.

Aim 6 - A town that meaningfully engages with, and is supportive of the needs and aspirations of, its young people

4.38 In the short term Crowborough will prioritise safety for its young people, promote a new Youth Council and improve facilities and activities for young people.

4.39 Long term priorities include seeking fundraising for the creation of a new youth club and encourage new leisure and recreation development.

Aim 7 - Delivering high quality and affordable housing

4.40 Crowborough would like a greater level of affordable housing to help families and young people stay in the town. To achieve this, short term priorities include gaining an understanding of local housing need, enforcing design standards, the provision of new housing sites in appropriate locations, early engagement between the Town Council and potential developers and exploring affordable housing 'exception sites'.

Aim 8 - A new focal point for the town at Pine Grove

4.41 The short term priorities for the above aim include the production of a master-plan for the Pine Grove site, an assessment of the potential for social and business enterprises and the creation of a new community centre.

4.42 Long term priorities include the implementation of design standards at Pine Grove including access to the town and public transport, landscaped open spaces and the potential for affordable housing on the site to be explored.

Next Steps

4.43 Work on the project is continuing and in the future critical areas of the vision will be identified and agreed. It is anticipated that a master plan for the town will be prepared over the next few years following public consultation.

Polegate Town Masterplan

The Aim of the Approach

4.44 Polegate Town Council began work on its master-plan for the area early in 2008. The Plan was updated in 2012.

4.45 The purpose of the Master-plan for Polegate is to develop a strategy for the Town which provides a framework for making decisions on current and future proposals, in a manner that is advantageous to the overall improvement of the area.

4.46 The Master-plan offers a long term sense of direction through which change can be effectively managed and co-ordinated for the greatest benefit of the Town and local area, with a focus on implementation.

The Objective of the Master Plan

4.47 The objective set out in the Master Plan document is to:

- To provide a strategic document to guide and co-ordinate future development in the Town of Polegate but not to duplicate or seek to repeat national or regional planning policies that are to be found elsewhere
- To provide a document that can inform and supplement the Wealden LDF
- To identify the present local infrastructure and to highlight additions/change/upgrades that may be required to accommodate present and future developments
- To ensure that the needs of all sections of the community are addressed To enhance the economic performance and potential of the area
- To improve the quality of life for all residents

Who is Involved?

4.48 The first stage in producing Polegate's Masterplan involved creating a number of working groups to input ideas and evidence into the masterplanning process. These working groups were established to look at:-

Community Infrastructure

- Roads / transport
- Parking
- Healthcare
- Education and training
- Water drainage and sewerage

Economic Performance

- Retail
- Employment
- Housing

Leisure and Recreation

- Formal and informal play space

- Sporting facilities
- Clubs and social / community centres

Key Vision Statement

4.49 Polegate's Master-plan outlines nine spatial vision objectives which are summarised below:

- Ensuring that the location of development is coordinated and meets Polegate's service and employment needs is co-ordinated with that of Eastbourne and the surrounding areas and that the public transport links to Eastbourne are improved through a quality bus corridor;
- Taking advantage of Polegate's position at the junction of the A22 and A27 and as a main line rail station, to provide for strategically important employment and civic facilities.
- Improving/redeveloping the Rail Station and adjoining Town centre with more intensive use of land, an improved environment and choice of shops.
- Taking advantage of the by-pass to improve the environment and space available for buses, pedestrians and cyclists.
- Improving gaps in Polegate's housing stock with the provision of good quality new housing, community facilities, including those for the elderly and a new sports hall. Identifying land suitable for the provision of a cemetery.
- Respecting and protecting the backdrop and setting of Polegate against the South Downs National Park.
- Providing new parks and open spaces in and around Polegate
- Maintaining strategic green gaps between Eastbourne and Polegate, and Polegate and Hailsham.

The Plan Process

4.50 A number of issues were considered during the 2008 Annual General Meeting, at which residents were asked to discuss in groups matters relating to Polegate. This included discussing community infrastructure, economic performance and leisure and recreation. In addition, a number of spatial vision objectives were outlined.

4.51 4.51 Following the consultation exercise, the gathered information was used to produce Polegate's Town Master-plan, which was made publicly available in July 2008. The master-plan has now been updated following a public Town Council meeting on 5th August 2010.

4.52 The latest updated Draft Report is available to view via the Polegate Town Council website at:

http://www.polegate-tc.co.uk/files/Masterplan%20DRAFT%20Feb%202012_2_.pdf

Summary of Key Messages

4.53 The master-plan also includes more detail from the working groups. The key issues raised are summarised below.

Shopping/retail

- Look to focus development and expansion of the retail area around the centre and railway station as a transport hub, working with existing landlords, developers and property companies, to regenerate the centre and provide larger units to attract national multiples.
- Establish a weekly/monthly farmers market
- Revitalise the traders association

Employment

- Adverse to loss of employment space
- Adverse to allocation of employment land at the Core Strategy SDA 4 site Adverse to any employment development at Honey Farm
- Supports employment at Dittons Road - Core Strategy SDA5 site providing that a link road is established between SDA4 and SDA5.
- Supports the idea of high quality business parks and the provision of a 'Public Service Village' within close proximity of the town centre.

Housing

- Hindsland Fields, Eastbourne Road, should only be considered for the provision of new educational facilities including secondary provision and for residential housing subject to a link road being provided across the railway to Jubilee Way roundabout. Underpinning the philosophy that future development of Polegate must be that of an 'urban extension' south of the by-pass, no 'standalone' site to the north of the A27 or west of the A22 should be considered for any potential development.
- It is imperative that the strategic green gaps between Polegate / Hailsham and Polegate / Willington & Eastbourne be preserved in order for Polegate to maintain its own identity.
- Any proposed development should include a good mix of dwellings which would blend in with existing building styles and complement existing housing stock.
- New infrastructure would be required to accommodate further housing e.g. employment land / Folkington Link / further improvements to the A27 / possible no through link road to join the rear area of SD4 with Jubilee Way roundabout / hospital provision / satellite health centre / primary and secondary schools / sewerage works/reservoir / additional railway car parking / residents' parking permit scheme / park / revitalised and expanded High Street / multi use sport and youth facility.

Roads and Parking

- Requirement for an underpass alongside the Folkington Link Reduce rat running through Polegate High Street and other roads.
- The need for either a multi storey rail user car park or a park & ride scheme has been identified, for which land at Black Path and Gosford Way could be considered.

- High Street parking should be policed effectively to maximise the benefit of the 2 hour parking restriction.
- Plans for traffic calming measures along Station / Pevensey / Dittons Road are not supported due to the proposed removal of lay-bys causing a further deficit in on street parking spaces and traffic congestion. However, the reduction of the speed limit from 40 mph to 30 mph is welcomed.

Transport

- There is support for the creation of an integrated transport hub of rail and bus services, to be situated at either the existing railway station or on land at Black Path, which is owned by the rail company and which could be developed into a shoppers / railway car park. This could be a partnership between the Town Council and the rail company and could have prioritised usage for the Town's shoppers and rail users.
- A new footbridge could be constructed to link the north and south sides of the Town across the railway crossing and the railway station should be upgraded to form the centre of this enterprise.
- The Polegate – Pevensey rail link (Willingdon Chord) is supported
- There should be a shuttle service to Eastbourne which could include a link to the DGH, with reduced rates for the elderly.
- The Hailsham rail line should be reinstated which would bring more people into the Town to use transport links. Support is given to the Lewes – Uckfield line as this would help remove more traffic from the congested roads.
- The Town Council also support a new station at Stone cross.

Healthcare

- Subject to attaining the necessary funding from the PCT, the healthcare teams from both Downland Medical Centre and Manor Park Medical Centre will relocate. At present the changes in the Primary Health Care Trust and lack of funding mean that there is unlikely to be a new health centre. The Town Council would prefer that a site be identified within the boundary of Polegate. It is vital that a satellite surgery remains in the centre of Town to enable residents with mobility issues to retain easy access to medical care.

Education Training and Skills

- Nursery places should be provided at the existing primary school site as well as pre-school groups provided by the private sector. Polegate Town Council would support a land swap (some housing to be on the current school land at Broad Road, Willingdon) at Willingdon Community School, to facilitate a new secondary provision on Core Strategy Site SD4 and support is given to a school which would be from nursery to 6th form. The school would provide facilities not only for the pupils but for the surrounding community, with a separate sports hall which could be used outside the school's core hours.

Leisure and Recreation

- Support is given to further expansion/development of recreational facilities within the town boundaries, to include a purpose built youth / sports club and courts for additional leisure activities, such as green bowls, petanque, and tennis and parklands. The Town Council also support a community facility on the Core Strategy Site SDA4. The Town Council considers that Brightling Road should be explored for further improvement and development as it has great potential. Access could be greatly improved and children's play equipment could be added, together with pathways and seating. The natural hay meadow must be preserved as an important conservation area and could possibly be enhanced with the provision of additional seating, from which residents could enjoy the wildlife. The wooded area is of particular interest and all species of wildlife should be encouraged by appropriate planting, i.e. buddleia, lavender etc. and the creation of additional habitats such as bat boxes and wood piles.
- Support is given to the extension / creation of cycle ways, possibly in conjunction with Sustrans.

Clubs and Social

- Further facilities within the Town, especially a purpose built sports/youth hall. The Community Centre, which is the main focus for social clubs and groups, is in need of replacement with a contemporary building which could incorporate a library, computer suite, conference room etc. The Town Council support the provision of a purpose built youth facility and community facility on the Core Strategy Site SD4.

Allotments

- The Town Council is actively seeking additional land which could be cultivated as allotments. The Town Council will endeavour to attain allotment land from any future major developers via s106 Agreements or Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments.

Water and Sewerage

- Support must be given to the provision of improved sewerage services to serve the area prior to any housing development taking place

The Elderly

- There is also a need for an affordable respite and convalescent care facility within Polegate. There should also be excellent home-care provisions and support groups for carers, as well as a variety of suitable social activities for retired residents, including health walks and fitness classes.

Next Steps

4.54 The Town Council hope that the Masterplan will provide a foundation for future proposals for the development of Polegate. The Masterplan is a working document and will be subject to regular reviews, amendments and inputting of additional information. It

is the aim of Polegate Town Council that consultation will continue, in order to ensure that the Masterplan is representative of the wider community.

Heathfield and Waldron Vision Statement

The Aim of the Approach

4.55 Heathfield and Waldron Parish Council produced a visioning document for the future of their area in April 2008. The intention is to inform the preparation of plans under the Wealden District Council's Local Development Framework process.

Who is Involved?

4.56 The visioning task was led by Heathfield and Waldron Parish Council's Planning Committee.

The Vision

4.57 The visioning document outlines priority objectives for the area and elements of Heathfield and Waldron's vision which is 'to continue to live in a green, vibrant and safe community'.

The Plan Process

4.58 The process involved discussions within the Parish Council and various consultations with residents and businesses.

4.59 The Heathfield and Waldron Parish Council's visioning document is not currently available on the Parish Council's website. If you wish to have a full copy, contact the Parish Clerk – contact details can be found on the parish council's website at: <http://www.hwpc.org.uk/>

Summary of Key Messages

4.60 The key messages from Heathfield and Waldron's visioning document are summarised below:

Promotion of business

- The continued promotion of business development including broadening the range of employment opportunities and ensuring that there is enough space for businesses to expand.

Central Weald position

- To maintain the area's prominent and central position, to protect the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) as far as possible and to keep Heathfield as an attractive and vibrant community.

Landmarks of Heathfield

- With Heathfield having its own characteristic features it is important to preserve its historic character and identity. This would include preserving buildings and landscape features within the area.

Service Centre

- The retention of the town as a service centre. This would include the retention of emergency services, professional services (including health) and free parking in order to encourage economic sustainability for businesses, employees and residents, and to provide a service centre for the surrounding villages.

Community Facilities

- There is a need for an increased provision of leisure facilities, including a swimming pool and more allotments. Furthermore, the existing community facilities need to be adequately maintained.

Affordable Housing

- Additional affordable housing is required to keep young people in the area and to ensure a mixed and cohesive community. Alongside this, improved or expanded infrastructure is required, particularly health services, education, public transport and recreational facilities. Also, serious consideration should be given to issues such as energy resources, drainage and the road network.

Public Space Preservation

- Continue support to the maintenance and enhancement of public areas such as the business hub of the High Street and the public open spaces. It is thought that this is particularly important as the route of the A267 through the town means the appearance and identity of Heathfield are highly visible.

Improved Bus Services

- Public transport needs to be improved and enhanced to support more sustainable travel and to improve accessibility to and from other Wealden main towns and outlying satellite villages.

Traffic Impact

- Improved public transport and better roads would ease traffic pressures in and around Heathfield. Also, further traffic improvements can be made in the High Street by the active policing of illegal parking. This would reduce the often experienced traffic jam and would improve the town centre environment.

Cycle Route Extension

- To benefit local businesses and increase the health and leisure facilities of the area, the National Cycle Network 21 should be extended to provide a route north from the Cuckoo Trail.
- In October 2016, Heathfield and Waldron Parish Council held a visioning day for councillors to look at developing a business plan for the Council, which would also start to address some of the issues raised in the Visioning document highlighted above.

Horam Vision Statement

4.61 Horam Parish Council have put forward a vision statement for the village. This was ratified by the Parish Council's Planning Committee on the 27th July 2016. Members decided that it is important to ensure that the village gains some benefits from development.

4.62 This statement reflects issues/concerns and potential provision, such as:

Issues of Concern

- Primary School – concerns re infrastructure and capacity; Doctors – concerns re patient capacity;
- Crematorium – potential development should involve extensive road traffic surveys on all three road junctions;
- Important to retain pharmacy.
- Concerns about becoming a 'dormitory'. Consideration needs to be given to ensure that the village does not become a small town.
- Lack of use of public transport – not sustainable. If development is on the outskirts of the village, residents will use their cars.
- Before new development commences should ensure that other developments are finished.

Potential Improvements/New Provision

- Opportunities for Green Space – country walks; log piles and the Cuckoo Trail; Housing – hedging preferred.
- Should have more bungalows on larger sites. Need improvements to Broadband
- Need more affordable housing
- Need to make best use of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments East Horam – potential for limited development;
- Sustainable Development – make public transport meet the needs of the community. Currently no early morning or late evening service. Need to extend bus timetable. County Council to have commuter bus.
- Need more local rural employment.
- Need more parking provision in the village
- Crematorium – potential development should involve extensive road traffic surveys on all three road junctions;
- Important to retain pharmacy.

- Concerns about becoming a 'dormitory'. Consideration needs to be given to ensure that the village does not become a small town.
- Lack of use of public transport – not sustainable. If development is on the outskirts of the village, residents will use their cars.
- Before new development commences should ensure that other developments are finished.

4.63 The minutes of the Horam Parish Council Planning Committee meeting where this statement was discussed can be found on the Parish Councils website at: <http://www.horam.com/parish-council/minutes/>

4 Masterplans/Vision documents

5 Neighbourhood Plan policy development

5.1 National planning policies are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (DCLG, 2012). It provides a framework within which local people and their accountable councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities (paragraph 1). Paragraph 17 bullet point 1 states that planning be genuinely plan-led, empowering local people to shape their surroundings, with succinct local and neighbourhood plans setting out a positive vision for the future of the area. The NPPF was updated in July 2018 and reiterates these principles at paragraphs 11 and 16.

5.2 The most pertinent aspects of the NPPF 2018 in relation to neighbourhood planning are:

- Neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans or spatial development strategies and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies. (paragraph 13)
- Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area and neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development (paragraph 29)
- Neighbourhood planning groups should consider the opportunities for allocating small and medium sized sites suitable for housing in their area (paragraph 69). Small and medium sized sites are classified in paragraph 68a as sites no larger than one hectare.

5.3 Taking into account the national policy requirements outlined above the key issues and objectives for neighbourhood planning policy can be summarised as follows;

- Implementing national policy in relation to neighbourhood planning;
- Enabling neighbourhood plans to support the delivery of strategic policies;
- Gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area and shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development;
- Provides opportunities for neighbourhood plans to allocate small and medium sized sites suitable for housing in their area.

The Wealden Local Plan

5.4 The Wealden Local Plan outlines the growth and change that will take place within Wealden District between 2013 and 2028 providing both strategic and local policies for development and change. The Wealden Local Plan is being examined using the NPPF 2012 however the principles of the NPPF 2018 have also been considered in developing the Wealden Local Plan.

5.5 The Wealden Local Plan can further the objectives outlined above by identifying opportunities where neighbourhood plans can help deliver growth and shape, direct and help deliver sustainable development within the District in line with the overall strategic framework.

Proposed Submission Wealden Local Plan

5.6 In developing the Wealden Local Plan consideration was made as to how neighbourhood plans could deliver and plan for growth identified in the District. The Wealden Local Plan sets out in Policy WLP7 the distribution of housing development across the District. This policy is set out on a parish basis and includes windfall allowance in identified parishes in line with the overall growth numbers for the District set out in WLP1. The policy also sets out the distribution of the windfall allowance within the identified parish including; within the development boundary, within a Core Area, policy compliant dwellings in the countryside, or within a town centre.

5.7 Taking into account the requirements of the NPPF and the key issues and opportunities outlined above, the suggested neighbourhood plan policy for the Wealden Local Plan is as follows.

Policy WLP 6

Neighbourhood Development Plans

Where a windfall development allowance has been identified in Policy WLP7 to be less than 50 dwellings this could be delivered through a Neighbourhood development Plan. In order to secure this allowance for a Neighbourhood Development Plan it will be necessary for the relevant body to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with Wealden District Council within six months of the date of the adoption of the development plan.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan may allocate outside a development boundary or a Core Area, subject to adherence to the strategic aims and objectives contained within the Wealden Local Plan.

5.8 This policy states that where a windfall allowance has been identified in Policy WLP7 to be less than 50 dwellings this can be delivered through a Neighbourhood Development Plan. To secure this allowance it will be necessary for the body undertaking the neighbourhood plan to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Council within six months of the date of the adoption of the development plan. The policy does allow Neighbourhood Development Plans to allocate outside a development boundary or a Core Area subject to adherence to the strategic aims and objectives contained within the Wealden Local Plan.

5.9 This policy will enable neighbourhood planning groups to consider opportunities for allocating small and medium sized sites suitable for housing in their area in line with paragraph 69 of the NPPF. It also enables opportunities to allocate outside identified Core Areas and Development Boundaries providing greater flexibility to deliver small scale housing growth within parishes. Owing to the need to maintain a 5 year housing land supply and the plan period the opportunity for neighbourhood planning groups to plan for

windfall growth has been limited to those areas with a windfall development allowance of 50 dwellings or less.

5.10 This document was published for representations between 13th August 2018 and 8th October 2018 and sets out the Council's preferred strategy.

5.11 A Sustainability Appraisal was published alongside the Proposed Submission Wealden Local Plan and concluded that as Policy WLP6 is a process policy that provides a mechanism for housing to be allocated by Neighbourhood Development Plans it has not been subject to an individual appraisal.

5.12 Representations received from Parish Council's as part of the consultation were in general support of this policy as it enables Parish Councils an element of control over where development will be located within the Parish. Concern was raised in the representations relating to the requirement to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding however to enable certainty over the deliverability of the identified growth in the Wealden Local Plan this requirement is necessary to secure the allowance for the neighbourhood planning group given the uncertainty of the levels of windfall development which may come forward whilst they are developing their neighbourhood plan.

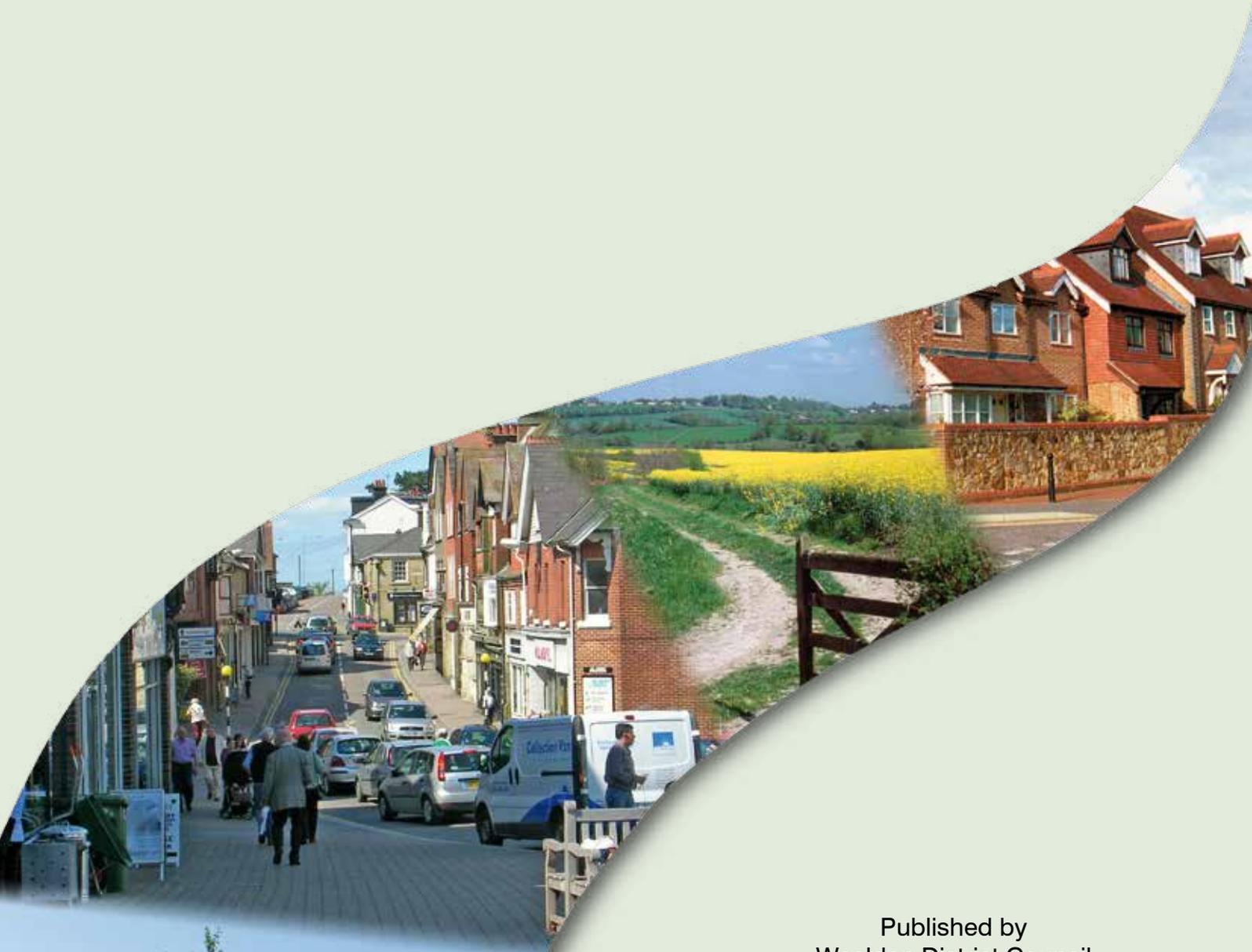
5 Neighbourhood Plan policy development

6 Conclusions

6.1 Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area. There are several Parish and Town Council's within Wealden who have commenced the process of producing a Neighbourhood Plan and the progress of these plans is outlined in section 4 above. Many of these plans have built on earlier masterplanning work undertaken by Parish and Town Council's which are summarised in section 5 above. The plans have been used to influence the policies within the Wealden Local Plan.

6.2 In response to provisions set out in the NPPF published in July 2018 policies have been developed within the Wealden Local Plan to enable neighbourhood planning groups to deliver small levels of growth within their parish area. Policy development in the Wealden Local Plan is set out in section 6 above.

6 Conclusions



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