

Hellingly Hospital

(Inset Map No.28)

22.1 The main hospital buildings and Park House at Hellingly Hospital have been closed. The owners of the site, the Eastbourne and County Healthcare NHS Trust, advise that around 28 hectares of the site are no longer required for health purposes and that the main buildings and Park House are redundant. However, the Trust have retained several buildings for health care around the northern edge of the site, namely the secure unit at Ashen Hill, an adjacent building Southview, which provides long term inpatient care, and the Trust's administrative building at Bow Hill.

22.2 In considering alternative future uses for the site, the Council has had careful regard to the relevant policies in the development plan and to the rural, relatively isolated location of the site. The guidance in PPG13: Transport aims to reduce the need to travel, especially by car, and to locate development relative to transport provision; this is reflected in Policies EN1 and EN2 of the Local Plan. On this basis, the uses proposed are either residentially based or in themselves would not be expected to attract large volumes of traffic. These include:-

- (1) another residential institutional use such as a hospital, nursing home, school, college or training centre;
- (2) a hotel which could also include ancillary uses such as sports facilities, restaurant and conference facilities;
- (3) indoor and outdoor sports and leisure uses but not including a cinema, concert hall or other public assembly uses which would be more appropriate within the towns;
- (4) special retirement housing for the elderly with linked health care facilities.

A combination of uses would be acceptable where such a proposal conforms with Policy HH1 and other relevant planning policies.

22.3 The special retirement housing for the elderly is considered appropriate where this involves residential accommodation within a complex providing linked health care in the form of nursing facilities, a clinic and other support services on site. Such development would generally be considered as an institutional use and it does not imply an acceptance of general housing development on the site; this would be firmly resisted as contrary to Structure Plan and Local Plan policies which strictly control new housing development in the countryside. Planning obligations would be required to restrict occupancy of the retirement housing to

qualifying groups by age and to ensure that the housing is permanently linked to the provision of health care and other support services.

22.4 These uses could be accommodated in the existing buildings but, due to their size and general condition, it is more likely that redevelopment will be sought, or a combination of conversion and redevelopment. Whilst the erection of new buildings could take place on the sites of the existing main hospital buildings and Park House buildings, an alternative development area is also put forward. The Health Trust would prefer an alternative area for a redevelopment of the hospital buildings in order to achieve an open space separation between the retained health services at the north eastern end of the site and the new development itself. The alternative development area should also prevent the spread of new buildings to the south and east in order to protect the open, rural setting of the site to the south where it can be seen from public roads. This alternative development area is shown on the Proposals Map Inset 28.

22.5 It is considered important to conserve and enhance the attractive open parkland setting and established character of the hospital grounds. Within the alternative development area, trees, tree lines and groups should be retained and strengthened. New landscaping will also be required, particularly at the peripheries of the area. To the south and east of the existing buildings the parkland character should be retained by maintaining and enhancing existing shrubs, trees, tree lines and groups. Furthermore, it is considered important to achieve public access to this area.

22.6 The Council is also concerned to limit the impact of new development on the landscape and surroundings, and careful consideration will be given to the height of new buildings together with the area of land occupied. In order to avoid dereliction and to minimise the impact of development, any of the existing buildings that are not required as part of a development scheme should be demolished and cleared from the site.

22.7 The Highway Authority is likely to require improvements to the existing road network, depending on the proposed future use. The main access off Park Road will require improvement to current highway standards, but care should be taken to retain the tree line to the north of the existing access.

22.8 Supplementary planning guidance has been published in the form of a Planning Brief. The purpose

of the Brief is to give guidance to potential developers on the policy. It covers a range of issues and sets out more detail on matters including the alternative uses, landscaping, the Highway Authority's requirements, management of the hospital grounds and arrangements for public access.

HH1 Following the termination of the present hospital use at the Hellingly Hospital, north of Hailsham, the Council will accept in principle the following uses in the existing hospital buildings or a redevelopment scheme:-

- (1) the existing or another residential institutional use;
- (2) a hotel;
- (3) indoor or outdoor sports or leisure uses;
- (4) special retirement housing for the elderly with linked health care and other facilities (subject to appropriate planning obligations).

In any proposed redevelopment, the new buildings should be erected either:

- (a) on the sites of the existing main hospital buildings and Park House buildings; or
- (b) on the alternative development area as defined on the Proposals Map, subject to the demolition of the existing main hospital buildings and Park House buildings, the retention and enhancement of the trees and tree groups within this area, and the retention of the parkland character of the northern part of the site.

In any proposed redevelopment, any new buildings

- (i) should have no greater impact on the surrounding area than the existing, and if possible should have less;
- (ii) should not exceed the height of existing buildings;
- (iii) should not occupy a larger area than the existing main hospital buildings and Park House buildings, measured by the aggregate ground floor area of the existing permanent buildings.

In any proposed redevelopment, any of the existing main hospital buildings and Park House buildings that are not required as part of a

development scheme should be demolished and cleared from the site.

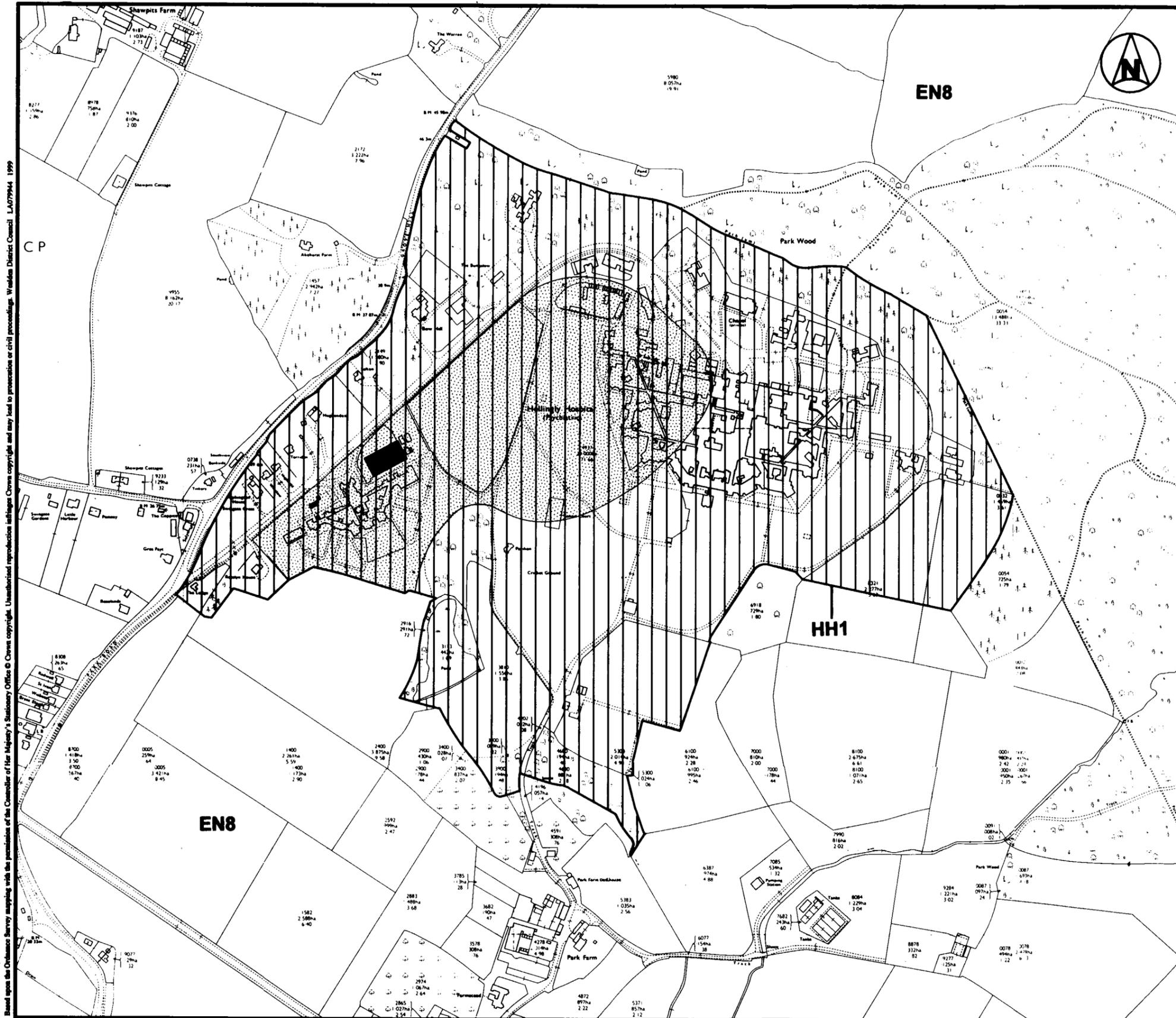
New landscaping will be required within the alternative development area, particularly at the peripheries of the area.

The existing shrubs, trees, tree lines and groups around the main hospital buildings and Park House, and to the south and east within the overall policy area should be maintained and enhanced.

The open parkland setting within the hospital grounds should be retained and access given to the general public.

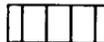
22.9 It is recognised that the existing use of the site has provided considerable local employment in the past. Employment potential will form an important part of the consideration of future uses. The acceptance of the specialised retirement housing/care facilities does not imply a general acceptance of residential development. The latter would be firmly resisted.

Inset Map No. 28 Hellingly Hospital



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KEY

-  Inset Map boundary
-  Hellingly Hospital policy area
-  Proposed alternative development area

Plan wide policies are listed on the main Proposals Map.



Proposals Map

