

Rye Neighbourhood Plan

Plan Submission Version 11

In accordance with Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012)¹, this is the plan proposal version of the Rye Neighbourhood Plan submitted by Rye Town Council as a qualifying body to Rother District Council as the Local Planning Authority. The Plan includes a map identifying the area to which the Plan relates; a consultation statement and a statement explaining how the proposed neighbourhood development plan meets the requirements of paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act. In support of the Plan there is an evidence document and a Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment. All documents should be read together

Plan Timeline: 2016 to 2028

www.ryeneighbourhoodplan.org.uk

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¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/637/contents/made>

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General Background to Neighbourhood Planning is HERE²

² <http://locality.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Quick-Guide.pdf>

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CA12	High Street
CA13	Inner Citadel
CA14	Speeding
CA15	Rail Connectivity
CA16	Rye and Camber Railway
CA17	Strand Water Project
CA18	Community Infrastructure and Services
CA19	Education
CA20	Health

Version	Comments	Date Prepared	By Whom
V1	Initial draft version	Jan 14	ATBK
V2	Second Draft	Feb 15	ATBK
V3	Third Draft	Feb 15	ATBK
V4	Fourth Draft	Mar 15	ATBK
V5	Fifth Draft	Apr 15	ATBK
V6	Sixth Draft	Oct 15	ATBK
V7 (and 7A)	Seventh Draft	End 15 – Early 16	ATBK
V8	Eighth Draft	Mid 17	ATBK and CT
V9	Ninth Draft	Mod 17	CT
V10	Final to accompany Reg 14 NDP	Dec 2017	ATBK and CT
V11	Reg 15 Plan Proposal	From June 2018	ATBK and CT

Rye Neighbourhood Plan – Summary

Rye is an ancient town of national historic importance and high architectural value. It is positioned on and around a rocky sandstone outcrop at the eastern end of Sussex close to the Kent border. Many in the community describe Rye as “rising like a jewel” from the surrounding Romney Marsh.



Since 2012, Rye Town Council has led the making of the Rye Neighbourhood Plan, working through an appointed Steering Group, a mix of councillors and selected citizens. The Plan reflects wide and intensive consultation with those who live, work, or study in Rye and with adjacent Parishes. Once made, the Rye Neighbourhood Plan will sit alongside the Rother District Council Core Strategy (2014); the saved policies of the 2006 Local Plan; and the draft Development and Site Allocations Local Plan (DaSA) (2016). Together they will form the medium term development plans for Rye³.

The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to achieve ‘**a thriving town for the 21st Century**’ by planning a strategic and coherent development of Rye with the aim of improving the economic and social well-being of the community, considering in particular its vulnerability to flooding and its role as a market town, a centre for tourism, leisure and culture; its enterprise and its commercial and fishing port, all in the context of its historic maritime character, which should be conserved. It does this through planning policies and aspirations that seek to achieve the following:

³ Section 38 (6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (formerly S54A of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990).

Housing (policies H1-H8):

- Allocate several larger sites to accommodate about 160 new homes to 2028.
- Support well designed small scale development on windfall sites.
- Encourage small (1-2 bedroom) homes for younger people and homes into which older people can downsize

Quality Design (policy D1):

- Support imaginative, high quality design to include “secure by design” .
- Protect the unique character of Rye.
- The Rye Character Assessment to inform all new development.

Reduce Flood Risk (policy F1):

- Apply the **sequential test** to explore ways of moving development away from areas at highest risk of flooding to any alternative lower risk sites.
- Where development is necessary in areas of flood risk, apply the **exception test** to assess whether there are wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh the flood risk and whether the development can be designed to be safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.
- Use opportunities provided by new development to reduce the causes of flooding, such as the management of water courses, ditches and sewers.

Enterprise, Employment and Business (policies B1-B3):

- Encourage development in three zones: the core business area of the Town Centre; in micro commerce around the Citadel; and in the maritime/fishing industry, considering the potential at Rye Harbour, which is closely linked to the Town.
- Support Rye as a visitor destination.
- Make provision for a second petrol station/convenience store close to the existing town centre.

Traffic Management (policies T1-T2):

- Encourage connectivity and sustainable transport including cycling.
- Tackle traffic flow and parking arrangements to prevent new development exacerbating existing parking issues.

Infrastructure (policy I1):

- Protect valued community facilities.

Environment: Natural and Historic (policies E1-E3)

- Protect strategic and green gaps around Rye.
- Protect green spaces, trees and other important habitats.

- Require new development in historic areas to have regard to the characteristics documented in the Rye Conservation Area Appraisal.
- Support renewable and low carbon energy.

Community Aspirations:

Document all those community aspirations raised during the consultation process which fall outside of the planning system but nevertheless are important to the community and will be pursued through individual projects as funding allows. These include Heritage; Enterprise; Town Promotion and Tourism; Green Tourism; Traffic and Parking; Rail Connectivity; Strand Water Project; Community Infrastructure and Services; Education; and Health.

Section 1 – Introduction

How is the Plan Set Out?

Section 1 is the introduction, which sets out why the Town Council decided to prepare a neighbourhood plan, its legal and policy context and the procedure it must follow.

Section 2 sets out the vision and objectives. It provides the guiding principles for making the plan. These were derived directly from community feedback received during numerous engagement events.

Section 3 summarises the characteristics of Rye (the full version is in a supporting document 'Evidence Background Paper'.

Section 4 sets out the planning policies for Rye and their supporting text. It is these policies that will become part of the statutory Development Plan for Rye once the Neighbourhood Plan is made (adopted).

Planning policies are in blue boxes.

Section 5: covers community aspirations. These are aims relating to matters for which no planning permission is required, and therefore cannot be influenced by planning policies. Whilst Rye Town Council is committed to achieving these aims, it has currently no funding to do so and some matters are outside its authority. Therefore, design and implementation is dependent on the agreement of partners and secured funding.

Community aspirations are in green boxes.

Section 6: sets out how the Plan will be delivered and how this delivery and the impacts of the Plan will be monitored. This includes a list of local priorities for funding.

Appendix A: this is a list acknowledging the work of all those who have been involved in the preparation of this Plan. A summary of the consultations indicating the wider participation is in RNP Support 3.

Appendix B: is a Policies Map which shows the location affected by planning policies in the Plan.

Supporting Documents:

- *RNP Support 1: Evidence and Background*
- *RNP Support 2: Site Assessments*
- *RNP Support 3: Consultation Statement*
- *RNP Support 4: Strategic Environmental Assessment (Summary – 4A and Assessments 4B); supporting sequential and exception flood risk assessments (4C conforms to NPPF 2018)*
- *RNP Support 5: Basic Conditions Statement*

Why do we need this plan?

- 1.1 Rye Town Council agreed to make a Neighbourhood Plan in early 2013. The Council wanted the people of Rye to have a say in all aspects of the future of the town but most importantly it wanted local people to decide where new housing and other development should go, rather than leaving this decision to others.
- 1.2 The Rye Neighbourhood Plan sets out a vision for the area that reflects the thoughts and feelings of local people with a real interest in their community. There are objectives on key themes such as traffic and moving around, housing, design, flood risks, employment, the environment, green spaces and community facilities. It builds on the knowledge and views of many groups in the Town and says what the Town Council and its partners will work on to 2028.
- 1.3 The principles and policies set out in the plan reflect both current national planning policy and guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2018) and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), as well as the Rother DC Core Strategy⁴ and emerging Development and Site Allocations Document. Importantly, the plan is considered to conform to the policies of NPPF 2018 which presumes in favour of sustainable development, defined as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.
- 1.4 The Town Council remains committed to developing and strengthening the contacts and groups that have evolved as a result of the Neighbourhood Planning process. By working together to implement the Plan, Rye can only be a better place to live, work and enjoy.

⁴ <http://www.rother.gov.uk/corestrategy>

What does the plan do?

- 1.5 The Rye Neighbourhood Plan is an opportunity for the residents of the town to look forward and shape the way the town will develop - to say how we want the layout of the town to evolve, in terms of housing, business premises, schools, community, leisure and tourism facilities as well as improved streets and transport. Importantly, the Plan also says how we want both our built environment and the surrounding natural environment to be conserved and enhanced as new development takes place.
- 1.6 This does not mean that everything that happens in Rye in future will be exactly what the community wants. The national and local context for planning is continually changing and will influence what development happens where. However, a neighbourhood plan is an opportunity for a community to set out its vision for the area and to increase its influence on how it accommodates change in the future.

Who drafted this plan?

- 1.7 This Plan was prepared by Rye Town Council as the 'qualifying body' in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012. The development of the Plan has been overseen by a Steering Group selected by Rye Town Council. The individuals were drawn from Rye Town Council (7 Councillors) and local citizen volunteers (6).
- 1.8 Whilst some funds have been made available by the Town Council, additional funding has been provided by Planning Aid and RTPI by grant. It should be underscored that the Plan would not have been possible without the efforts of local volunteers. Once the draft was developed we benefitted from scrutiny by consultants: from AECOM and arranged by Action in rural Sussex.
- 1.9 Individuals and organisations that have assisted in the production of this plan are acknowledged in **Appendix A**.

What is the Process?

- 1.10 The process of creating this Plan involved a series of stages. First, there was scoping by the Steering Group, then followed community engagement events, workshops and conversations in order to understand the issues and to collect ideas on how they should be solved. All these are documented in the Consultation Statement in RNP Support 3.

- 1.11 As the issues were identified, the Steering Group formed some sub groups to focus on specific themes. Once these had been established, the group confirmed the vision, planning principles and the objectives. A thorough literature review was carried out to ensure that all earlier work back to the 1990s was captured. This guided the selection of many early options. Throughout the Steering Group considered sustainability and the impact on the environment.
- 1.12 The process of preparing the Rye Neighbourhood Plan is set out in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. This comprises:
- a. Undertaking background research and evidence baseline work and informal public and stakeholder consultation (2013-2017);
 - b. Publishing a Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan and the draft Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for a statutory six-week public consultation period (current stage);
 - c. Revising the draft Neighbourhood Plan and SEA where appropriate in line with consultee responses;
 - d. Submission of the Neighbourhood Plan and SEA to Rother District Council for a legal check;
 - e. Publication of the Neighbourhood Plan for a further 6 weeks by Rother District Council;
 - f. Examination by an independent Examiner appointed by Rother District Council in consultation with Rye Town Council (see section below).
- 1.13 The independent Examiner must consider whether the Neighbourhood Plan meets the 'Basic Conditions'. The Basic Conditions are set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as applied to neighbourhood development plans by section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. They are that:
- "Have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan;
 - The making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
 - The making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority.
 - The making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.

- Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the neighbourhood plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the plan⁵.

1.14 The Examiner must also consider whether other legislative requirements are met namely:

- a. “The Neighbourhood Plan meets the requirements of Section 38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (the Plan must specify the period to which it has effect, must not include provisions relating to ‘excluded development’, and must not relate to more than one Neighbourhood Area) and
- b. The policies relate to the development and use of land for a designated Neighbourhood Area in line with the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 Section 38A”.

1.15 The Examiner must recommend one of three things:

- a. That the Neighbourhood Plan goes forward to referendum unchanged;
- b. That the Neighbourhood Plan be modified and then goes forward to referendum;
- c. That the Neighbourhood Plan should not go forward to referendum (because it does not meet the legislative requirements above and cannot be modified to make it compliant).

1.16 If the examination is successful then Rother District Council in consultation with Rye Town Council will consider making any modifications recommended by the Examiner. Rother District Council will then make arrangements for a referendum of all the electorate in Rye parish on whether the Neighbourhood Plan should be used to help make decisions on planning applications. If the referendum result is more than 50% ‘yes’ then the local planning authority will make the Rye Neighbourhood Plan part of the statutory Development Plan for the area.

Wider Context

1.17 As explained in paragraph 1.13, a neighbourhood plan must be prepared in the context of European, national and local legislation and policies. These include the following:

- a. The requirements of European Union obligations, which have been incorporated into UK legislation. These indicate that a strategic environment

⁵ Regulation 32 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) prescribes the following basic condition for the purpose of paragraph 8(2)(g) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act: “The making of the Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European Site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012) or a European Offshore Marine Site (as defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2007) either alone or in combination with other plans or projects”.

assessment (SEA)⁶ is required. This is because the Plan allocates sites for development; contains sensitive natural assets; and may have significant environmental effects that have not fully been considered through the SEA of the Core Strategy.

- b. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)⁷ which sets the government's planning policies for England. This policy seeks to make the planning system less complex and easier to understand, providing guidance for local planning authorities for all matters including handling of flood risk. As we intend to submit Plan Proposal to Rother DC in November 2017, we have noted and applied NPPF 2018 Para 214 which states:

"The policies in the previous Framework will apply for the purpose of examining plans, where those plans are submitted on or before 24 January 2019. Where such plans are withdrawn or otherwise do not proceed to become part of the development plan, the policies contained in this Framework will apply to any subsequent plan produced for the area concerned."

- c. The Rother District Council Core Strategy (2014) which sets local planning strategy. In 2016 Rother DC produced a Development and Site Allocation (DaSA) Local Plan - Options and Preferred Options for public consultation⁸ to elaborate the strategy and identify development sites. This referenced the work of neighbourhood plans, including the Rye Neighbourhood Plan. The related Strategic Housing and Land Assessment (SHLAA) considers the potential for development in and around Rye.

What area does this plan cover?

- 1.18 The designated area covered by this plan is the parish of Rye, as shown in red in Figure 2 below. In the initial phase there was consultation with Rother District Council to determine the planning relationship between Rye and adjacent Parishes. As part of the approval to plan, it was agreed that there would be protocol to cover this.⁹
- 1.19 The settlement boundary is the dividing line or boundary between areas of built/urban development (the settlement) and non-urban or rural development – the countryside. A settlement is where there is usually a variety of residential, commercial, employment uses and where services are normally provided and expected, the proportions of each varying depending on the type of settlement. The existing boundaries are established in the 2006 Rother DC

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategic-environmental-assessment-directive-guidance>

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

⁸ <https://www.rother.gov.uk/dasa>

⁹ <http://www.rother.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=27312&p=0>

Local Plan¹⁰. As part of the overall policy to conserve the character of Rye the Plan retains the settlement boundary as an important differentiation between areas where any form of new development would be acceptable and where they would not. (Rother Core Strategy Policy OSS2). To enable the Plan there are two locations as shown on the plan (Figure 2) where variance is proposed. The environmental impacts of these adjustments have been considered and are not considered detrimental. Detail can be found at 4.75 and in the Site Assessment Paper. The boundary changes have regard for the:

- Existing pattern, form and function of settlements, including of closely 'linked' settlements and important 'gaps' of countryside between them;
- Character and settings of Rye;
- Sensitivity to further development both within the main built up confines and in more rural fringes;
- The amount of land needed to fulfil development needs and requirements;
- Availability of local infrastructure and services;
- Accessibility to facilities and services, and avoiding scattered and ribbon development;
- Environmental considerations, including the need to conserve designated areas of national and local landscape, archaeological, geological, ecological or historical importance;
- Flood risk

¹⁰ Rother DC Local Plan - <http://www.rother.gov.uk/localplan2006>

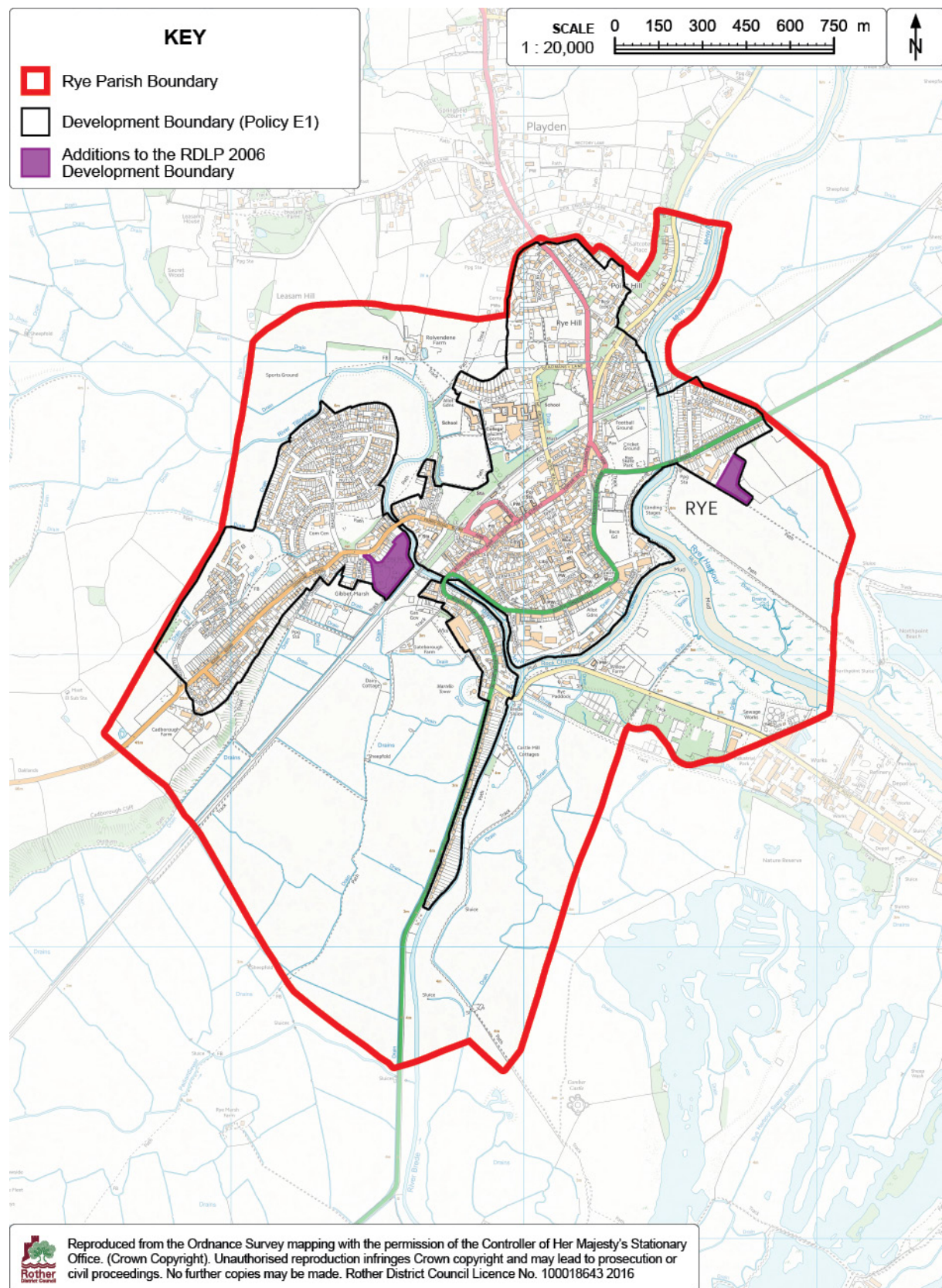


Figure 2 – Rye Parish (Marked in Red contiguous), showing the Development Boundary (in Black) and the two sites where boundary change is proposed in the Plan.

Section 2 - The Vision and Objectives

Background

- 2.1 Throughout the plan making process there has been continual consultation with and involvement by people across Rye. From the early stages in 2013, detailed work on the themes was delegated to working groups, which have reported back to the Steering Group. There have been public events and numerous face to face conversations. A webpage was launched in mid 2013, supported by Twitter and Facebook. The results of all this dialogue can be found in the Consultation Statement.
- 2.2 The overwhelming view from local people is that Rye's strengths lie in its character as an historic market town, a tourist destination with unique historic character and a working port, located on the eastern boundary of East Sussex¹¹ and adjacent to the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Romney Marsh. Residents and visitors alike value the heritage and natural assets of the Parish. Indeed, both contribute to the reasons for people living in Rye and wanting to visit it. Both the heritage and environment provide opportunities for social interaction and importance for individual health and mental wellbeing. People want to ensure that Rye retains its unique character as:
- a. A market town, Rye serves a large area of rural villages covering the coastal area from East of Hastings to Romney Marsh and North to the eastern boundary villages of East Sussex. Rye attracts a significant number of visitors (about 1 million¹²) throughout the year.
 - b. A town with a striking and much valued visual appearance in the landscape. Its historic centre sits on a sandstone outcrop rising sharply above the low lying surrounding salt marshes and tidal waters.
 - c. A working fishing port, for one of the surviving fishing fleets on the South Coast. Rye Harbour is located to the immediate south east of the town and has a commercial quay for ships to 84 metres. The port of Rye comprises the three-river system (Rother, Brede and Tillingham) from their sluices, holding water levels above the tidal stretches, down to the sea.
- 2.3 The Rother Core Strategy objectives for Rye and Rye Harbour are as follows:
- i) To work with stakeholders to improve traffic management, tackle congestion and promote sustainable transport measures;

¹¹ Rye – Historic Character Assessment Report September 2009 by R. Harris. Part of the Sussex Extensive Urban Survey (EUS)

¹² Figures estimated by Rye Town Council from the number of visitors to attractions across the Town.

- ii) To work with agencies to support and promote strategic transport links from Rye to the wider locality;
- iii) To improve access to high quality education, employment and housing;
- iv) To enhance sustainable tourism and leisure;
- v) To improve the availability of day to day goods and services;
- vi) To secure investment in community facilities and in new and/or improved pedestrian and cycle routes linking residents to their facilities;
- vii) To conserve and enhance the unique built character and quality of the Citadel and its distinctive landscape setting;
- viii) To protect and sensitively manage the high quality ecological and landscape resources;
- ix) To continue to manage, and protect the community from, the risk of flooding.

- 2.4 Taking these principles and applying them to all that we have heard from the people of Rye, particularly about current issues, has enabled us to develop a Vision of Rye in 2028 and Objectives to achieve that Vision.

Rye Neighbourhood Plan Vision

The vision for the Rye Neighbourhood Plan is encapsulated by the line, **‘a thriving town for the 21st Century’** within a high quality landscape.

Detailed Objectives

Strategic Objective

To plan a strategic and coherent development of Rye with the aim of improving the economic and social well-being of the community, considering in particular its vulnerability to flooding and its role as a market town, a centre for tourism, leisure and culture; its enterprise and its commercial and fishing port, all in the context of its historic maritime character and the importance of its ecological designations (such as the AONB), which should all be conserved.

Objective 1: Rye must continue to feel ‘compact’: We have a population in excess of 4500. We know this will grow, but we want to enable this growth without allowing the town to “sprawl” in to the surrounding green spaces. At the heart of this feeling of compactness is ‘walkability’. The majority of people living in Rye are within about 15 minutes’ walk of the High Street. We want to keep it this way. Towns that move their residential and shopping areas to the perimeter quickly lose their soul, becoming uninviting and unattractive.

Objective 2: Rye must continue to act as a centre for the surrounding area: As with any market town, Rye supports many people (estimated up to 20,000¹³) from the surrounding villages. In turn, these people make a significant contribution to the town’s economy. We need to ensure that Rye continues to provide an appropriate range of employment, shopping, and community facilities, including education. We also need to ensure that people can access the town easily – this means sufficient parking, good public transport and a safe environment, with easy walking and cycling options.

Objective 3: Rye must retain its markets, festivals and events: Central to Rye’s character and identity there are many events that must be maintained and helped to flourish. There are two weekly markets: general and farmers’. There are seasonal festivals such as the Maritime, Arts, Jazz, Scallop, Wild Boar and Bonfire events. Others such as the raft race, medieval and sporting events are not currently organised but there is talk of resurrecting them. All these strengthen the town’s community spirit, providing a focus for people from the surrounding area and “reasons to visit” for the numerous visitors, making Rye a destination town for many. However they all attract high volumes of visitors and related traffic resulting in the need to encourage with partners sustainable travel.

Objective 4: Rye must continue to have a meaningful relationship with the surrounding countryside (The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Romney Marsh): In the same way that most residents live within about 15 minutes of the Town Centre, they also are within 15 minutes’ walk of open countryside. We need to retain the green spaces that bring the countryside into our town and allow the town to ‘breathe’. We need to ensure that the size, form and location of new buildings do not cut us off from the glorious views from inside the Town and the stunning look of Rye rising from the Marsh from surrounding areas. The preservation of sight lines is important to most. In making this plan, we must do everything to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife, historic built and cultural heritage of the area.

¹³ http://www.rother.gov.uk/media/pdf/i/q/Rye_and_Rye_Harbour_Study.pdf

Section 3 – The Character of Rye



Figure 3: Rye from the Southeast

- 3.1 Rye is a historic market town and port in the eastern half of Rother district near the border with the county of Kent. The town is the main service and employment centre in eastern Rother. Rye Harbour is a satellite village to Rye and is located to the south east of the town (outside of the Neighbourhood Plan area). The area surrounding Rye is heavily constrained by landscape and biodiversity designations and land prone to flooding but in recent years there has been some growth to the west of the town. The population of Rye Parish is recorded as being 4,547 in 2015.
- 3.2 Some parts of Rye's built up areas border on adjacent parishes (Rye Foreign, Playden and Icklesham). Compared to the district as a whole, there is a higher proportion (15.6%) of children up to 15, and adults aged 30-44 (15.3%), but fewer adults aged 45-64 (27.5%) and aged 65+ (27.7%) in Rye in 2014-16.
- 3.3 Rye is a traditional market town, having lost its cattle market in the early 2000s. It attracts significant number of visitors throughout the year, but in particular the summer months, due to its historic character and its proximity to attractive countryside and the popular beach at Camber Sands.
- 3.4 As a Cinque Port town, the town centre around and including the ancient Citadel, forms the historic core, designated as a Conservation Area in 1969, and reviewed in 2006 (see map of Conservation Area in Figure 29. The town centre is of very high architectural value, with a predominantly medieval street layout and building stock, with around 290 listed buildings¹⁴. Equally important

¹⁴ Historic Character Assessment Report: Rye Sep 2009 (Sussex Extensive Urban Survey (EUS))

is the town's visual appearance in the landscape, with the Citadel on a sandstone outcrop rising like an island above the low lying surrounding salt marshes and tidal waters.

- 3.5 In Rye, there are pockets of social and economic deprivation within the town with high levels of child poverty, relatively low levels of income, high unemployment rates and significant barriers to housing and services¹⁵.
- 3.6 The local economy of Rye and the surrounding areas is dominated by local tourism. Rye enjoys an abundance of high quality hotels and guest houses located within the town itself. Approximately 70% of the Guest Houses and Bed and Breakfasts located in Rye have been awarded a 4 star or higher rating, with 25% of these providers achieving the highest possible rating of 5 star GOLD. The main attraction is the historic core of the town and the surrounding countryside.
- 3.7 The town boasts a high cultural offer, including a number of annual festivals, such as the high-profile Rye Arts Festival and the Rye Bay Scallop Festival, a strong arts and literary community, with several art galleries, and the long tradition of the Rye potteries.
- 3.8 The Port of Rye and Rye Harbour Road Industrial Estate are also main centres of employment for the town and the surrounding settlements. However, the local economy suffers from high seasonal unemployment relating to the tourism sector and wages are relatively poor compared to County and regional levels.
- 3.9 The countryside surrounding Rye is subject to a number of environmental designations, signifying its landscape character and conservation importance. There are a number of Ancient Woodlands and Biodiversity Opportunity Areas. The low lying river valleys and surrounding marshland are important to the settlement as they are particularly rich in biodiversity with a number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Sites of Nature Conservation Importance and Local Wildlife Sites (LWS). Natural England has recently designated a Ramsar¹⁶ site to the south east of Rye. The surrounding area to the north and west is on higher ground and is designated as part of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. These designations are shown in the maps at Figures 26 and 27.
- 3.10. Rye Parish contains important archaeological remains (Figure 29) and scheduled monuments (Para 4.82). It is considered by Historic England that

¹⁵ See further information about the Indices of Multiple Deprivation in the Sustainability Appraisal.

¹⁶ The Convention on Wetlands, called the Ramsar Convention, is an intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and use of wetlands and their resources. It is named after a city in Iran.

there is a much larger number of sites of archaeological remains (recorded on the Sussex Historic Environment Record (HER)¹⁷ held by East Sussex County Council), some of which may be of national importance. The government's definition of the historic environment (which may otherwise be thought of as cultural heritage) within the glossary to the NPPF, is very broad, including planted and managed flora as well as all evidence of the past interaction of people and place including surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged. In addition to designated heritage assets (listed buildings, conservation areas and scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens, battlefields and protected wrecks)¹⁸ there exists considerable scope for further heritage assets to be identified as 'non designated heritage assets', within the definition set out in the NPPF. The National Planning Policy Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance require that decision-making aims to sustain the significance of all heritage assets, including non-designated assets, such as the archaeological sites and historic buildings recorded on the County HER.

- 3.11 Further details of the key characteristics of Rye are in the supporting document 'Evidence Background Paper' (RNPSupport 1). This includes a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) study.

¹⁷ <https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/environment/archaeology/her>

¹⁸ **Rye Rebuilt** (2009) by David & Barbara Martin with Jane Clubb & Gillian Draper and the **Rye Historic Character Assessment** (2009) by Roland Harris.
https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/media/1744/rye_eus_report_maps.pdf

Section 4 - The Planning Policies

Housing

- 4.1 The level of housing growth for Rye is derived from an assessment of the Rother District-wide spatial options and as set out in the Rother DC Core Strategy 2014 policy RY1: (v) “Provide between 355-400 dwellings net additional dwellings between 2011 and 2028. Opportunities for growth will primarily be sought within the built up area of Rye;”
- 4.2 In 2016 the Development and Site Allocations document¹⁹ proposed an allocation of 40 dwellings at Rye Harbour. A letter from Rother District Council officers²⁰ confirmed that the updated target for allocations is as below.
- Rother Local Plan Core Strategy housing requirement for Rye/Rye Harbour: 355-400 dwellings over the period 2011-2028
 - Homes built = 198 dwellings
 - Sites with outstanding planning permission = 28 dwellings
 - Small windfall sites allowance = 22
 - Residual requirement = 107 – 152 homes for Rye and Rye Harbour
 - Expected housing allocations in Rye Harbour = 40 homes
 - **Outstanding housing requirement for Rye to be met through NP allocations = 67 – 112 dwellings (April 2016-March 2028)**
- 4.3 Early work on the Neighbourhood Plan considered the role of the town in the district and the scope for development on the sites identified in the SHLAA. Other sites put forward during the Neighbourhood Plan process have also been considered in the overall site assessment. There have been numerous conversations with land-owners, architects and potential developers to assess achievability and viability of development on all the sites considered. This work is set out in detail in the supporting document ‘Site Assessment Document’. Because of its topography, landscape context, statutory designations and flood risk, options for development within Rye Parish are severely limited. Drawing on

¹⁹ <https://www.rother.gov.uk/dasa>

²⁰ Rother Marlow to Kimber E Mail dated 17 May 2017

the conclusions of the Site Assessment Document and the Strategic Environmental Assessment of the sites the allocation of housing development is as set out in policy H1 below. The housing provisions, subject to the site-specific comments, are considered appropriate.

4.4 During negotiations about the Rye housing target, it has been agreed with the Local Planning Authority that there is some uncertainty whether Rye Harbour will contribute towards the Core strategy target for Rye and Rye Harbour. This is because the proposed allocation for the former is the subject of potential ecological objections. Therefore, on a precautionary basis, the Rye housing target has been increased by 40 dwellings. Without the allowance for development at Rye Harbour, the target for Rye becomes 107 to 152 dwellings. Against this scenario, the Rye proposals can realistically yield some 115 – 150 dwellings. Leaving aside the uncertainty regarding the Rye Harbour allocation, other, generic factors below suggest that there should be some “headroom” in the Rye allocation.

- a. the supporting Site Assessments document finds all the sites sustainable, while the SA/SEA highlights that the allocations are all predominantly brownfield sites supporting the economic and social needs of the town
- b. some of the sites have factors limiting early release
- c. there is a relatively high affordable housing need in the town
- d. neighbourhood plans should deliver at least the Local Plan requirement.

4.5 Developers should note the Local Planning Authority’s National and Local List of Planning Application Requirements updated December 2017 (first published November 2013). Given the protected habitats surrounding Rye, developers should note the requirement for an Ecological Survey and Report, (NPPF para 118 and Local Plan Core Strategy - Policy EN5) for any development application (except for change of use and development to an existing dwelling (householder)) within: a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI), Local Nature Reserve (LNR), Special Protection Area (SPA), RAMSAR site, Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or adjacent to any of the above where any impact is likely o Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Habitat.

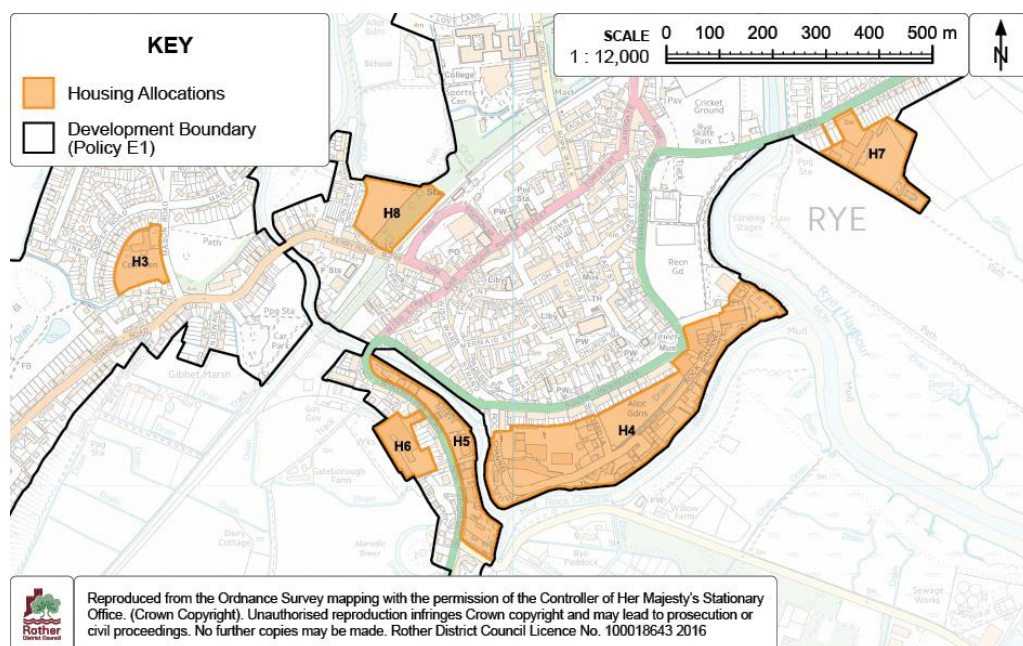


Figure 5: Housing site allocation map: primary housing sites in orange (See Housing Policies for detail).

Policy H1 Housing Allocations: To meet the Rother Core Strategy housing target for Rye the following sites, as delineated on the Policies Map, are allocated for development subject to the criteria in policies H2-H8 and other relevant development plan policies:

- a. H3 - Former Tilling Green School for up to 20 dwellings
- b. H4 - Rock Channel for 30 dwellings
- c. H5 - Winchelsea Rd East for 10 dwellings
- d. H6 - Winchelsea Rd West for 20 dwellings
- e. H7 - Freda Gardham School for 30 dwellings
- f. H8 - Lower School Site for 50 dwellings

These allocations would provide a total of 160 dwellings.

Providing an Appropriate Mix of Dwellings:

4.6 Rye attracts many “incomers” who would like to live in the town, some because of family connections, some because it is an attractive place to live and is within easy travel distance to London. This has resulted in a buoyant property market, in which many local people, because of their low earnings cannot afford to buy into or even rent because commercial rents are relatively high.²¹

²¹ Rother Local Strategic Partnership – Annual Meeting 15 June 2017

4.7 There is therefore high demand for “affordable housing”²², resulting in demand outstripping supply.²³ This is supported by the housing needs analysis carried out by the Steering Group (see Background Evidence Paper). This evidence also demonstrates a need for the provision of smaller homes, especially for young families, young people and for older people who wish to downsize. Although the Core Strategy Policy LHN2 stipulates that for developments of 10+ dwellings, there will be 30% (of the total) affordable housing to meet local needs in Rye, there are other factors dictating the need for this to be handled as part of the Rother strategic plan.

4.8 Any policy to increase the amount of housing must ensure that housing stock and population mix remain balanced whilst new development must also be financially viable. The Rother Core Strategy requires that allocated housing sites for 10 dwellings or more must provide 30% as affordable housing as defined in the NPPF.²⁴

Policy H2 Housing Mix: The housing developments allocated within this Plan shall include:

- a. Affordable housing which will be appropriately integrated into each development so that it is indistinguishable from the equivalent market housing. Affordable housing should be spread carefully through the development, not isolated in specific blocks.**
- b. Housing of a size, type and mix which will reflect both current and projected housing needs for Rye, including dwellings suitable for elderly occupants and smaller units (1 and 2 bedrooms) for younger people and those looking to downsize their accommodation.**

²² Affordable Housing is defined in the National Planning Policy Framework as “Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision...”

²³ Rother District Council Resident Survey by Opinion Research Services June 2017

²⁴ <http://www.rother.gov.uk/article/9895/affordable-housing>

The former Tilling Green school site.

- 4.9 The Tilling Green site comprises the former school building and playing field/green space. The building is currently used for community purposes. This site is owned by East Sussex County Council (ESCC); but is subject to disposal. One proposed scheme for up to 32 dwellings and a community centre has been withdrawn as it was found to be non viable once the flood risk requirements had been incorporated (Proposal [RR/2015/2581/P](#)) . A reappraisal by Rother DC officers indicates a more realistic allocation of 20 dwellings with the retention and repair of the existing community centre.

Policy H3 Former Tilling Green School is allocated for a development of up to 20 dwellings and a community centre (up to 500 sq m), with up to 10% being self /custom build subject to the following criteria:

- a. The community centre is to be retained in-situ or re-provided before the dwellings are occupied;**
- b. If the community centre is re-provided it shall face onto Mason Road to make a more community inclusive and accessible facility;**
- c. The design of new development shall be sympathetic to the building form and materials used in surrounding buildings and provide appropriate private gardens for the dwellings and public open space for the community centre;**
- d. Car parking should be provided according to appropriate standards; an approved access provided, and**
- e. Flood risk is to be mitigated by a SUDS for surface water and improved sewerage to cope with the additional flows. This must alleviate historical surface water flows and ponding in Mason Road.**
- f. Any development application may need to be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) in line with BS42020:2013 and CIEEM guidance.**

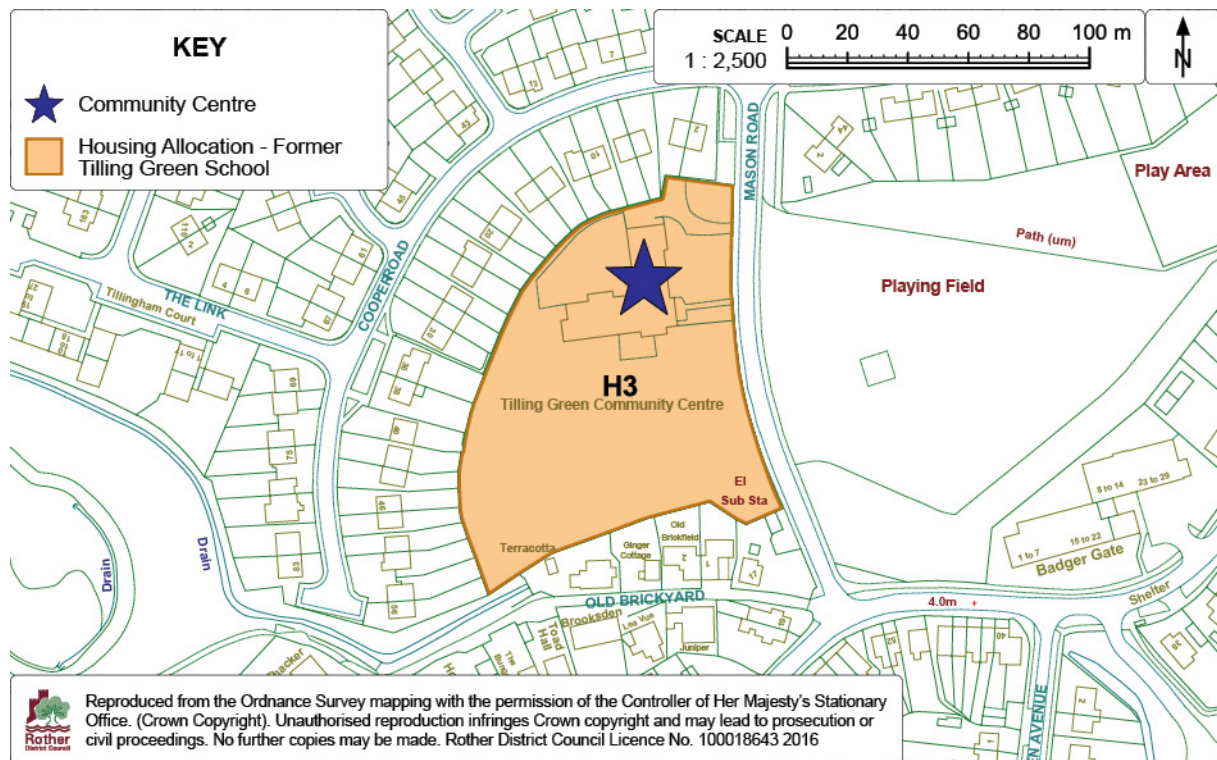


Figure 6: Tilling Green Former Infants School

Rock Channel.

- 4.10 This broad location runs east-west from Bridge Point in west to Rock Channel East in the east. It is bounded by the Undercliff (A259) in the north and the river on the other three sides. Policy RY3 of the 2006 Rother District Local Plan allocated this land for housing, open space and appropriate commercial uses, subject to the preparation of development briefs, which were undertaken between 2005 and 2007. The location is divided into four areas shown in Figure 7. The location is seen by many residents to be most important for the public for walking (including access to the England South East Coastal Path²⁵, cycling and access to the river. The allocation in Policy H4 relates to site A. It is intended that Site B remains as allotments; Sites C and D may deliver some windfall small development (para 4.20) over the plan period.

²⁵ <https://www.nationaltrail.co.uk/england-coast-path-se>

Policy H4 : Rock Channel, Site A is allocated for a mixed use development of 30 dwellings in this location, subject to the following criteria:

- a. The design of new development shall be innovative, of high architectural quality to enhance setting against the Rye Conservation Area and having regard to its riverside location, with green spaces, improved and accessible riverside walks including provision for the England South East Coastal Path;
- b. Access to the site will be via the existing track on the west side of the site, upgraded as necessary, with an improved access point onto the A259 as required by the Local Highway Authority;
- c. The development shall be designed to minimise and mitigate flood risk including appropriate surface and waste water drainage; and
- d. Development of the location will need to be undertaken on a comprehensive basis and/or according to an overall masterplan.
- e. Any development application may need to be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA), in line with BS42020:2013 and CIEEM guidance.
- f. Occupation of the development is phased to align with the delivery of sewerage infrastructure

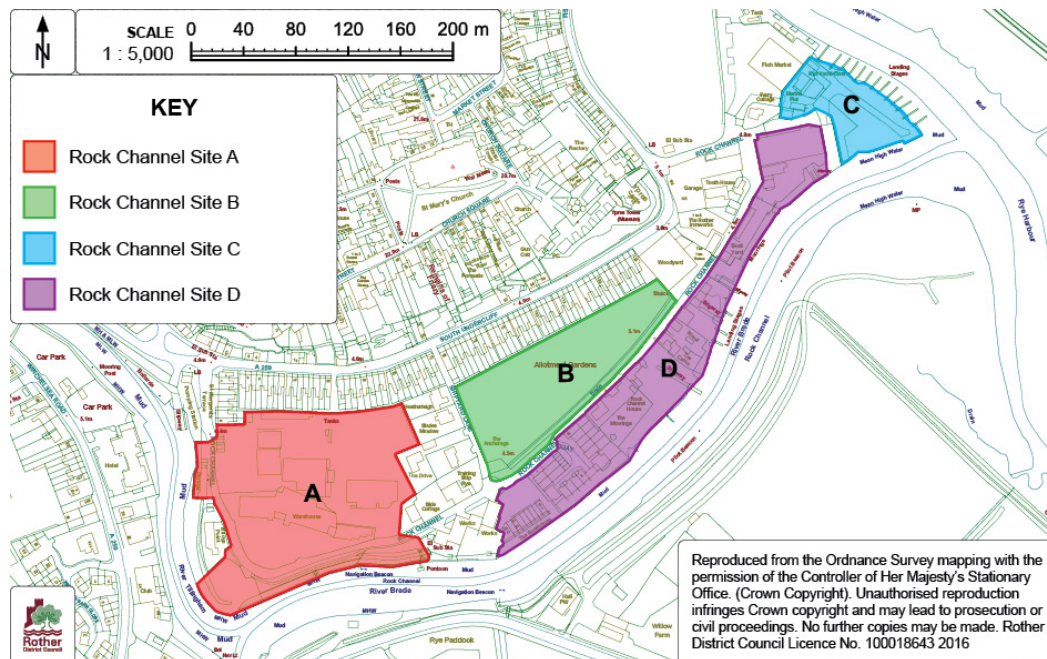


Figure 7: H4 - Rock Channel Broad Location

Winchelsea Road [East Side].

- 4.11 This broad location runs from the Harbour Rd to the former Total Garage on the east side of the Winchelsea Rd. It is considered to be an important potential development area for Rye. The function and role of the location is seen to provide a key gateway to the Town from the south-west and will need to maintain attractive views across north-eastwards to the distinctive historic maritime built character of The Strand and to the Citadel beyond. It will also be an important part of the setting of the busiest part of the Strand.
- 4.12 The mixed ownership makes for challenging integrated planning as does the accessing of sites directly off the A259. Up to now individual proposals have been considered on their own merits but what has emerged Up to now individual proposals have been considered on their own merits but there is a need for a masterplan approach and design considerations for the whole location which focus on building height, scale and the need for visual permeability, along with compatible uses, and the potential for shared access/servicing/parking arrangements. Development here will face the challenges of the piecemeal ownerships, a range of existing uses, potential contamination of some land and how the range of land use potentials may be accommodated. Given its position on the main A259 trunk road, there may also be potential for roadside facilities.



Figure 8 : The Strand from the west.

Policy H5 Winchelsea Road [East Side] is allocated for a mixed use development with up to 10 dwellings across the broad location, car parking or B1 employment subject to the following criteria:

Development of the location will need to be undertaken on a comprehensive basis and according to an overall masterplan;

The design shall be of high architectural quality and create a strong sense of place to enhance its setting against the Rye Conservation Area and having regard to its riverside location.

There should be provision for riverside green spaces and access for the England South East Coastal Path;

Any scheme shall enable views from the South to the cliff face, maximising visual permeability, and with roof heights set not to obstruct longer views from the countryside towards the Citadel;

The development shall be designed to minimise and mitigate flood risk and enable efficient drainage.

Any development application may need to be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA), in line with BS42020:2013 and CIEEM guidance.

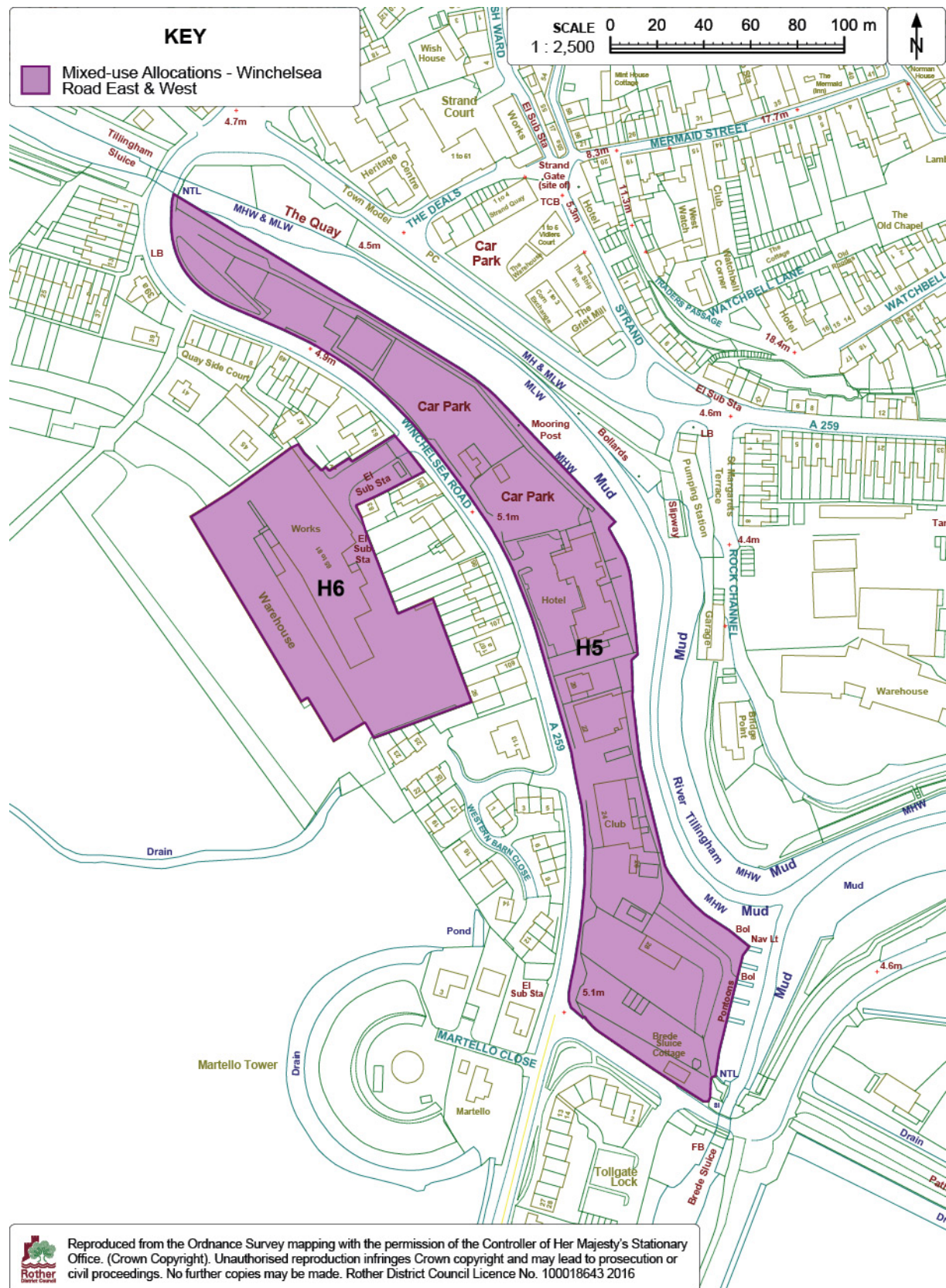


Figure 9: Sites at Winchelsea Road East Side (H5) and West Side (H6)

Winchelsea Rd (West Side):

- 4.13 This broad location sits on the west side of the main gateway to Rye from the South Coast road. The location is lower than the road by some 2 metres and is bounded by the road in the East and the Marsh in the West. To the south of the site is Grade II listed Willow Tree House and Martello Tower Number 30, both should be preserved and their settings enhanced.
- 4.14 As the location is edged by Marsh there is a high flood risk, which has to be mitigated as part of any development. (RNP Support 4)

Policy H6 Winchelsea Road [West Side] is allocated for a mixed use development of up to 20 dwellings and B1 employment subject to the following criteria:

- a. Development of the location will need to be undertaken on a comprehensive basis and/or according to an overall masterplan;**
- b. The design shall create a strong sense of place;**
- c. Buildings shall be orientated to allow views through to the marsh to the south-west; and**
- d. The development shall be designed to minimise and mitigate flood risk.**
- e. Any development application may need to be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA), in line with BS42020:2013 and CIEEM guidance.**
- f. Occupation of the development is phased to align with the delivery of sewerage infrastructure**

The former Freda Gardham school site

- 4.15 This former school owned by ESCC, comprises school buildings, outbuildings, a disused swimming pool and playing field between, all verging onto Romney Marsh.
- 4.16 It should be noted that only the footprint of the former school, grounds and former swimming pool to the South are allocated. This footprint differs from the site described in RY 19a and 19r in the SHLAA 2103. The Steering Group has allocated at variance to the SHLAA 2013, principally to confine the allocation to the brownfield site (as currently fenced) without encroaching onto the green spaces of the Marsh. The site assessment document (RNP Support 2) shows this. This location is one of two where the Plan sees a realignment of the settlement boundary (the other being Gibbet Marsh).

- 4.17 One mechanism for providing affordable housing for local people is to enable them to build their own homes (self-build)²⁶, or have them custom-built to their own specification perhaps using the Community Land Trust²⁷ model. Government figures indicate that 53% of people would wish to be able to build or specify a new dwelling. There has been some interest in this type of development, expressed at open events and through contacts with the Neighbourhood Plan website²⁸. This local support has been dependent on there being land available. As one of the larger sites in the Neighbourhood Plan, and one of those in public ownership, the opportunity should be taken to meet some of the need for self-build homes, perhaps in the order of 2 or 3.
- 4.18 This initiative does present risk as self-build sites may not deliver housing as envisaged. Therefore, Rye Town Council's will review this allocation five years after the flood mitigation works have been carried out and, if, despite marketing, plots remain available, it will consider whether this land should be re- allocated as conventional housing as part of a review of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Policy H7 Former Freda Gardham School site is allocated for residential development of up to 30 dwellings, at least 10% of which will be self /custom build subject to the following criteria:

- a. The development shall not commence until the flood mitigation works planned for 2022 by the Environment Agency for the eastern bank of the River Rother (Eastern Rother Tidal Walls) have been fully implemented;
- b. The development shall include appropriate treatment to the south and west boundaries to protect the countryside and habitats beyond; and
- c. The development shall be designed to minimise and mitigate flood risk and provide effective drainage.
- d. The layout of any development shall ensure future access to the existing sewerage infrastructure for maintenance and upsizing purposes;
- e. There should be adequate access to/from the A259.
- f. Any development application may need to be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) in line with BS42020:2013 and CIEEM guidance.

²⁶ <http://www.selfbuildportal.org.uk/>

²⁷ Community Land Trust

²⁸ <http://www.ryeneighbourhoodplan.org.uk/>

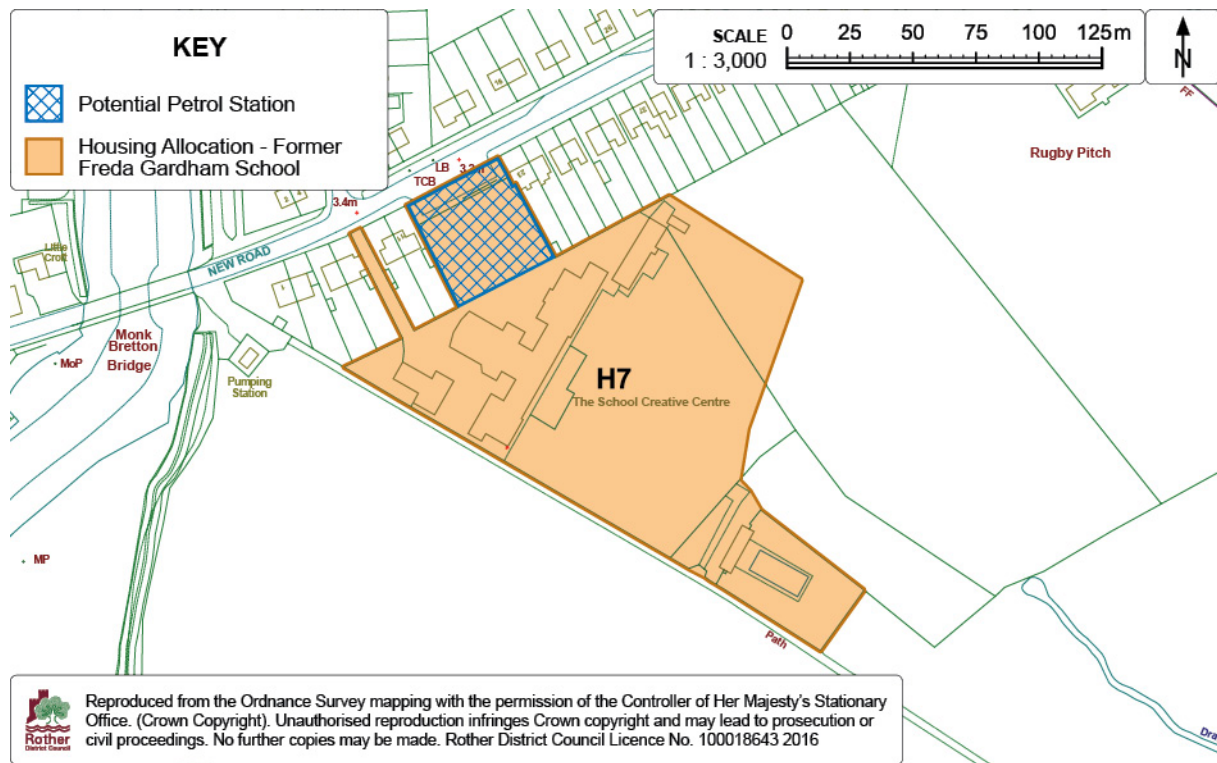


Figure 10: Former Freda Gardham School

The former Lower School site

4.19 This former ESCC education site has been cleared and is now overgrown and fenced. Natural England list the deciduous woodland habitat on part of this site. There was planning permission (expired early 2016) for a supermarket outlet and earlier outline proposals for housing. However, two major retail companies have considered and rejected the site for a supermarket. There is a current planning application to develop the site entirely for housing and this seems to be a realistic use for the site, but to allow for parking and green space proposed density is an issue. The site lies within 400yds of Rye Town Centre comprising the former school site and adjoining scrub land/woodland alongside the railway line. The proximity of the site to the A259 and the Marsh Link railway crossing will require early consultation with Highways England and Network Rail about site access.

Policy H8 Former Lower School Site is allocated for up to 50 dwellings subject to the following criteria:

- a. The development shall be designed to minimise and mitigate flood risk;
- b. The development shall be designed to avoid damage to the Natural England priority woodland;
- c. Access to the site shall be carefully designed to be safe, accessible for pedestrians and cyclists as well as vehicles and avoid conflict with the nearby level crossing of the railway;
- d. Parking provision on the site will be in accordance with local standards and avoid increasing pressure for on-street parking in the vicinity of the site.
- e. Any development application may need to be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) in line with BS42020:2013 and CIEEM guidance.
- f. Occupation of the development is phased to align with the delivery of sewerage infrastructure

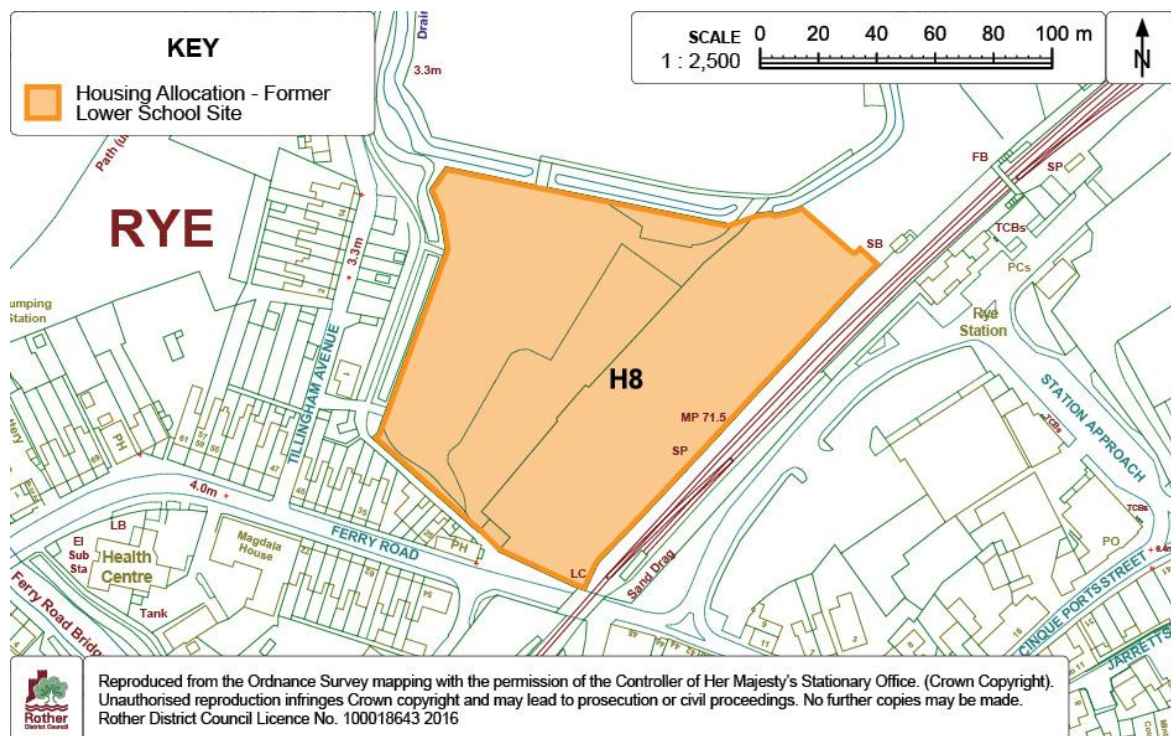


Figure 11: Lower School Site

Windfall of Opportunity Sites across Rye

- 4.20 The Plan will support proposals for small residential developments on infill and redevelopment sites within the parish, subject to the proposals being well designed and meeting relevant requirements set out in other policies in this Plan. These are known as ‘windfall sites’ and Rother District Council estimates that up to 22 dwellings could be achieved by 2028 on small sites in Rye at a rate commensurate with historic levels.
- 4.21 Development must achieve best use of land in a manner that does not adversely impact on other policies within the Plan, particularly those that relate to environmental and design quality. These issues are covered by the Rother Core Strategy Policies EN2 and EN3 and the Design Policy D1 in this Neighbourhood Plan.

High Quality Design and Conservation of the Historic Built Environment

- 4.22 High quality design of development is a key priority for Rye. However, there is already a robust policy framework for this issue in the Rother Core Strategy and emerging Development and Site Allocations Document so it is important that the Neighbourhood Plan adds to this foundation rather than duplicates it. Policy EN2: Stewardship of the Historic Built Environment is quoted in full at paragraph 4.79 of this Plan and provides strong protection to heritage assets, particularly where these are recognised through formal designation such as the Rye Conservation Area which covers much of the central area of the Town (see Figure 17). The Core Strategy also requires the following:

“Policy EN3: Design Quality New development will be required to be of high design quality by:

- a. Contributing positively to the character of the site and surroundings, including taking opportunities to improve areas of poor visual character or with poor townscape qualities, and
- b. Demonstrating robust design solutions tested against the following Key Design Principles as appropriate (expanded in Appx 4 and the RNP Supporting Documents), tailored to a thorough and empathetic understanding of the particular site and context:
 - 1) Character, Identity, Place-Making & Legibility
 - 2) Continuity and Enclosure

- 3) Quality of Public Realm, Ease of Movement, and 'Secured By Design'²⁹
- 4) Diversity
- 5) Landscape Setting of Buildings and Settlements
- 6) Design in Context (Understanding and appraisal of site and wider setting, and incorporation of existing site features into proposals)
- 7) Building Appearance and Architectural Quality
- 8) Sustainable Design and Construction.

4.23 The draft Rother Development and Site Allocations document is also proposing specific policies on extensions, alterations and outbuildings to existing dwellings (Policy DHG5) and boundary treatments (DHG7). In this context the Steering Group has carried out detailed work to establish the architectural and heritage character of different parts of Rye to inform the design of new development. This work is summarised in RNP Support Paper 1. For planning purposes, the assessment identifies three zones, with different character, each with differing sense of place, within the town as follows:

- **Zone Yellow:** the ancient "island site" zone covered by the Rye Conservation Appraisal. This is sub-divided into the area within the Town Walls, known as the Citadel and the lower parts outside the walls. Much of the zone is designated as a Conservation Area³⁰ (and Figure 29) which gives it legal protection as all development is required to conserve and enhance its character. Article 4 Directions relating to the Rye Conservation Area have removed permitted development rights and have had a significant impact in maintaining and enhancing the historic core townscape since the 1950's.
- **Zone Blue:** at river level around the base of the Citadel. This area is predominantly Victorian with some individual buildings from earlier periods. It lies between the Conservation Area, and the outer Zone Green below.
- **Zone Green:** the outer zone is mainly 20c and covers the linear or ribbon development branching outwards from Zone Blue to the Parish Boundary at: Rye Hill, Military Road beyond the Victorian development, New Road; New Winchelsea Road and Harbour Road, Ferry and Udimore Road leading to Cadborough Cliff, Ashenden Avenue, Tilling Green and Valley Park and back to the Water Tower on Rye Hill.

²⁹ <http://www.securedbydesign.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Secured-By-Design-Building-Stronger-Safer-Housing-Peterborough.pdf>

³⁰ <http://www.rother.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=6181&p=0>

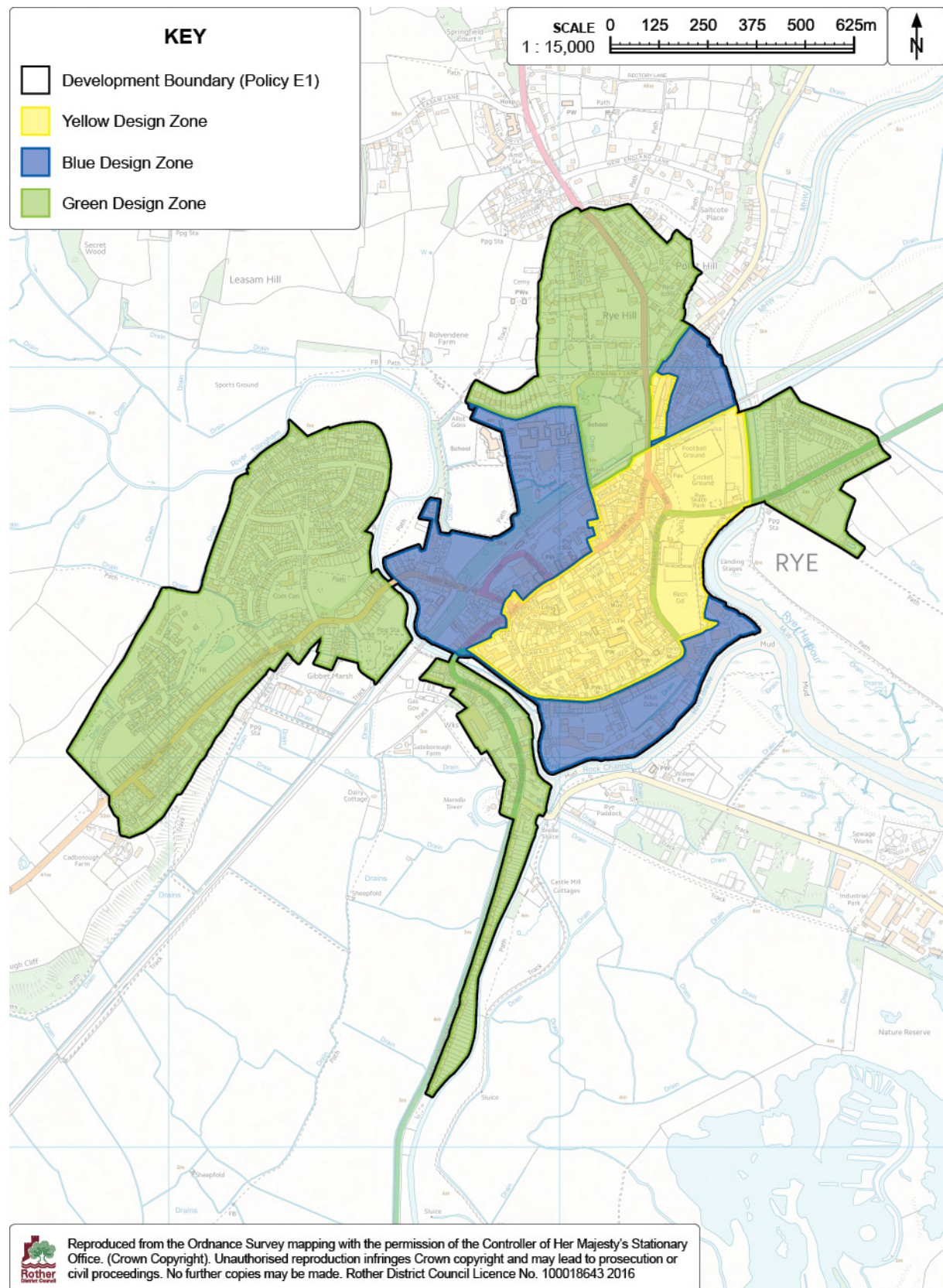


Figure 12: Character Zones

Policy D1 High Quality Design: Development within Rye will be expected to achieve high quality design having regard to the character of the area in which the development is located, which is detailed in the Rye Character Assessment. Proposals will demonstrate how the design has had regard to the relevant development plan policies and the following principles specific to Rye, to:

- a. Achieve high quality design on a human scale with a clear sense of place; connection to its surroundings and adhering to such principles as "secure by design";
- b. Have regard for the distinctive topographical context, including the high prominence of roof and townscape;
- c. Protect the historic environment by recording the archaeology – by desk based assessments - relating to Rye's long history as a port, trading and agricultural centre as part of all planning applications on the development sites;
- d. Achieve selective redevelopment which is planned comprehensively rather than piecemeal;
- e. Achieve a vibrant mix of land uses such as housing, employment and retail;
- f. Make the best use of the rural margins and riverfronts to reinforce the connections between the town and its landscape setting;
- g. Ensure improved accessibility including pedestrian and cycling routes linking all areas to each other and back into the centre of Rye, reinforcing Rye as 'a connected community' with pedestrian and cycle access to all;
- h. Design dwellings to take into account the requirements to address locally specific flood-risks;
- i. Design into all developments storage facilities for recyclable materials as holding areas prior to collection;
- j. Maintain quality into the future through the use of sustainable and good quality materials, sound construction techniques, and planned management regimes;
- k. Provide access to electric car charging points for all new developments.

Reducing Flood Risk

- 4.25 The National Planning Policy Framework 2018 sets strict tests to protect people and property from flooding which all local planning authorities are expected to follow. In making this plan, the **sequential approach** to site selection has been taken so that development is, as far as reasonably possible, located where the risk of flooding (from all sources) is lowest, taking account of climate change and the vulnerability of future uses to flood risk. This has involved the application of the ‘**Sequential Test**’ and, because much of the planning area is in an area of high flood risk the ‘**Exception Test**’.
- 4.26 Rye is one of the flood risk "hotspots" in the East Sussex County Council Flood Management Plan³¹. With more frequent events of extreme rainfall resulting in high ground water, high river levels, higher volumes of natural spring outfalls, surface water ponding, when combined with high or surge tides and strong winds as seen in December 2013, the flood defence system is fully tested, and there are weak spots, localised flooding can occur. ESCC, as the Lead Local Flood Authority, has initiated a surface water flood risk assessment of Rye; the results of which are reflected in this plan³².
- 4.27 The Southern Region Flood and Coastal Committee³³ seeks a balance between resistance (flood defence) and resilience (community action) for homes, businesses and critical infrastructure on the flood plain but protected by flood defences. It also accepts that development can take place on the flood plain where it is deemed safe to do so after detailed flood risk assessment.
- 4.28 The Rother DC Core Strategy (policies EN6 and EN7) seeks to work with partners – particularly the Environment Agency for main rivers and the Romney Marsh Inner Drainage Board (RMIDB) for marsh drainage - to achieve an effective and integrated approach to flood risk management. National policy aims to avoid inappropriate development in areas at current or future risk from flooding, and to direct development away from areas of highest risk. Higher level strategies provide a clear context for the Plan’s policies in relation to reducing flood risk. The Rother DC Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)³⁴ informs the application of the Sequential and Exception Test as set out in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)³⁵.

³¹ <https://new.eastsussex.gov.uk/environment/flooding/localfloodriskmanagementstrategy/>

³² <http://apps.environment-agency.gov.uk/wiyby/37837.aspx>

³³ SRFCCC Meeting at ESCC on 23 Oct 2018

³⁴ <http://www.rother.gov.uk/article/4900/Strategic-Flood-Risk-Assessment>

³⁵ <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/>

- 4.29 At the confluence of the Rivers Rother, Brede and Tillingham and the coast, there are some 1400 existing dwellings categorised by the Environment Agency as “at risk” in Flood Zones 2 and 3.
- 4.30 The Government announcement in December 2014 that the flood mitigation schemes for area Folkestone to Cliff End will be funded, means that the Eastern Rother Tidal Walls project is on course for completion in 2022. This combined with earlier work on flood defences to the remainder of the river system will mean that the height of the defensive wall will have been lifted to 5.8m AOD. On the map (Figure 13 overleaf), the small unshaded areas are of the lowest flood risk. The blue area indicates the flood risk zone. These zones are defined by the Environment Agency as below.
- **Dark blue** ■ Flood Zone 3, land assessed as having 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river or sea flooding. For planning purposes, shows the area that could be affected by flooding, either from rivers or the sea, if there were no flood defences. This area could be flooded by tidal waters if the flood defence system failed. The area might also be subject to localised “ponding” of surface water caused by extreme rainfall in conditions of high ground water and also spillage from the Combined Sewer System in the extreme conditions.
 - **Light blue** □ Flood Zone 2, land assessed as having between 1 in 100 and 1 in 1,000 annual probability of river flooding, or between 1 in 200 and 1 in 1,000 annual probability of sea flooding in any year. For planning purposes, shows the additional extent of an extreme flood from rivers or the sea. The area might also be subject to localised “ponding” of surface water caused by extreme rainfall in conditions of high ground water and also spillage from the Combined Sewer System in the extreme conditions.
 - **No Shading** Flood Zone 1, land assessed as having less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river or sea flooding, but might be subject to localised “ponding” of surface water caused by extreme rainfall in conditions of high ground water. They might also be subject to spillage from the Combined Sewer System in the same conditions.

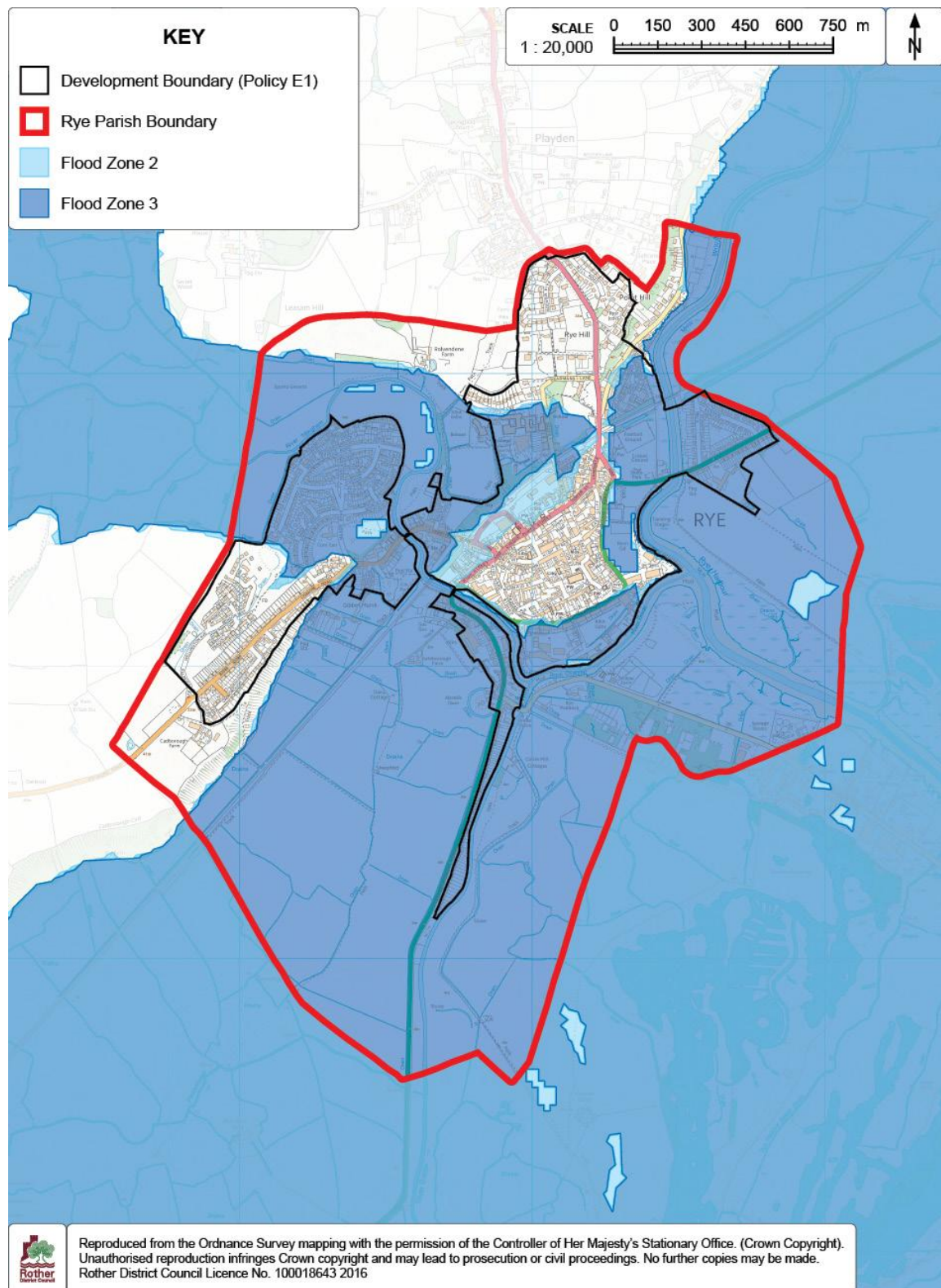


Figure 13: Rye Flood Risk ³⁶

³⁶ <http://www.rother.gov.uk/article/4900/Strategic-Flood-Risk-Assessment>

- 4.31 Along the South Coast, sewerage systems employ Combined Sewer Overflows (CSO), which are designed to protect homes in extreme circumstances. CSOs reduce the risk of “hydraulic overload” in the sewage system by discharging diluted wastewater to water courses and the sea. The Plan supports all measures by the water companies to replace such systems. The Plan encourages the industry to:
- a. encourage partnership working to find solutions to “overload” situations;
 - b. develop its systems to cope with the worst case scenarios;
 - c. ensure that vital infrastructure is protected from flood risk with systems being upgraded as necessary to match occupancy of any new development;
- 4.32 The more sustainable approach for drainage and surface water management involves upstream Natural Flood Management (NFM) and downstream Sustainable Drainage System (SUDS). SUDS help to slow down the water flow rate to pre-existing levels, reduce pollutant loading and where possible reduce the volume of water flowing off paved and other impervious surfaces by applying multiple stages where water is stored, treated and released back to local watercourses or groundwater at a controlled rate. For Rye, we strongly encourage SUDS to be incorporated into all planning proposals, where appropriate, as per national guidance from the Environment Agency.
- 4.33 In some cases, new development can have a substantial cumulative impact on surface water flood risk locally. Often the ‘green areas’ - gardens, lawns and verges - form part of the overall function of the whole site’s drainage plan. As a principle any development should not increase flood risk.
- 4.34 Where there is new development, techniques such as permeable paving can be used, as opposed to bituminous construction to allow infiltration and reduce the amount of surface water runoff. The Environment Agency has produced guidance on the permeable surfacing of front gardens which can be found online.
- 4.35 From the earliest times, Rye found its water from the numerous springs to the north and west of the Town. In the main, these exist today releasing water from aquifers and into the drainage system. In some places, such as the Tilling Green, The Grove and the Military Road, in extreme conditions this water aggravates surface water and ponding. It can also be the cause of soil erosion and landslip in places such as parts of the Citadel and the Military Road.



Figure 14: “Ponding” caused by localised flooding on the Strand, Rye Dec 2015

4.36 Many in the community have concerns about flood risk. Some have asked that even with effective flood defences, “should we be building on the flood plain at all?” This plan seeks to meet the challenge of balancing the need for new homes and mitigating flood risks on sites where it is safe to do so after detailed flood risk assessment. The community has underscored that:

- a. new development in flood risk areas in Rye must be designed to mitigate risk;³⁷
- b. any development on any land unprotected by a flood defence scheme must be avoided;
- c. no development should disrupt the existing watercourses of the existing and complex drainage system; and
- d. Southern Water will be encouraged to work with partners to ensure that the sewerage system can cope with any new development, but occupancy of any new development must be aligned with the delivery of sewage infrastructure.
- e. Measures to reduce flood risks can also impact on habitats and wildlife and the Plan should encourage opportunities to support wildlife conservation where possible.
- f. All development should take full account of flood risk, water supply and demand considerations.

³⁷ <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change/neighbourhood-planning-flood-risk/what-should-be-considered-if-there-is-a-risk-of-flooding-in-the-neighbourhood-plan-area/>

- 4.37 As sites in Flood Zone 3 with development potential have been identified across Rye in this plan, developers proposing to build in a flood plain should make themselves very familiar with the technical guidance accompanying the National Planning Policy Framework..³⁸ This explains that “site specific and detailed flood risk assessments will be necessary and any developments will include flood-resilient buildings, designed to reduce the consequences of flooding and facilitate recovery from the effects of flooding sooner than conventional buildings. This may be achieved through the use of water-resistant materials for floors, walls and fixtures and the siting of electrical controls, cables and appliances at a higher than normal level. The lower floors of buildings in areas at medium and high probability of flooding should be reserved for uses consistent with the flood risk. If the lowest floor level is raised above the predicted flood level, consideration must be given to providing access for those with restricted mobility. In considering appropriate resilience measures, it will be necessary to plan for specific circumstances and have a clear understanding of the mechanisms that lead to flooding and the nature of the flood risk by undertaking a flood risk assessment.”

³⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/revised-national-planning-policy-framework>

Policy F1 Reducing Flood Risk

Development in areas at current or future risk from flooding will be subject to a Flood Risk Assessment which applies the ‘sequential test’ and ‘exception test’ and demonstrates that:

- a. there are no other reasonable available sites for the development;**
- b. there are sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh flood risk; and**
- c. the development can be made safe for its lifetime without increasing risk elsewhere.**

Flood Risk Assessments (FRA) will take into account the following local characteristics:

- a. the particular geographic location of Rye at the confluence of three rivers and the coast;**
- b. the planned improvements to flood defences and the need to maintain those that exist;**
- c. the need to address local sewerage systems which, in extreme conditions, in order to prevent hydraulic overload may discharge diluted untreated wastewater to water courses and the sea;**
- d. the need to manage drainage for surface water to reduce existing flooding problems either on the site or elsewhere, taking into account the springs to the north and west of Rye which aggravate surface water and ponding and can also be the cause of soil erosion and landslip;**
- e. the need to avoid any loss of or have adverse impact on any open watercourse and existing culverts and drainage ditches;**
- f. the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) and measures such as permeable driveways, water harvesting systems and/or green roofs;**
- g. the impact of any flood mitigation measures on the local habitats and wildlife, which are protected by national and international designations.**

All design to cope with flood risk will take full account of the detailed technical guidance accompanying the National Planning Policy Framework. (Footnote 34).

Enterprise and Employment

- 4.37 Rother District has one of the weakest economies in the South East, with a low level of economic productivity (Gross Value Added only 68% of the regional average).³⁹ The global trading situation has an adverse impact, particularly as the area started from a relatively weak base. This is compounded by the uncertainty associated with the UK's plans to leave the European Union. An issue raised by many in the community is the need for effective business development for jobs, inward investment and enterprise.
- 4.38 The levels of earnings in Rye are below the national average, adversely impacting on prosperity and standard of living. The economy has limited capacity to support a wide range of job opportunities, especially for younger people.⁴⁰ Those with skills and education must travel outside to find suitable employment and those with low skill levels find themselves competing in a crowded and uncertain commercial market.
- 4.39 With its attractive topography and distinctive heritage, Rye has a unique identity and widespread reputation with tourists. However, it must encourage businesses appropriate to its characteristics to maximise its role as a destination town. Further information about the economic and tourism profile of Rye is contained in the Evidence Background Paper.



Figure 15: Heritage Centre Rye

³⁹ <http://www.rother.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=14875&p=0> Rye and Rye Harbour Study

⁴⁰ <http://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2011/nov/24/wages-britain-ashe-mapped>

- 4.40 In March 2015, the South East Tourist Office was closed as a result of budget cuts. The important facility of information centre for visitors has passed to the Rye Town Council managed Heritage Centre.
- 4.41 The Citadel provides the focus for retail and other services for the town, an attraction for tourists and a place of residence for many. However, there is also a need to increase the number of micro businesses, less dependent on footfall, in the surrounding areas of the town centre, the working port and industrial areas of Rye Harbour.
- 4.42 The High Street needs specific attention with future development providing real “reasons to visit”. High rents and business rates remain an issue. In common with many town centres there have been business closures and relocations. The Plan looks to national studies⁴¹ ⁴²to support its policies.
- 4.43 The Port of Rye and Rye Harbour Road Industrial Estate provide main centres of employment unrelated with tourism for the town and the surrounding settlements (up to 1000 jobs including the fishing fleet).⁴³ With the Environment Agency holding significant plots of riverside and land alongside “gateways”, its policy of short term leasing, (for necessary income to the Port), rather than disposals deters long term substantial business investment. The result is short term use by car lots, car washes, parking and storage.



Figure 16: Historic ship Balmoral at Rye

⁴¹ <http://thegreatbritishhighstreet.co.uk/pdf/GBHS-British-High-Streets-Crisis-to-Recovery.pdf>

⁴² <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/transport-institute/pdfs/future-high-street>

⁴³ <http://rother.devplan.org.uk/document.aspx?document=19&display=chapter&id=167>

- 4.44 Discussions with local small businesses suggest that there is a requirement for a small office/enterprise centre (Incubator/SME cluster site) close to the town centre. One site which provides this facility is the Rope Walk Centre. Other community feedback suggests that the Plan should:
- a. Encourage festivals and major town events;
 - b. Take every opportunity to create employment and training opportunities;
 - c. Encourage maritime related enterprise;
 - d. Support the fishing fleet;
 - e. Support the High Street and encourage “reasons to visit”;
 - f. Support a second supermarket;
 - g. Support a second petrol station; and
 - h. Support faster broadband.
- 4.45 The Rother DC Core Strategy Policy RY1: Policy Framework for Rye and Rye Harbour includes that proposals for development and change will:
- a. Retain the centre of Rye as the main focus for retail and services for the town, and increase the choice of convenience shopping in Rye by facilitating the increase of some 1,650 sq m net additional convenience floorspace within or adjacent to the town centre;
 - b. Promote at least 10,000 sq m of employment floorspace at Rye Harbour Road industrial estate to promote economic regeneration and job creation, having particular regard to protecting the integrity of internationally designated habitats;
 - c. Promote green tourism initiatives, including careful management of Rye Harbour Nature Reserve and, where feasible, new habitat creation and green infrastructure linkages, that protects and enhances the integrity of the internationally important ecological interests;
 - d. Tackle social exclusion and promote opportunities for young people to access education, community facilities, employment and leisure;
 - e. Maintain and enhance the community, cultural and tourism assets of both Rye and Rye Harbour village”.
- 4.46 Rother DC has also carried out an ‘Employment Sites Review’ to inform plan making, and its recommendations include: of the 7 areas/estates with intensification potential, 3 of these are already recognised through planning permissions, with Harbour Road, Rye having by far the greatest potential, with over 15,000sqm of floorspace benefiting from an outstanding planning

permission; for Rye and Harbour Road, it notes that the lower end of the minimum floorspace target is already provided for by outstanding planning permissions at Harbour Road Industrial Estate but adds that, given its strategic role, identified opportunities for further intensification would most appropriately be provided for by an enabling policy, which would also need to fully acknowledge the need to not adversely impact on the surrounding nature conservation designations; at the same time, encouragement is given to Rye Town Council, through its Neighbourhood Plan, to consider the potential to promote higher density office led schemes in more central locations”

- 4.47 Proposed Policy DEC3 of the Development and Site Allocations document seeks the effective use of existing employment sites by retention of existing uses, and supporting intensification, conversion, redevelopment and/or extension of existing sites. Where sites cannot continue solely in employment use then a mixed use is preferred, prioritising alternative community uses, affordable housing and then market housing, subject to local needs. In some cases sites have been allocated in the Plan for housing where the land is brownfield or vacated because of relocation of business to more modern facilities in Rye Harbour.

Policy B1 Employment and Business Development

To support the economic vitality of Rye development proposals for the following will be permitted subject to other relevant development plan policies:

- a. development which regenerates or enhances the fishing and maritime and port related industries;**
- b. development of micro (low footfall) businesses around the Citadel in Zone Blue (Figure 12);**
- c. proposals for new business development especially small scale flexible office units, affordable workshops and high quality office space;**
- d. development which facilitates improved broadband access for businesses and home workers.**

Existing employment and business floor space will be safeguarded unless it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority that the premises are no longer suitable for employment and evidence has been submitted that demonstrates that the property has been actively marketed for at least 18 months on realistic market terms; it is shown that there is no prospect of new employment and business occupiers being found or no relocation to more modern facilities in Rye Harbour.

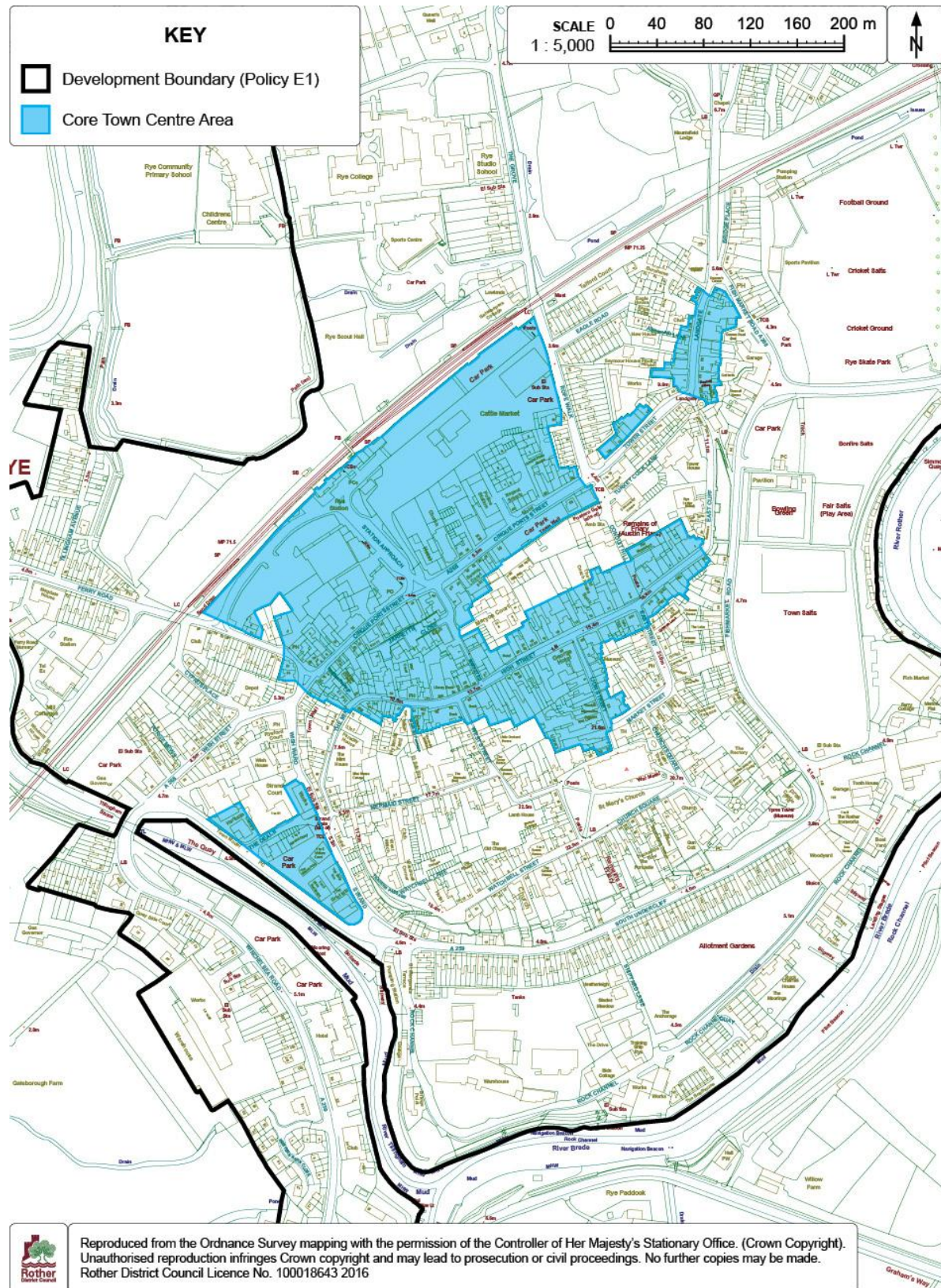


Figure 17: Core Town Centre Area in blue



Figure 18: Rye from the East showing the Fishing Quay

Policy B2 Supporting Rye as a Visitor Destination

To support the attractiveness of Rye as a place to visit, development proposals for the following will be permitted subject to other relevant development plan policies:

- a. Development that enhances the Town Centre Area (Figure 17) and the area around (Zones Yellow and Blue in Figure 12) to improve visitor attraction and “reasons to visit”, such as that related to art, culture; festival and entertainment.**
- b. Proposals that support the retention of the former cattle market as a site for a traditional weekly market and daily parking;**
- c. Proposals that support the maintenance of an information centre as part of the Rye Heritage Centre;**
- d. Proposals that support the provision of visitor accommodation and hospitality services; and**
- e. enterprises which promote “green tourism” such as walking and cycling and appreciation of the area’s natural assets.**

Retail

- 4.48 There has been considerable debate in the community about the need for a second supermarket and/or petrol station to provide competition and choice. The Rother Core Strategy includes a requirement for 1,650 sq m net additional convenience floorspace within or adjacent to the town centre of

Rye. Accordingly the Steering Group has assessed potential sites around the town centre (RNP Support 2). These sites have been identified as “edge-of-centre” sites because suitable and viable town centre sites were not available. However, importantly they are near to the centre of Rye population in the West of Rye.

- 4.49 The Lower School site previously had a planning permission for a supermarket (RR/2010/2570/P) but this has now expired due to lack of commercial interest reflecting changing retail trends away from large superstores to on-line shopping and smaller convenience stores. However, it remains the case that there is significant convenience trade “leakage” from Rye, such that a further store would undoubtedly claw back trade, with associated benefits in terms of reliance on the car. Also, with further development in Rye and increasing fuel costs, it is considered that the opportunity for accommodating a further supermarket or convenience store and petrol station in the future should not be entirely lost. At present there has been no interest from any major operator since Sainsburys and Tesco jointly stated that neither was pursuing the one edge of centre opportunity at the former Lower School site. The lack of any positive response to more recent approaches on behalf of the RNP Group about retail interest and the overall cutting back of store development programmes, combine to indicate that there is no reasonable expectation that any new supermarket allocation would be taken up in the foreseeable future. This is considered to amount to a material change in circumstances since the Core Strategy was prepared and examined.
- 4.50 Work by the Steering Group to identify an alternative site (to the Lower School) for a supermarket close to the Centre has resulted in no community consensus. One site, Gibbet Marsh was regarded as meeting the criteria has been withdrawn because of community opposition. One of the arguments was that it provided valuable overflow car parking (up to 280 cars) within easy pedestrian distance to the Town Centre and Station. This location has been categorised as a green space and therefore to enable its continued use as a car park the development boundary is proposed to include this site.
- 4.51 Given the interest by BP to establish a petrol station and convenience store in Rye, it is considered appropriate to identify a site of up to 2000 sq m close to the centre and on the A259 trunk road to cater for any developer proposing a petrol station and convenience store of up to 500 sq m.

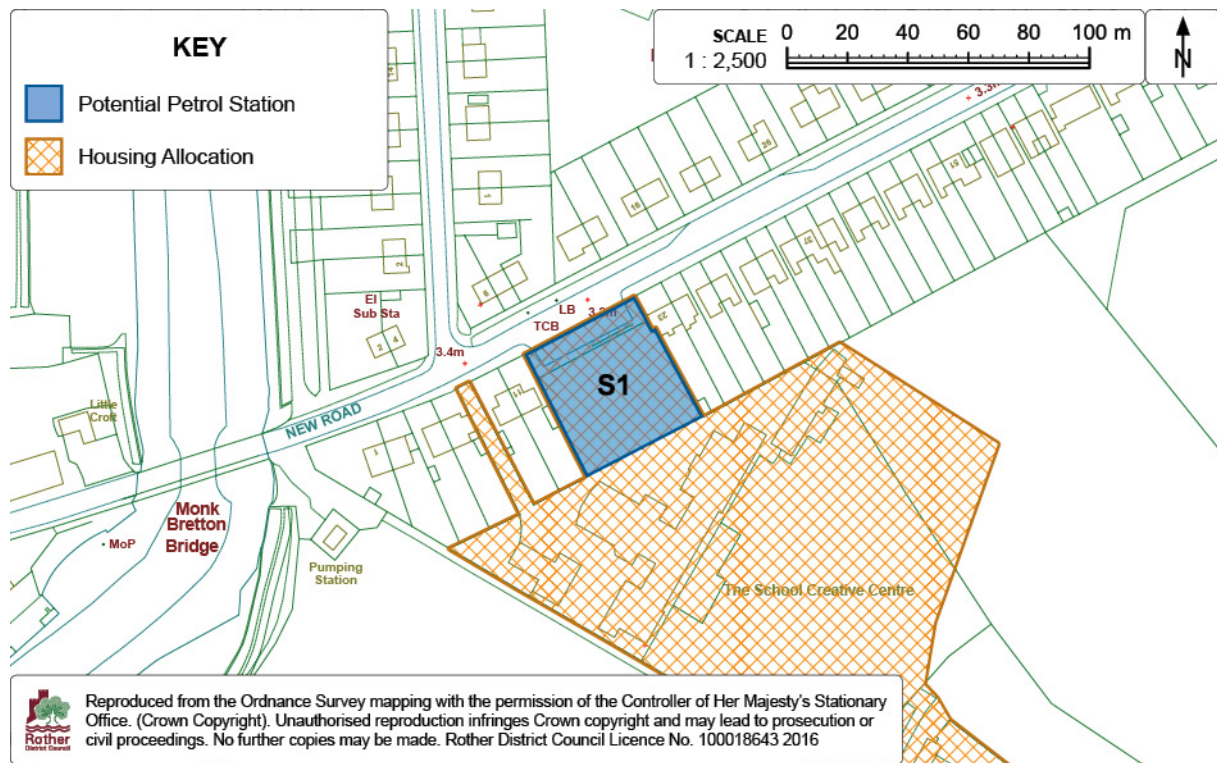


Figure 19: S1: Potential retail outlet primarily for petrol and food

Policy B3 Further Convenience Store Provision

A site (S1) at the Former Freda Gardham School is allocated for a petrol station and convenience store of up to 500 sq m subject to other relevant development plan policies and the following criteria:

- a. Submission of a retail impact assessment demonstrating that the proposal will not have a significant adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre;
- b. The development will be of a form, scale and height appropriate to its setting and retain or replace existing trees and other vegetation;
- c. The development will retain and enhance pedestrian links into the town centre to encourage linked trips;
- d. The site will have a separate road access from the housing development (H7) to the South.
- e. The development shall be designed to minimise and mitigate flood risk.
- f. Any development application may need to be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA), in line with BS42020:2013 and CIEEM guidance.

Traffic, Access and Getting Around

- 4.52 Rye's unique geographic and physical situation creates a challenging framework around and within which transport has to work: the original hill top with its small grid system of streets still houses much of the key business and commercial operations of the town (currently including all the town's banks and building society, dentists, dispensing chemists, library and 3 churches), while the (trunk) A259 road coming in from the west skirts the base of the hill (with narrow carriageway for a trunk road) before going out across the marsh to the east. Developments, particularly in the last century have created residential, educational and industrial areas around and away from the base.
- 4.53 The A268 road takes much traffic north up Rye Hill through neighbouring villages to reach the A21 whilst the B2089 provides a link to the area to the west and the northern parts of Hastings and St Leonards. The are concerns over the speed of traffic coming into the town on these two major routes as well as on the A259, residents of New Road, New Winchelsea Road and Udimore Road in particular are looking for action to control the problem. There are issues for the safety of road users and traffic flow resulting from building developments within the town - that in Deadmans Lane continues to cause problems and the access for other sites in the town is a key concern and may impinge on their viability. Changes in traffic volumes underline fundamental shifts in living and working patterns. Further information about these characteristics, trends and community feedback are in the Evidence Background Paper.
- 4.54 Rye benefits from a centrally located station and rail links to Ashford in the east and Bexhill to the west. There are proposals for a High Speed service between Ashford and Bexhill which may stop at Rye, but as this is currently uncertain, it is dealt with in the Community Aspirations section in Chapter 5. Reconciling all the different demands - the needs of residents and of commercial and business operations, the protection of structures that are in places fragile and historic, the demands of tourism and leisure activities, etc - is very difficult, especially as the town is not an easy place for people to get around under their own steam (even more so in inclement weather). The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to promote traffic management, supporting vulnerable road users - pedestrians, children, those with mobility difficulties - while recognising residents' and visitors' needs and those of business and commercial operations for vehicle usage.
- 4.55 Given the broad sweep of the Plan, it has not been possible to carry out a detailed consideration of all traffic issues but the issues have been considered strategically. Lessons from other neighbourhood plans indicate that we should be innovative to encourage sustainable travel including local community transport and street environments that significantly reduce the impact of traffic on the town's community life. The policies in this section focus on aspects which the Rye Neighbourhood Plan can deliver through the planning system by influencing the design of new developments, including

parking provision and connectivity for pedestrians and cycles. Other transport issues, where partnership action is required, are addressed in Section 5: Community Aspirations.

Policy Context

4.56 The Rother DC Core Strategy Policy RY1: Policy Framework for Rye and Rye Harbour includes the requirement for proposals for development and change to:

- a. Promote efficiencies and improvements to the strategic transport network to improve connectivity between Rye and other major urban centres;" and
- b. Support traffic management on the local road network, promote sustainable alternatives to the car and implement the objectives stated in Local Transport Plan 3 and the Rye Local Area Transport Strategy".

4.57 The Core Strategy also includes:

- a. Policy TR2: Integrated Transport which promotes improvements in the provision and use of sustainable transport modes including walking and cycling;
- b. Policy TR3: Access and New Development which seeks to minimise the need to travel and support good access to employment, services and community facilities, as well as ensure adequate, safe access arrangements; and
- c. Policy TR4: Car Parking which sets out principles for parking provision which will be elaborated upon in the form of Supplementary Planning Document.

Connectivity and Sustainable Transport

4.58 In all development there must be a detailed consideration of access and connectivity to existing and proposed routes leading from new development to the Town Centre and its services. Such connectivity encourages residents and users to walk and cycle more and use the private car less, which is important in a town such as Rye where the roads are narrow and parking facilities are restricted. One of the key factors in the selection of the development sites in the housing section was accessibility to the Town Centre.

4.59 The Rye Bay and Romney Marsh area also has huge potential for cycle tourism. The Plan takes account of the East Sussex County Council Cycling and Walking Strategy, which sees Rye as a natural hub for expansion and facilities in the extreme East of the County. As such, within Rye, there is scope for improved connectivity, with better cycle routes and secure cycle parking to encourage cycling – as well as making it easier to cycle (and walk)

within Rye. More cycle parking provision is also needed to encourage this mode of transport and to meet existing demands.

Policy T1 Connectivity and Sustainable Transport

Development proposals within Rye will be permitted subject to other relevant development plan policies and the following criteria:

- a. The development is located close to the town centre and other community facilities to enable access to these amenities by walking and/or cycling;**
- b. The design of new development makes the most of opportunities to improve walking or cycling facilities in and around the site, including linking with other strategic routes such as the National Cycle Network and the Greenway initiative;**
- c. The development includes cycle parking and other facilities that would encourage users to access the site by foot or bicycle.**
- d. Cycling will be encouraged along a proposed route alongside the Royal Military Canal**
- e. At Rock Channel it supports the delivery of an enhanced riverside walk on the town side of the water.**

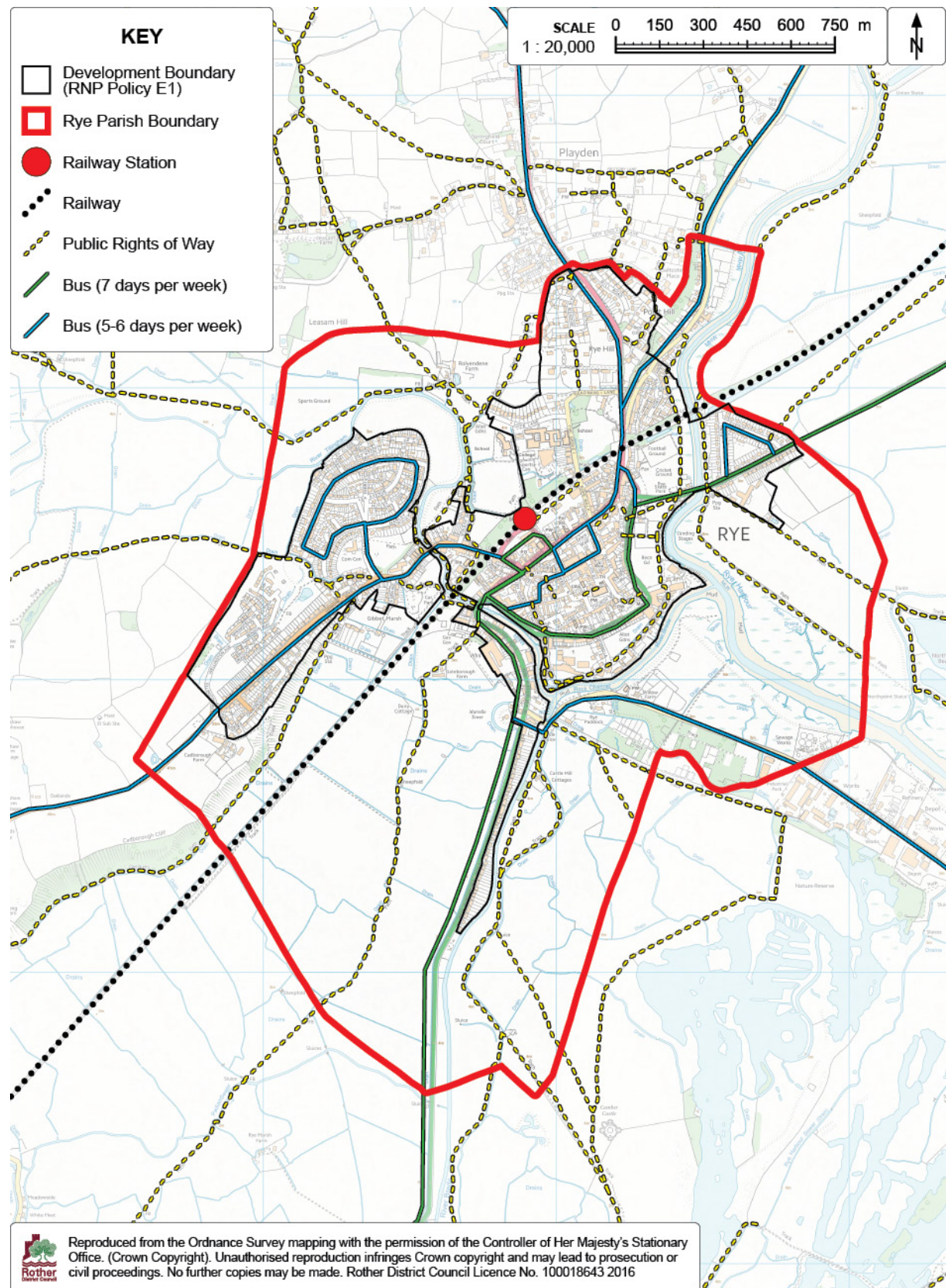


Figure 20: Accessibility

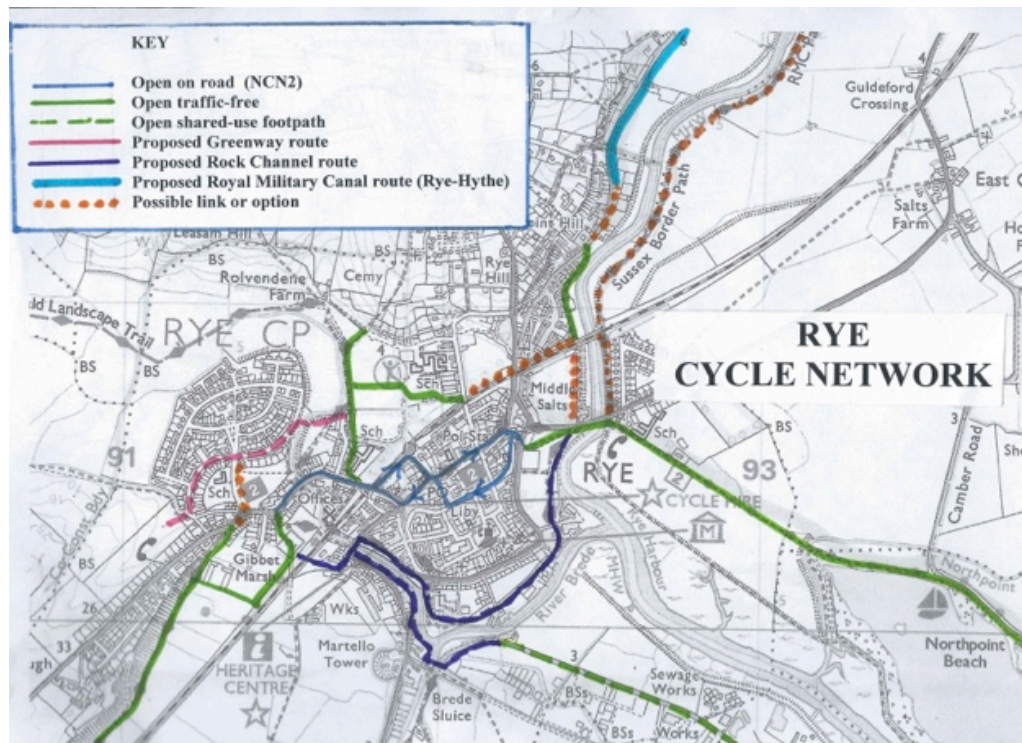


Figure 21: Cycleways



Figure 22: The Greenway Cycle and Footpath Proposal

Parking

- 4.60 Car ownership levels in Rye parish are up to the national average but parking is limited across the Parish. On-street parking is so restricted that the building of a centralised parking facility would be strongly supported by the community. There are also significant community concerns with regard to car-parking provision for new residential development in the light of recent experience locally where inadequate car-parking provision has caused serious highway and amenity problems. High levels of on-street parking also create a poor urban environment to the detriment of local character and visual amenity, which the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to avoid. Because of the continual problems of parking⁴⁴ in and around Rye, policy T2 sets strict requirements for parking but drawing on the East Sussex County Council guidance.⁴⁵

Policy T2 Car Parking

Development proposals which do not meet the parking standards specified below for Rye will have to justify to the Planning Authority the reasons for the lower provision:

- a. new dwellings with 1 bedroom will be provided with a minimum of 1 off street parking space per dwelling,**
- b. new dwellings with 2 or 3 bedrooms will be provided with a minimum of 2 off-street car-parking spaces per dwelling.**
- c. new dwellings with more than 3 bedrooms shall be provided with a minimum of 3 off-street car-parking spaces.**

All proposals will need to demonstrate provision for visitor spaces and cycle parking

Infrastructure and Community Facilities

- 4.61 This Plan considers all aspects of infrastructure required to support development .
- 4.62 Rother District is recognised for its high quality of life and emphasis on community life. With Rye at the extreme end of the District, the Plan supports a vibrant, safe, balanced and inclusive community with a range of facilities for

⁴⁴ <http://www.ryenews.org.uk/news/ryes-burning-issue-parking>

⁴⁵ https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/media/1759/parking_guidance_residential.pdf

all from birth to death. With an ageing population, the delivery of services and activities in accessible locations is a particularly significant. The Plan seeks to reflect the strong relationship between health, recreation, leisure, culture, heritage and the environment. The existing range of facilities and their role in the community is explored in the Evidence Background Paper.

- 4.63 National Planning Practice Guidance covers the infrastructure required to be provided by utilities such as gas, electricity, water supply, water quality and waste water treatment. The developer will need to work closely with relevant providers to ensure adequate capacity to serve the development. Some site specific requirements for larger sites may involve the provision of new electric substations, water pumping stations, supply pipe work etc., depending on their scale, location and nature. The developer should liaise with utility providers at an early stage (pre-application) to identify any capacity issues and how to overcome these. As any necessary improvements to sewerage water treatment infrastructure Southern Water will need to match occupancy of the development, careful planning will be required to achieve this.
- 4.64 For any recreational and on-site art, a maintenance schedule and management plan for 15 years maintenance should be submitted with any conditions specified. The maintenance and management must address safety inspections including weekly visual inspections and periodic RoSPA inspections. The management shall include arrangements for litter picking, dog waste clearance, dog waste and general waste collection.
- 4.65 In the west of Rye, the former Tilling Green School is being disposed of and a proposal for affordable housing has been withdrawn. The existing school building has been used for several years as a community facility, which houses a range of facilities including local access to Housing Associations, Credit Union, Early Years Foundation Services (EYFS), nursery facilities, dementia activities and recreational clubs. Future needs for this have been justified and therefore the requirement to refurbish or replace the facility has been included within policy H3 which allocates this site for development.
- 4.66 The policy of East Sussex County Council was to close the Tilling Green Infants and Freda Gardham Primary schools to build the Rye Community Primary School in 2008, co-located with the then secondary school. This concentrated educational assets and facilities within The Grove-Love Lane “education quarter”. A Studio School was built, established but then closed in 2018. The Schools have since moved to academy status. There has been much community debate about capacity of the various educational stages, with particular concern about Early Years, (pre-school) child and nursery care.

- 4.67 There is wide support for more facilities for younger people but few ideas about how this can be achieved. Consultations with younger residents and students continue. One proposal is for those faltering organisations for younger people should consider sharing within a centrally-located, multi-purpose facility.
- 4.68 There is now a record of successful Amenities Community Interest Company (CIC) operating community facilities such as the allotments and the new Kino site. These are successful models which should be encouraged. Registering key community facilities with Rother District Council as 'Assets of Community Value' will also be considered as this provides them with a degree of protection from disposal.



Figure 23 and 24: Play spaces on Valley Park and the Salts

Policy Context

- 4.69 NPPF 2018 (Section 8) provides a clear framework for the promotion, retention and development of local services and community facilities. The Rother DC Core Strategy sets policies for the protection and enhancement of existing facilities and resists any inappropriate loss (Policies CO1-3).
- 4.70 Rye serves as a centre for a much wider rural catchment area. As a result, its facilities are of equal value to residents living well outside the parish boundaries. By the safeguarding of local community facilities and services and providing new services, the Plan aims to strengthen Rye's role as a key settlement serving a disparate rural community.

Policy I1 Infrastructure and Community Facilities

In order to meet the future needs for essential infrastructure for the Community, improved utility infrastructure will be encouraged.

The following facilities are particularly valued by the community and they will be safeguarded from loss or alternative uses: Community Centres (Conduit Hill and Marley Road); Early Years facilities, Rye Leisure Centre; the Salts sports fields and facilities including Rye Bowls Club; and Rye Rugby Club.

Development proposals that result in the loss of sites or premises currently or last used for community purposes will be refused unless:

- a. alternative provision of the equivalent or better quality is available in the local area or will be provided and made available prior to the commencement or redevelopment of the proposed scheme; or**
- b. it can be demonstrated there is no reasonable prospect of retention for the current use and that no other community use of the site is suitable or viable.**

The Environment, Green Spaces and Energy

- 4.71 Rye is blessed with a wide range of green and open spaces: The Salts, Mason's Field, marshland, allotments, the Railway Corridor, former Freda Gardham playing fields and informal areas of grassland/woodland. All these link to the rural and surrounding rural countryside beyond which in turn links to the nearby coast. This is a vital feature of the Town. There is a wide community view that green areas beyond the parish boundary, in particular the 'strategic gap' between Rye and Rye Harbour, should be maintained as green spaces.



Figure 25: Rye from the East

- 4.72 Much of the area around Rye is designated for the importance of its landscape and/or its habitats for wildlife. This includes European designations as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Ramsar sites, national designations as Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Local Wildlife Sites (LWS). The location of these areas is shown on the map below. The impact of proposed development on these areas is covered by Core Strategy Policy EN1: Landscape Stewardship which covers the management of the high quality historic, built and natural landscape and Policy EN5: Biodiversity and Green Space. Rother District Council has confirmed that the potential impact of development in Rye on the European designations has already been assessed through the Habitats Regulations Assessment of its Core Strategy.

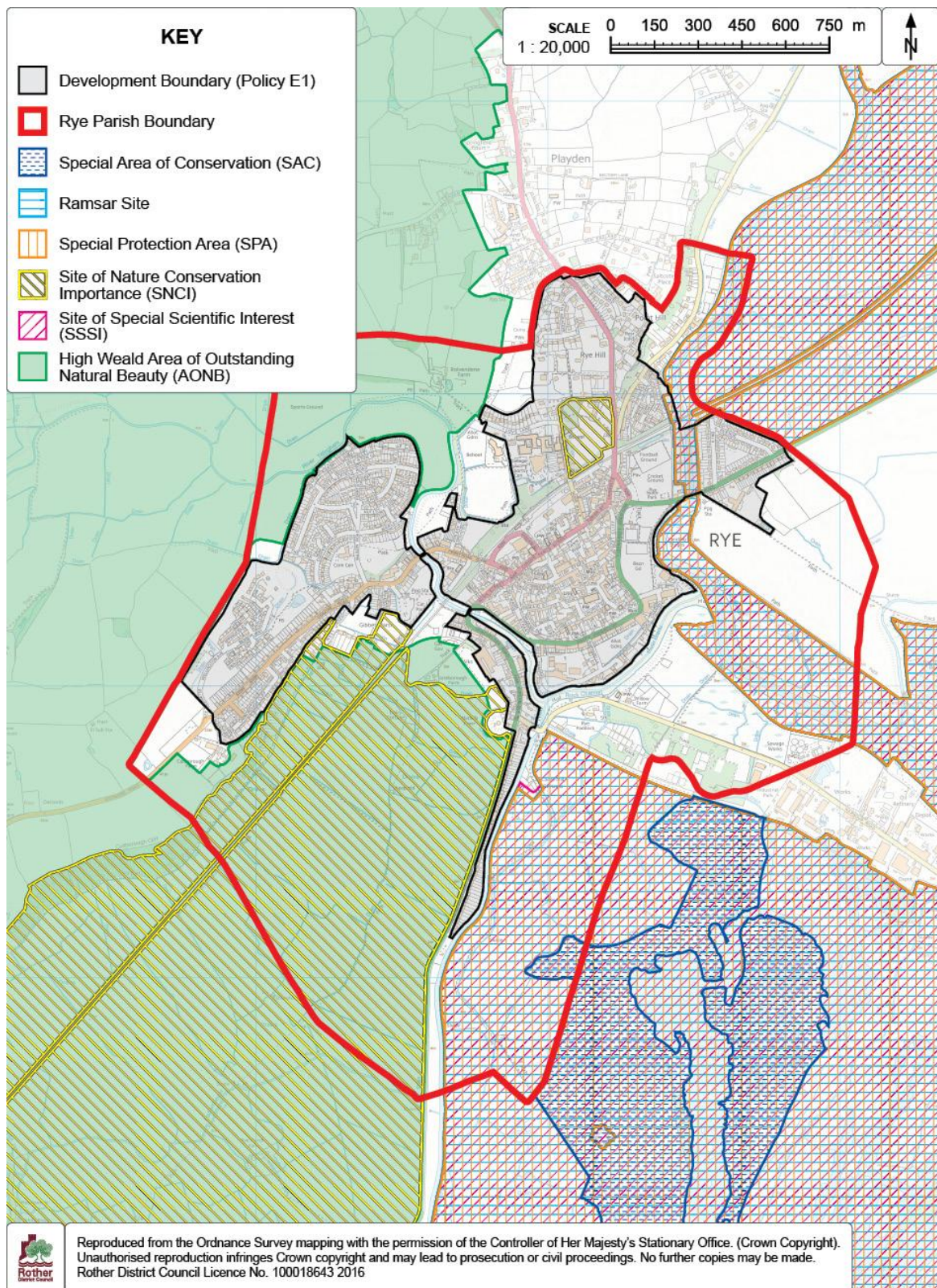


Figure 26: Designated and Protected Areas

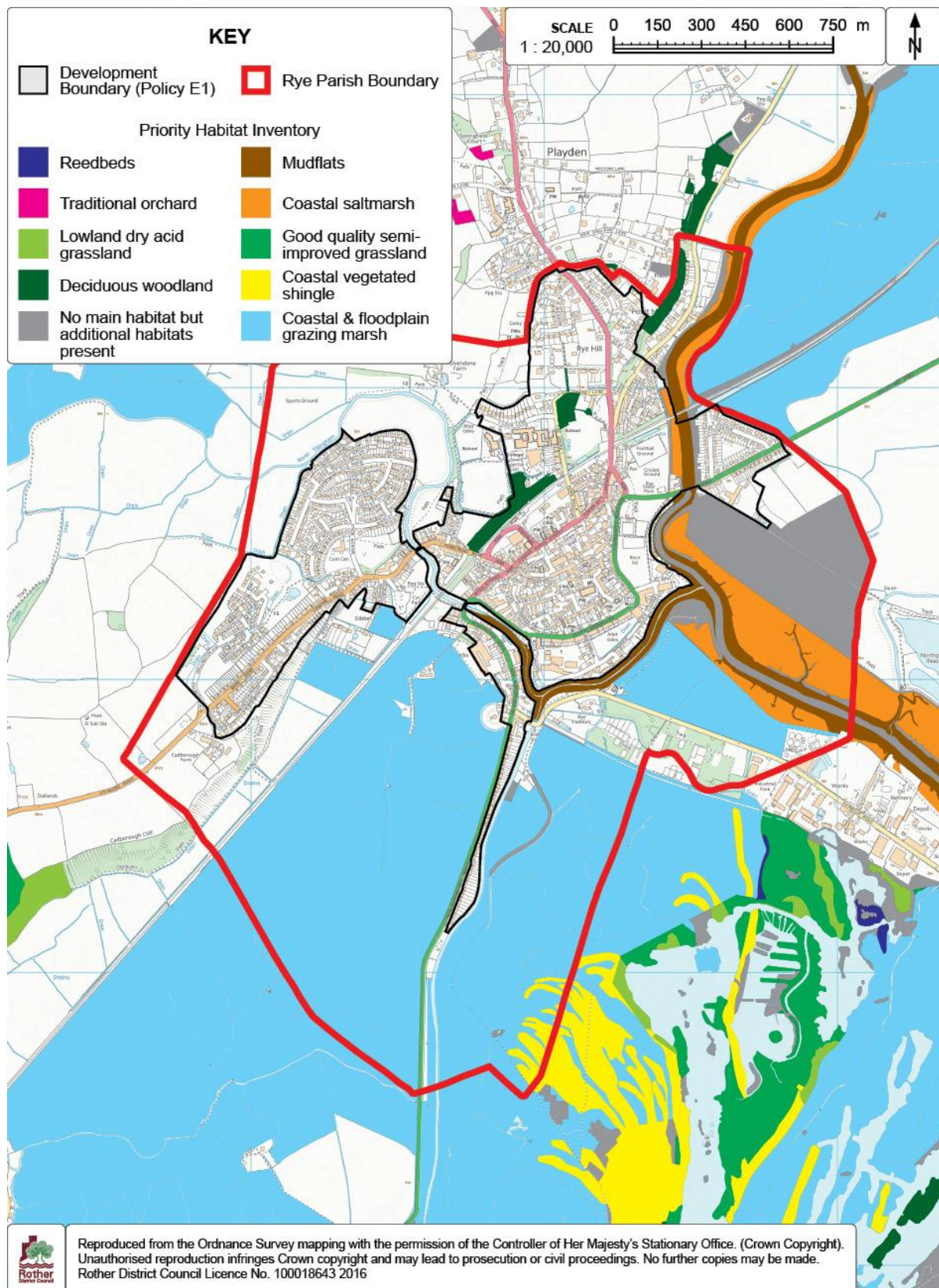


Figure 27: Rye Habitats

4.73 The characteristics of the environment of Rye and the community's aspirations for protecting it are explored in detail in the Evidence Background Paper. These aspirations include:

- a. Seeking more areas of green space around the town to create wildlife habitat, enhance residents' quality of life and contribute towards the provision of a bio-diverse natural environment;
- b. Protecting existing open space, including gardens, allotments, recreational space, open fields, woodlands and pathways;
- c. Existing groups, Transition Rye and Rother Environmental Group are considering future energy use and intend to establish a community energy company (RX) to encourage local generation and measures to reduce energy usage.
- d. For many, light pollution is an issue. The Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) claims that only around one 10th of the country enjoys a truly dark night sky; ⁴⁶
- e. There are no local facilities for disposing of bulk domestic waste. Items which cannot be removed through the Rother DC waste collection service have to be collected by private contractors at cost or carried to the household waste sites at Mountfield or Pebsham (East Sussex) or Lydd (Kent).

The Development Boundary and Strategic Gaps

4.74 Development boundaries around settlements are a well-established planning policy tool in East Sussex. Rother DC Core Strategy Policy OSS2 states that development boundaries around settlements will continue to differentiate between areas where most forms of new development would be acceptable and where they would not. The draft Development and Site Allocations Document proposes a policy DIM2 which says that new development shall be focused within defined settlement development boundaries, principally on already committed and allocated sites, together with other sites where proposals accord with relevant policies. In the countryside (that is, outside of defined settlement development boundaries), development shall be normally limited to that which accords with specific policies or that for which a countryside location is demonstrated to be necessary.

⁴⁶ <http://www.cpre.org.uk/resources/countryside/dark-skies>

- 4.75 However, in order to meet the targets set by the Core Strategy, the former Freda Gardham Site (H7) is allocated for development and requires a boundary change to enable that. Gibbet Marsh is part car park (on tarmac and on grass) and part green space. It requires a change to the development boundary to enable this . These amendments are shown on the Policies Map that accompanies this Plan and RNP Support 2.
- 4.76 The Core Strategy designates one strategic gap (Policy RY1 iix) where development is to be strongly resisted: the gap between Rye's Rock Channel and the industrial estate at Rye Harbour Road. This remains to protect the unique character and setting of Rye from further development and the coalescence of settlements. In addition, to further protect the profile of Rye , it is important to retain green areas as gaps between Rye and adjacent Parishes, particularly with Icklesham, Udimore, East Guldeford, Playden and Rye Foreign. For these reasons, the policy below sets criteria that should be applied to the countryside, within the parish of Rye and outside the Rye NP Development Boundary, which surrounds and adjoins the town in order to preserve the unique setting and special character of historic Rye. This policy when applied in conjunction with Core Strategy Policy OSS2 –Use of Development Boundaries will also assist in safeguarding the open countryside⁴⁷ and marsh and preserve the unique setting and special character of historic Rye.

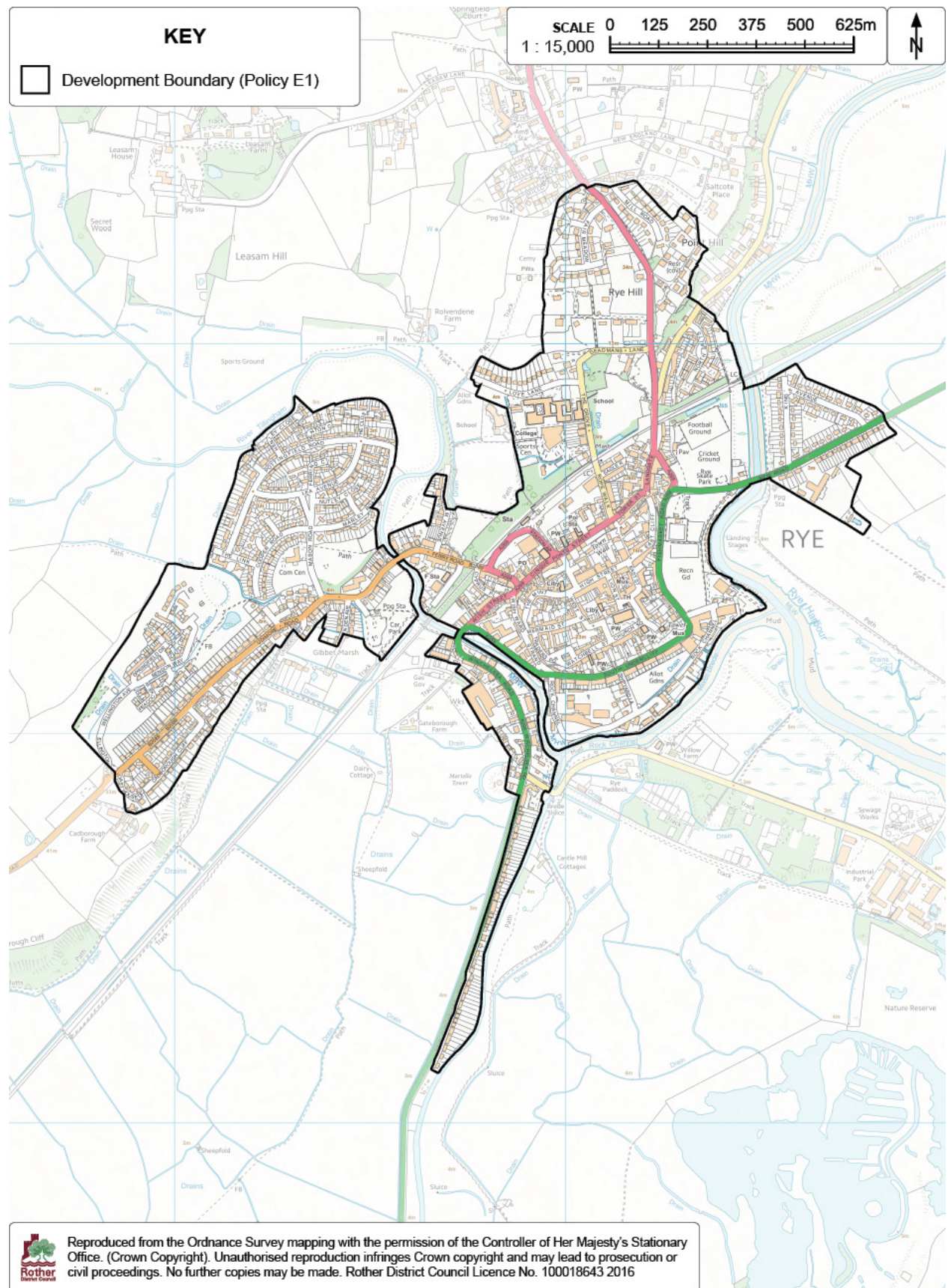
⁴⁷ Coalescence of settlements and urban sprawl have been acknowledged as problems in England since the 1950s. Strategic gaps and their policies are meant to be only concerned with the strategic pattern of settlements and settlement identity. Open countryside is defined as undeveloped land beyond the settlement boundary"

Policy E1 Development Boundary , Strategic Gap & Setting of Rye

New development in Rye will be contained within the Town's Development Boundary as defined on the Policies Map.

Outside the Development Boundary, development will be restricted to that for which a countryside location is necessary or which accords with other specific Development Plan Policies

To preserve Rye's unique setting, particular control over development will be applied to conserve and enhance the open landscape on the edges of the Town including the Strategic Gap between Rock Channel and Rye Harbour.



Green Infrastructure and Local Green Space

4.77 Effective management of habitats may be seen within a wider approach to ‘green infrastructure’. This is defined by the Rother DC Core Strategy as a strategic network of multi-functional green space which supports a wide range of purposes:

- a. The creation and enhancement of a sense of place,
- b. Provision of recreation opportunities,
- c. Preservation and enhancement of biodiversity,
- d. Sustainable transport routes,
- e. Improved water resources and flood management,
- f. Contribution to climate change adaption and mitigation.

4.78 NPPF 2018 defines Green Infrastructure as a “A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities” Rother DC sets out policies for local green spaces and amenities.⁴⁸ There are targets set out in Natural England’s standard for accessible natural green space (ANGSt) and the follow-on work led by East Sussex County Council.⁴⁹ Given the specific environmental context of Rye, with its high quality historic built environment and public realm, the distinctive character of its landscape setting, its proximity to internationally protected habitats and its exposure to potential flooding, the consideration of and compliance with these policies will be of paramount importance.

4.79 The Plan will support development which:

- a. integrates new multi-functional open space within it.
- b. actively seeks to improve the connectivity of green infrastructure and enhance biodiversity (and not supporting development which further fragments green infrastructure and impacts negatively on biodiversity).
- c. increases the number of street trees in a locality.
- d. designates green infrastructure including spaces to protect them from development, while encouraging gardens and permeable surfaces.
- e. integrates biodiversity improvements within any renewable energy installations⁵⁰

⁴⁸ <http://www.rother.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=6405&p=0>

⁴⁹ <http://sussexlnp.org.uk/documents/EastSussexGISstrategyFinal.pdf>

⁵⁰ Research by the Building Research Establishment shows that where a Biodiversity Management Plan is developed, field based solar farms can deliver habitat enhancements

- 4.80 Although surrounded by green space, within Rye there is green infrastructure, important for their environmental character, the local recreational facilities which they provide and as a source for biodiversity. Green infrastructure comprises parks and gardens, accessible natural and semi natural green space, green links, watercourses and canals, accessible countryside, and designated nature conservation sites. The Community places importance on the preservation and protection of these areas. In addition to green spaces there are two historical allotments identified in Figure 28.

Policy E2 Green Infrastructure

To protect and encourage the provision of green infrastructure:

- a. the local green spaces listed below and identified in Figure 28, will be safeguarded from loss or alternative uses.**

A and B: Valley Park common areas

C: Masons Field

D: Tilling Green Triangle

E: Pottingfield Greens 1, 2 and 3

F: Gibbet Marsh – Green Space (overflow car park)

G: The Strand

H: Rye College Sports Field

I: The Church Yard

J and K: North Salts; Middle Salts and Town Salts

L: Rye Rugby Club Field

- b. Any trees lost through development are to be replaced either on the site or in close vicinity to it. As roots are vital to keep trees healthy and upright all development proposals must take into account the impact on the roots of trees to be retained and avoid damage to them.**
- c. Where practical, development proposals will include improvements to local green infrastructure, particularly to improve connectivity for people and habitats.**

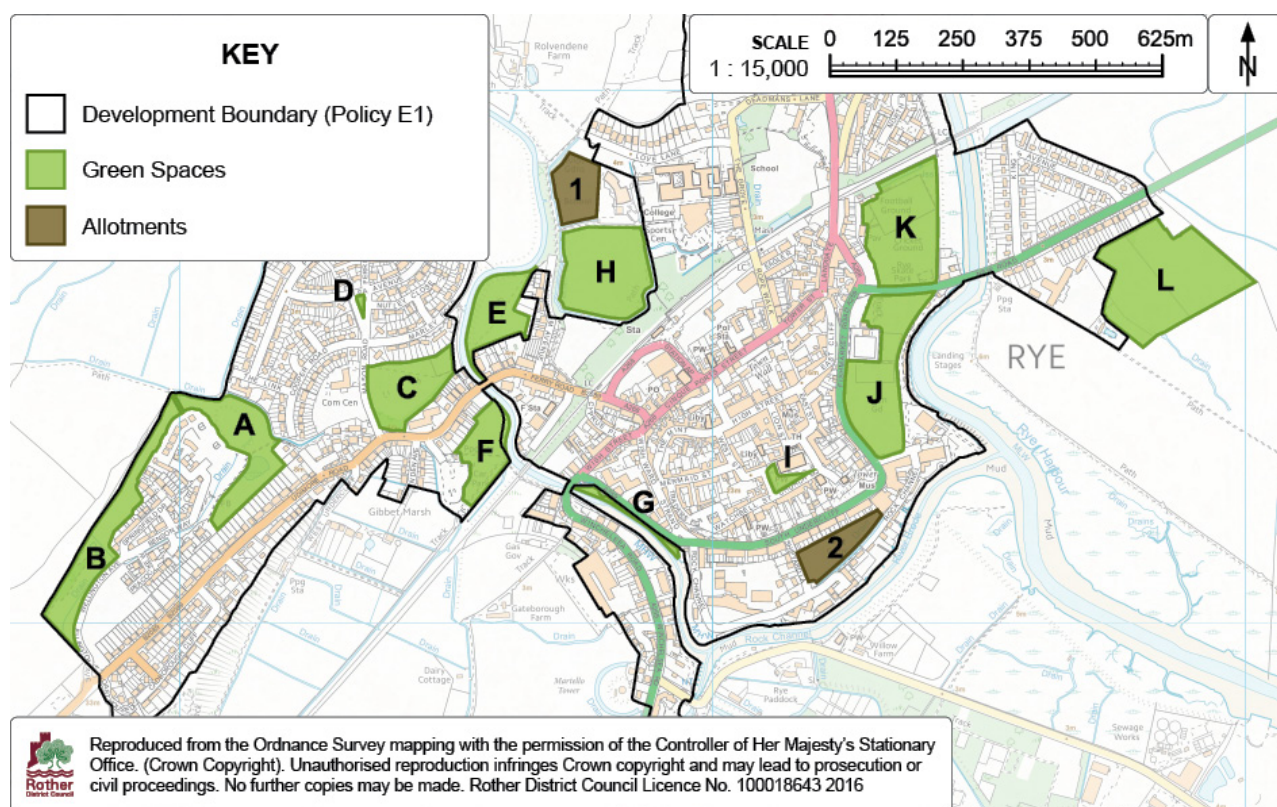


Figure 28: Rye Green Infrastructure

To promote conservation of the historic environment.

4.81 Rye is a historic town with records going back to Saxon times when the region along the south coast including Rye, was under the rule of the Abbey of Fecamp in France. At its heart is St Mary's Church dating from the early Norman period. In the 14th century Rye underwent regeneration and fortification. This was begun with the building of the town wall and four gates; Landgate, Strandgate, Baddings Gate and Postern Gate. Modernisation of defence was implemented in the 15th and 16th centuries but today only one of the gates remains; the Landgate. The remains of these medieval defensive structures, including the Landgate and Ypres Tower, form the core of the heritage buildings today.



Figure 28a: Ypres Tower

4.82 The rich diversity of architectural styles and periods make Rye an architectural and heritage gem partly set in cobbled streets with heritage street furniture, making the town such an important tourist destination. In all there are some 290 listed and varied structures in Rye including:

- a. 14c The Monastery⁵¹, Landgate⁵² and Ypres Tower⁵³
- b. The St Mary's Church Rye Turret Clock (could be 14th century)
- c. 1735: The Water System in Church Square (Pump Street) is Grade II* listed and a Scheduled Ancient Monument;
- d. the 18th century Water Cistern in Wish Ward is Grade II listed;
- e. Early 19th century: Martello Tower number 30
- f. 1923: the WW1 memorial⁵⁴ designed and built under the supervision of Sir Reginald Blomfield who had property in the Town;
- g. 1927: the St Anthony of Padua Roman Catholic church in Watchbell Street is unique to the UK as the only building in this country in the Spanish Romanesque style popularised in Spain's former South American colonies;⁵⁵

⁵¹ <http://www.ryemuseum.co.uk/the-monastery/>

⁵² <http://www.ryemuseum.co.uk/landgate-walls-and-strandgate/>

⁵³ <http://www.ryemuseum.co.uk/home/ypres-tower/>

⁵⁴ <https://www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk/memorial/106976/>

⁵⁵ http://www.catholicdirectory.org/Catholic_Information.asp?ID=33760

- h. Later additions include the lookouts at the East and West ends of the Citadel (Hilders Cliff) ⁵⁶

4.83 Ancient Monuments, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas are protected by law under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 126-141) and the Planning Practice Guidance require that decision-making aims to sustain and enhance the significance of all heritage assets, including non-designated assets. Archaeological sites, historic buildings and other heritage assets are recorded on the County Historic Environment Record (HER) ⁵⁷.

4.84 There are significant archaeological remains across the parish. With Rye's long history as a port, trading and agricultural centre with the shifting nature of past river channels, beaches and marshes, there is high potential of the survival of evidence of past human activity of industrial, ship-building, fishing, and as a rural centre. Development will take account of this potential through appropriate assessment, evaluation and mitigation in order that significant archaeological remains are protected in situ, enhanced and conserved or where this is not possible adequately recorded in advance of their loss. Provision will be made for all discoveries and findings to be reported to appropriate professional standards and the archive deposited with Rye Museum.

4.85 There is already a strong policy framework protecting heritage assets in the NPPF and the Rother DC Core Strategy. In particular the latter includes the following policy:

“Policy EN2: Stewardship of the Historic Built Environment

Development affecting the historic built environment, including that both statutorily protected and the non-statutorily protected, will be required to:

- a. Reinforce the special character of the district's historic settlements, including villages, towns and suburbs, through siting, scale, form and design;
- b. Take opportunities to improve areas of poor visual character or with poor townscape qualities;

⁵⁶ <http://www.ryesussex.co.uk/directory/127/ef-benson-society/>

⁵⁷ <https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/environment/archaeology/her>

- c. Preserve, and ensure clear legibility of, locally distinctive vernacular building forms and their settings, features, fabric and materials, including forms specific to historic building typologies;
- d. Make reference to the character analysis in Conservation Area Appraisals, where relevant;
- e. Reflect current best practice guidance produced by English Heritage and HELM59;
- f. Ensure appropriate archaeological research and investigation of both above and below-ground archaeology, and retention where required”.

4.86 Criteria d of the above policy refers to the relevance of Conservation Area Appraisals⁵⁸ in design decisions. The Conservation Area Appraisal for Rye was adopted by Rother District Council in 2006 and informs the following policy. This applies primarily to proposals within the Conservation Area but may also be relevant to proposals affecting historic areas outside the designated area or affecting the setting of the Conservation Area.

⁵⁸ <http://www.rother.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=6181&p=0>

Policy E3 Heritage and Urban Design : All development and major repairs by Highways Authorities and Utilities, impacting on the historic built environment of Rye will be designed with regard to the characteristics set out in the Rye Conservation Area Appraisal. These include:

- a. The archaeological interest of the buildings themselves;**
- b. The medieval pattern of narrow streets with most of the buildings lining the footways; the occasional recess by way of court or garden providing an interesting contrast and giving variety to the streetscene;**
- c. Partially revealed 'glimpse' views created by the curve or slope of many of the streets or by passageways;**
- d. Buildings largely of two or three storeys with pitched roofs in which there are often dormer windows;**
- e. The high number of timber-framed buildings, with the more formal work of the medieval period being represented in the few buildings of stone;**
- f. The restricted palette of materials, prevalent ones being brick, handmade clay tile (for roof or tile hanging), weather boarding, painted render and slate;**
- g. The good historic street surfaces including several streets that are paved with cobbles;**
- h. The highly visible and important roofscape of jumbled historic clay-tiled roofs, its impact heightened by the topography of the town.**
- i. The distinctive and high quality, often historic, shop fronts and advertisements.**

4.87 Many non-designated heritage assets go unrecognised and therefore may fail to be taken into account during decision-making. Historic England encourages communities to produce 'local lists' of non-designated heritage assets to help ensure that their conservation needs are taken into account⁵⁹. Section 5: Community Aspirations includes the aim to compile such a list for Rye in consultation with Historic England and Rother District Council.

⁵⁹ <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/hpg/has/locallylistedhas/>

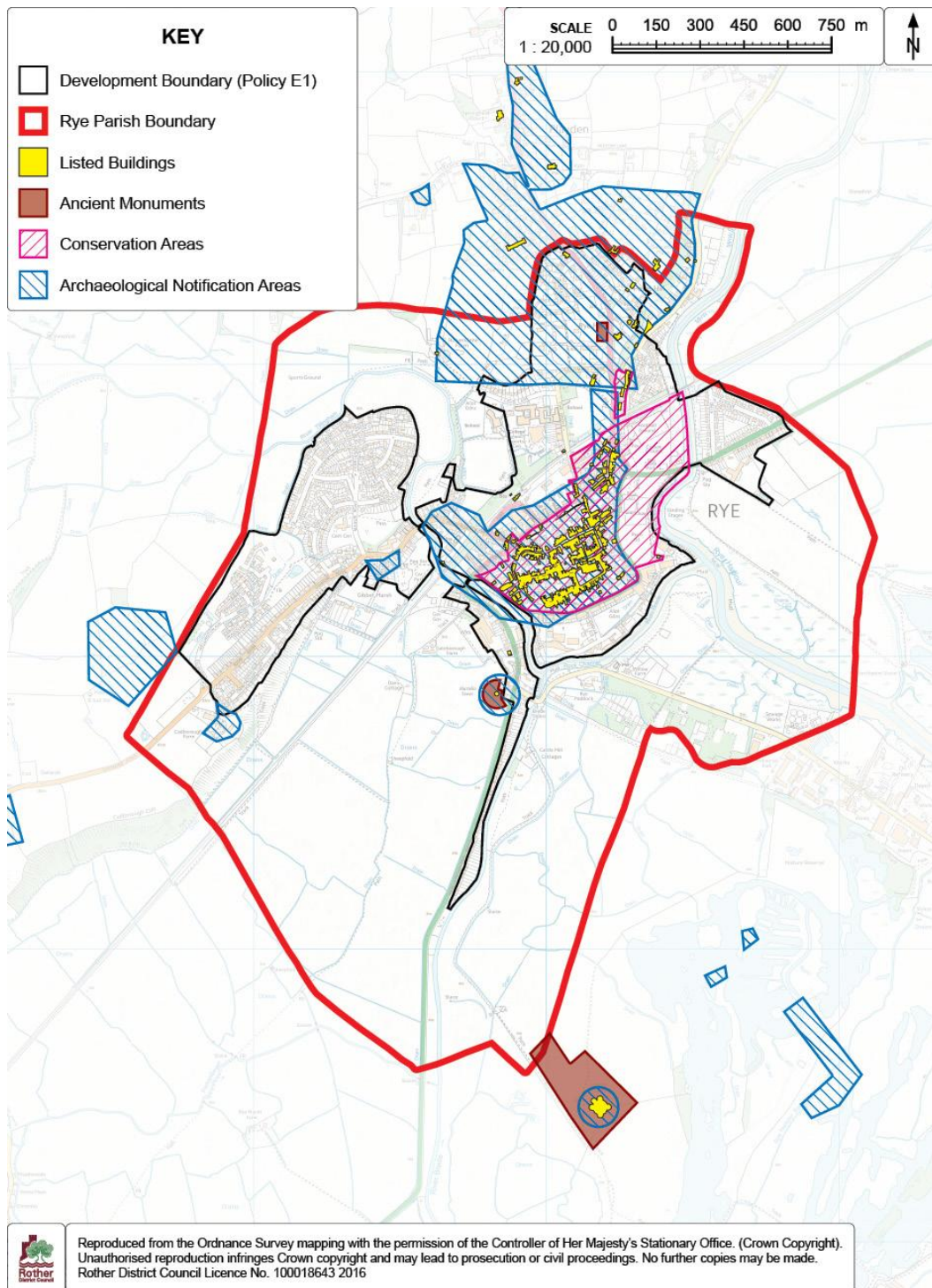


Figure 29: Rye Conservation Area and Other Heritage Designations

Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

4.88 The Government's National Planning Policy Framework expects local planning authorities to have a positive strategy to promote energy from renewable and low carbon sources. In response, the Core Strategy has a strategy (Policy SRM1) 'Towards a Low Carbon Future' which supports in principle proposals for renewable and low carbon energy generation schemes, particularly those utilising solar, biomass and wind energy technologies, that:

- a. do not have a significant adverse impact on local amenities, ecological and heritage assets or landscape character, and
- b. in respect of locations in or adjacent to the High Weald AONB and other sensitive landscapes, are generally small in scale.

The Rother Development and Site Allocations document seeks views on appropriate locations for wind turbines, opportunities to encourage biomass/wood fuel from local sources and the thresholds that should apply to the requirement on developers to submit an 'energy statement'. The following policy suggests that all development proposals should be accompanied by an energy statement proportionate to their scale, i.e. one for a house extension is likely to be much briefer than one for a development of ten houses. It also suggests a number of specific measures, some of which will not be acceptable in certain circumstances. For instance, solar panels will be carefully controlled where they could impact on the historic roofscape of Rye. Some of these measures will also only be appropriate for retro-fitting to existing buildings as new development would be expected to take a 'fabric first' approach such as the Passivehouse concept ⁶⁰.

⁶⁰ <http://www.passivehouse.com/>

Policy E4 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

All new developments shall be required to submit an ‘energy statement’ proportionate to the scale of development which explains how the proposal promotes the use of renewable and low carbon energy. Measures could include the following:

- a. The installation of smart meters for gas and electricity.**
- b. The fitting of solar panel systems where this is appropriate to the character of the building and the area.**
- c. Systems which permit energy storage (to transfer the 11am – 2 pm generation peak of a solar panel system to the evening demand peak between 6pm and 9pm).**
- d. Small scale individual and community energy generation systems including solar photovoltaic panels, biomass, anaerobic digestion and communal combined heat & power (CHP) units, ground and air source heat pumps.**
- e. Demand response systems (rather than supply side) integrated by Virtual Power Plant (VPP) to manage the timing of peak demands for electricity.**
- f, Ground source heat pump (GSHP) networks where they can be installed in new installations such as future flood defences.**

To encourage measures to handle landslip and rockfall

- 4.89 In parts of Rye, there is a local record of rock fall and landslip since medieval times, land above Military Road; the boundaries of the Citadel where there was no Town Wall; and Cadborough Cliff.
- 4.90 Planning Practice Guidance on Land Stability (6 March 2014) sets out the broad planning and technical issues in respect of development on or close to unstable land and states that planning authorities may need to consider identifying areas where particular consideration of such risks is needed, potentially limiting development in those areas or ensuring that there is appropriate land remediation or mitigation.
- 4.91 Building Regulations state that "The building shall be constructed so that ground movement caused by - ... landslip ... in so far as the risk can be reasonably foreseen, will not impair the stability of any part of the building." The Rother Development and Site Allocations document proposes Policy DEN6: Land Stability which says that: "Development will only be permitted on

unstable or potentially unstable land, including former landfill sites and coastal margins, where:

- a. the nature of the instability has been properly assessed; and
- b. any remedial measures required to ensure that the development does not add to the instability of the site or surrounding land are environmentally acceptable and normally implemented prior to the commencement of building works”.

4.92 If adopted, this policy would provide sufficient safeguards on this issue.

Section 5 – Community Aspirations

- 5.1 The process of preparing the RNP has resulted in the community raising a significant number of issues and suggested actions that cannot be addressed through the planning system. These are considered no less important; indeed, many would help to address the problems that have been created by development in the past. They might also mitigate the impacts of future development in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.2 What follows represents the aspirations of the community which can be acted on through community projects. Each will need to be considered by separate project teams, studies completed and if agreed then funding sought from a mix of sources: from partners, from community grants, from S106/CIL developers' contributions, or from private sources. These fall into the following themes:
- a. Heritage
 - b. Enterprise and Employment
 - c. Town Promotion and Tourism
 - d. Green Tourism
 - e. Traffic and Parking
 - f. Rail connectivity
 - g. Strand Water Project
 - h. Community Infrastructure and Services
 - i. Education and
 - j. Health

Heritage

- 5.3 The heritage assets of Rye are an integral part of its value to residents and as a visitor attraction. The community can help to protect these assets by raising awareness about heritage features that are not formally designated but are nonetheless important reminders of Rye's past. They can also work with partners to raise funds to restore heritage structures and items such as the Rother barge 'Primrose' which has been offered to Rye by Hastings Museum to relocate to display on the Strand. This barge is the only surviving Rother Barge and used to lay in the mud on the River Rother.

Community Aspiration 1 – Heritage

- a. To work with Historic England and Rother District Council to compile a local list of non-designated heritage assets in Rye.**
- b. To protect, through work with partners, Rye’s public heritage structures: including the Landgate Tower, remains of the Town Walls to the North of the Centre, the Town War Memorial and the lookouts in the west and east of the Citadel.**
- c. To encourage the movement of the Rother Barge “Primrose” from Hastings to Rye to a location to be decided on the Strand**
- d. To encourage the work of Rye Museum in recording and archiving local archaeology**



Figure 30: Rother Barge “Primrose”

Enterprise and Employment

Training for Specific Skills and Enterprise

- 5.4 The Town Council will work in partnership with the local authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), businesses and training providers to enable training and skills development. Local apprenticeship schemes will be strongly encouraged.

Community Aspiration 2 – Training

To encourage training opportunities for:

- a. the hospitality trade;**
- b. maritime related businesses in the Port of Rye; and**
- c. the fishing industry.**

Town Promotion and Tourism

- 5.5 Promotion of the Town as a visitor destination needs to happen in a more coherent and coordinated way, drawing together the several organisations involved. All organisations involved in marketing must work together and take a more joined up approach. Each website should provide links to the others where appropriate and should be updated regularly providing information about events, accommodation, transport and any other information needed by visitors.

Community Aspiration 3 – Town Promotion and Tourism

To better coordinate the marketing of the Town as a visitor destination.

Green Tourism

- 5.6 Green Tourism encourages organisations and businesses involved in tourism to improve their sustainability and there is a certification scheme to recognise their efforts⁶¹. Rye is in an excellent position to promote green tourism due to the extensive environmental assets within and around the town. The Town Council encourage visitors to Rye to use public transport where possible and provides details of local cycling routes, cycle hire, farmers' markets, and wildlife factsheets as well as details of local Green Tourism Business Scheme members.
- 5.7 One environmental asset within easy reach of the town is Rye Harbour Nature Reserve adjacent to Rye Parish. There is wildlife, habitat, landscape and walks beside the sea, whatever the season. The Nature Reserve lies within a large triangle of land extending south from Rye, along the River Rother, past

⁶¹ <http://www.green-tourism.com/>

Rye Harbour to the sea, westward to Winchelsea Beach and northwards along the River Brede. This triangle of land is largely designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest ([SSSI](#)) because of the many unusual plants and animals that live here as well as the way the land has been built up by the sea over the last 500 years.

- 5.8 Shingle wildlife is specialised because of the harsh conditions that prevail, so there are many rare and endangered plants and animals to be found here. Large gravel pits were created by shingle extraction and these have become a valuable habitat for wetland wildlife. Most of the area also has the European wildlife designations of Special Protection Area ([SPA](#)) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC). In 2006 the SSSI was included in the new 9,000+ ha. site called the Dungeness, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay SSSI.

Community Aspiration 4 – Green Tourism

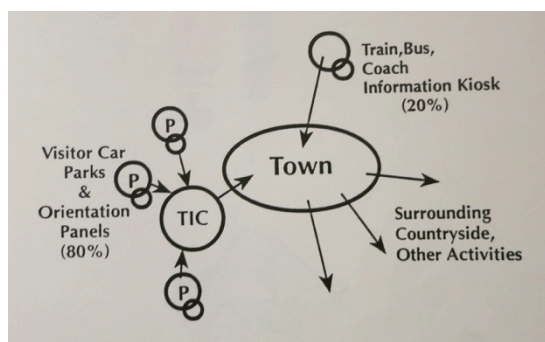
To encourage Green tourism and leisure, including support for the nearby Rye Harbour Nature Reserve

Traffic Issues

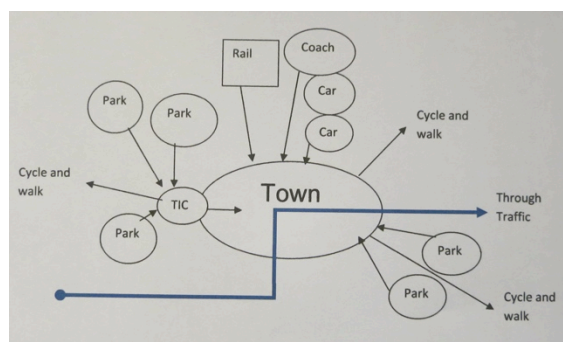
- 5.9 Traffic issues are very important to Rye, its residents and its businesses so are a significant element of the Community Aspiration Chapter. There is national guidance on how to improve traffic management such as Historic England's 'Streets for All (South East)'⁶² and DCLG/DfT's 'Manual for Streets'⁶³. Joint working with East Sussex County Council as Local Highways Authority will be key to developing holistic solutions and individual projects. Much work has already been done: the 1993 Rye Initiative was updated by Rother DC and the Rye Partnership in 2006 and revisited through the RNP. The strategic design concepts are shown below:

⁶² <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/streets-for-all/>

⁶³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/manual-for-streets>



1993



2016

Figures 31 and 32: Rye traffic management concepts

5.10 In 1987/8 the Ferry Road/Crownfields/Station Approach/Cinque Ports Street one-way system was introduced when a supermarket was built on the site of the former bus depot. The system does not properly address the needs of pedestrians, bus/train passengers and road users.

5.11 During the last five years, there has been:

- a. an extension of parking restrictions in South Undercliff to 7 days a week;
- b. the introduction of a one-way system in Deadmans Lane; and
- c. the creation of a single central High Street loading bay, which has had some positive effects on traffic problems in the centre of town, but without traffic enforcement is often used for unauthorised car parking.

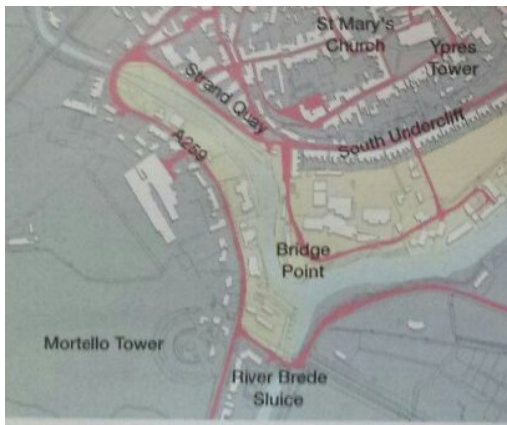
5.12 A wide range of issues and possible solutions were raised by the Community and considered by the Steering Group. These are set out in detail in the Evidence Background Paper. These have resulted in the aspirations below.

Through Routes

5.13 Improvements to through routes are the responsibility of Highways England in conjunction with East Sussex County Council. The former has explained that Rye is not a high priority for major road improvements, but has asked to be consulted further about aspirations which have arisen during the consultations.

Community Aspiration 5 – Through Routes

To consider some innovative improvements, including road widening of parts of the A259 from New Winchelsea Road to the Monkbretton Bridge, where land allows; improvements to the Harbour Road junction and a possible re-routing to bypass much of the Strand Quayside, as recommended by the Marks Barfield Study (Figures 34 and 50).



Now



Proposed by MarksBarfield

Figure 33 and 34: The Strand – examples of earlier schematic proposals

The Town Gateways

- 5.14 The Rye Initiative (1993) made recommendations about these which are generally considered to hold good today. Of the identified inner Town “gateways” two should be considered for improvement.

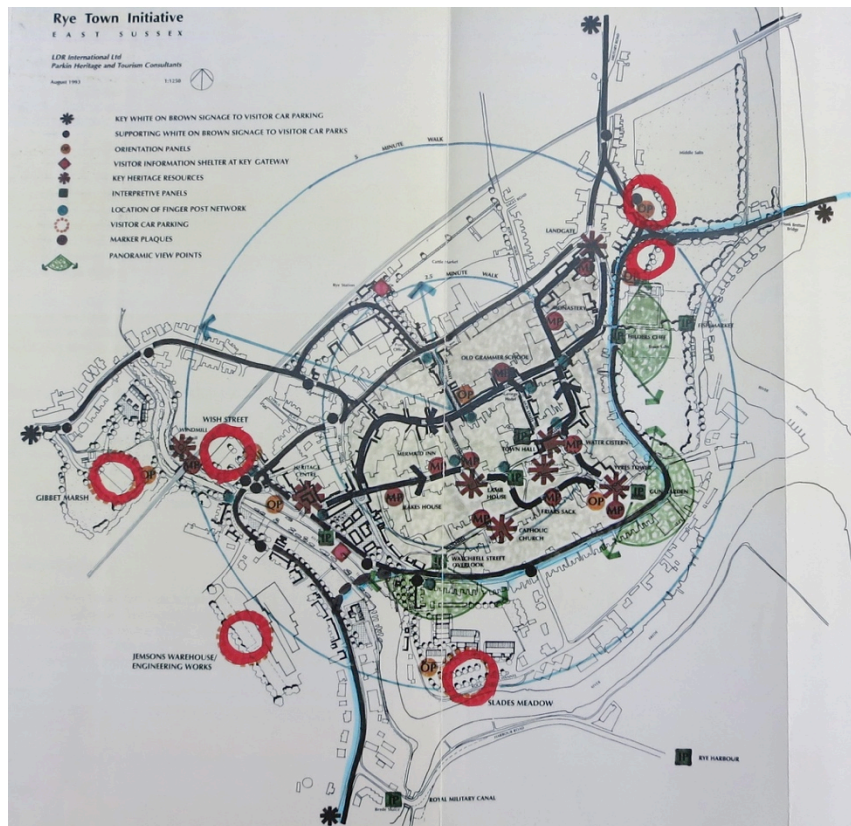


Figure 35: Town “Gateways” showing linkage with through and internal routes

- 5.15 Winchelsea Road to the Strand is part of the gateway to Rye from the West, a visitor attraction and therefore should be subject to further study. With its heritage buildings, cafes and antique shops, it is a major tourist attraction, but cars and people are mixed to the extent that safety is compromised. Many desire the location to be more pedestrian friendly and conducive for visitors.

Community Aspiration 6 – Town Gateways

To consider innovative approaches to the town gateways, including a form of ‘shared space’ street environment at the junction of Mermaid Street, Wish Ward and the Strand.

Ferry Road/Station Approach

- 5.16 The Station Approach is Rye’s multi-transport hub (railway station, bus stops, taxi rank, coach and car parking). It has related vehicle parking (Network Rail

and former Cattle Market), for cars and coaches, which is vital for those working in and visiting the Town.

- 5.17 This hub at peak times of travel and on Market Days, sees pedestrians crossing in all directions competing with vehicles travelling through Rye and manoeuvring to park. Safety of the location could be enhanced by considering innovative solutions such as “shared space” or multiple crossings. Clearer information displays and signage should also be provided, rather than the current confusing system.

Community Aspiration 7 – Ferry Road/Station Approach

To consider innovative improvements to Station Approach to make it more pedestrian friendly, accessible to cyclists and enhancing its appearance. Any approach might include improved pedestrian crossings perhaps combined with system of “shared space”.



Figure 36: Station Approach:

Parking

- 5.18 This is one of the most contentious issues for the community in 2016. It resulted in an inconclusive 2016 Public Meeting with the Sussex PCC to address the issues. The issues raised by residents together with the other evidence considered by the Steering Group are set out in the Evidence Background paper.

- 5.19 A strategic and holistic review is recommended, which should build on the work completed in the past, including as part of the 1993 Initiative. An outline strategy is suggested in the following community aspiration.



Figure 37 Vehicles parking on the pavements in the High Street.

Community Aspiration 8 – Parking Strategy

- a. Encourage people who drive to the town to park in the “interceptor car parks” (Car parks shown in RED on Figure 35). These have the potential to capture vehicles before they enter the town centre. This will require increased signage and consultation with partners setting parking fees at a level to make the option attractive..**
- b. Provide an improved town centre allocation of short term on-street car parking in the Town Centre with better clarity for users, more blue badge spaces and signage to underused parking areas. The on-street car parking zones need to be better allocated (loading, short stay, blue badge) and marked. Clear signage, designation and delineation of car parking bay areas without yellow lining is required to assist users.**
- c. Provide more capacity closer to the Town Centre, considering the feasibility of multilevel parking sites close to the Station subject to design/built form implications.**
- d. Consider more effective motorcycle parking provision at the Strand to meet existing peak demands and to create separation between bikes and pedestrians.**
- e. At peak tourist times consider Park and Ride, using existing sites, such as Gibbet Marsh.**
- f. Consider the creation of residents’ parking zones in certain areas of the town centre and station. This will prevent commuters and town centre employees from occupying residents’ parking areas.**
- g. Ensure that all new developments have adequate off-road parking.**
- h. Work with Rother DC, Network Rail and ESCC to provide preferential parking rates – for residents and town centre workers.**
- i. Encourage East Sussex County Council and other partners to improve parking management by introducing Civil Parking Enforcement by 2020.**

Electric Car Facilities

- 5.20 Electric cars are becoming more common and this trend is likely to increase with the Government's announcement that petrol and diesel cars will be phased out by 2040. However, there are no facilities in the area to recharge electric vehicles.



Figure 38: Example of electric car charging power point

Community Aspiration 9 – Electric Car Facilities

To consider establishing electric car parking facilities near the Station Approach.

Out of Town Bulk Delivery Handling

- 5.21 With increasing use of internet suppliers and “just in time” supplies for business there has been a rise in the number and frequency of LGV, HGV and vans entering the Town. Currently some companies such as Hermes Logistics and the Tuscan Restaurant use large supply vehicles to drop off at out of town storage (3 miles away in Rye Harbour where there are facilities for storage and handling). Smaller vehicles then supply goods to the Town Centre. By wider adoption of this process larger vehicles (up to 7.5T) could be restricted or removed from the High Street.

Community Aspiration 10 – Out of Town Bulk Delivery Facilities

To consider edge of edge-of-town storage facilities to remove large deliveries from the Town Centre

Improved Road Signage

- 5.22 To provide greater clarity of directions to car parking within the town and in response to comments and concerns of misunderstanding, clearer signage and better road markings are required. There are many examples of outdated and misleading signs, such as in Tower Street. Car parking control zone signs should be located at key entrances to the town particularly into the Town Centre. Well designed signs should also be placed to divert incoming traffic to those car parks acting as “interceptor parks” at Rye’s “gateways” (Figure 35).

Community Aspiration 11 – Improved Road Signage

To encourage a holistic review of all road and pedestrian signage with a view to redesigning to better guide visitors to “interceptor car parks” and to aid through traffic.

High Street

- 5.23 Comments from both the community and visitors indicate the need to create a more pedestrian-friendly and more ‘active’ Town Centre. The speed of traffic needs to be reduced and the control/management of on-street car parking improved. (Civil Parking Enforcement is being considered by East Sussex Council). Pedestrianisation is impracticable because of the lack of rear access for delivery vehicles and community transport. Other innovative options, including limited “shared space”⁶⁴ sections, in order to move on from established practice will require political will and determination, careful thought and observation, and the courage to explore and refine new solutions.



Figure 39: Examples of shared (road) space

⁶⁴ A term for an emerging approach to urban design both to reduce the adverse impacts of traffic in town centres and increase the safety of pedestrians. Although there is steep learning curve initially, it is seen that the Public quickly see the benefits.

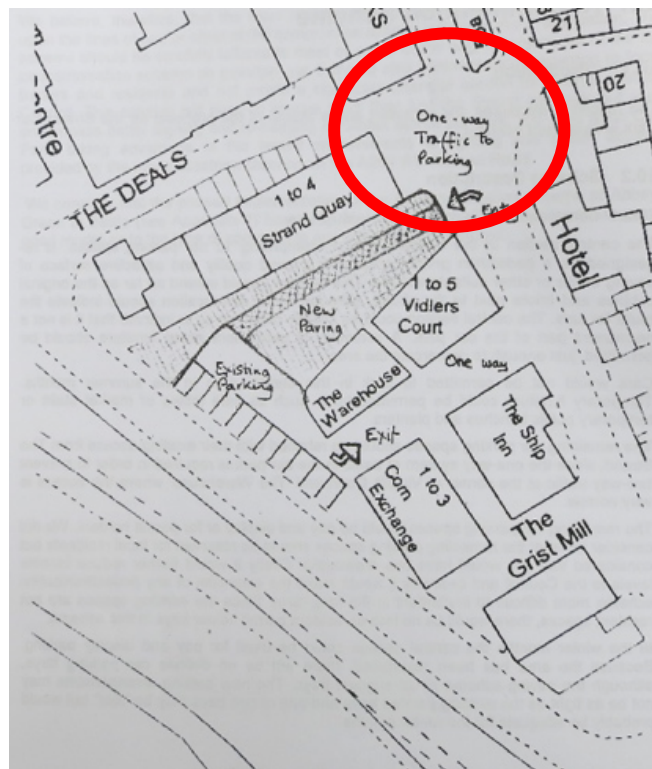


Figure 40: Detail of the Strand Junction

Community Aspiration 12 - High Street

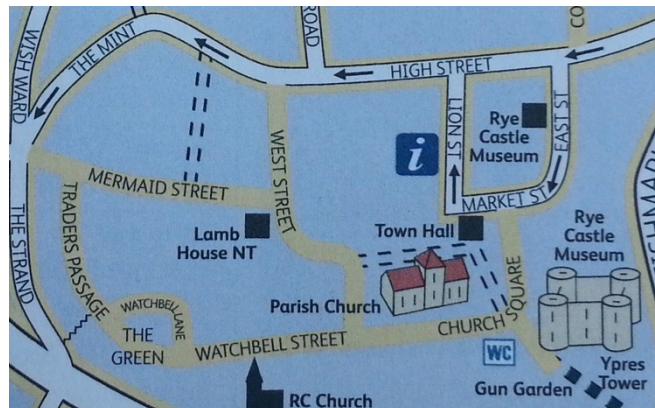
To consider innovative solutions to improve the roadscape of the broad location of the High Street from Hilders Cliff to the Mint and at the junction of the Mint, Mermaid Street and Wish Ward.

Inner Citadel

- 5.24 Timber framed medieval houses, cobbled surfaces, fragile narrow and often uneven pavements are all adversely affected by too much heavy and speeding traffic on the inner Citadel roads. Pavements are routinely mounted by vehicles in attempts to pass in single track roads, endangering pedestrians, property and street furniture.

Community Aspiration 13- Inner Citadel

To consider all measures to regulate traffic within the Inner Citadel to protect pedestrians, street furniture and property



Figures 41 and 42 : Citadel congestion

Speeding

- 5.25 Traffic calming and speed reduction measures have been considered for the main through roads. This Plan has considered several proposals to improve road safety and reduce the hazards caused by speeding vehicles (particularly those coming into the town) by the main access routes.

Community Aspiration 14 – Speeding

To support proposals for:

- a. A 20mph speed limit for the Citadel, Cinque Ports Street, Wish Ward, Ferry Road (as far as the level crossing), Station Approach, Tower Street and Landgate; and
- b. The installation at the town boundary on all 5 entry roads distinctive markings to remind all road users to comply with the 30mph limit and to proceed with care in the town.



Figures: 43 and 44: Examples of traffic speed regulation signs

Rail Connectivity

5.26 In its relatively isolated location at the eastern end of East Sussex, Rye needs improved infrastructure (road and rail) to increase connectivity to and from the town. Many, but not all, aspire to seeing the Fast Javelin Service (also known as HS1 extension) extended from Ashford to Bexhill with a stopping service at Rye. As and when fast Javelin rail services arrive to serve Rye, more parking will be needed for those coming into Rye from surrounding areas to catch trains. The proposal is being led by Network Rail along with East Sussex, Kent, Hastings and Rother Councils. Depending on the emerging outcomes of this work further consideration will be given to the implications, including parking. Strategic rail improvements will be supported:

Community Aspiration 15 – Rail Connectivity

To support:

- a. The Fast Javelin Train (HS1) extension from Ashford to Bexhill, stopping at Rye and Hastings; and
- b. Improvements to the existing rail service to provide better connection with mainline routes (later train times; more rolling stock) and other public transport using the Rye hub of Station Approach.
- c. Consideration of related overflow station parking using Gibbet Marsh



Figures 45 and 46: Rail transport

5.27 In 1895 the Rye and Camber Tramway was opened to connect Rye with a new golf course at Camber. The Rye & Camber Tramways Co. Ltd was liquidated in February 1949. Originally designed to cater for the transportation needs of golfers and their caddies to Rye Golf Club from Rye, the steam railway also took fishermen from Rye to their fishing boats moored opposite Rye Harbour village, where a river ferry could be hailed. During WW2 the line served military purposes between Rye and Rye Harbour (East Side). When built it was entirely on private land. Sections of the track and some infrastructure remain today.



Figures 47 and 48: The Rye Harbour Halt and sections of rail at Rye Golf Club.

5.28 A renewal project would provide an important “green” tourism attraction and would chime with trends in other parts of the Country where old rail lines have been reinstated. Any project would have to be coordinated with the work to develop the England Coastal Path (Eastbourne to Camber) by Natural England.

Community Aspiration 16 - Rye and Camber Railway

To encourage a project to reinstate the Rye & Camber Railway.

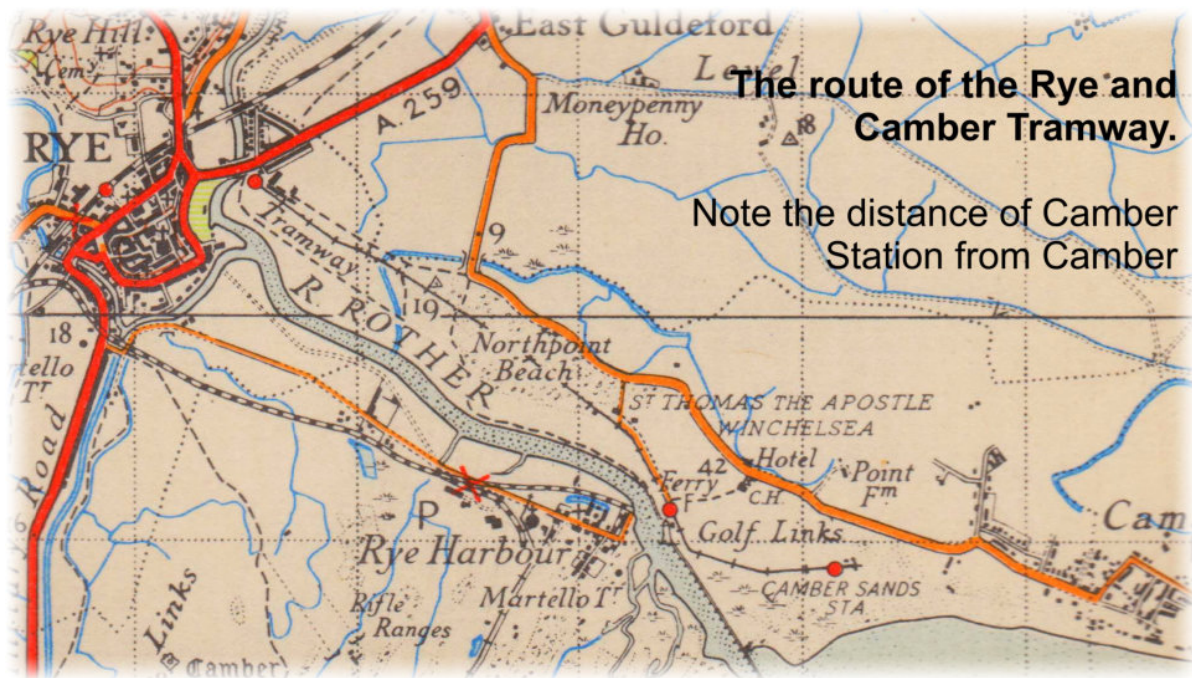


Figure 49: The Route of the Rye & Camber Railway East of the River Rother.

The Strand Water Project

- 5.29 Marks Barfield Architects⁶⁵ have carried out a study for Rother DC and the Environment Agency to look at ways of relieving traffic on the A259 around the Strand Quayside Broad Location and improving the location to make it more attractive for visitors. The highway improvements are covered by Community Aspiration 5 and the following aspiration supports the proposals for maintaining the water level at Strand Quay.

Community Aspiration 17 – Strand Water Project

To encourage an innovative project to maintain the water level at the Strand Quay to a depth of 1.5m and to provide ways over the River Rother to enhance the visitor experience.

⁶⁵ <http://www.marksbarfield.com/#/projects/>

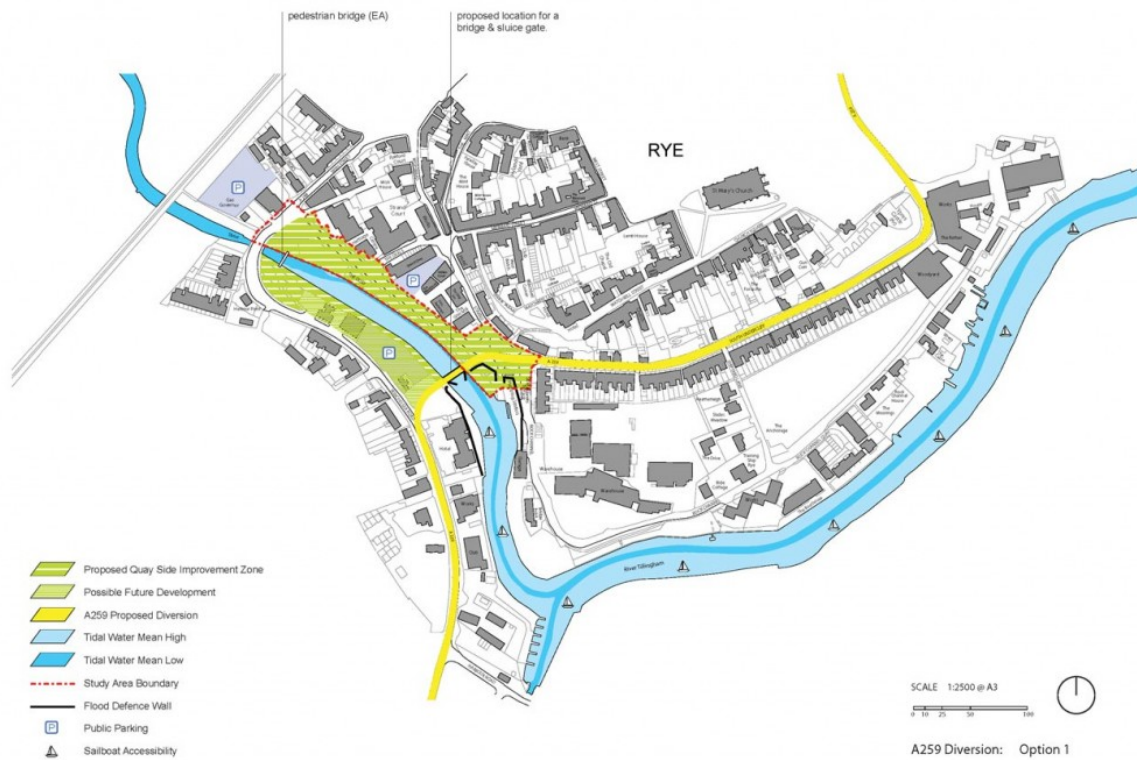


Figure 50: The Marks Barfield Project to improve the Rye Quayside Broad Location

Community Infrastructure and Services

- 5.30 There is a wide variety of community infrastructure needs in Rye Parish. These have been considered by a sub working group which recommended the following aspiration be included.

Community Aspiration 18 – Community Infrastructure and Services. Through the encouragement and support of existing community activities and facilities, including social enterprises, to:

- a. Enhance cultural and heritage activities, including at St Mary’s Church (and tower), Rye Castle Museum, Kino, the Rye Heritage Centre, the Conduit Hill Community Centre and Rye Art Gallery.**
- b. Support local organisations that enhance activities for young people**
- c. Support the local “Recycle Swap Shop”**
- d. Encourage the sale of Fairtrade goods**
- e. Retain and enhance the two existing allotment areas (Love Lane and South Undercliff) and community garden as part of the green infrastructure and community facilities.**
- f. Encourage a local domestic bulk waste facility for recycling perhaps sited at Rye Harbour.**
- g. Encourage high speed broadband communication with improved services across the Parish for both domestic and business use.**
- h. Support the publicly-accessible leisure centre and swimming pool to meet local needs.**

Education

5.31 The schools (covering age 2 to 16 years) in Rye are now governed by The Rye Academy Trust (RAT), including Rye College⁶⁶ and Rye Community

⁶⁶ <https://www.ryecollege.co.uk/>
https://ryeacademytrust.org/files/documents/Annual_Report_and_Financial_Statements_for_the_Year_Ended_31_August_2016.pdf

Primary School. The last includes the Pugwash Nursery. In 2016 there was a review of facilities with a view to enhancement and development.⁶⁷

- 5.32 Early years' provision is made independently (privately) at the Ferry Road Centre and also at the Grove Lane facility (co-located with Rye Community Primary School).

Community Aspiration 19 – Education

To encourage and support the expansion and enhancement of education facilities in Rye, consulting East Sussex County Council as required.

Health

- 5.33 The Community is able to choose to access medical services in one of two places locally: the Ferry Road Surgery and the Kiln Road Medical Centre co-located with the Rye Memorial Hospital. The latter is in the Parish of Rye Foreign.
- 5.34 Capacity and services should expand to cater for the increased population resulting from the implementation of this plan.

Community Aspiration 20 – Health

To encourage increased local medical services which support the increased community and reduce the need to travel

⁶⁷

https://ryeacademytrust.org/files/documents/Annual_Report_and_Financial_Statements_for_the_Year_Ended_31_August_2016.pdf

Section 6 – Delivery and Monitoring

Introduction

- 6.1 The Rye Neighbourhood Plan will be implemented through a combination of Rother District Council's consideration and determination of planning applications for development in the parish and through steering public and private investment into a series of infrastructure projects contained in the Plan. The community aspirations set out in Chapter 5 will inform projects to be led by Rye Town Council working in partnership with other relevant bodies, subject to funding being available.

Development Management

- 6.2 Most of the planning policies contained in the Neighbourhood Plan will be delivered by landowners and developers responding to its proposals for encouraging and managing development. In preparing the Plan, care has been taken to ensure, as far as possible, that these proposals are achievable.
- 6.3 Rother District Council will be responsible for determining planning applications for development within Rye Parish, in line with the Core Strategy, the Development and Site Allocations document and the Rye Neighbourhood Plan. The Town Council will use the Rye Neighbourhood Plan to frame its representations on submitted planning applications. It will also work with the authorities to monitor the progress of sites coming forward for development.

Infrastructure Projects

- 6.4 The Community Infrastructure Levy was implemented by Rother District Council in April 2016 and has largely replaced the pooling of S106 agreement financial contributions. It is charged on qualifying residential and retail development; further details are available at <http://www.rother.gov.uk/CIL>
- 6.5 At least 25% of the Levy collected by Rother District Council from development in the Parish of Rye will be transferred to the Town Council once it has a made Neighbourhood Plan. The projects set out in Section 5 will be put forward for inclusion in Rother District Council's infrastructure list (known as the Regulation 123 List) and will guide Rye Town Council's own expenditure of its proportion of the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Monitoring and Review of the Neighbourhood Plan

- 6.6 Changes in the local planning context, such as an increase in the housing requirement, a delay in allocated sites being delivered or a deficiency in the district's five year supply of housing land, could result in the Neighbourhood Plan needing to be reviewed. Rye Town Council will review the Plan annually, soon after the election of Mayor in April/May. The work will be

handled by the Rye Townscape and Planning Committee which will report against the policies and aspirations to full Council.

Acknowledgements

This Neighbourhood Plan represents 5 years' work, mostly by volunteer councillors and a group of citizens of Rye. These people held the conviction that without a plan Rye would remain a hostage to fortune to developers and others, who would then decide Rye's future development.

For all those who contributed the time and effort there are sincere thanks. We trust that the generations who follow will appreciate the work and build on it for the long term future.



**Mayor of Rye
Chair**

Vice Chair

Appendices:

- A List of those who prepared the Rye Neighbourhood Plan
- B Policies Map

Supporting Documents:

- *RNP Support 1: Evidence Background Paper*
- *RNP Support 2: Site Assessment Document*
- *RNP Support 3: Consultation Statement*
- *RNP Support 4: Strategic Environmental Assessment and supporting sequential and exception assessments*

Appendix A

List of those who participated in preparing the Rye Neighbourhood Plan

September 2013

Cllr Shaun Rogers (SR) (Chair) Colonel Anthony Kimber (AK) (Vice Chair, Neale East (Sec); Cllr Heidi Foster (HF), Prof Burton Rosner (BR), Mandy Turner (MT), Cllr Nigel Jennings (NJ), Canon Richard Orchard (RO), (Rye TC Advice) Cllr Sonia Holmes, Cllr Berni Fiddimore (BF), Cllr Mike Eve (ME), Andy Stuart (AS), Julian Luckett (JL), Town Clerk Richard Farhall (RF)

May 2014

Cllr Berni Fiddimore (BF) (Mayor and Chair), Colonel Anthony Kimber (AK) (Vice Chair and Secretary), Cllr Mike Eve (ME), Prof Burton Rosner (BR), Canon Richard Orchard (RO), Cllr Nigel Jennings (NJ), Cllr Shaun Rogers (SR), Andy Stuart (AS), Mandy Turner (MT), Cllr John Breeds (JB), Cllr Heidi Foster (HF). Richard Farhall (RF) (Town Clerk).

May 2015

Berni Fiddimore (BF) (Mayor and Chair); Colonel Anthony Kimber (AK) (Vice Chair and Secretary), Cllr Cllr Shaun Rogers (SR), Cllr Ray Prewer (RP), Cllr Cheryl Creaser (CC), Cllr Andy Stuart (AS), Mike Eve (ME), Heidi Foster (HF), Cllr Pat Hughes (PH), Dan Lake (DL), Prof Burton Rosner (BR), Frank Palmer (FP), Cllr John Breeds (JB), Canon Richard Orchard (RO), Richard Farhall (RF) (Town Clerk),

May 2016

Cllr Jonathan Breeds (JB) (Mayor and Chair); Colonel Anthony Kimber (AK) (Vice Chair and Secretary), Cllr Shaun Rogers (SR), Cllr Ray Prewer (RP), Cllr Cheryl Creaser (CC), Cllr Pat Hughes (PH), Prof Burton Rosner (BR), Frank Palmer (FP), Heidi Foster (HF), Cllr Berni Fiddimore (BF), Cllr Andy Stuart (AS), Mike Eve (ME), Dan Lake (DL), Canon Richard Orchard (RO), Richard Farhall (RF) (Town Clerk)

2017

Cllr Jonathan Breeds (JB) (Mayor and Chair), Colonel Anthony Kimber (AK) (Vice Chair and Secretary), Cllr Cheryl Creaser (CC), Cllr Berni Fiddimore (BF), Cllr Shaun Rogers (SR), Mike Eve (ME), Cllr Ray Prewer (RP), Cllr Andy Stuart (AS), Dan Lake (DL), Cllr Pat Hughes (PH), Frank Palmer (FP), Prof Burton Rosner (BR), Canon Richard Orchard (RO), Heidi Foster (HF).; Richard Farhall (RF) (Town Clerk),

Key Functions – Leads

Vision and Objectives (Previous Mayors Cllr Berni Fiddimore, Cllr Shaun Rogers and Vice Chair, Col Anthony Kimber)

Housing (Handled by the Steering Group : Vice Chair Steering Group, Col Anthony Kimber. Involved Cllr Bernadine Fiddimore, Cllr John Breeds, Cllr Shaun Rogers and Cllr Ray Prewer and Cllr Cheryl Creaser).

Community infrastructure: (former Cllr) Heidi Foster , Chris Coverdale, Jack Ash

Transport/traffic: John Howlett, Kenneth Bird,

Business and Enterprise: (Former Cllr) Mike Eve.

Environment: (Former Cllr) Nigel Jennings, Mike Slavin.

Advice and Plans. Dominic Manning

Evidence: Vice Chair Col Anthony Kimber; Prof Burton Rosner and Canon Richard Orchard

Budget and Workplan: Vice Chair Col Anthony Kimber and Richard Farhall,Town Clerk) including links with Locality, RTPI, Planning Aid and Action in Rural Sussex (AIRS).

Communication and Engagement strategy: Col Anthony Kimber and Town Clerk. Both attend the fortnightly Rye Town Planning meeting to update, raise issues and seek approvals for key steps. In addition they coordinate input to annual Town Meetings, special RNP open events and attendance at planning seminars in the Southeast.

Website, Facebook and Twitter: Colonel Anthony Kimber

Community Asset Register: Cllr Andy Stuart

Rye Town Council Linkage and Advice Richard Farhall: Town Clerk

Consultees and Contributors

Aroncorps
Martello Developments
Martin and Stubbs Estate Agents
Jempsons Transport
Plutus Estates
McCarthy and Stone
Amicus Horizon (now Optivo)
Orbit Homes
Eric Bourne

Jonathan Jempson
Jonathan Dunn Architects
The Harbour Master of Rye
Rye Tennis Club
Rye Leisure Centre
Rye Academy Trust
Rastrum Ltd Rye Harbour
Rye Academy
Rye Medical Centre
Early Years Rye
The Rye and District Memorial Hospital

Statutory Consultees

Rother District Council
The Environment Agency
ESCC
Natural England
Historic England
Highways England
SGN
National Grid
Southern Water
Rye Partnership

Appendix B – Policies Map

