

Burwash Neighbourhood Development Plan 2020-2028



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Foreword

Burwash Parish is special. Located deep in the heart of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) our parish is steeped in history.

We want to encourage growth and progress in ways which protect and respect our landscape and heritage. This means ensuring that we support and grow our local economy, so that the custodians of the land, farmers, landowners and all those whose work to maintain the land are enabled to continue into the future.

While some residents commute, many more work locally. We have recently actively facilitated two housing developments which meet local needs and are in keeping with this unique environment. We want to ensure that everyone who contributes to our community and economy can live here, so that our villages can flourish for generations to come. We see the delivery of new housing as extremely important in meeting these aims.

In January 2016, Burwash Parish Council (BPC) agreed to proceed with a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for the entire parish – Burwash, Burwash Weald and Burwash Common. This Plan has been developed in line with the expectations of the Localism Act 2011, which gives communities the ability to exercise more control over future developments in their area, reflecting local needs and preferences. After four years of investigation and extensive consultation we are pleased to present to you the Burwash NDP.

In the creation of this Plan, we have paid careful attention to everyone's housing needs. We know we need more housing and we want to meet these needs by providing suitable and sustainable homes. We have carried out a comprehensive review of the land available, including sites put forward during our Call for Sites and ensured that the community has been central to our extensive consultation.

Our community has been clear in its requirements, which are, in outline:

- To protect the AONB
- To retain the current development boundaries
- To welcome developments which meet the needs of our rural community

Our policies directly reflect the dual aspirations of meeting local housing needs and protecting this unique historical place. It was heart-warming to see the huge level of response to the pre submission consultation and the level of support at over 94% demonstrates to us that the NDP truly reflects the views of the local community and meets the aims of the Localism Act.

In the course of preparing the Plan, during 2017, applications were submitted by developers on the two main sites that had been identified in the 2013 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). These two sites - Watercress Field (Strand Meadow) and Shrub Meadow ('Denton Homes') were for 30 and 45 new houses (later amended to 42 new homes at RDC request) respectively. Both applications resulted in unprecedented levels of objections from the community. They were both turned down by the elected members of the RDC Planning Committee. The developers for each site subsequently appealed but Watercress Field was turned down on Appeal in July 2019 while Shrub Lane was withdrawn before the Appeal scheduled for January 2019.

BPC resolved in May 2019 to proceed with the Plan including the target of 52 new homes without allocating sites since the two main sites on which the target was based had been tested and refused and no other suitable sites were identified during the Call for Sites.

Whilst we understand that Officers at RDC have been under pressure to increase the number of units coming forward, as RDC does not have the required level of pipeline cases, we consider that this should not compromise objective planning assessment and the correct application of the Neighbourhood Plan process. The key sites on which the original target of 52 were based have been scrutinised and the community proven correct in their view that they are not suitable. BPC has, therefore resolved to approve the plan on the basis of no site allocation, while accepting of RDC's target of 52 new homes.

This objective, evidence based Plan reflects the needs and wishes of the community and follows the national and local planning framework and regulations. We have been committed to finding sites to meet the numbers required throughout. The Plan has been overwhelmingly endorsed by the Community.

This Plan has now been submitted to Rother District Council (RDC). After this it will be subject to consideration by an independent Examiner. If it is approved by the Examiner we will hold the required local community referendum on the NDP. Currently any such referendum process is suspended due to restrictions introduced because of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

The referendum will be held as soon as possible. NDP's awaiting a referendum are to be regarded as a material planning consideration.

A majority vote in favour of the NDP will allow the Plan to be formally adopted. Thereafter it must be taken into account by developers, planners and local authorities when making or considering new developments in our Parish.

Finally, we would like to thank the many individuals and organisations who have freely given so much of their time. BPC and the Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group (NDPSG) wish to thank the community for their continued involvement in this important work. Without your contributions, this Plan would not have been possible.

Ian Rees and Nick Moore
Joint Chairmen of the Burwash NDP Steering Group

Councillor Bob Franklin
Chairman of Burwash Parish Council

Executive Summary

1. The Localism Act 2011 gives communities the ability to exercise more control over future developments in their area by creating their own Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP).
2. In January 2016, Burwash Parish Council (BPC) agreed to proceed with the NDP for the entire Parish. After four years of investigation and extensive consultation this final document has been produced.
3. We have submitted this final document to Rother District Council (RDC) for a further six-week consultation and then to an Examiner for independent examination. If the Plan passes examination, a Parish Referendum will be held. If the majority of votes cast are in favour of the NDP it will then be 'made' (adopted) and its policies will be a material consideration in all future planning applications in Burwash.
4. Initial consultation brought together a number of local residents who volunteered to work on specific aspects of this Plan. The NDP Steering Group was formed along with four Sub-Groups covering the following aspects of this NDP:
 - Environment
 - Infrastructure (including Leisure, Economy and Tourism)
 - Housing
 - Consultation and Communications
5. Detailed investigation and extensive consultations have been carried out over the past four years to inform the production of this Plan. A range of policies has been developed which reflect the views of the community on where new developments should be built; what they should look like, what supporting infrastructure should be provided and how they should meet local housing need. These policies provide a framework for planning applications for the new buildings this community wants to see built in the future.
6. Options for sites for the development of new homes were looked at in order to meet the Burwash housing target set by RDC of 52 new homes by 2028. This target only relates to Burwash village as Burwash Weald and Burwash Common were not given a housing target by RDC in view of their status as hamlets and relative lack of accessibility to key facilities and services.
7. RDC has introduced a rule stating that only developments of six or more new homes within the development boundary are allowed to count towards the housing target they have set. An analysis of all planning applications across the Parish since 2002 shows that only four schemes would have met this requirement. Two of these schemes involved the recently completed Old Rectory Court site, which saw the redevelopment of 18 existing units replaced by 19 new units and the completion in 2018 of Morris Court (10 units) which has also not been counted in the housing target by RDC as it is an Exception Site.
8. RDC's rule of only counting six or more new homes does not work in rural areas such as Burwash. Historically, new schemes have been on a small scale reflecting the ownership of the land which is predominantly held in small parcels.
9. A thorough review of all development opportunities was undertaken. This looked at the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) carried out by RDC

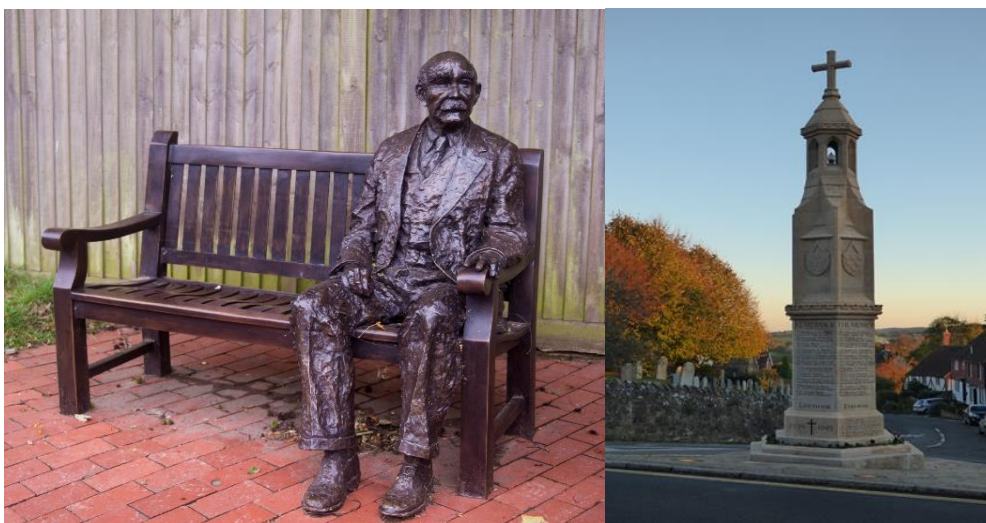
which informed our housing target. In addition, we asked RDC to consider two additional sites for development which, following detailed consideration, they subsequently rejected.

10. We also carried out a Call for Sites which brought forward four potential development sites (three were new and one, The Glebe, had already been considered and graded 'red' within the SHLAA). Following presentations, detailed evaluation and consultation sessions with residents it was decided that none of these sites were suitable for development.
11. The decisions taken by RDC to refuse the "Denton Homes" and Strand Meadow planning applications were also considered along with our wish to protect the High Weald AONB.
12. Further details of the review and assessments are included in Section 4 of this document under 'Housing' and supported by more detailed information in the appendices.
13. We have concluded that there are no suitable development sites, which meet RDC's rule of six or more homes, and which will be supported by RDC and the community. For this reason we are not allocating any sites for development within this Plan.
14. If this Plan is adopted the current housing target of 52 new homes by 2028 will still apply but all new planning applications will be assessed in the light of the policies set out in the agreed NDP. Applications which meet these requirements will be welcomed and supported.
15. The Parish Council and the community share the view that we would like to see RDC amend its current rule concerning six or more new homes counting towards the housing target and for Exception Sites to also be counted. It is felt that these unnecessary rules inhibit our ability to meet the housing target set by RDC. These changes would help us to deal with some of the difficulties we are facing in identifying available development land, centred as we are in the heart of the High Weald AONB.
16. The Parish Council remains committed to exploring other schemes as exception sites like the highly successful Morris Close development in order to provide affordable housing for the community. It will also be looking into the merits of setting up a vehicle such as a Community Land Trust to assist in the delivery of new homes.



History of Burwash Parish

17. Burwash Parish has been inhabited since prehistoric times, with archaeological findings in Burwash Weald at Willingford Bridge dating from the Stone Age and evidence of Iron Age inhabitants from the Roman Forge nearby. At the time of the Norman Conquest, Burwash was a hilltop settlement with a wooden church, which was replaced in 1090 by the stone church of St Bartholomew's.
18. By the 13th century, Burwash had emerged as an important trading centre, which prompted King Henry III to grant a weekly market from 1252, an annual three-day fair in May and an additional annual fair on August 24th.
19. During the Elizabethan and Stuart periods, many of the older buildings were rebuilt or replaced, and during the 18th century many timber-framed houses were tile-hung. Burwash still has an exceptionally high proportion of medieval buildings in its High Street. The Parish has 137 listed buildings, with most of them in the High Street Conservation area.
20. In the 18th and 19th centuries Burwash gained a reputation for smuggling; several smugglers' graves can still be seen in the churchyard of St Bartholomew's. The main route connecting Heathfield and Hawkhurst, then a toll-road and now in part the A265, was a notorious spot for highwaymen.
21. Today, the Parish retains very many of the characteristics of its rich history. The communities in the three ridge-top villages of Burwash, Burwash Weald and Burwash Common, continue to enjoy the beauty of the protected High Weald AONB which surrounds them.
22. Burwash is closely linked with the author Rudyard Kipling. Kipling lived at Bateman's, now owned and managed by the National Trust, from 1902 until his death in 1936. Many of his best-known works were produced here including "Puck of Pook's Hill" and the poem "The Land" which is about Bateman's. Bateman's is visited by around 129,000 people each year. A statue of Kipling sitting on a bronze bench was commissioned by the BPC and paid for by donations from the local community. It was unveiled in February 2019. Kipling's son is named on the Memorial.



Character Appraisal

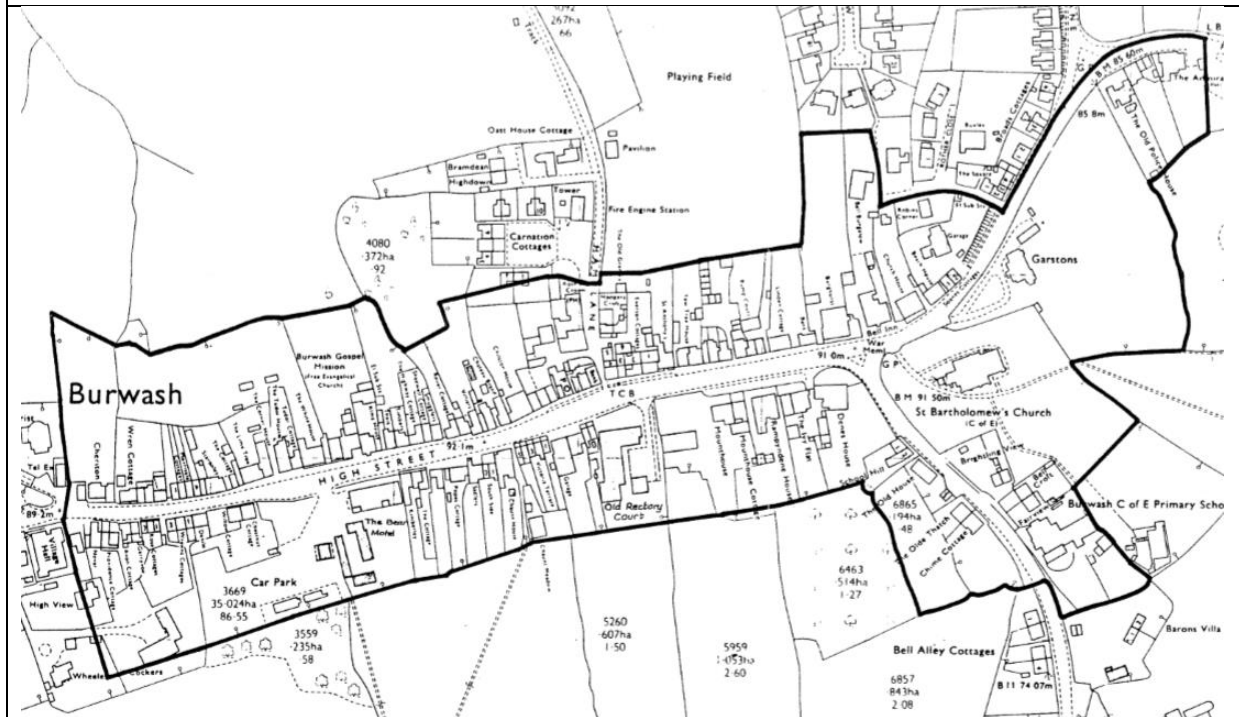
What is a Character Appraisal?

23. Planning future growth and development for the Parish requires a broad understanding of its characteristics and appearance. The Character Appraisal is a factual and objective report and includes an analysis of the elements which make an area distinctive, such as historic properties, open spaces, building materials, property types, state of maintenance and landscape setting.

Key Characteristics

24. The Character Appraisal covers the entire Parish, but focuses on the three villages of Burwash, Burwash Weald and Burwash Common.
25. Most of the housing in the Parish is set either on the prominent ridgetop or along the several historic routeways which radiate steeply downwards into the Rother and Dudwell river valleys on either side of the ridge and continue as narrow, winding rural lanes, many of which link to neighbouring settlements. The Parish was selected by English Heritage in its 2005 Historic Landscape Characterisation Project as a classic example of the landscape features of the Upper Rother and Dudwell High Weald AONB. It comprises spectacular valley landscapes with far-reaching views to the north and south across a series of ridges, floodplains and ancient woodland and, as noted by The Royal Geographical Society, has some of the best-preserved medieval field systems to survive unscathed in northern Europe. When considering future developments, it is vital that these important historical features are protected and retained.
26. Burwash Village High Street makes up most of the Parish Conservation Area. The Medieval and Georgian homes and frontages – mixing hung tile finishes, white weatherboarding, wooden sash windows and tall chimneys – have earned Burwash its reputation as one of the most picturesque and historically significant villages in East Sussex and gives it its distinctive character.
27. Burwash Common and Burwash Weald are predominantly linear settlements along the A265 road. Many houses sit on individual plots with generous gardens and behind mature hedges and fences. There is an attractive mixture of traditional Georgian and Victorian cottages and farmhouses. Houses have mostly been added singly or in small clusters reflecting the historical settlement pattern.
28. In Burwash Village, there have been a number of small post-war ‘estate’ developments; Highfields, Rother View, Rosemary Gardens, Strand Meadow, Hornbeam and Beechwood Close, The Old Orchard and, most recently, Morris Close which was completed in 2018. In addition, four units on the Old Laundry site were completed in 2016, and the rebuild of Old Rectory Court which has recently been completed in the High Street adds a net gain of one additional unit to the original number. Some designs have complemented the traditional style of the locality better than others, and some designs have been unsuitable for their AONB setting.
29. The full Character Appraisal and listed buildings are appended to this plan. (See Appendix C).

Map of Burwash Conservation Area



Purpose of the Neighbourhood Development Plan

Our Parish

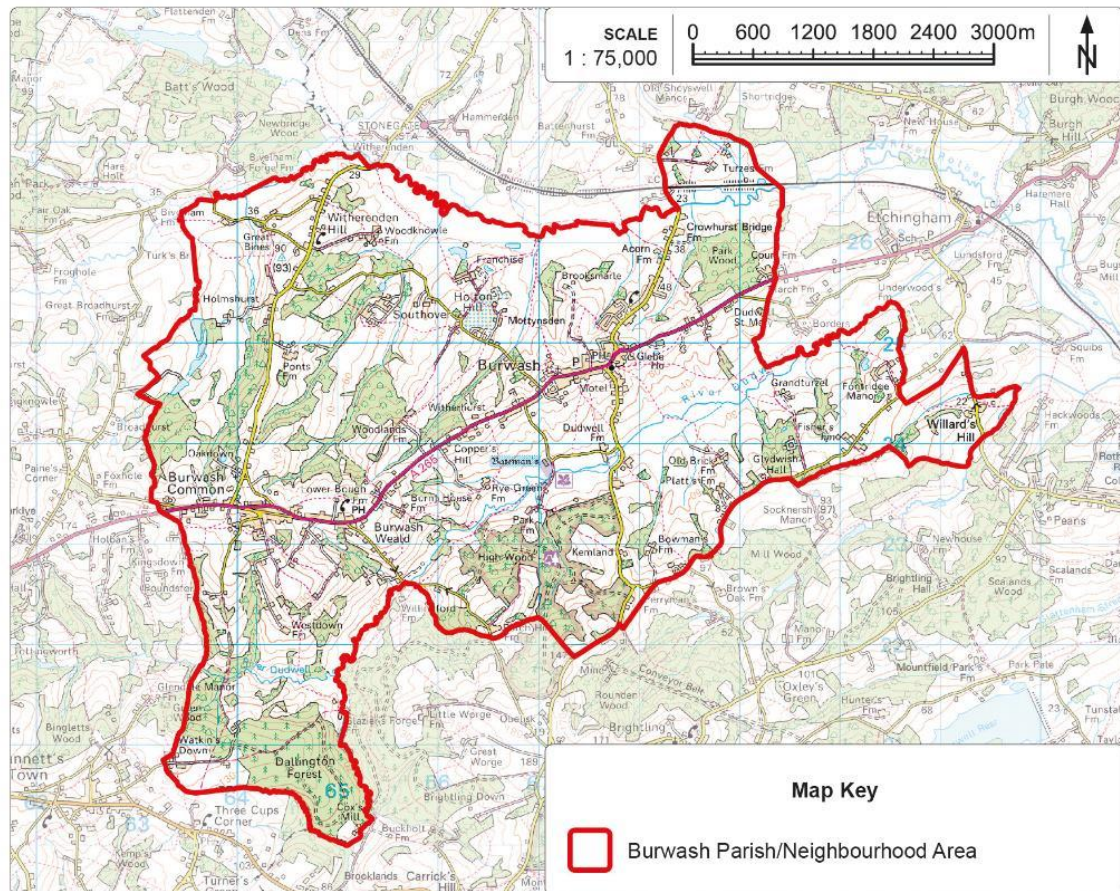
30. The Parish of Burwash lies in East Sussex. The parish comprises three separate villages – Burwash itself, Burwash Weald and Burwash Common. For the purposes of local government administration it has a Parish Council and forms part of Rother District. Its local councils are East Sussex County Council and Rother District Council (RDC).
31. The three villages are ridgetop settlements with steep river valley sides affording spectacular views across the Weald and towards the coast. The entire Parish is within the High Weald AONB. The 2011 Census showed the Parish comprised of 2,713 inhabitants in 1,178 households.

What is a Neighbourhood Development Plan?

32. The Localism Act 2011 gives communities additional powers to establish planning policies for the development and use of land in a neighbourhood. This enables local people to guide and shape development in their area. NDPs can shape and influence where development should go, what it should look like, and what supporting infrastructure should be provided.
33. An NDP should support the strategic development needs set out in RDC's Local Plan and Core Strategy and plan positively to support local development (as outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework).
34. An NDP should address the development and use of land and include land use policies. This is because, if successful at examination and referendum, the NDP will become part of the statutory Development Plan once it has been 'made' (brought into legal force) by the planning authority. Applications for planning permission must then be determined in accordance with the NDP, unless material considerations indicate otherwise (see section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
35. This NDP has been prepared in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012, the Localism Act 2011 and Directive 2001/42/EC on Strategic Environmental Assessment.



Map showing the Parish boundary and Neighbourhood Development Plan area



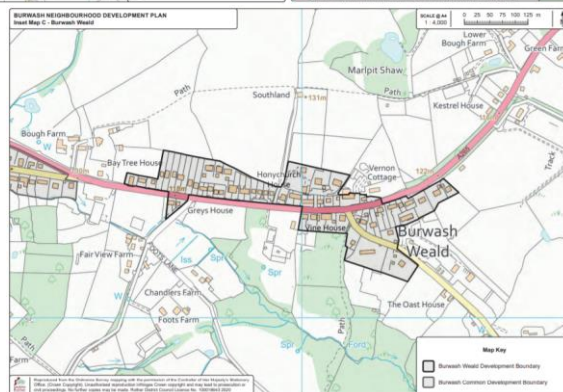
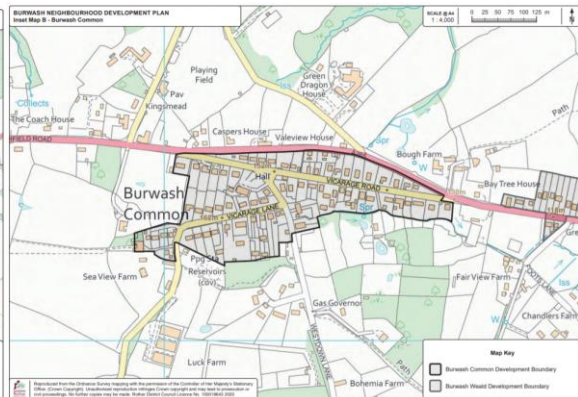
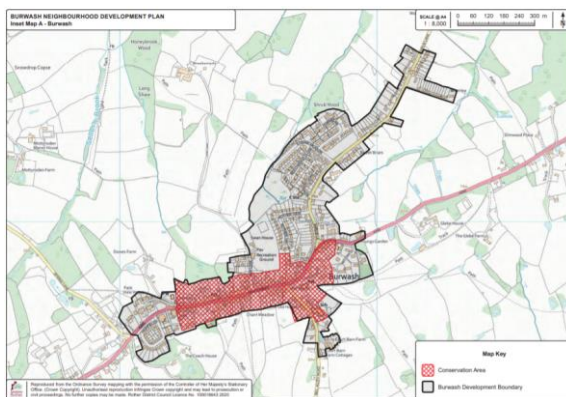
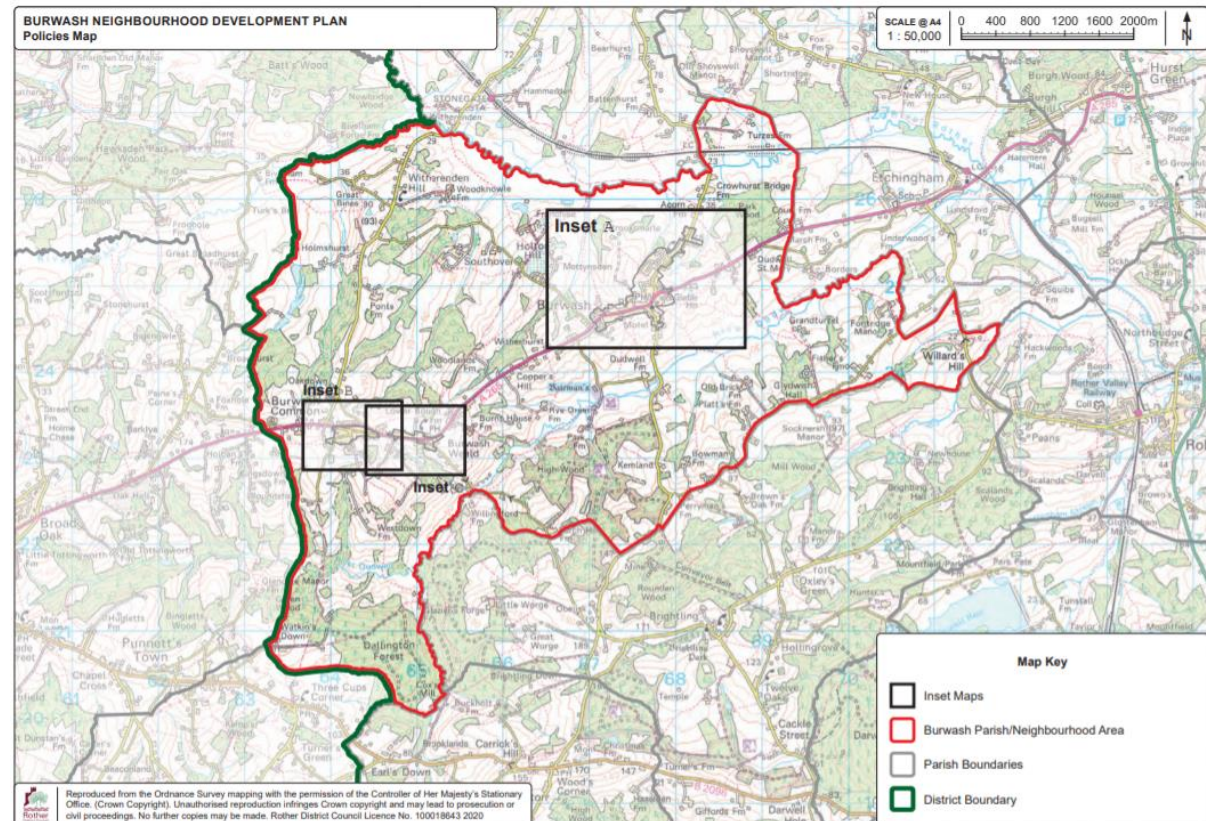
Context

36. The Burwash NDP sets out a series of local policies approved by the community, which will govern decisions made by planners on new development. These policies must comply with legislative requirements as follows:

- a. Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to make the order (or neighbourhood plan).
- b. The making of the order (or neighbourhood plan) is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area).

Burwash Neighbourhood Development Plan

The following maps show the Development Boundaries for Burwash, Burwash Weald and Burwash Common as defined by Rother District Council



How the Plan was developed

Decision to proceed

37. The decision to go ahead with developing an NDP for Burwash was taken by BPC in January 2016. This decision was formally registered and accepted by RDC in June 2016.

Setting up the Steering Group

38. A number of local residents volunteered to assist with the development of the plan and together they made up the NDP Steering Group.

Creation of Sub-Groups

39. Four Sub-Groups were set up to work on specific aspects of the plan and to report to the Steering Group. These were:

- Infrastructure (including Leisure, Economy and Tourism)
- Environment
- Housing
- Consultation and Communication.

40. The Steering Group and Sub-Groups carried out widespread consultations and research, identifying issues and objectives and developing required policies.

Developing the Plan

41. Through a combination of questionnaire surveys, public consultations, workshops, village events, e-mail correspondence and meetings with local businesses, the Steering Group was able to collect the views of the residents on what they wished to see for the future of their parish. For residents, the most important aspects they wished the Neighbourhood Plan to address included Environment, Housing and Infrastructure (including Leisure, Economy and Tourism).

42. The vision and objectives in this document were presented to both the community and BPC as a sound basis for proceeding with the NDP. There were various consultation events which informed the vision and objectives.

43. Further details on the consultation events and questionnaire results can be found in Appendices A, H, K and L.

44. The following list is a summary of the steps taken to produce the NDP:

- a. A consultation questionnaire sent out to all households asking for their input into the key components of the Neighbourhood Plan (October/November 2016)
- b. Publicity stands at the Summer and Christmas Fairs (2017 and 2018)
- c. Stalls at the Annual Assembly (2017 and 2018)
- d. Transport and Traffic surveys covering the entire Parish (December 2017, summer 2018 and February 2019)
- e. Call for Sites (February 2018)
- f. Vision and Objectives consultations (February/March 2018)
- g. A Housing Needs Questionnaire (April 2018)

- h. Air Pollution surveys (from June 2018 and ongoing)
- i. Dark Skies Monitoring (early spring 2018)
- j. A Biodiversity survey of the Parish by the Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre (November 2018)
- k. Site promoters/landowner presentations (April 2018)
- l. A survey of local businesses (April/June 2018)
- m. Community Consultation on the Call for Sites (July 2018)

Community Engagement

- 45. Obtaining the views of the community has been an essential part of the development of this plan.
- 46. The various consultation events gave residents and other stakeholders (e.g. local businesses) the opportunity to contribute to its shape, key messages and policies. A full description of the community engagement process is included in the Communication Strategy. (See Appendix B)

Evidence Gathering

- 47. The Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group (NDPSG) began with a review of RDC's Core Strategy and Local Plan to ensure that our Plan addressed their objectives. Members of the NDPSG met with the High Weald AONB unit and reviewed their Management Plan and the ESCC Landscape Character Assessment. The NDPSG reviewed Parish records and relevant published statistical information including the Office of National Statistics, Census and East Sussex in Figures (ESiF). The Sub-Groups researched extensively, undertook surveys and engaged in community discussions to produce the documents in the Appendices.

Pre-Submission Consultation (Regulation 14)

30th May to 18th July 2019

- 48. The draft plan was approved by Burwash Parish Council and the consultation was launched at the Parish Annual Assembly on Thursday 30th May, which was attended by over 50 local residents.
- 49. 550 copies of the Plan were printed. These were a combination of the full plan and a summary document which set out the Executive Summary, proposed policies and future projects.
- 50. These plans and copies of a two paged leaflet which set out the consultation process, an outline summary of the Plan and how to obtain more information were made freely available throughout the Parish in the local store, butcher's shop, Pavilion, Internet Café and the three local public houses.
- 51. The accompanying leaflet was posted to all dwellings in the Parish. This also advertised two drop-in sessions which were arranged to allow local residents to come along and raise any issues or points of clarification.
- 52. Posters were also distributed around the Parish and two large banners, advertising the consultation, were displayed in Burwash Common and in Burwash Village.

53. Individual letters encouraging replies were also sent to:
- 77 local businesses
 - 27 local community groups and societies
 - the 4 Call for Sites landowners
54. Two further leaflets were posted to all dwellings in the Parish on the 1st and 11th July to highlight the impending closure of the consultation process on 18th July.
55. The Plan was notified to 35 statutory consulting bodies with 72 emails sent. Ten of these bodies responded.
56. Within the Burwash NDP website an electronic response form was set up to record the community's comments, and the volunteers at the Internet Café were available to assist any residents who needed help to complete their return. NDP postal boxes were provided at the Internet Café, the butcher's shop and the Burwash Common Pavilion for residents to place written returns.
57. The plan and all appendices were made available on the Burwash NDP website and responses could be made online through this route. Throughout the consultation period the consultation was featured on the Burwash Parish Council website and app with regular prompts being sent. The consultation was also advertised regularly on Facebook.
58. The two drop-in sessions were held on Saturday 8th June at the Burwash Common Playing Fields Pavilion in the morning and at the Internet Café in Burwash village in the afternoon. These were attended by over 70 local residents.
59. Various other parish events were used to promote the consultation and encourage responses. These included:
- Burwash Common quiz night
 - Rose and Crown quiz night
 - Burwash Ladies Group
 - Burwash Primary School Parent Teacher's and Friend's Association Summer Fair
 - Burwash Village Open Garden event
 - Burwash Primary School Sports Day
60. A pop-up event was held throughout the day in Burwash High Street on Saturday 22nd June.

Pre-Submission Responses

61. This extensive consultation process resulted in a total of 1,435 'hits' on the website. The level of responses from the community was extremely high. A total of 539 responses were made either through the website or the postal boxes provided. A database was set up to record all these responses and each has been numbered and hard copy files have also been established for audit or inspection purposes.
62. Of these, 529 responses came from local households and businesses. A further 10 replies were received from the statutory consulting bodies.
63. Within the responses from the local community there were over 1,000 comments which were all individually considered and are shown in the appended summary sheets.

64. The analysis of these 529 returns shows

Yes	501	94.70%
No	13	2.46%
Didn't indicate	15	2.84%

Further analysis

65. The reasons provided within the 13 Noes have been analysed and are as follows

7	Don't want any development
2	Suggested other sites
1	Impact on business
1	Not enough parking
1	Not enough affordable housing
1	Non specific

66. The comments have also been analysed and covered the following issues

Topic	%
Affordable/Accessible homes for local people	16.98
Lobby for 6 or more rule to be changed/Small developments only	14.16
AONB/Views	10.94
Protect Village life and culture	10.94
Parking/ Electric car points	10.34
Traffic speed/volume	9.40
Infrastructure	6.87
Environment/Ecology	4.90
Other sites (inc. Oakley's and Bell Inn)	4.49
No more sites/development	2.95
Young people	2.53
Community transport	2.10
Include Burwash Common and Weald in housing target	1.82
Footpaths/cycle path	1.68

Revisions to the Plan

67. The Steering Group considered the detailed responses received and whether any changes should be recommended to the Parish Council. This resulted in amendments to all the original policies. These changes mainly related to providing additional explanatory text and some policy rewording. Of the original 26 policies, 2 have been combined and 5 removed.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

68. A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a process to identify likely significant effects of NDPs on the environment.
69. An SEA provides technical details of likely effects of the proposed NDP and sets out a management and monitoring framework to help mitigate and track any impacts.
70. In order to have the NDP tested, a screening opinion request was drawn up and submitted to RDC by our consultant. The screening opinion describes the impact of building on the environment in landscapes sensitive to development (see Appendix D).
71. Following consultation with other bodies, RDC has determined that new developments would be likely to have significant environmental effects. On this basis, a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required for the proposed Burwash NDP. (See Appendix D).
72. RDC also concluded that the proposed NDP is not likely to have a significant effect on European designated protected habitats (Habitats Regulations) which is another environmental consideration.



SECTION 2 OUR VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Our Vision

1. The Steering Group, with guidance from Moles Consultancy (the Consultant advising on the NDP), held a workshop on 7th August 2017 to discuss and formulate the draft vision and objectives for the Burwash NDP.
2. Our vision is for Burwash Parish to be a friendly, welcoming community of three villages.

We will enhance and protect our rich area of outstanding natural beauty and heritage whilst being sympathetic to appropriate development which meets the needs of our community.

To promote and support our existing and new businesses and encourage tourism, we will seek the appropriate infrastructure to ensure a sustainable future for Burwash.'
3. Through a combination of questionnaires and surveys, public consultations, workshops, village events and meetings, the Steering Group collected the views of parishioners on how they wished to see their village develop in the future. For the community, the three most important aspects they wished the NDP to address were Environment, Infrastructure (including Leisure, Economy and Tourism), and Housing. Three Sub-Groups covered each of these aspects while a fourth Sub-Group was set up to facilitate consultations.
4. In the Autumn of 2017 Burwash residents were given an opportunity to comment and add to their vision for Burwash. The two important questions asked were: -

What are your three wishes for our three connected villages of Burwash?

What will it look like in 2028 if the best of our wishes came true?
5. The responses, along with ideas that emerged from the community engagement events, including the extensive consultation on the draft Plan (Regulation 14), shaped the vision and objectives for the Plan. These are included in Appendix L.
6. Capturing everyone's aims and aspirations also provided us with a sound basis on which to formulate the policies proposed in this Plan.

Our Objectives

7. The objectives provide a framework to deliver development and other changes that conserve and enhance the sustainability of Burwash in a balanced approach to social, economic and environmental factors. They reflect the nature of the Parish and the direction the local community wants to take, especially in securing the long-term future of those community and environmental assets most precious to local people. They also accept and welcome change that will enable the community to grow in a sustainable way.
8. The objectives which seek to address the issues identified have been grouped into themes and have been used to develop the policies that are set out later in the Plan. The objectives initially put forward at the outset of this process have been developed to reflect the views of residents gathered through subsequent consultations and comments provided by residents and statutory bodies during the Regulation 14 consultation.

Environment

9. The Parish landscape has remained largely unchanged for many hundreds of years. This is reflected in its current natural and built environment and historic settlements. The Environment Sub-Group looked at the Parish's general history, archaeology and landmarks. They also studied the natural landscape, environment and biodiversity.
10. The following objectives reflect the importance of protecting, preserving and where possible enhancing the special features of the natural and historic environment of the Parish.
 - a. To conserve and protect our distinctive landscape with natural features such as hedges, ditches, verges, trees, wildflower meadows and ancient ghyll woodlands, including the two nationally important Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) at Willingford Wildflower Meadow and Dallington Forest.
 - b. To conserve and protect the Parish setting including views into and out of the historic built and landscape setting of the AONB.
 - c. To conserve and enhance the ecosystem and biodiversity of the Parish.
 - d. To improve the safety and quality of footpaths and bridleways and increase access around the Parish through this 'green' network.
 - e. To protect and enhance the open and community green spaces such as Swan Meadow, Burwash Common Memorial Fund Playing Field, Down Meadow and Hornbeam.
 - f. To support and encourage land stewardship schemes which protect nature, landscapes and the environment.
 - g. To protect the dark skies by minimising light pollution.
 - h. To protect and conserve the environment and minimise air pollution.

- i. To ensure that designated heritage assets in the parish and their settings are preserved and enhanced for their historic significance and their importance to local distinctiveness, character and sense of place.
- j. To ensure that landscaping associated with any new development fits within the local natural setting.

Infrastructure (including Leisure, Economy and Tourism)

11. The Infrastructure Sub-Group researched all the aspects of infrastructure within Burwash Parish and produced an Infrastructure Assessment report. The Infrastructure Assessment highlights potential areas of infrastructure improvement, strengthening and future proofing which are included in the list of potential projects.
12. The Infrastructure Assessment is complemented by Traffic Surveys and a survey of the views and needs of local businesses. These documents can also be found in Appendix K.
13. The following objectives set out the important priorities.
 - a. To promote appropriate speed limits to ensure that local roads are safe for pedestrians and residents who live close to the road, and to facilitate free-flowing vehicle movement.
 - b. To maintain and seek to improve the bus services through the villages.
 - c. To preserve the footways and pavements, and ensure they are suitable and safe for pedestrians, including those with mobility issues.
 - d. To encourage more sustainable means of travel, including cycling and walking.
 - e. To provide appropriate car parking space to meet the needs of residents, support the viability of local shops and businesses, and to promote tourism.
 - f. To ensure that all financial contributions received by the Parish Council from new developments (CIL) are used on projects and initiatives that meet the identified needs of the community.
 - g. To promote and encourage small scale and appropriate tourism through active marketing initiatives.
 - h. To help sustain the local economy and to help local business networking, including the development of a local business directory, in order to sustain the local economy.
 - i. To identify opportunities for new business development and premises to provide further employment within the Parish whilst safeguarding existing employment for the community.
 - j. To seek improvements in the communications infrastructure, including the provision of superfast broadband, whilst ensuring that the siting and appearance of any required equipment has minimal impact on the visual amenity, character and appearance of the local area.

- k. To encourage the provision of a range of appropriate activities which promote the Parish as a destination for visitors. These activities include events, specific walking trails, footpaths and bridleways. To produce promotional material to advertise tourist attractions in local, regional and national forums.

Housing

- 14. The Housing Sub-Group carried out research into housing need and supply, including a housing needs survey, a character appraisal and re-evaluation of land assessments. The Sub-Group led the Call for Sites process. These documents are included within Appendices C, F and H.
 - a. To plan for and support the delivery of suitable new housing which meets the current and foreseeable future needs of the local community.
 - b. To ensure that new housing development is designed and built to a high quality, respecting the existing character of the three villages in the Parish.
 - c. To provide an appropriate mix of housing to meet local needs for sale and rent including level access accommodation for the elderly or disabled and housing which is affordable to local households.
 - d. To maintain and enhance the wooded and rural character of the villages by encouraging the integration of soft landscaping in new developments and, where appropriate, screening from the AONB.
 - e. To protect and enhance listed buildings and other heritage assets.
 - f. To conserve and enhance the historic environment in relation to buildings, landscapes, and places that enhance our heritage settings.

Consultation and Communication

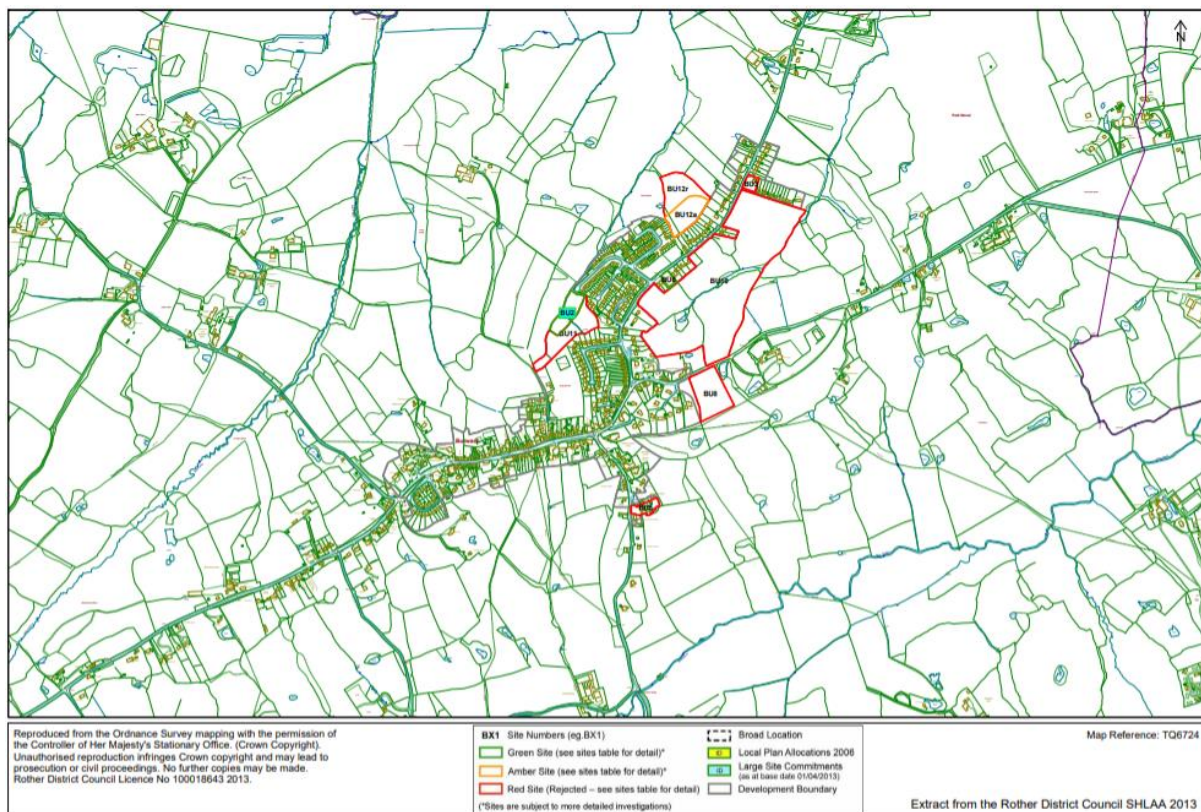
- 15. To prioritise and support open communication and consultation between residents, local businesses and organisations, the Parish, District and County Councils.
- 16. To build on the consultation and community communication processes adopted for the NDP and to ensure these are enshrined in future plans of the Parish Council.



SECTION 3: ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)

1. In 2013 Rother District Council (RDC) carried out a review of its 2010 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). SHLAAs are land surveys which are carried out to identify areas of land suitable for potential development. This review informed RDC's Core Strategy which was adopted in September 2014 and provided the information to support the specific housing targets for each area. This map shows the results of the SHLAA land survey. Full details of the SHLAA assessment and a description of each site can be found at Appendix N.



2. The RDC assessment for Burwash Parish concluded that, in the view of the relative inaccessibility to key services, Burwash Weald and Burwash Common were not suitable for additional housing and they were therefore not included within the housing target for Burwash Parish as a whole.
3. Burwash village was identified as having access to key services. The initial housing target for Burwash village was set at 35 homes. However, in September 2014, the adoption of the Core Strategy brought with it an increase in this target to 52 homes.
4. Nine sites were identified by RDC in the Burwash village area as part of the SHLAA. Six were evaluated as 'red' (not suitable for development) and rejected by RDC for a variety of reasons including adverse impact on the AONB, rural character and setting, and impact on biodiversity.

5. One site, ('Shamrock Field' land NW of 40-49 Shrub Lane - SHLAA ref. BU12a later forming part of what is known as the Shrub Lane / Denton Homes site) was evaluated as 'amber' and a possible development site for 30 units although it was acknowledged that there were significant AONB, community, landscape and biodiversity impacts to overcome in order for this site to be considered suitable for development.
6. Two sites were graded as 'green' and therefore suitable for development. These were the former Burwash Laundry site (SHLAA ref. BU6) for 6 units and the Strand Meadow site (SHLAA ref. BU2 later known as 'Watercress Field') for 17 units.
7. Full details of the SHLAA evaluations can be viewed on-line via the RDC website (See link on page 43 or the Burwash extract at Appendix N).

Land evaluation

8. At the outset the NDP Steering Group carried out its own evaluation of possible development sites within Burwash Parish. The options were very limited given the constraints of the AONB and the heritage setting, the problem of the steep slopes on either side of the High Street, the fact that over 330 acres is owned by the National Trust and the need for proximity to the village hub. The Steering Group met with RDC to discuss the options identified:

Two sites in fields to the south of Greenfield Lane

9. These two possible sites both relate to the frontages of the large field to the south of Greenfield Lane in Shrub Lane (SHLAA ref BU10). Following consideration RDC confirmed that neither site was suitable and stated in their response that: 'The rural setting and character of the village, landscape setting and lack of footpaths all weigh against development in the gaps. This view was supported at the last Local Plan Inquiry when this site came forward with the Inspector's conclusion stating that the green field location in the AONB, landscape intrusion and lack of adequate local employment made these sites unsuitable for development.'

Other options

10. During the consultation process residents raised questions about the potential for development of the Bell Inn and Oakley's Garage sites. These have both been considered.
11. The Bell Inn stopped operating as a public house in 2010. It would require a change of use from commercial to residential to permit it to be developed for housing. It is highly unlikely to provide six or more new homes which is the minimum number required by RDC to count towards the housing target so has not been included in this NDP.
12. Oakley's Garage has stood empty for almost three years and is increasingly derelict. It is being marketed for sale but at present has not been sold and no application has been made for change of use to residential. The option for allocating this site was seriously considered as it is felt that this could provide circa 6 new homes. The Parish Council currently takes the view that the site should be protected for commercial development in order to provide additional local employment in the area where such opportunities are limited however, an allocation for a mixed development would be likely to be well received.

Analysis of Planning Permissions in Burwash

- 13.** RDC set the requirement that to count towards the housing target, developments must contain six or more homes. In the context of housing development in the Parish, this is a significant constraint.
- 14.** An analysis of all planning permissions for additional homes granted since 2002 has been undertaken. This shows that 92% of permissions were below six homes (46 of 50 permissions). Of the 4 schemes of six units or more, The Old Orchard (12 units) and Morris Close (10 units) have been completed. Strand Meadow (30 units) only has outline planning permission, with its subsequent application for full approval having been refused by RDC. This was taken to appeal and the decision was upheld. Rectory Court (19 units) has just been completed and replaces 18 units which were demolished.
- 15.** RDC requirement of only six or more new homes counting against the housing target does not work in rural areas particularly Burwash because of its location within the heart of the AONB. As can be seen from our research only four schemes since 2002 have involved developments of six or more new homes and of these one scheme was an Exception Site and RDC have advised us that because of this it does not count towards the housing target. One further scheme, Rectory Close was a redevelopment of an existing scheme with a net gain of one additional home.
- 16.** The 'six or more' rule received the joint second highest level of comments of all responses from the community during the Pre Submission Consultation. The community are best placed to understand that this rule does not reflect the land availability in Burwash as historically demonstrated by our analysis as set out in para 14 above and in detail in Appendix E.
- 17.** The full table of permissions since 2002 is shown in Appendix E.

What has happened since the SHLAA?

- 18.** One of the two sites evaluated as 'green' (suitable for development), the former Burwash Laundry site was developed in 2016 but only four houses were provided. This development therefore fails to meet the RDC minimum requirement of six homes for inclusion in the housing target.
- 19.** Two further applications have come forward. One, the 'Shamrock Field, Shrub Lane (known locally as 'Shrub Meadow / Denton Homes site' after the name of the developer) comprises two areas considered in the SHLAA, one graded 'amber' and the other graded 'red' (SHLAA ref. BU12a and BU12r respectively). The other application concerns the site known as 'Strand Meadow' (Watercress Field) which also comprises two areas in the SHLAA graded 'green' and 'red' (SHLAA ref. BU2 and BU11 respectively).
- 20.** The 'Denton Homes' scheme was rejected by RDC in 2018 because of its impact upon the AONB. This scheme had over 300 objections. Initially the developer appealed this decision. The appeal was also opposed by the local community. RDC, Burwash Parish Council, Etchingham Parish Council and a local community group were all given approval by the Planning Inspectorate to be participants in the Inquiry. RDC agreed to provide up to £100,000 towards the cost of defending their decision at the appeal. The developers subsequently withdrew prior to the Inquiry, citing their view that they felt they were unlikely to be successful due to protections afforded to the AONB.
- 21.** The full planning application on the Strand Meadow (Watercress Field) scheme for 30 units (with no affordable housing) was considered by RDC and unanimously refused in 2019 for several reasons including:

 - a. The design of the proposed development being out of character with the historic settlement of Burwash and the High Weald,
 - b. Poor pedestrian access,
 - c. Urban character and appearance of the buildings,
 - d. Does not represent a high-quality response to the local context and landscape, and
 - e. The failure to enter into a Section 106 agreement.
- 22.** This application had over 400 objections. The Strand Meadow (Watercress Field) decision was appealed by the developer but the decision was upheld by the Planning Inspectorate. Despite this recent refusal and rejection on appeal, consultation has recently recommenced by the same developer who, we understand, intends to submit a new scheme for 30 homes, once again with no affordable housing.

Call for Sites

- 23.** In January 2018, the Burwash NDPSPG carried out a local 'Call for Sites' to identify land potentially suitable for new housing development within the Parish boundary of Burwash. Agents, developers, landowners, businesses, relevant local interest groups and others were invited to identify any sites, land or buildings across the Parish that could have potential for additional housing. Owners of land identified in the SHLAA were also contacted inviting them to submit proposals. It was made clear that putting forward a site for consideration did not mean it would necessarily be accepted for inclusion in the final Plan. The Call for Sites consultation was open for six weeks.

24. The following four sites were submitted by landowners. A consultation event was held in April 2018 to enable proposers to make a presentation and give us a better understanding of their proposals.

Site 1: Fairview Farm

25. This is a greenfield site on the A265 in Burwash Common. The site is in an area not included in the SHLAA and is outside the development boundary for Burwash. The landowner was keen to bring this site forward for affordable housing. The site could accommodate approximately six housing units.



Site 2: Little Dawes

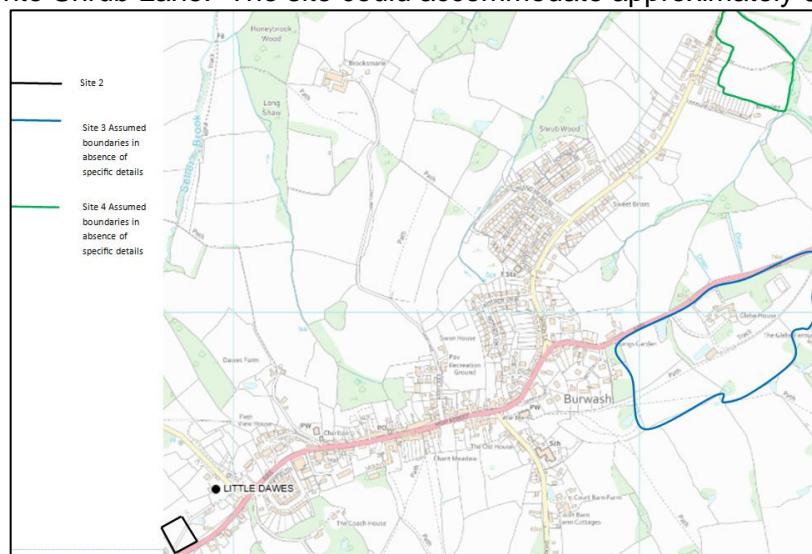
26. This is a greenfield site on the A265 just to the west of Spring Lane. The site is outside the development boundary and is on a steep slope visible across the Rother valley. The site could accommodate approximately six units.

Site 3: Glebe House

27. This is a greenfield site which is currently agricultural land to the east of the village of Burwash fronting the A265. The site is outside the development boundary and could accommodate approximately 15-20 units.

Site 4: Fields to the rear of 102-109 Shrub Lane

28. This is a greenfield site which is currently agricultural land with fields that have a frontage onto Shrub Lane. The site could accommodate approximately 60 units.



Evaluation of Sites

- 29.** Only the landowners for Fairview Farm and Little Dawes took up the invitation to attend the presentation event.
- 30.** Following these presentations, the NDPSG carried out an evaluation of the specific sites. This process was independently facilitated by Moles Consultancy (the consultant advising on the NDP). The report and evaluations are included in Appendices F and G respectively.
- 31.** Residents were consulted about the Call for Sites outcome at two events in July 2018; one held in Burwash Common and the other in Burwash village. Over 50 households attended these events.
- 32.** Residents were asked to consider the merits of the specific proposals and, as all four sites were outside the development boundaries, whether they felt the boundaries should be expanded to facilitate these potential schemes.
- 33.** There was a small majority (52%) in favour of the Fairview Farm scheme but a clear majority (79-95%) against the other three. Of those consulted, 91% were opposed to extending the existing development boundaries.
- 34.** Many comments - by far the single largest subject in the responses - related to the need for any development to provide housing to meet the needs of local people.
- 35.** The NDPSG consulted with BPC and, taking all feedback into consideration including the detailed evaluation, it was agreed that none of the sites was suitable for inclusion in the final Burwash NDP.

Housing Needs Survey

- 36.** The 2011 Census shows that the tenure mix for the Parish is as follows:
 - 78.6% Owner occupiers
 - 0.3% Shared Owners
 - 9.8% Private rented
 - 9.5% Social rented
 - 1.8% Rent free
- 37.** 'Affordable housing' is housing which is deemed to be affordable to those with a median household income or below. This is generally expressed as rents set no higher than 80% of the open market rent. There are several different types of affordable housing:

Social Rented
- 38.** Properties let as Social Rented units are usually let on Assured Tenancies, which give the tenants security of tenure at rent levels broadly in line with those of Council tenancies.

Affordable Rented
- 39.** These are usually let on Assured Shorthold Tenancies which have a defined end date (maximum of three years). They are let at up to 80% of the local open market rent level.

Shared Ownership

40. This enables lower income households to move into home ownership by being able to buy a portion of the property, usually a minimum of 25%. The household pays a reduced rent on the unowned balance. Shared owners can stay at that initial level of ownership or, if their circumstances allow, they can buy further shares and reduce their rent accordingly.
41. A Housing Needs Survey was carried out in June 2018 to determine local needs.
42. Residents across the Parish were asked about the make-up and age profile of their household, the number of years they have lived in the Parish, whether they intended to move within the next five years and, if so, if they intended to remain in the Parish.
43. There were returns from 126 households which is 11.3% of the total households shown in the 2011 Census. Of these, 46 were from households with children. The average time lived in the Parish was 23 years and 8 months.
44. There were 18 households who indicated that they intend to move within the next five years with 38 who may move and 70 not intending to move.
45. Further analysis was carried out to establish the tenure of potential movers and the types and sizes of properties required.
46. This showed 79% of potential movers required one or two bedroom accommodation and the main requirement was for level access homes, principally for the elderly to buy or rent in order to downsize. The second largest requirement was from young families requiring Social Rented houses. There was only very limited demand for Affordable Rent or Shared Ownership. The planning application on the 'Denton Homes' site in Shrub Lane was predominantly for three and four bedroom houses for sale with no provision of social rented units. The Strand Meadow development which was refused in 2019 and the decision upheld on appeal proposed 30 homes which were mainly three bedroom houses with no provision of any affordable housing. We understand that a new application from the same developer is being prepared, and this will once again propose 30 units, predominantly 3 bed houses for sale, with no affordable homes.
47. The full analysis of this survey is in Appendix H.

Community Support for Developments

48. The community has demonstrated its understanding of the competing pressures of protecting the AONB and heritage settings for future generations and the need for additional housing. The community has been supportive of new development proposals where they make a positive impact on their setting and the provision of housing meets local needs. This is evidenced by the following schemes:

Morris Close (Exception site)

49. Exception sites are typically built on land such as agricultural, where normally development would not be permitted.
50. In 2013 BPC became aware of the availability of funding which could be used to develop an exception site to provide affordable housing for local residents. This funding arose because a developer who could not provide affordable homes on their own site had paid

an agreed sum to RDC to allow the development for affordable housing elsewhere. BPC moved quickly to identify a possible site and arranged introductions between the landowner and Hastoe (the Housing Association who developed the scheme). BPC worked closely with Hastoe and RDC to ensure the homes were affordable and prioritised local residents.

- 51.** This ten-unit scheme comprises eight social rented units and two shared ownership units. The scheme was widely supported by the community, and when it was completed in 2017 all of the units were taken up by local residents or households with strong local connections.

Old Rectory Court

- 52.** Optivo, who own Old Rectory Court, rehoused the tenants of this 1960's built sheltered housing scheme in 2013. The building was left empty for two years during which the community pressed for it to be redeveloped. Finally, in 2015 Optivo submitted a planning application for a replacement of the older persons' scheme and four houses for shared ownership. However, the main building was further into the site than the existing one which encroached into the AONB, the designs were suburban in style and the materials were not in keeping with the heritage setting. This resulted in a significant level of local objections. Following the refusal of the planning application there was a long period during which Optivo considered its options including sale of the site. The community, through the Parish Council, contacted Optivo to re-establish their relationship and worked in partnership to bring forward a supportable scheme which met design standards for this heritage setting and local housing need.

- 53.** This approach culminated in a new application which resolved the previous issues and was widely supported by the community. This scheme has recently been completed and provides fifteen units of housing for older people and four houses for shared ownership. The sympathetic use of materials has complemented the heritage setting and both the rented and shared ownership units are occupied by local households or those with a strong local connection.

Housing Conclusion

- 54.** Everyone involved in researching and contributing to this Plan understands the huge tension between our need for additional housing and the need to protect the AONB. The steepness of the land surrounding each of our ridgetop villages, sloping into the Rother and Dudwell valleys provides irreplaceable natural habitats and long distance views of unparalleled beauty.

- 55.** The difficulty in finding suitable sites for development is not a new problem. In RDC's Local Development Framework – Rural Settlements Study November 2008 it states "Despite the fact that Burwash is a large sustainable rural community with a wide range of services and facilities, limited additional opportunities exist for the alteration of the settlement boundary as it currently exists, due to the elevated position of the village and the outstanding landscape of the surrounding countryside. Like many of the ridgetop settlements that are so characteristic of this part of the High Weald ANOB, there are distant views to the north and south, which precludes in depth development to the rear of the existing linear form".

- 56.** The Burwash NDPSG has reviewed all the various sites set out in the SHLAA and those that came forward through the Call for Sites.

- 57.** The Call for Sites identified four sites. Two of these submissions did not provide any real detail about their proposals and neither of the owners attended the event organised to allow them to outline their schemes in more detail. One of these sites (The Glebe) had already been considered by RDC within the SHLAA and was graded 'red', not suitable for development. All four sites were evaluated and subject to public consultation and not one of them was supported, as they all sat outside the development boundaries and each would impact adversely on the AONB.
- 58.** Although a majority (52%) of those consulted were in favour of Fairview Farm (a scheme of circa six homes) there was a clear majority (91%) against expanding the current development boundaries which would be required in order to facilitate this development. It is located outside of Burwash village so would not contribute to meeting our housing target.
- 59.** The SHLAA review concluded that the reasons given by RDC not to support six of the nine SHLAA sites were well founded and there were no grounds to seek to challenge RDC's views.
- 60.** One of the two 'green' sites within the SHLAA, the former Burwash Laundry site (SHLAA ref BU6) was developed but with only four houses, so does not meet RDC's rule of a minimum of six properties to count towards our housing target.
- 61.** The other 'green' site, (SHLAA ref: BU2) Strand Meadow has recently had full planning permission for 30 properties refused by RDC and the decision upheld on appeal. Over 400 people objected to this development. As stated previously, we understand a further application is being prepared.
- 62.** The 'amber' site (SHLAA ref BU12a Denton Homes/Shrub Wood) was the subject of a planning application in 2017. This scheme included the adjoining 'red' - not suitable for development - site (SHLAA ref BU12r) and was originally for 45 homes (later amended to 42 homes at the request of RDC). This application was refused by RDC. Over 300 people objected to this development. Within the SHLAA, the assessment of the 'amber' site suggested a possible scheme of up to 30 homes. Given that the more recent application was moderated by RDC to 42 homes and this was across this site and an adjoining larger site, it is difficult to see how the 'amber' site alone could accommodate anywhere near 30 homes.
- 63.** In addition to the need to protect the AONB, land available for development is severely restricted within Burwash village area not least because 330 acres are held for the nation by the National Trust.
- 64.** The Burwash NDPSG has worked tirelessly to identify options. However, it is our considered opinion that there are no development sites, which meet RDCs requirement of six or more homes within the existing development boundary, which will be supported by RDC and the community. For this reason, we are not allocating any sites for development within this Plan
- 65.** BPC remains committed to exploring other small schemes as exception sites similar to the highly successful Morris Close development in order to provide affordable housing for the community. It will also be looking into the merits of setting up a vehicle such as a Community Land Trust to assist in the delivery of new homes.

SECTION 4 - OUR POLICIES

Policy List

This section sets out the policies that will support and deliver the vision and objectives for Burwash. The detailed evidence behind each one can be found in the appendices to this draft Plan.

The policies being proposed in the Plan are:

General Policies

GP01 Protection of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) landscape

GP02 Views into and from the AONB

GP03 Heritage

GP04 Development boundaries

GP05 Design standards

GP06 Existing open spaces

GP07 New open spaces

GP08 Sustainable development

Housing

HO01 Housing tenure and mix

HO02 Rural Exception sites

Environment

EN01 Land management

EN02 Natural environment protection

EN03 Green infrastructure: footpaths and bridleways

EN04 Dark skies

EN05 Historic landscape environment

EN06 Integration of landscaping

Infrastructure: including Leisure, Economy and Tourism

IN01 Pedestrian safety

IN02 Parking

IN03 Supporting businesses

IN04 Retention of existing business premises

Full details of these policies can be found in the following pages. The policies are shown in bold print.

General Policies

Protection of the AONB Landscape

The community has overwhelmingly demonstrated their opposition to developments which impact on the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The whole of the Parish is situated within the High Weald AONB. The importance of protecting AONBs is a national priority which is recognised in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 and is also protected within the RDC Core Strategy Policy EN1- Landscape Stewardship and the High Weald AONB Management Plan 2019 - 2024.

The East Sussex Landscape Assessment 2016 (relevant extracts in Appendix I, The Environment Assessment, section 4.8) describes the characteristics of Burwash Parish as follows: "As with most of the Wealden landscape the historic field patterns of small fields and significant hedgerows remain intact, apart from in the wider more fertile river valleys where farming is more intensive." The area includes: spectacular long-ranging views from ridges across the valleys to the north and south, steep valley sides descend sharply from the ridge towards the Rother and Dudwell rivers, rolling, richly wooded landscape with ancient woodland and shaws, unimproved grassland, heathland and historic field boundaries, relatively open valley floors with small, winding, partly tree-lined rivers and extensive areas of exceptional remoteness. At certain times of the year the Rother floods turning the valley bottom into a huge sheet of water.

The High Weald AONB Management Plan provides a strategy to conserve and enhance the AONB designated landscape. This plan has been adopted by Rother District Council and developments will need to have regard to this plan

The National Policy Planning Framework (NPPF) 2019 states that: "Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty".

Policy GP01 Protection of the AONB Landscape

Any development will be considered with regard to the need to protect and enhance the AONB landscape character of the countryside. Development will only be permitted where it conserves or enhances the natural beauty and village character of Burwash Parish. In particular, development shall:

- a) Need to be appropriate to the AONB in terms of scale, size, design, type, use of materials which reflect the locally used palette and sensitivity of setting;**
- b) Protect and, where appropriate, restore the natural function of all watercourses to improve water quality, prevent flooding and enhance wetland habitats including rivers, wet ancient woods, land with ghylls, and floodplains;**
- c) Reflect the historic settlement pattern of the Parish, use local materials that enhance the appearance of the development and support woodland management;**
- d) Relate well to historic routes and not divert them from their original course or damage their rural character by loss of banks, hedgerows, verges or other important features;**

- e) Not result in the loss or degradation of ancient woodland or historic features within it and, where appropriate, contribute to its ongoing management;**
- f) Retain and, where necessary, reinstate historic field boundaries, and direct development away from medieval or earlier fields, especially where these form coherent field systems with other medieval features.**

Views into and from the AONB

This policy looks to ensure developments do not impact on views into and out of the AONB. The entire Parish is set within the High Weald AONB and has infinite big beautiful views, across wide panoramic expanses of countryside and across huge distances. The views of this landscape include natural and man-made features which provide an historic and cultural context. The importance of protecting AONBs is a national priority which is recognised in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019. This is also reflected in the ESCC Landscape Assessments for the Upper Rother and Dudwell Valleys. The Parish of Burwash enjoys a significant number of views into, out of and across the beautiful High Weald AONB. These views are visited from roads, lanes, footpaths and numerous other by-ways that provide public access.

Policy GP02 Views into and from the AONB

Developers will be required to provide evidence of the impact of their developments from any area to which the public has the right of access. Developments will generally only be supported if they conserve and protect the Parish setting including views into and out of the historic built and landscape setting of the AONB from any area to which the public has access.

Heritage

We will protect listed buildings, sites of high archaeological significance, non-designated heritage assets and the Conservation Area together with other key buildings or structures throughout the Parish, which are of significant local architectural and historic interest, and other aspects which contribute to the distinctiveness of the Parish such as the brick pavements and lime trees in the High Street. These and other buildings, including those within the Conservation area, will be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance.

Policy GP03 Heritage

Development proposals will be expected to complement and enhance the distinctiveness of the local vernacular, buildings, structures and other features and their setting of historic significance.

Proposals for development that affect designated heritage assets or sites of high archaeological significance will generally not be supported.

Proposals for development that effect non-designated heritage assets will be supported if they do not pose any harm or loss to the significance of the heritage asset. In such cases applicants should clearly demonstrate that any harm is both unavoidable and justified on the basis of the public benefits it delivers.

Development Boundaries

Burwash village, Burwash Weald, and Burwash Common are individual ridgetop settlements separated by beautiful countryside. These gaps are important in order to maintain a distinction between the built environment and the rural countryside.

The Parish has three well-defined Development Boundaries designated by RDC within which developments can take place subject to meeting normal planning criteria.

Any development outside the Development Boundaries will be regarded as lying within the countryside as defined in paragraph 12.47 of the Core Strategy, to which RDC policies RA2 and RA3 relate.

Policy GP04 Development Boundaries

Development proposals outside the existing Development Boundaries (as shown in Appendix M) will generally not be supported unless they are needed to meet essential operational requirements of utility infrastructure providers.

Design Standards

These design standards apply to all new homes and other buildings and alterations to existing properties that require planning permission.

Policy GP05 Design Standards

All proposals for development must achieve a high quality of design and demonstrate how they complement local vernacular, distinctiveness and the aesthetic qualities of rural settlements and buildings found in the High Weald AONB, in particular by:

- a. Respecting/complementing in scale and form the character of existing buildings in the locality;**
- b. Respecting established building lines and arrangements of rooflines, front gardens, and boundary treatments;**
- c. Using good quality materials that complement the existing palette;**
- d. Adopting innovation to achieve sustainable energy design including the integration of renewable energy technologies, reduction in use of fossil fuels, efficient use of natural resources, recycling of resources, provision of low and zero carbon energy infrastructure and achieve best practice in sustainable drainage;**
- e. Providing sufficient external amenity space, refuse and recycling storage and car and bicycle parking to ensure a high quality and well managed streetscape;**
- f. Providing access for people with restricted mobility;**
- g. If additional power lines are required, they should all be run underground;**
- h. Providing sufficient electric car power points for each home where off-street parking is provided;**
- i. Applications for extensions to existing buildings, where planning permission is required, will also need to comply with the relevant and appropriate standards above;**
- j. Applications must also consider the High Weald AONB design Guide for housing development**

Applications proposing development contrary to the above will not be supported.

Existing Open Spaces

Burwash is well served in terms of green spaces for community use and as a whole area due to being in the High Weald AONB, and so the community wishes to see these areas preserved.

Swan Meadow, on Ham Lane, is in the centre of Burwash and is a valuable community open space used for sport (e.g. football, cricket, tennis) and for a variety of community events, such as the Summer Fair. In addition the pavilion is made available to local groups and societies. Swan Meadow also contains a children's play area.

Burwash Common Playing Fields are centrally located within the village on Stonegate Road. These fields are available for the community for a range of sports and also benefit from a playground for children and exercise equipment

Down Meadow in Burwash Common is a nature reserve owned by the Parish Council and managed as a community nature reserve.

Hornbeam is a community open green space adjacent to Shrub Lane and managed by the Parish Council.

Policy GP06 Existing Open Spaces

Proposals for development will not be supported if they impact on the existing open spaces in the Parish at Swan Meadow, Burwash Common Playing Fields, Down Meadow and Hornbeam.

Policy GP07 New Open Spaces

Larger developments of ten or more homes should be designed to provide new open space reflecting and extending the existing provision of accessible green spaces within the Parish and providing wildlife corridors and stepping stones between semi-natural habitats in the wider area.

Sustainable Development

Our goals are to reduce the demand that new developments place on energy resources, reduce the running costs of new homes and ensure that the current levels of air pollution are not increased through development. The benchmark for air pollution has been provided through analysis by Lambeth Scientific Services over the past 12 months. This data will be added to the final BNDP.

Policy GP08 Sustainable Development

All new development should seek to achieve high standards of sustainability and, in particular, demonstrate in its proposals how design, construction and operation will:

- a. Reduce the use of fossil fuels;**
- b. Promote the efficient use of natural resources, the re-use and recycling of resources, and the production and consumption of renewable energy;**
- c. Adopt and facilitate the flexible development of low and zero carbon energy through a range of technologies;**
- d. Adopt best practice in sustainable urban drainage;**

- e. Promote measures which improve, or as a minimum, maintain current air pollution levels within the Parish.**

Development proposals which can demonstrate that they meet the above requirements without impacting adversely to the setting of the AONB will generally be supported.

Housing Policies

Housing Tenure and Mix

The Burwash Housing Needs Survey showed that the largest local housing needs are currently:

- a) Two and three bedroom homes for Social Renting to enable local families to remain within the community; and
- b) Single level access or accessible one and two bedroom homes for sale and rent to meet the needs of the elderly and people with disabilities, enabling them to remain independent and within the community for as long as possible.

Policy HO01 Housing Tenure and Mix

Planning applications within the development boundaries of the Parish (as shown in Appendix M) will generally be supported where they meet local housing needs and

- a) Provide a range of property types and**
- b) Provide a minimum of 40% affordable housing.**

Rural Exception Sites

Rural Exception Sites can play a valuable role in developing much needed affordable housing on small developments in locations which would not normally be granted planning permission. Rural Exception Sites are included within RDC Core Strategy and within policy DHG2 of the RDC emerging DaSa.

The Morris Close development in Burwash village is a useful example of how rural Exception Sites can help to bring forward small developments of affordable housing. This scheme provided ten affordable housing units all of which were taken up by people with a strong local connection.

Policy HO02 Rural Exception Sites

Proposals for the development of small-scale affordable housing schemes on rural Exception Sites in the Parish will generally be supported.

Environment Policies

Land Management

Extensive areas of land within the Parish are under management e.g. by the Forestry Commission, National Trust or operating land stewardship schemes with Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and Natural England. Land owners should seek guidance through the historic Landscape Characterisation report produced by Historic England.

Land owners are encouraged to work positively to manage their land and working farms with active programmes to protect and enhance the landscape and biodiversity, including active soil and water quality management and in eradicating invasive species such as Himalayan Balsam. RDC Core Strategy Policy EN1 Landscape Stewardship and the High Weald AONB Management Plan 2019-2024 apply.

Policy EN01 Land Management

Development will be expected to retain or enrich well-established features of the environment, ecosystem and biodiversity, including mature trees, ancient woodland, species-rich hedgerows, watercourses and other ecological networks together with the habitats alongside them including ponds, green and wildlife corridors.

Proposals that would result in unacceptable impact to existing land, including farmland, during or as a result of development will not be supported.

Natural Environment Protection

A Biodiversity report produced for Burwash Parish by the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre in November 2018 shows that, apart from being entirely within the AONB, Burwash Parish contains two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). These are statutory sites of national importance. There are also seven Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and one Local Geological Site (LGS). The Parish contains examples of seven significant habitats: Ancient/veteran trees, Ancient woodland, Deciduous woodland, Lowland heathland, Lowland meadow, Ghyll woodland, Wood-pasture and parkland, Coastal and floodplain grazing and Open water.

Policy EN02 Natural Environment Protection

Development shall conserve and enhance the well-established features of the natural environment, ecosystem and biodiversity within the Parish and should seek to achieve a net gain for biodiversity. All developments should be informed by an Ecological Impact Assessment in line with British Standards and technical guidance. These features include:

- a) Mature trees, ancient woodland, species-rich hedgerows, unimproved and wildflower meadows**
- b) Flora and fauna and ecological biomes together with their habitats such as watercourses, ponds, springs and wetland habitat and green and wildlife corridors.**

Green Infrastructure: Footpaths and Bridleways

The Parish is fortunate to have an extensive network of footpaths and bridleways. These provide access across the landscape to other areas, opportunities for exercise, horse-riding, dog-walking, enjoyment of the beautiful views deep within the remote countryside and are a great tourist attraction. Walking routes include stretches of many of the country lanes, which, with their notable verges and prolific, often rare species of wild flowers, form important pollinating corridors. There are no footways present on the majority of the lanes within the parish and increasing traffic, use of lanes as rat runs and the general pattern of driving, threaten the safety, exercise and enjoyment of residents and visitors.

Policy EN03 Green Infrastructure: Footpaths and Bridleways

Where applicable, new development must ensure the continued upkeep and enhancement of existing public footpaths and bridleways without detriment to biodiversity.

Proposals will be expected to

- a) Provide improved opportunities for people and animals to use a safe network of footpaths and bridleways for leisure and exercise, and**
- b) Maintain and keep safe existing links to other settlements and facilities of the Parish.**

Dark Skies

The three villages of Burwash, Burwash Weald and Burwash Common, like other rural villages in the area, maintain a tradition of being unlit. The preservation of the dark sky is extremely important to residents of the Parish.

At night, the Parish is profoundly dark compared to the bright lights of much of the south-east, contributing to a sense of remoteness and tranquillity. The absence of street lighting allows the stars to be seen in the dark skies above, reduces the damaging impact of light pollution and maintains habitats for nocturnal wildlife.

During 2018, our night skies were monitored in conjunction with the High Weald AONB Partnership's light meter reading project and the findings have shown that Burwash has readings equivalent to a Silver Tier Dark Sky Reserve. This means that artificial light glow is limited, and the Milky Way is visible within the Parish. (see map Fig 4 in Section 7.7 of the Environment Assessment).

There is increasing awareness of the impact that light pollution can have on wildlife, by interrupting natural rhythms including migration, reproduction and feeding patterns.

Policy EN04 Dark Skies

New development proposals should be appropriate to the dark skies status of the three villages and limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, the intrinsically dark landscapes within the parish and nature conservation.

Lighting, including outside and security lighting, associated with such developments should be in accordance with the CIE 150 (2003) and the Institute of

Lighting Professionals (ILP) lighting guidance on the reduction of obtrusive light. All new developments with external lighting should meet or exceed ILP guidance for the environmental zone in which the development is set to take place (www.theilp.org.uk) and/or the highest standards of light pollution restrictions in force at the time.

Historic landscape Environment

The character of our historic environment could be undermined and compromised by the cumulative negative impact of new development. English Heritage Conservation Principles 2008 (Historic England) defines harm as ‘change for the worse, here primarily referring to the effect of inappropriate interventions on the heritage values of a place’. Land owners should also seek guidance from the Historic Landscape Characterisation report produced by Historic England.

Policy EN05 Historic Landscape Environment

Proposals that pose potential adverse impact to the historic landscape assets in our Parish will generally not be supported. Applicants should clearly demonstrate that any harm is both unavoidable and justified on the basis of the public benefits it delivers.

Integration of Landscaping

The East Sussex Landscape Assessment (see Appendix L) describes the types of landscape, natural, man-made and farming for Burwash which is in a largely unspoilt and tranquil rural landscape with few intrusive features.

Burwash Parish is located in an AONB. It is therefore critical that the design of all new landscape features is integrated into and complements or enhances the landscape setting.

The design of new landscape features will happen at an early stage in the design process to ensure they are well integrated into new developments. New development proposals will have considered and correctly interpreted the landscape character of their location so as to produce the most appropriate design solution for the development.

Policy EN06 Integration of Landscaping

Where appropriate developers will be required to submit an integrated landscape scheme as part of their proposal which is sensitive and complementary to the existing AONB, and to the local landscape character.

Infrastructure including Leisure, Economy and Tourism Policies

Pedestrian Safety

Residents across the Parish expressed a high level of concern about pedestrian safety, principally in respect of the A265 which passes through all three settlements.

All relevant developments which require planning permission will need to ensure that their proposals are accessible and provide safe use for pedestrians.

Policy IN01 Pedestrian Safety

All proposals must incorporate inclusive design features to assist those with mobility issues. Development proposals will be generally supported where the development:

- a) Incorporates measures to facilitate pedestrian safety;**
- b) Integrates with existing or proposed footpaths, footways and cycle routes, ensuring that residents, including those with disabilities, can walk or cycle safely to schools, shops, green spaces and other Parish facilities and;**
- c) Retains or improves existing footpaths and footways.**

Parking

The extensive consultation carried out showed that parking is a very important issue for residents, visitors and for the survival of businesses in our communities. Parking is a particular issue in Burwash village with pressure on street parking. The current provision of parking in the centre of the village is inadequate. Similar parking pressures are being experienced by residents in Burwash Common. The Parish Council is in discussion with RDC to take over the car parks and is looking at ways to increase the options for off-street parking. This forms part of the Parish Councils Rolling Programme for 2019-2023.

Any development within the settlements must at least be self-contained in terms of the number of parking spaces it provides. No development within the settlements should result in the use of the existing carriageway or verge for residents' parking. Where possible, additional parking provision should be considered as part of new development.

In Burwash village businesses are dependent to a great extent on passing trade, and loss of parking, which prevents passing trade from stopping, could impact the viability of our businesses and community facilities. By requiring adequate parking in all new developments, we will reduce the pressure on existing on and off-street parking within the village.

Parking standards are administered by ESCC Highways. These are set out in 'Guidance for Parking at New Residential Developments', 'Transport Development Control 2017', 'Guidance for Parking at Non-Residential Developments' and the 'Car Parking Demand Calculator'.

Policy IN02 Parking

Where appropriate, all developments shall provide adequate appropriate car parking in accordance with ESCC Parking Standards.

Development proposals that would result in an overall net loss of existing on-street and/or off-street car parking, or which fails to provide adequately for the development itself, will generally not be supported.

Supporting Businesses

The community and society are changing and we need to ensure that changes in working practices support new local services and enterprises and allow existing businesses to expand and remain within our community. We have a high, and increasing, number of people working from home and new services will be needed to support this growing group. The majority of our small business owners live and work in the Parish and we need to support local people in developing new business opportunities. The Parish's landscape is

exceptional and is a base to explore nationally and internationally important sites. Tourism is important to our community, allowing our retail businesses and public houses to survive.

Many small businesses located within houses do not require planning permission. Where permission is required because of the scale of the business, e.g. employees, deliveries, parking or noise etc the following policies will apply.

Policy IN03 Supporting Businesses

Proposals for the development of new or existing businesses on isolated sites will be supported if the development:

- a. Will help sustain the local economy and help local businesses to remain viable;**
- b. Is in keeping with the character of the area and the amenities of neighbouring properties and minimises visual impact through sensitive siting and design**
- c. Minimises the impact of the proposal on the wider character of the AONB landscape and**
- d. Will not cause or exacerbate any severe traffic problems and will promote sustainable transport**

Retention of Existing Business Premises

It is essential to balance the demand for new homes with the need for local employment. Over the years, many properties have obtained change of use from commercial to residential and this is inhibiting the option of opening new shops. In developing policy our objective is to retain retail and other business premises, including public houses, which provide for local employment and local services to our community.

Change of use from certain types of commercial use to residential is covered by permitted development use rights. In Burwash these would apply to any offices wishing to convert to residential use. These are, however, subject to impact evaluations including ones on the conservation areas and the AONB

Policy IN04 Retention of Existing business Premises

Support will be given to the creation of new and the retention of existing retail shops, public houses and other businesses against any proposals for redevelopment or change of use.

Planning applications that result in the loss of businesses will generally not be supported unless it can be demonstrated by:

- a) At least two independent valuation reports which confirm the value the property is being marketed at; and**
- b) Clear evidence is provided that a publicly active marketing campaign, for sale or letting for a continuous period of at least eighteen months has been carried out and that the premises cannot be sold or let on any basis for either reoccupation or redevelopment for employment generating uses.**

SECTION 5: OUR FUTURE

Future Projects

1. The community engagement undertaken as part of this plan identified numerous projects which the community would like to see implemented. Some of these aspirational projects are long term and others short to medium term.
2. Following discussions over the latter half of 2018 Burwash Parish Council (BPC) developed a strategy to undertake a range of projects and improvements across the parish. Aspirations for new initiatives were added to the BPC's programme and a rolling plan agreed which includes a number of these projects. The rolling plan is intended to be delivered within the next four-year Parish Council term (2019-2022).
3. The rolling plan and potential longer-term projects are set out below.

Parish Council Rolling Plan

Community and Communications

- Establish a Community hub, reviewing siting options
- Continuing support for the Internet Cafe
- Develop communications – including website, social media presence, Business Directory, bulletin and Burwash Village Magazine articles
- Partnership working – Bateman's, Burwash School, Fairfield Surgery, Police Community Support Officer (PCSO), local groups and neighbouring parish councils
- Parish Events including:
 - Love Burwash
 - Burwash in Bloom
 - Parish Assembly
- BPC presence at local fairs and festive evenings
- Coordination and support for vulnerable older residents
- Develop a Welcome Pack for new residents
- Develop a Parish Promotion Plan – including tourism and businesses
- Community Safety

Environment and Maintenance

- Planning and development issues, including AONB
- Neighbourhood Plan – actions arising
- Open Spaces including Down Meadow and Hornbeam
- Ecology
 - Wild flowers
 - Wildlife Protection
 - Dark skies
 - A Parish planting programme
- Parish maintenance:
 - Verges
 - Grass cutting

- Bins (litter/dog/grit)
- Lime Trees
- War Memorials
- Allotments
- Seek listed status for village pavements, rights of way and footpaths

Traffic and Transport

- Update and deliver on strategy 20mph pinch point (A265 between Flower shop and the Bearcar park), bollards, crossing points
- A265 speed limits in Burwash Weald and Common
- Village gates
- Speed-watch programme
- Take over the two Burwash village car parks
- Look at key parking issues and identify new parking options
- Look into footways and cycle paths
 - Linking Burwash/Burwash Weald and Burwash Common
 - Linking Burwash and Etchingham (for station)
- Business case for a Community Bus

Finance and Administration

Identify potential funding opportunities, including:

- Grant applications
- Local fundraising
- Crowdfunding
- Sponsorship

Aspirational Capital Projects for the Future

4. Alongside the aspirations arising from the public consultations, the Steering Group considered some of the issues the village may face in the future. As a result of this a number of large-scale capital projects for the upgrade or replacement of existing Parish facilities were identified. These include:
 - Create all weather playground areas, including zip wires
 - Create more places, spaces and leisure pursuits for children and young people e.g. indoor venues, multi-use games area, wildlife areas
 - Create a community café (In process of realisation)
 - Upgrade or replace Swan Meadow Pavilion
 - Upgrade or replace GP surgery
 - Upgrade or replace pre-school and primary school
 - New Village Hall.
5. At some time in the future when these buildings and facilities reach the end of their useful life they will need to be replaced.
6. Coordinated collaboration between the stakeholders, community, local organisations and the Parish Council will enable these ideas to be taken forward. Proposals for consideration by the Parish Council would be subject to assessed need and the

availability of relevant funding. At this stage these are not included within the Parish Council's rolling plan programme, and no discussions have been held with the owners, trustees or other relevant parties. These are simply a look ahead to what might be our future challenges in order to meet the aspirations and needs of the community.

Funding for the Rolling Plan

7. Funding for the Rolling Plan will be provided through a mixture of grants, the Parish precept, fund-raising and developer contributions. These contributions are collected primarily through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). CIL allows local authorities to set a fixed rate charge per square metre of new development which is shared between RDC and the relevant Town or Parish Council.



SECTION 6

APPENDICES, SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND ACRONYMS

Appendices		
Schedule of Evidence Documents	A	- Parish-wide consultation questionnaire
	B	- Communication and Engagement strategy
	C	- Character Appraisal including Listed Buildings
	D	- Screening Opinion and Strategic Environmental Assessment
	E	- Planning Permissions
	F	- Call for Sites report
	G	- Call for Sites evaluation report
	H	- Housing Needs Survey
	I	- East Sussex Landscape Assessment
	J	- Burwash Environment Assessment
	K	- Burwash Infrastructure Assessment including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Survey • Traffic Survey
	L	- Consultation event records <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wishes of children and young people • Wishes of local residents
	M	- Site and boundary Maps
	N	- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
	O	- Regulation 14 consultation results
Sources of information		
Links to external sources of information	Rother District Council Local Plan 2006 Local Plan & Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) -	
	Core strategy Core Strategy - Rother District Council	
	RDC Housing with SHLAA evaluations http://www.rother.gov.uk/background-evidence/housing	
	Census http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011	
	East Sussex in Figures (ESiF) Welcome to ESiF	
	Office of National Statistics https://www.ons.gov.uk/	
	High Weald AONB http://www.highweald.org/	
	CPRE Campaign for the Protection of Rural England https://www.cpre.org.uk/	
	East Sussex Landscape Character assessments for Upper Rother Valley and the Dudwell Valley https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/environment/landscape/	
	Department for Environment Food & Rural Affairs Magic Maps https://magic.defra.gov.uk/	

Acronyms

AONB Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

BNDP	Burwash Neighbourhood Development Plan
BPC	Burwash Parish Council
CIE	International Commission on Illumination (Commission internationale de l'éclairage)
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
ESCC	East Sussex County Council
ESiF	East Sussex in Figures
LGS	Local Geological Site
LWS	Local Wildlife Site
NDP	Neighbourhood Development Plan
NDPSG	Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group
NPPF	Neighbourhood Planning Policy Framework
OS	Ordnance Survey
PCSO	Police Community Support Officer
RDC	Rother District Council
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
SSSI	Sites of Special Scientific Interest