Rother Local Plan

Core Strategy

Adopted 29th September 2014

Rother Local Plan Core Strategy
Adopted 29th September 2014
Print version 1.2

Contents

Contents

Index of Policies

Contents

Part I

Introduction and Context

1. Introduction
2. Policy Context
3. 'Portrait' of Rother District
4. Main Issues

The Rother Local Plan

1.1   The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, as amended by the Localism Act 2011, requires the Council to produce a 'Local Plan' for the district.

1.2   The objective of the Local Plan is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It should be aspirational, reflecting the vision and aspirations of local communities, but also realistic. It should set out policies that address the spatial implications of social, economic and environmental change. These should embrace polices to deliver the homes and jobs needed in the area, preferably over a 15-year time period, as well as supporting development and infrastructure.

1.3   A Local Plan may be a single document or made up of several 'development plan documents'. The Local Plan Core Strategy forms part of the development plan for the area[1]. Planning applications will be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The Role of the Core Strategy

1.4   This Local Plan Core Strategy (hereafter referred to as the Core Strategy) lies at the heart of the plan-making system. It is where the strategic direction for development and change across the district is established, as explained below.

1.5   The Core Strategy has a pivotal role in delivering the objectives and priorities for Rother that are set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

1.6   It sets out the Council's vision and objectives that will guide the future pattern and form of development over the period up until 2028. It provides broad guidance on the scale and distribution of development and the provision of supporting infrastructure, both for the district as a whole and for its towns and rural areas. It also contains 'core policies' that address the key issues facing the district in relation to sustainable resource management, community development, housing, the economy, the environment, and transport.

1.7   The Core Strategy also provides a framework to help ensure that the investment decisions of both public and private bodies are not made in isolation, but are properly co-ordinated and focussed towards a clear set of goals. In this respect, this strategy will dovetail with other plans, notably the Council's own Corporate Plan, which sets out its contribution to achieving the Sustainable Community Strategy.

1.8   This Core Strategy replaces a number of policies in the Rother District Local Plan (2006). These are identified in Appendix 1.

---

1   At the point of adoption, the development plan for Rother District comprises this Core Strategy, the Waste and Minerals Local Plan 2013, together with saved policies of the Rother District Local Plan, the Minerals Local Plan and the Waste Local Plan.

1.9 Other local development documents will elaborate upon this Local Plan Core Strategy. Most significant will be a 'Development and Site Allocations Plan', which will identify the sites required to meet the development provisions of the Core Strategy as well as set out more detailed development management policies. It will be subject to separate public consultation in its preparation. Further Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), which expand upon policies set out in DPDs, are also proposed to be prepared.

1.10 In addition, the Council's Development Plan Documents may be supplemented by more local 'neighbourhood plans' produced by Parish/Town Councils or other constituted neighbourhood organisations.

1.11 A fuller explanation of the how these and related Local Plan "project management" documents sit together, and the Council's programme for their preparation, is contained in its 'Local Development Scheme'. This is viewable in the Local Plan (2011-2028) section of the Council's website at www.rother.gov.uk/localplan or at one of its Community Help Points.

Plan-making process

1.12 This Core Strategy has been through a number of consultations in line with Regulations. Details of consultations, comments made and how those comments were taken into account at each stage is set out in the Consultation Statement prepared for the Proposed Submission document, as well as the supplements to it relating to Focused Amendments and Main Modifications.

1.13 An overview of all the different stages of the Core Strategy process is available on the Council's website. It is noted that the Core Strategy has been subject to a combined Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to help ensure that the plan contributes to achieving sustainable development.

1.14 This Core Strategy has been found 'sound' by a Planning Inspector subject to the inclusion of some main modifications following an examination in public. Her conclusions are set out in the Inspector's Report received in July 2014, while the recommended main modifications were in the Appendix to the Report. All these main modifications are incorporated in this Core Strategy as adopted by resolution of the Full Council on 27th September 2014.

1.15 All supporting information, including the background evidence studies, available to view on the website at: http://www.rother.gov.uk/localplan.

National Planning Policies

2.1   The Core Strategy for Rother District must be in line with national planning policies unless there are reasons justifying a local exception. The main policy imperatives are highlighted below.

2.2   National planning policies are consolidated in the 'National Planning Policy Framework' (NPPF). This provides guidance to local planning authorities both in drawing up plans and as a material consideration in determining applications.

2.3   The NPPF highlights the purpose of the planning system in terms of contributing to the achievement of "sustainable development", and defines the three dimensions of this – economic, social and environmental. Gains in these should be sought simultaneously.

2.4   A 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' is central to the NPPF. Paragraph 14 states that, for plan-making, this means:

• Local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area;

• Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs, with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change, unless:

- Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Frame work taken as a whole; or

- Specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted.

A footnote to the final points indicates that areas where development should be restricted include sites protected under the Birds and Habitats Directives, SSSIs and AONBs.

> **Policy PC1: Presumption in favour of sustainable development**
>
> **(i) When considering development proposals, a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework will be taken.**
>
> **(ii) Planning applications that accord with the policies in the Local Plan (and, where relevant, with policies in a Neighbourhood Plan) will be dealt with promptly and approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Account will be taken of whether policies are up-to-date, having regard to most recent monitoring information, as well as policies of the National Planning Policy Framework.**

2.5   The Council will always work proactively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

2.6   The NPPF is supported by online national Planning Practice Guidance, as well as a separate 'Planning policy for traveller sites'.

2.7   While this Strategy was prepared in the context of the South East Plan (2009), that Plan was formally revoked in March 2013. Its broad strategy to focus development in the coastal part of the District (and East Sussex generally) in order to support its regeneration is followed through in this Strategy. The South East Plan also has a bearing on this strategy insofar as development and infrastructure provisions in existing plans in the region have been prepared in general conformity with it.

Sustainable Community Strategy

2.8   The Council works with key organisations in both Rother and East Sussex through Local Strategic Partnerships. They have produced an Integrated Sustainable Community Strategy for East Sussex 2008-2026, called 'Pride of Place'.

2.9   The Sustainable Community Strategy for East Sussex sets out the vision for East Sussex to 2026 to address the inequalities in the county, create successful people and businesses and a sustainable environment.

2.10   Local priorities are around supporting children and young people, community safety, cultural and leisure activity, reducing environmental impacts, employment and skills, health improvement, tackling congestion, affordable housing and sustainable construction.

2.11   The Government expects that spatial planning objectives in Local Plans should align not only with national policies, but also with the local priorities set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy. The Council worked closely with the Rother LSP to ensure that this alignment has been achieved.

Other strategies and plans

2.12   Other relevant policies, plans and programmes, as well as sustainability objectives, which may impact upon the Core Strategy have been taken into account, notably through the 'Sustainability Appraisal' (SA) process. These are referred to in the relevant chapters and listed in the SA. Their influence on the Core Strategy is also reviewed in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report.

2.13   On 19 February 2013 the East Sussex, South Downs, and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Plan (2013) was formally adopted. This plan replaced the majority of the policies that were contained in the Waste Local Plan (2006) and Minerals Local Plan (1999) and is part of the statutory 'development plan' and should be read in conjunction with the Council's Local Plan (2011-2028). The Waste and Minerals Sites Plan will allocate specific areas of land where it is considered that the management of waste and production of minerals could take place in the future. This document is currently in production.

2.14   Reference is also made to the UK Marine Policy Statement, which the Council will have regard to, along with marine plans and designations, as these are developed, to ensure integration with the marine planning regime.

Rother District

3.1 Rother district covers some 200 square miles and is a predominantly rural district. Figure 1 shows Rother in a regional context, the main settlements within Rother and the main road connections.

Figure 1: Map showing main settlements in Rother with main road connections

Population

3.2 Some 92,325 people currently live in Rother (ESiF 2014 estimates), many dispersed across the rural area, but with nearly half being in Bexhill. There is a high proportion of elderly people, especially in Bexhill. The broad age structure of residents today is shown in Figure 3 below.
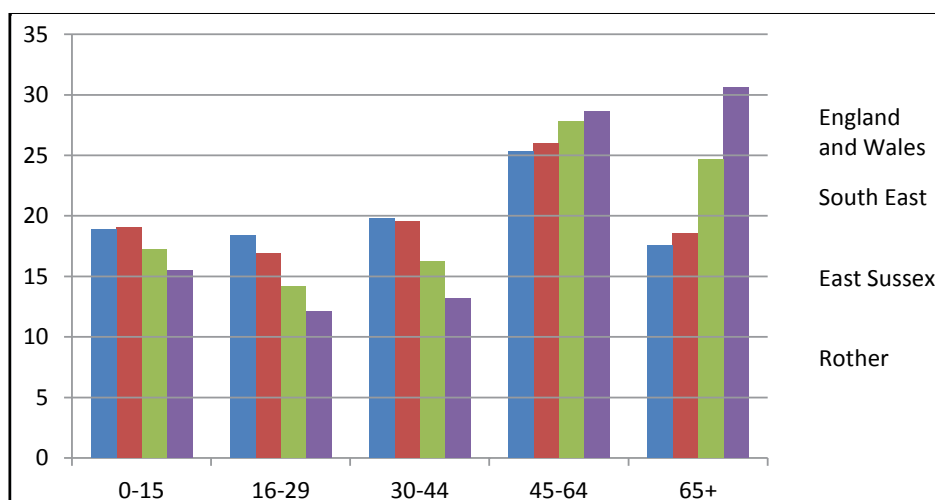
Figure 2: Age Structure of Residents (ESiF, 2014)

Living in Rother

3.3   Although not a wealthy area relative to other more affluent parts of the South East, Rother is an attractive and safe place to live. It benefits from a blend of some of the most beautiful countryside and coastline in South East England and contains the historic market towns of Battle and Rye, the Victorian/Edwardian seaside town (and administrative centre) of Bexhill and many picturesque villages.

3.4   Rother residents agree that the district is a good place to live. 86.2% of local residents indicate that they are satisfied with their local area as a place to live compared to 82.8% in the South East and 79.7% nationally. (Rother Place Survey 2008/09).

Environmental conservation and flood risk

3.5   The importance of the environment is evidenced by the extent of the district, some 82%, is designated as 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty' (AONB), while a further 7% of the district not in the AONB is either nationally or internationally designated for its nature conservation value. Rother also has a number of Conservation Areas and local heritage plays a large part in tourism.
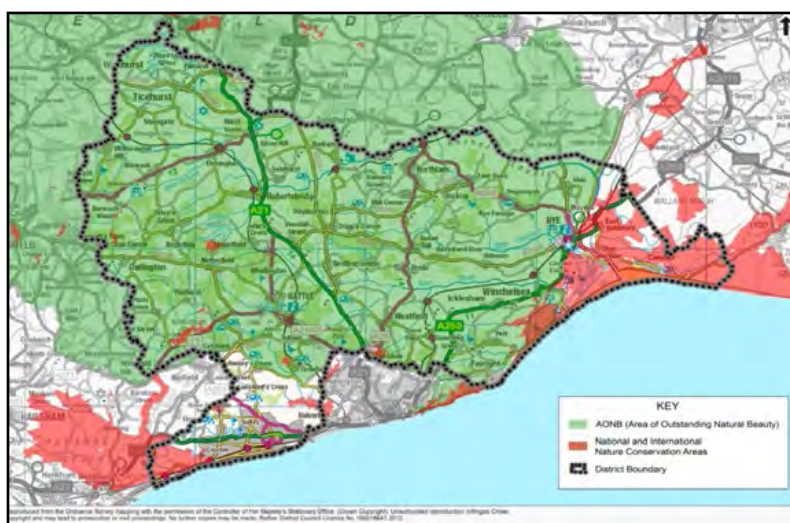
Figure 3: Environmental Designations

3.6   The Pevensey Levels straddling the south western boundary of the district is a 'Ramsar' site, designated for its international importance as a wetland habitat. In the south east, a 'Special Protection Area' (SPA) between Dungeness and Pett Level is of European importance for wild birds, while an area between Dungeness and Winchelsea Beach is designated as a 'Special Area of Conservation' (SAC), in recognition of its flora and fauna. In addition there are significant areas between Dungeness and Pett Level, including parts of the East Guldeford Levels that are either 'Proposed Ramsar' and/or 'Proposed SPA' extensions.

3.7   There are also a number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) in Rother. Figure 3 shows the extent of these environmental designations, with Figures 17a and 17b showing designated nature conservation sites in more detail.

3.8   A recent review of the extent of Ancient Woodland shows that this is also significant, covering over 15% of the district – the greatest of any district in the South East (see the Ancient Woodland Inventory, 2010). This is of ecological as well as cultural and landscape importance.

3.9   The low-lying and coastal nature of the district makes it particularly vulnerable to flooding. The predominant key flood risk comes from the sea. The majority of the coastal perimeter benefits from flood defences which help reduce the threat of flooding within the district. Mapping of flood risk areas is contained in the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

The local economy

3.10   The economy is weak relative to the region as a whole, and average local incomes correspondingly low. In part, this is a reflection of the poor economic conditions of neighbouring Hastings which, together with most of Rother, forms a 'Travel to Work Area'[2](TTWA). East Sussex has a weak economy relative to the South East as a whole in the South East, with economic productivity (Gross Value Added) of local businesses being only 63% of the regional average (2012; ESiF), while the Hastings and Rother area is relatively weak economically in a County context.

3.11   The recent recession is likely to have a considerable impact on the district as a whole, particularly as the area starts from a relatively weak base. For example, figures show that there has been an increase in the numbers claiming out of work benefits (such as Job Seekers Allowance and Lone Parent Income Support) since 2009. There has also been a considerable decease in the number of housing developments completed within the district.

3.12   There has long been a high reliance on jobs outside the district, with net out-commuting of 5,484 workers (2011 census), equivalent to 19.7% of the workforce. Conversely, Rother has the highest proportion of people work at or from home than in any other district in the South East.

3.13   The economically active rate within the district is low at 73.3% compared to 80.0% for the South East (Annual Population Survey/Labour Force Survey, 2014). The service industries make up a significant proportion of the employment within the district and account for 88.9% of jobs (Figure 5). The largest proportion of this service employment comes from public administration, education and health with 32.6% compared to 26.4% in the South East (UK Industry Employment SIC, 2012, ONS).

2 Travel-to-Work Areas (TTWAs) are used to detail areas which have self-contained labour markets
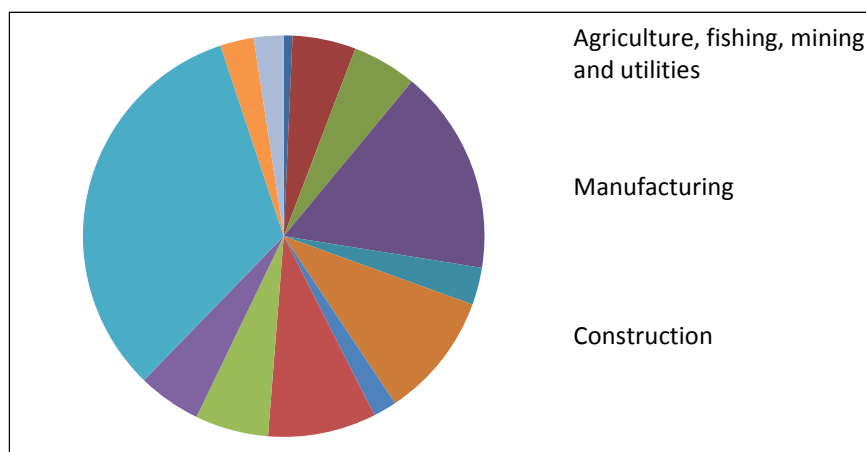
Figure 4: Industry of Employment, 2012

3.14   In 2012, mean full time gross weekly earnings (by place of work) in Rother at £524 were 18.1% lower than earnings in the South East. Unemployment in Rother in August 2014 as measured by Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) claimant rate stood at 1.5%, against the South East average of 1.3%. The claimant rate in Rother has decreased since September 2013 when it stood at 2.2%.

Affordability of housing

3.15   Low earnings combined with the area's high house prices result in real difficulties of housing affordability, especially for younger people. In 2012, median affordability ratios suggest that house prices were 9.6 times the average income within Rother. This contrasts with a South East median affordability ratio of 8.0 and is higher than the ratio for Rother in 1998, of 5.3 times. Figure 5 shows average house prices across Rother.
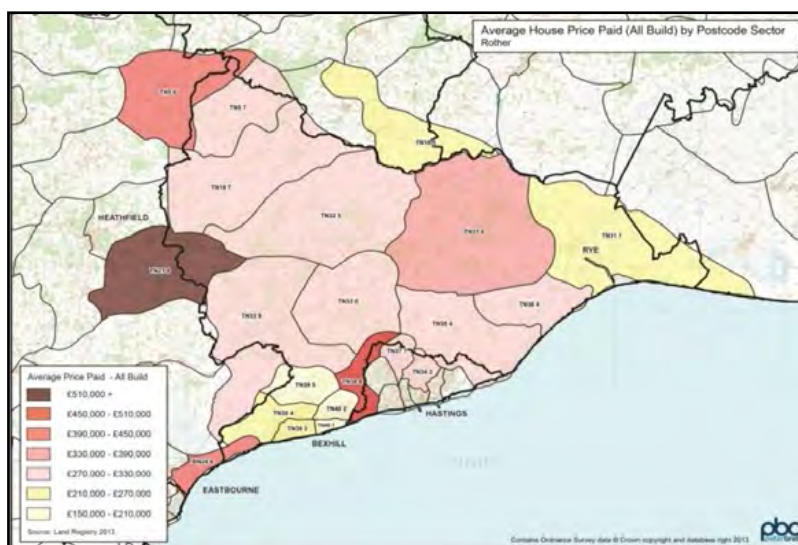
Figure 5: Map showing Average price paid (all transactions, Land Registry 2010-2013)

3 - 'Portrait' of Rother District

Social characteristics

3.16   The 2010 Index of Multiple Deprivation gives an overall rank for Rother of 132 out of the 354 English local authorities, with the most deprived local authority ranked as 1. Rother has seen a fall in the ranking since 2007, when Rother was ranked 163.

3.17   Rother has a much higher proportion of owner occupancy and a much lower proportion of social housing compared to the national, regional and county averages. In Rother, 77.9% of households are owner-occupiers and just 11.5% social rented. Equivalent figures elsewhere are: England & Wales (68.9%/19.2%), South East (74.0%/14.0%) and East Sussex (75.1%/11.9%).

3.18   Educational attainment is generally above the national average but below that for the South East region.' of Rother District

Accessibility

3.19   Accessibility within the district is generally poor, particularly in terms of road and rail journey times to London and to regional centres such as Ashford and Brighton. These poor links disadvantage the district in economic terms.

3.20   A comprehensive picture of the district is contained in 'Rother in Profile' (2009). Other key references are: LSP Action Plans' indicators, the Monitoring Report, the Council's Performance Plan, and 'East Sussex in Figures' (ESiF) database.

Demographic trends

3.21   Based on planned housing growth, Rother's population is projected to increase by some 9,200 people between 2011 and 2028. As Figure 6 shows, trend-based forecasts show that older age cohorts that are forecast to increase most.
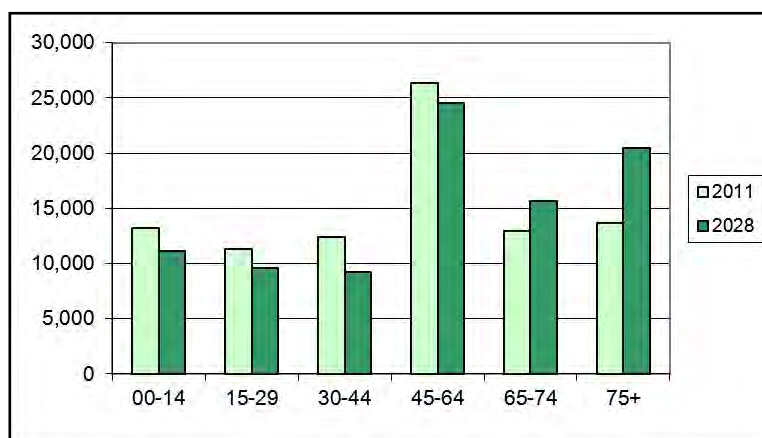
Figure 6: Population estimates by age structure (2011-2028)

3.22 Population projections based on housing growth and economic growth forecasts, suggest that Rother will see some major changes in terms of its population structure between 2011-2028. The district is forecast see large increase of over 5,000 (+38%) people over 75 and an increase in those aged 65-74 of some 3,300, (a 20% increase). There is also projected to be an increase in the population of the 30-44 age group of some 2,100 people, but a fairly static number of 16-29 year olds. The numbers of children up to 15 are expected to increase 8% over the plan period Of course, these trends may be influenced by factors such as the scale, location and form of development and any changes in relative economic circumstances.

3.23 The district's average household size, which is already one of the lowest in the region, at 2.15 persons in 2014, is set to reduce further to 2.13 by 2020 and to 2.10 by 2025.[3]

Identification of main issues

4.1   Key issues and priorities already identified in the Sustainable Community Strategy have provided the starting point for defining the critical issues to be tackled through this strategy. The 'Main Issues' below also reflect the spatial characteristics and trends identified in the previous chapter, feedback from local people at the earlier consultation stages of Core Strategy preparation and the findings of the last 'Place Survey'. Regard is also had to other documents that provide a context to plan-making.

Main issues

4.2   For the purposes of developing this Core Strategy, the "Top 10" strategic development issues particular to Rother district – although by no means a comprehensive list (and not in any priority order) – are seen as:

1) Securing economic improvement

Both enterprise and levels of earnings locally are very low, which impacts on prosperity and hence on standards of living. It also impacts on the capacity of the economy to support a wide range of job opportunities, especially for younger people looking to develop careers. Economic improvement is handicapped by relatively low skill levels, a weak commercial market and poor communications. Regeneration is a particular priority for the coastal areas of the district and adjoining Hastings. The current economic climate further compounds these issues in a relative weak local economy.

2) Delivering affordable housing to meet all needs

The challenge of improving the affordability of housing is directly related to low earnings within the locality. The relative affordability of housing in Rother has been a significant issue for some time and is getting worse. The house price/earnings affordability ratio[4] for Rother in 2013 showed it as being the 'least affordable' district in East Sussex and notably less affordable than both the national and regional averages.

3) Carbon reduction and adaptation to climate change

The South East is expected to see the greatest impact of climate change within the UK. Incidences of more extreme weather are expected with flash flooding, increased storminess, higher sea and air temperatures and rising sea levels.

As a coastal district, it is especially important to mitigate our impacts, to reduce carbon emissions, identify potentials for renewable and other non-fossil fuel based energy and to work with the changing climate through adaptation. The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) in setting its priorities has stated its commitment to carbon reduction within the district.

---

4   ESiF House price/earnings affordability ratios, 2002-2013 - districts

4) Maintaining safe places to live

Although Rother has generally low crime rates compared with the South East and England and Wales, having a safe place to live is still a priority for local people, both young and older. It is also integral to the area's continuing attractiveness as a place to live and work.

5) Supporting strong, sustainable communities

There will be many economic, social and environmental challenges facing local people over the period of this Strategy, and it is considered vitally important that these are met by having strong communities and highly engaged residents. These are all key visions for the creation of the Government's 'Big Society'.

6) Planning for an ageing population

Planning for an ageing population – in delivering services, economic activity and housing - is a particularly significant issue in Rother as its already older age profile is set to increase. However, this does not mean simply accommodating projections, but also requires a comprehensive strategy to make the area more attractive to young people and families.

7) Better access to jobs and services

Road and rail infrastructure gives rise to particular concerns locally, not only by businesses, but also by residents. Current prospects for real improvements in journey times, either by road or rail, from elsewhere in the region are limited. The role of Information Technology is therefore set to become more significant in terms of access to jobs and services.

As a large, essentially rural district, access to services is a particular issue. Particular threats are seen in the centralisation and increasing electronic delivery of public services, although this may also reduce access difficulties if effectively managed. An increasing focus of commerce in larger urban centres outside of Rother may threaten the viability and hence access of local shops and services.

8) Conserving environmental quality

The district's environmental designations impose stringent international and national obligations upon how land is used. Accommodating growth whilst ensuring that this does not conflict with the unique wildlife and habitats protected under these designations is particularly challenging.
At the same time, the rich built and natural heritage is highly valued by local people, who demand high design standards and proactive management to conserve.

9) Better facilities for sports, leisure and culture

There is a strong relationship between health and recreation, while evidence has shown that there are existing deficiencies in some leisure provision. Promoting active communities is a key priority action for the LSP.

10) Managing uncertainties

Uncertainty about the future is inevitable, but is especially so at present. This applies to environmental conditions, energy supply and security, as well as economic and housing market conditions. Coastal change, flood risk, infrastructure schemes, development activity rates and public funding levels are locally significant uncertainties.

During preparation of this Core Strategy, the most significant uncertainty related to the Bexhill to Hastings Link Road. However, following planning permission in July 2009, the Secretary of State has approved the Compulsory Purchase Orders and granted final funding approval. Construction is now underway. Hence, there is now no need for related contingencies. It is scheduled to be completed in 2015.

Part II

Vision and Objectives

5. Spatial Vision
6. Strategic Objectives

Introduction

5.1   Given the district's characteristics, and the main challenges that it will face over the next 15 or so years, the main priority for the future is seen as providing for continual and sustainable improvement in the quality of life of existing and future residents, and for local communities as a whole.

5.2   Living more sustainable lifestyles will require a greater awareness of and a sharper response to global warming and climate change. It will involve careful management of the area's precious but vulnerable natural and built environmental resources, including its landscape, biodiversity and water.

5.3   Increasing overall prosperity is a key local objective, which recognises the relatively low economic productivity of the area. This issue has been further heightened by the recent economic downturn.

5.4   There is a need to broaden employment opportunities, improve overall skill levels and increase earning potentials. This involves providing an environment more conducive to business growth, as well as continuing to mitigate the adverse effects of the area's relative peripherality through improved connectivity – both physical and electronic.

5.5   Supporting and encouraging younger people to remain and work in the area is also seen as a key part of the overall approach to improving prosperity, as well as to sustaining balanced communities.

5.6   More widely, it will remain important to support people, especially children, the increasing number of older people and other vulnerable sections of communities, to both be part of and benefit from the strong community life of the district.

5.7   The Council is eager to ensure that development and change in Rother district recognises and respects the distinctive and diverse characteristics of its towns, villages and countryside areas, and their local priorities.

5.8   Regeneration is a particular priority along the coast, while conservation of the natural beauty of the High Weald is a priority for over 80% of the district.

5.9   Specific attention is given to each of the towns – Bexhill, Battle and Rye – and to the more rural parishes, while still recognising the inter-relationships between them.

5.10   The Vision overleaf presents a description of Rother in 2028, highlighting the changes from today. This is in line with the East Sussex Integrated Sustainable Community Strategy, as outlined in the 'Policy Context' section, and takes full account of feedback from consultations.

Vision for Rother in 2028 …

Rother District is recognised for its high quality of life, where there is a strong emphasis on community life. This has been achieved by continuing to support and further develop vibrant, safe, balanced and inclusive communities.

There is a strong commitment to a more sustainable, low carbon future and adapting to climate change. There is sensitive stewardship of environmental resources and conservation of the area's outstanding environmental and cultural assets.

Sustainable economic growth has been secured, with much improved job opportunities, which encourage young people to stay in the area and provides greater prosperity for all.

Improved economic and social well-being has been facilitated by better access to jobs and services, in both urban and rural areas, and improved connectivity with the rest of the region, including through effective telecommunications networks.

Development and change has contributed significantly to meeting local needs and aspirations, having responded positively to the district's circumstances, as well as to regional and sub-regional imperatives.

There has been a notable improvement in economic conditions in the coastal towns of Bexhill and Rye as a result of a strong focus on regeneration notably through close working with neighbouring Hastings.

Bexhill has retained and strengthened its distinct identity and become one of the most attractive places to live on the south coast - attractive to families, the young and older people alike. It is the main focus of development in the district, and this continues to enable improvements in the supply of jobs and services.

Rye has improved its economic and social circumstances whilst fully respecting and sensitively managing its historic character, vulnerability to flooding and ecologically important setting. It maintains a strong tourism sector and Port activities.

The inland and essentially rural areas of Rother, falling mainly within the High Weald AONB, retain their essential local character.

Battle continues to be a thriving small market town and tourist centre which retains its character, with sensitive conservation of its historic core and setting.

The character and diversity of villages has also been retained. They are vibrant and inclusive, having evolved organically in a manner sensitive to their surroundings.

The countryside continues to be protected for its intrinsic value as well as being more accessible and economically active, while change is carefully managed to respect its character.

Figure 7: Vision for Rother in 2028

6.1   The Vision in the previous chapter is translated into the Strategic Objectives set out in Table 1 below:

Theme	Strategic Objective
Overall Spatial Strategy	To achieve a pattern of activity and development that contributes to the Sustainable Community Strategy, the 'Spatial Vision' and responds to particular local circumstances and environmental resources.
Bexhill	To strengthen the identity of Bexhill and for it to become one of the most attractive places to live on the south coast, attractive to families, the young and elderly alike, within an integrated approach to securing a more prosperous future for the Bexhill and Hastings area.
Hastings Fringes	To provide attractive and accessible fringes of Hastings, consistent with environmental designations.
Rye	To improve the economic and social well-being of Rye, including in relation to its market town role, tourism and the Port of Rye, whilst fully respecting and sensitively managing its historic character, vulnerability to flooding and ecologically important setting.
Battle	To support the market town and tourist centre role and character of Battle, and conserve its historic core and setting.
Rural Areas	To meet local needs and support vibrant and viable mixed communities in the rural areas, whilst giving particular attention to the social, economic, ecological and intrinsic value of the countryside.
Sustainable Resource Management	To mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts, and to use natural resources efficiently.
Communities	To continue to support, and further develop, vibrant, safe, balanced and inclusive communities.
Local Housing Needs	To provide housing in a way that supports local priorities and provides choice, including for affordable housing.
Economy	To secure sustainable economic growth for existing and future residents and provide greater prosperity and employment opportunities for all.
Environment	To maintain the high quality, and improve the long term stewardship, of the natural and built environment, with full regard to potential future consequences of climate change.
Transport and Accessibility	To provide a higher level of access to jobs and services for all ages in both urban and rural areas, and improve connectivity with the rest of the region.

Table 1: Strategic Objectives

6.2   The above Strategic Objectives provide the basis for developing the strategies for spatial areas, as contained in Part III, and for the 'core polices' relating to sustainable development, community development, environment, housing, the economy, and accessibility, that are put forward in Part IV. The policies in this Core Strategy should be read as a whole.

6.3   Delivery of the Strategic Objectives is also to be pursued by the specific consideration of related infrastructure requirements of the strategy and the establishment of a monitoring framework, with indicators that relate to them (see final chapter).

6.4   The Strategic Objectives have been assessed for their sustainability through the Sustainability Appraisal process.

Part III

Spatial Strategies

Scope and Issues

7.1 This chapter considers how the Vision should be carried forward in terms of the broad nature and scale of development and change across Rother district up to 2028. It considers where the main areas of change, and restraint, should be. It also sets out broad development principles to guide the location and form of development.

7.2 Development within the district is seen in the context of the wider sub-region and region. Regard is given to the relationship with larger towns and cities which act as centres of employment, shopping and service provision for parts of the district. In particular, consideration must be given to links with neighbouring Hastings, which is part of the same strategic housing and labour market area.

7.3 Rother district itself is a diverse area, with varying circumstances. In common with other Sussex coastal towns, Bexhill and Rye have particular needs for regeneration, although each has its own context. For example, the international nature conservation designations and areas of flood risk around Rye have a major bearing on its growth potential; Bexhill's low economic activity and a relatively older age profile impact on its economic vitality.

7.4 Virtually all the inland parts of the district lie within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Here, priority is given to the conservation of natural beauty, although regard should still be given to the social and economic needs of the area. The historic town of Battle lies a few miles inland of Hastings, with a surrounding rural catchment. There are also many villages spread across the district, reflecting the dispersed settlement pattern of the area.

7.5 It follows that the spatial strategy needs to combine the strategic imperatives facing the district as a whole with the local factors affecting particular areas and settlements.

Aim and Objectives

7.6 Chapter 6 identifies the following Strategic Objective to guide the pattern of activity and development across Rother district:

> *'To achieve a pattern of activity and development that contributes to the Sustainable Community Strategy and the 'Spatial Vision', and responds to particular local circumstances and environmental resources.'*

7.7   The following objectives elaborate upon this:

> **Overall Spatial Objectives:**
>
> i)   To guide sustainable development and help build more sustainable communities, with a balance between homes and jobs;
>
> ii) To maintain and enhance the character of settlements, the relationship between them and with their landscape settings;
>
> iii) To give particular attention to promoting economic regeneration and growth for the Hastings/Bexhill area;
>
> iv) To give particular attention to supporting the 'market town' roles and environmental qualities and settings of Battle and Rye;
>
> v)   To promote vital, mixed communities in the rural areas, whilst also giving particular attention to the distinctive characteristics of the High Weald AONB and the intrinsic value of the wider countryside

7.8   More locally specific objectives and strategies are set out in chapters 8 - 12.

Scale of development

7.9   There is a general high demand for housing in the South East region, in-migration being the main "driver" for housing growth in East Sussex. However, environmental designations and relatively low economic growth constrain sustainable growth.

7.10   Following revocation of the South East Plan, the scale of growth needs to have due regard to the policies contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. The key policy reference is paragraph 47; this states that Local Plans should meet the full objectively assessed need for market and affordable housing as far as is consistent with other policies of the Framework. In accordance with this, the Council, together with Hastings Borough Council, commissioned a [Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)](#) Update in June 2013, specifically to provide a housing needs assessment.

7.11   For Rother, this identified a need for 6,180 net additional dwellings over the plan period to meet the demographic trend-based assessment of need. This level of growth would also readily meet both the economic and local housing needs for new dwellings. This can be compared to a level of growth of some 4,800 dwellings previously required under the South East Plan. The capacity to accommodate this level of housing growth, as well as any shortfall in capacity in Hastings Borough, having due regard to sustainability considerations, is summarised below.

The economy

7.12   Nationally, and internationally, the economy has taken an unexpected major setback in the last few years. As a consequence, forecasts of economic growth are much reduced.

7.13   An Employment Strategy and Land Review carried out jointly with Hastings Borough Council in 2008 highlighted the need for a "step change" in economic performance, as well as a need to significantly increase the supply of business accommodation to meet pent up and future potential demand.

7.14   It concluded that an additional 100,000 sq.m. of business floorspace would be an appropriate target to improve the balance between homes and jobs and meet economic objectives, with most development in the first half of the Plan period.

7.15   The Employment Strategy and Land Update: August 2011 reviews the earlier Study. It suggests that the Hastings/Bexhill area remains one of areas of greatest need for regeneration, and that, in the absence of some previously planned significant rail or trunk road transport improvements, economic activity needs to be strongly fostered in order to achieve future prosperity. It also concludes that an increase in economic activity rates are likely, with the consequence that the previously recommended scale of business land release, of some 100,000sq.m. across the district, which would support of the order of 2,500 jobs, is still broadly appropriate.

7.16   Whilst the amount of proposed housing development has increased since the above study, this scale of employment land release is still regarded as an appropriate minimum on the basis that it is well above trend-based forecasts and, hence, an aspirational but achievable target. Overall economic policies are set out in Chapter 16, while the scope for further employment development in rural areas is set out in Chapter 12.

7.17   Rother and Hastings Councils have agreed a common approach as the basis for joint working to secure a more prosperous future for the Hastings and Bexhill, recognising the close relationship between the towns, whose centres are only 5 miles apart, and with only a small gap between the urban areas. This agreement addresses shared issues of regeneration, accessibility, and use of land on the urban fringes, especially where a countryside park between the towns is being jointly promoted.

 Rother and Hastings Councils' shared approach to future prosperity for the Hastings and Bexhill area:

Economic regeneration and growth will be generated through joined up working concentrating on:

i)   increasing economic activity and investment, supported by the development of high quality education opportunities and integrated skills training;

ii) securing investment in and otherwise assisting areas of socio-economic need, with particular regard to increasing employment opportunities;

iii) ensuring a range of housing supply across Hastings and Bexhill to support sustainable growth, including for economically active people and families;

iv) developing the economy, healthy lifestyles and the role of culture, sports, arts, tourism and leisure;

v)   increasing transport infrastructure capacity, via a 'local transport strategy' for Hastings and Bexhill prepared in association with East Sussex County Council, notably by early construction of the Bexhill Hastings Link Road, improved access to the A21 at Baldslow and measures to foster more sustainable travel patterns; and

vi) implementing the Combe Valley Countryside Park, together with other cross-boundary urban fringe development/management schemes.

7.18   In line with this approach and activity of the local regeneration company, Sea Change Sussex, it is envisaged that a large part of further employment land supply will be by implementation of mixed-use development sites at North East Bexhill, already identified in the Local Plan 2006.

7.19   The smaller market towns and villages have varying employment development potentials. Battle, as well as Robertsbridge, benefits from relatively good access to London. While Rye is more distant from larger centres, it is only 22 minutes from Ashford International, with its fast trains to London and Europe. Rural areas of the district have seen job growth in the past, with significant use being made of former agricultural buildings.

7.20   It is acknowledged that the commercial property market across the district is relatively weak compared with much of the south-east. This can help businesses in terms of rents, but acts as a brake on the creation of new units. Hence, simply allocating sites will not be sufficient to bring about development. The strategy needs to focus on retaining and improving the effective use of existing employment sites, supplemented as appropriate by new allocations at suitable locations as part of mixed-use developments.

7.21   A broad strategy response to stimulate economic activity in the district is put forward in Chapter 16: Economy.

Housing

7.22   A range of factors need to be balanced to determine the most appropriate scale of residential development, with 'drivers' for growth on the one hand, including demographic projections and housing market pressures, and supply constraints, notably environmental designations and infrastructure availability on the other. Critical in balancing these is the vision that local communities have for their area. These factors are reviewed, and their implications for housing development reassessed, in the Background Paper on 'Overall Housing Provision'. A further assessment, which reviews both the more recent SHMA Update 2013 and the SHLAA Review 2013, is set out in the 'Summary Appraisal of Housing Growth Potential',(July 2013).

7.23   Sustainability Appraisals have been prepared alongside successive iterations of the Strategy. In the light of the SHMA Update 2013, the Sustainability Appraisal of the Proposed Submission Core Strategy is supplemented, in respect of the potential for further housing development, by a 'Sustainability Appraisal of the Council's proposed revised modifications'. This most recent Appraisal supports the planned level of housing growth, recognising that it is higher than that previously proposed, largely on the basis of the greater weight given to housing objectives. However, it also concludes that higher levels of housing, which would fully meet the housing needs assessment for Rother, and potentially contribute to wider housing needs, would be unsustainable.

7.24   The main reasons for this are, firstly, that the potential for housing growth at Bexhill is as much as is likely to be achievable in housing market terms. There are also increasing uncertainties in overcoming transport capacity constraints and in achieving job growth, such that the key objective of a better balance between homes and jobs is increasingly compromised. Secondly, the potential for further growth elsewhere is seen as impacting increasingly, and significantly, on environmental designations, most notably on the conservation of the natural beauty of the High Weald AONB. Further detail about the distribution of housing growth is set out in the following section.

7.25   The cancellation of other transport infrastructure improvements that would have given a boost to economic regeneration at Bexhill and Hastings, notably capacity increases in the Hastings to Ashford railway line and A21 improvements, also impacts on the potential for sustainable growth.

7.26   Environmental factors have been very influential in setting the levels of development in Rother. Most notable are:

- the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This covers 82% of the district, including all the inland parts, where national policies giving priority to conservation of the 'natural beauty' of the landscape limit major growth;

- international and national nature conservation sites. The low-lying marshlands to both the south-east and south-west of the district have overlapping international designations. In total, these cover 14% of the district, and have particular impacts on Rye and its environs;

- areas vulnerable to flood risk. The low-lying position of most coastal settlements makes them heavily constrained by flood risk considerations, while some inland settlements are also vulnerable.

7.27   Even so, the balance of homes and jobs may be assisted by housing investment, while affordable housing remains a local priority. This is elaborated in the 'Affordable Housing' Background Paper.

7.28   Local communities needs and aspirations for more affordable housing and jobs, as well as for improved services and facilities, have also been reviewed, notably through work on 'Local Action Plans' as well as through dialogue with Town and Parish Councils, and in Bexhill, the Town Forum Executive. Further detail of such needs and aspirations are contained in the town and Rural Areas chapters, as well as in their respective Background Papers.

7.29   It is concluded that an appropriate overall target for net additional housing in the district over the period from April 2011 to March 28 (17 years) should be at least 5,700 dwellings, or an average of 335 dwellings/year.

7.30   This represents a substantial increase on previous rates of housebuilding, being 37% higher than the average of 245 dwellings per year (1991-2011). In fact, given the low rate of housing completions in the first two years of the plan period (275 dwellings), the actual rate of housing now required 2013-2028 (of 362 dwellings per year), represents an increase of 48% on past rates. Hence, and notwithstanding the constraining environmental factors, the District will see a significant boost in housing supply over the plan period.

7.31   This growth is justified primarily in terms of contributing to the projected demand for new homes, as well as in meeting the local need for housing and the need to support economic regeneration. The possibility of further opportunities for sustainable housing (as well as employment) development arising over time cannot be ruled out; hence, the requirement is expressed as a minimum for the purposes of plan-making. These will be further assessed as part of site allocations/ neighbourhood planning processes.

Distribution of Development

7.32   The distribution of development has been determined by looking closely at local circumstances across the district against the backcloth of strategic issues, most notably the strategic Vision and Objectives, as well as demographic and economic projections.   It has been subject to Sustainability Appraisal (SA).

7.33   Particular regard is given to the role of settlements in terms of seeking to locate most development in locations that offer a range of employment, services and facilities - thereby supporting community life and existing services.

7.34   Furthermore, as highlighted by the SA, this approach should assist in providing opportunities to reduce the need to travel by car thereby reducing carbon emissions, and encouraging walking and cycling. It is also cost efficient, maximising the use of existing facilities and infrastructure and by reducing the need for new ones.

7.35   Service provision is taken only as a starting point, as it is recognised that some larger settlements are unsuited, mainly for environmental reasons, to accommodate the levels of growth suggested by this approach, while other, smaller settlements may benefit from some growth to ensure their continued sustainability.

7.36   The overall spatial distribution of development outlined in Figure 8 also takes account of the location of existing commitments, the combined effect of these and any further requirements on the scale of population increase – with the aim of ensuring that it is not disproportionate, and on the degree of 'local housing needs'.

7.37   In all cases, the distribution of development also needs to be mindful of valuable environmental and heritage assets, as well as infrastructure availability. Potential sites to deliver the housing strategy are identified in the Strategic Housing Land Availability (SHLAA) Review 2013. These, as well as other sites, will be further assessed as part of site allocations/neighbourhood planning processes to determine whether, and if so how, they will be duly brought forward. There will be public consultation as part of these processes.

7.38   With worsening levels of deprivation relative to other parts of the country, it remains the case that Bexhill and Hastings need to regenerate economically. Additional transport infrastructure capacity is also critical to achieve such growth however. This principally relates to the Bexhill Hastings Link Road, for which construction is now underway. A report into 'Housing Delivery in Bexhill and Hastings' concludes that the town may grow at a much increased rate than in the past, while a Transport Study shows this to be possible, subject to further assessment.

7.39   The SHLAA Review 2013 indicates the potential for growth. At the same time, the degree of growth proposed is at a level that does not undermine the key local objectives to improve the balance of homes and jobs and to retain the town's "sense of place".

7.40   The degree of growth at Battle and Rye is moderated due to the high environmental factors that bear upon them. Battle is not only heavily constrained by its historic form and AONB setting, but also by traffic congestion.   While it already has a major housing development planned, there are limited opportunities either for further employment sites in accessible locations or for major retail growth in the town centre.

7.41   The opportunities for further development at Rye are very limited by its historic form and topographic setting, as well as the virtual enveloping presence of international nature conservation designations, the AONB and flood risk areas (which also affect parts of the town itself).   Added to this, the town seeks to prioritise social and economic challenges and, like Battle, manage its very important heritage. The SHLAA identified very little potential for further outward growth, while the yield from existing allocations may not fully materialise. For both towns, the SHLAA Review 2013 indicates some potential for further housing via redevelopment within both commercial and residential areas, although the prospects for this requires further assessment.

7.42   Some potential for sustainable growth in the Hastings Fringes is identified. Of note, a large scale site at Breadsell Farm mainly in Hastings which would have justified some development on adjoining land in Rother is not promoted in the adopted Hastings Planning Strategy. Also, the prospect of a new railway station in at Wilting (which may have facilitated some housing development) has also receded with publication of Network Rail's development strategy[5]. While current evidence does not support the identification of development at Breadsell Farm, given the housing land supply position, relevant policies are framed in such a way as to not rule out the longer-term prospect of a sustainable scheme if the environmental, access to services and transport constraints were satisfactorily addressed.

7.43   Rural communities in particular are keen to ensure that development in villages contributes to their character and sustainability of services, as well as meets local needs (such as for affordable housing, play areas, community halls, etc.). Hence, development in rural areas should be set at a level which allows for limited growth, reflecting individual settlement's needs, opportunities and service provision. At the same time, the housing provisions seek to maximise the contribution that the villages can make to sustainable growth without prejudicing their individual character and amenities, as well as those of their shared, for the most part High Weald AONB, landscape setting.

7.44   Further explanation of the development potential and overall strategies for the towns and villages is contained the relevant area chapters and the respective background papers.

---

5 See Kent RUS using this hyperlink: http://www.networkrail.co.uk/browse%20documents/rus%20documents/route%20utilisation%20strategies/kent/kent%20rus.pdf

Route Utilisation Strategies (RUS) are produced by Network Rail (NR). RUSs considers existing capacity, infrastructure capability and train operations, followed by forecasting future demand and providing recommendations as to how this should best be accommodated.

7.45   The overall impact of the distribution of new development proposed set out below (and in chapter 12 for individual villages) is to maintain the existing settlement pattern. It both supports the role of the main service centres in ways compatible with their context and provides for the sensitive evolution of smaller settlements, with a focus on enabling them to meet local needs locally.

Policy OSS1: Overall Spatial Development Strategy

The Strategy for the Overall Spatial Development is to:

(i) **Plan for at least 5,700 dwellings (net) in the district over the period 2011-2028;**

(ii) **Plan for at least 100,000 square metres of gross additional business floorspace;**

(iii) **Identify suitable sites in accordance with the following spatial distribution:**

   (a) **Focus new development at Bexhill, giving particular attention to promoting economic regeneration and growth of the Hastings and Bexhill area, including through mixed use developments;**

   (b) **Provide for some development in Battle and Rye that helps maintain their small market town roles and is consistent with their respective environmental constraints and settings;**

   (c) **Facilitate the limited growth of villages that contain a range of services and which contributes to supporting vibrant, mixed rural communities, notably in relation to service provision and local housing needs, and is compatible with the character and setting of the village;**

   (d) **Allow for small-scale infill and redevelopment, and otherwise enable local needs for housing and community facilities to be met, in other villages; and**

   (e) **Give particular attention to the ecological, agricultural, public enjoyment and intrinsic value of the countryside, and continue to generally restrict new development to that for which a countryside location is necessary or appropriate to promoting sustainable land-based industries and sensitive diversification, primarily for employment uses.**

7.46   The broad locations for development are set out in the respective area chapters, while the distribution within the district is set out in the table below.

Approximate Development Levels 2011 - 2028		
	Housing	**Employment**
Bexhill	3,100 dwellings	At least 60,000sq.m.
Hastings fringes	100-250 dwellings	At least 3,000sq.m.
Battle	475-500 dwellings	At least 10,000sq.m.*
Rye	355-400 dwellings	At least 10,000-20,000 sq.m.
Villages	1,670 dwellings	At least 10,000sq.m.
Total	**At least 5,700 dwellings**	**At least 93,000 – 103,000sq.m.**

Figure 8: Approximate Development Levels   (* includes sites on Marley Lane)

7.47   As stated above, the level of housing growth in line with this strategy is at least 5,700 dwellings. This enables a higher level of housing growth when individual sites are assessed. The exact distribution will be refined when allocations are subsequently brought forward.

7.48   The distribution of development between individual villages is set out in the Rural Areas chapter. Actual numbers and areas will be subject to further detailed investigation of potential sites.

7.49   Given the need for regeneration, especially in the coastal towns, most business development should be in the first 10 years of the plan period.

7.50   The Key Diagram (Map 1) illustrates the main elements of the development strategy, including settlements identified as having development potential.

Future Allocations and 'Windfall' Sites

7.51   The table at Appendix 3 summarises the local housing targets together with the housing land supply position at April 2011. Taking account of outstanding planning permissions, there is a need to provide for at least a further 4,295[6] dwellings in the District as a whole between 2011 and 2028.

7.52   Sites for new development will be set out in due course through a Development and Site Allocations Plan and Neighbourhood Plans. Existing Local Plan housing (and other) allocations will be subject to review as part of these processes. These allocations amount to some 1,607 dwellings which, if these are all carried forward, would still require some additional 2,688[7] dwellings need to planned for to meet the overall target.

6 4,295 comprises 3,770 (total allocations required lower end of range), plus 65 exception sites, plus 460 small site windfalls.

7 2,688 comprises 2,163 (total allocations required lower end of range), plus 65 exception sites, plus 460 small site windfalls.

7.53   Government policy in the National Planning Policy Framework states that: "Local planning authorities may make an allowance for windfall sites in the five-year supply if they have compelling evidence that such sites have consistently become available in the local area and will continue to provide a reliable source of supply." It adds that: "Any allowance should be realistic, having regard to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends, and should not include residential gardens."

7.54   In fact, there is a strong track record in Rother of both large and small (essentially brownfield) windfall sites coming forward. Moreover, these have made a significant contribution to housing numbers in past years. Typically, windfall sites are small-scale and within 'development boundaries' (which are discussed further below).

7.55   Sites for 6+ dwellings should be allocated for development, drawing on the detailed work in the SHLAA, although the prospect of some larger windfall sites will still exist. However, as allocations are not normally made for sites of less than 6 dwellings, there will inevitably by some continuing supply of small-site windfalls.

7.56   Given Rother's past record of fairly consistent small site windfall developments, an allowance for these is made in years 5-10 and 10-15, at rates of 47 dwellings and 45 dwellings a year respectively. This compares with some 90 dwellings a year on small site windfalls over the period 2000 -2010. The future allowances do not include any provision for redevelopment on garden land. Further allowance may be made for the delivery of affordable housing "exception sites" in accordance with the Council's programme. This amounts to some 65 dwellings, all of which would be in the rural areas. This programme is underway with several sites currently being progressed.

7.57   Taking the above windfall allowances into account, the outstanding requirement for further allocations is some 2,163 dwellings.

7.58   The Council will continue to monitor and review the contribution of windfalls to overall supply and the extent to which they may either reduce the need for allocations, impact on the need to release sites, or provide a contingency for certain sites not being developed. Particular attention will be given to the incidence of large windfall sites, which may increase the actual scale of housing growth over the plan period.

7.59   Further consideration of the general timing of development is contained in chapter 19.

Development boundaries

7.60   Development boundaries' around settlements are a well-established planning policy tool in East Sussex. They provide a clear and readily understood indication of where development would, and would not, be allowed in principle. Within development boundaries there is a presumption that infilling, redevelopment and changes of use will be acceptable subject to other policies of the plan.

7.61   They help to focus development and investment into sustainable locations and to protect against intrusive development beyond the substantially built-up areas of towns and villages.

7.62   Consideration has been given to whether to retain such prescribed limits, or whether to rely on a criteria-based policy. It is found that the level of certainty they afford, for all involved in planning, continues to be highly valued. They reflect the established settlement pattern and provide a useful reference for the application of policies specifically designed to help meet local needs, such as those relating to community facilities and affordable housing. Therefore the use of development boundaries is maintained. Current boundaries will be reviewed, in conjunction with the consideration of proposed land allocations, as part of the forthcoming Development and Site Allocations Plan. The relevant factors are set out in the following policy, OSS2.

Policy OSS2: Use of Development Boundaries

Development Boundaries around settlements will continue to differentiate between areas where most forms of new development would be acceptable and where they would not.

Existing development boundaries will be reviewed by the Development and Site Allocations DPD, having regard to the:

(i)   Existing pattern, form and function of settlements, including of closely 'linked' settlements and important 'gaps' of countryside between them;

(ii)   Character and settings of individual towns and villages;

(iii)   Sensitivity to further development both within the main built up confines and in more rural fringes;

(iv)   The amount of land needed to fulfil development needs and requirements;

(v)   Availability of local infrastructure and services;

(vi)   Accessibility to facilities and services, and avoiding scattered and ribbon development;

(vii) Environmental considerations, including the need to conserve designated areas of national and local landscape, archaeological, geological, ecological or historical importance;

(viii) Following physical features, unless this may suggest a potential for development that is inappropriate.

Sustainable Development Principles

7.63   At the heart of planning, at all levels, is the principle of 'sustainable development'. In essence, sustainable development is about ensuring a better quality of life for everyone both now and in the future.   It means a more inclusive society that achieves and shares the benefits of increased economic prosperity, in which the environment is protected and improved and there is a less wasteful use of natural resources.

7.64   The NPPF sets out the key principles based around three mutually dependent dimensions – an economic role, a social role and an environmental role. The Government's 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' is set out in Policy and supporting text in chapter 2.

7.65   Key considerations in relation to the social, economic and environmental impacts of development provide the basis for assessing the sustainability of development. These are set out in core 'delivery' policies for the key aspects of sustainable development; that is, resource management, economy, communities, housing, environment and transport, and supplement policies for particular spatial areas within the district.

7.66   General development principles applicable to the identification of sites and the determination of planning applications for the development of land are set out below.

Policy OSS3: Location of development

In assessing the suitability of a particular location for development, when both allocating land for development and determining planning applications, sites and/or proposals should accord with the relevant policies of this Core Strategy and be considered in the context of:

(i)   The spatial strategy for the particular settlement or area, and its distinct character;

(ii)   The capacity of, as well as access to, existing infrastructure and services, and of any planned or necessary improvements to them;

(iii) The local need for affordable housing;

(iv) Needs and priorities identified in approved Local Action Plans;

(v)   The low carbon and renewable energy potentials of the site;

(vi) the character and qualities of the landscape;

(vii) Making effective use of land within the main built-up confines of towns and villages, especially previously developed land, consistent with maintaining their character;

(viii) Any constraints relating to land stability, contamination, air quality, agricultural land quality and coastal erosion, and the ability to satisfactorily address these;

(ix) The deliverability of development, including consideration of land ownership patterns and the viability of development;

(x)   The need for and access to employment opportunities.

General development considerations

7.67   In addition to the above criteria, the suitability of a specific development proposal also needs to be considered in terms of the extent to which it delivers appropriately high standards that conserve landscape character and bio-diversity, makes most efficient use of finite water and energy resources, as well as fosters local identity and safeguard amenities.

7.68   All development should be capable of accommodating the reasonable expectations of likely occupiers, including in terms of indoor and outdoor space, personal safety and not be unduly affected by adjacent intrusive uses and buildings. They should cater for practical needs, such as parking and access, refuse and recycling facilities and open space.

7.69   At the same time, the amenities of neighbouring properties needs to be protected, in terms of loss of light and privacy, avoiding an overbearing presence and otherwise causing intrusion such as through noise, activity at unsocial hours, lighting, etc.

7.70   Environmental impacts need to be carefully addressed, such that landscape character is conserved, inappropriate fragmentation of the countryside avoided, important trees, woodlands and hedgerows retained, and where appropriate, supplemented by new landscaping, and wildlife habitats protected and encouraged.

7.71   Good design should respect the character of its setting, whether urban or rural, and make a positive contribution to reinforcing local distinctiveness.   This relates not only the layout and design of buildings, but also the treatment of external areas, which should respect landscape character. Key design principles are set out in chapter 17.

7.72   Density standards are not advocated as development should respond to its setting and accord with the principles of good design. This includes looking at higher densities in more accessible locations. Minimum standards can also lead to inappropriate cramming, although unduly low densities may also be inappropriate in failing to make effective use of development land.

7.73   The need to ensure that infrastructure and facilities required to service development are available or will be provided is addressed in chapter 19, while drainage matters are covered in chapter 13, and meeting the transport and access demands created is addressed in chapter 18.

7.74   The following policy addresses those general development considerations concerned with 'fitness for purpose' and local amenities, and complement other policies relating to other factors. Such policies include policy EN1 relating to landscape, policy EN3 relating to design and policy EN5 relating to biodiversity.

Policy OSS4: General Development Considerations

In addition to considerations set out by other policies, all development should meet the following criteria:

(i)   It meets the needs of future occupiers, including providing appropriate amenities and the provision of appropriate means of access for disabled users;

(ii)   It does not unreasonably harm the amenities of adjoining properties;

(iii) It respects and does not detract from the character and appearance of the locality;

(iv) It is compatible with both the existing and planned use of adjacent land, and takes full account of previous use of the site;

(v)   In respect of residential development, is of a density appropriate to its context, having due regard to the key design principles.

Scope and Issues

8.1   Bexhill is by far the largest settlement in Rother district. It has a population of 43,714 people[8], equivalent to some 48% of that of the district as a whole.

8.2   The town's age structure reflects a combination of the town's history, seaside location, and quiet character, with relatively low house prices compared to the wider South East. There is a high proportion of older people, with 34.3% of the population aged over 65 years[9], which compares with 24.7% for East Sussex and 18.6% for the South East. Migration information[10] confirms a trend in older couples (aged 45+) and retirees moving to the town.

8.3   The proportion of children, younger adults and people aged 30-44 are all correspondingly lower than county and regional averages. This is partly attributed to limited job and career opportunities locally. Average incomes are noticeably lower than county and regional levels, with most jobs in the public sector and local services.

8.4   The combination of the town's demographic profile, seaside character, relatively low crime rate and built environment help give it a genteel character.

8.5   However, there are indications of a gradual fall in its economic well-being. Most notably, this is evidenced by falling rankings in the national 'Index of Multiple Deprivation'. This is matched by neighbouring areas, especially Hastings, with which the economic health of the town is closely linked.

8.6   To help reverse this trend, a shared approach with Hastings Borough Council to fostering a more prosperous future for both towns is set out in Chapter 7: Overall Spatial Strategy.

8.7   The amount of business accommodation is relatively low for the size of the town, with only Beeching Road and, to a lesser extent, Brett Drive and Elva Way forming recognised industrial estates. Hastings Direct is the largest private sector employer. Business organisations have supported further provision, including high quality units.

8.8   There has been retail development at Ravenside Retail Park in recent years, but there has been little retail or other commercial investment in the town centre, while the level of vacant premises is around 10% of all shop units[11].

8.9   While educational attainment of Bexhill's residents is lower than local and regional averages, the town's new, innovative High School, in addition to recent developments of both the Bexhill College and the University Centre, Hastings, provides a basis for improved educational achievement locally.

8   Source: East Sussex in Figures: Population estimates in 2014 - parishes

9   Source: East Sussex in Figures: Population estimates in 2014 - parishes

10   Housing Market Assessment for Hastings and Rother March 2006, DTZ Pieda Consulting

11   Source: RDC Survey April 2011 identified 21 empty units, relative to Goad 'Centre Report' which identified 217 shop units (as well as 104 service units) in the town centre.

8.10   Looking ahead, both national and local demographic trends indicate that the proportion of older people in the population will increase noticeably over the next 15-20 years.

8.11   Public consultation has highlighted a general desire for the town to continue to serve its older, and ageing, population, while at the same time, improving its opportunities and attractiveness to younger people.

8.12   Growth also provides an opportunity for the town. Development has been focussed on urban redevelopment in recent years, as limited transport capacity on the A259 to Hastings has frustrated new sites being developed. A high proportion of this has been flatted schemes, often for older people. However, there is the potential for sustainable urban extensions, subject to additional traffic capacity.

8.13   A fuller consideration of issues and opportunities is contained in the Bexhill Town Study Background Paper, as well as in the Bexhill Local Action Plan.

Objectives

8.14   As outlined in Chapter 6, the Strategic Objective for Bexhill is :

   'To strengthen the identity of Bexhill and for it to become one of the most attractive places to live on the south coast, attractive to families, the young and elderly alike, within an integrated approach to securing a more prosperous future for the Bexhill and Hastings area.'

8.15   The following objectives elaborate upon this, taking account of the main themes highlighted in evidence documents and through consultation.

Bexhill Objectives:

i) To increase the number and range of local job opportunities, within an integrated approach across the Bexhill and Hastings area;

ii) To make the town more attractive to younger people and families and thereby foster a more balanced demographic profile;

iii) To improve the quality and character of the built environment, promote its heritage and a clean, safe image for the town;

iv) To secure investment in improved community infrastructure, particularly that which promotes active lifestyles;

v) To strengthen the retail, commercial as well as cultural role of the town centre as the heart of the town;

vi) To focus on meeting socio-economic needs within more deprived areas of the town;

vii) To promote a scale and nature of housing consistent with other objectives, especially economic growth, and infrastructure capacity.

Strategy for Bexhill

Character

8.16   Local consultations have emphasised that a strategy to deliver the objectives needs to build on the strengths in the town's character in relation to the:

- high level of participation in community life
- strong cultural heritage, notably the iconic De la Warr Pavilion
- distinct Town Centre and Old Town areas
- amenity provided by the seafront and green spaces
- low crime levels

8.17   In line with the objectives, the strategy should also look at improving the availability of jobs, access to affordable housing, education and training opportunities, and leisure facilities, to specifically cater more for younger and economically active sections of the population.

Economy

8.18   In terms of the central concern of economic well-being, while the town's coastal location and relatively poor transport links limit its commercial market potential compared to other parts of the region, there are existing local firms with growth potential. Also, Sea Change Sussex[12] has shown in Hastings that where new modern premises are available, investment in new industries, such as cultural industries, media, health and leisure and eco-industries, is possible.

8.19   Hence, the strategy involves stimulating the market, supporting the growth of local firms and attracting investment that resonates with the town's bold past, more genteel character today, and more particularly with achieving wider recognition of the qualities that make it a very pleasant place to live on the south coast. Examples could include healthcare, leisure and insurance.

8.20   Providing suitable sites and premises, and infrastructure, for business growth is considered further under the 'development strategy' at Policy BX3 below.

8.21   Education remains a key part of the strategy, to support families across the town. There is scope to improve provision through rationalisation while still providing accessible schools for all parts of the town; a new primary school will be required to serve new housing development to the north of the town.

Well-being

8.22   Increasing the town's amenities' will improve its profile, as well as contribute to the vision. The priorities include continuing to invest in improving the public realm, including the seafront environment, open spaces and leisure facilities, to make them more attractive to all age groups.

8.23   More broadly, promoting a design agenda that both respects the town's heritage, through robust design standards and careful management of change in the Town Centre and Old Town Conservation Areas, and promotes innovative design especially on key sites, will reinforce public realm and open space initiatives.

8.24   Access to major 'green space' is identified as being limited for the eastern part of the town.[13] The commitment to create a 'Countryside Park' extending from the sea between Bexhill and Hastings, around Pebsham, and westwards along the Combe Haven, will address this.

8.25   The Council's Leisure Facilities Strategy[14] identifies a need for further provision of sports halls, multi-use games areas (MUGAs), community health and fitness facilities and swimming lanes. In meeting this need, it concludes that, in terms of drive time access, Bexhill Leisure Centre is the preferred location for new facilities. It would also reduce competition with Hastings and serve a wider catchment area.

---

12 Sea Change Sussex is a trading name of East Sussex Energy Infrastructure & Development Ltd, the local regeneration company.
13 ESCC Strategic Open Space Strategy 2011
14 Leisure Facilities Strategy 2009-2020

8.26   Positive consideration should also be given to building on existing water sports activities to support more active lifestyles, whilst recognising the wide range of use of the seafront.

8.27   As well as leisure and health facilities, 'community life' is facilitated by support for the Bexhill Town Forum, its member organisations and other community groups, volunteering, pre-school provision, adult education and other lifelong learning, such as provided by the Library Service and, for older people, through the University of the 3rd Age (U3A).

8.28   A greater focus on larger, family housing is proposed, whilst also facilitating a range of 'supported housing' options for older people. Affordable homes will focus on the needs and aspirations of younger adults, with more provision of shared ownership dwellings.

8.29   Particular attention should be given to parts of the town that demonstrate forms of deprivation, most notably in Sidley and around the town centre, to reduce economic disparities and increase opportunities. Effective actions are expected to be brought forward through collaborative working of key agencies and community groups. At the same time, policy formulation should take specific account of the implications for these localities and vulnerable groups.

8.30   In addition to the town centre, the district shopping/service centres at Sidley and Little Common provide focal points for community life in their localities, and are supplemented by smaller neighbourhood centres across the town.

8.31   Accessibility to both jobs and services in the town and district centres, other employment areas and neighbouring towns should reinforce local identity, as well as healthy lifestyles. Also, and recognising the traffic capacity difficulties discussed in relation to the 'development strategy' below, every effort needs to be made to encourage walking and cycling, as well as effective bus routes.

8.32   The following policy sets out how the objectives will be achieved.

Policy BX1: Overall Strategy for Bexhill

The overall strategy to deliver the objectives for Bexhill is to:

(i)   Conserve and enhance the town's distinct and independent character and residential function, supported by local services and jobs as much as possible;

(ii)   Develop local amenities, including support for community activities and facilities, learning opportunities, and improved sports and leisure facilities, including a new leisure/swimming centre, and a network of accessible green space around the town, as well as by implementation of the Combe Valley Countryside Park;

(iii)   Promote the economic growth of the town, and wider area, including through encouraging growth in new and established local firms, especially in high value-added sectors, prioritising development for employment purposes, increasing the supply of land and premises and promoting efficient infrastructure;

(iv)   Give priority to improving welfare and economic opportunities in more deprived areas, including by assessing the impacts of development proposals on more vulnerable groups and areas;

(v)   Improve road, rail, bus and cycling access within Bexhill and between the town and Hastings, via an integrated sustainable local transport strategy for the Bexhill and Hastings area, key elements of which will be:

(vi)   The Bexhill to Hastings Link Road, associated 'greenway' and new 'quality bus corridors';

(vii)   A cycle network that focuses on 'utility' routes to the town centre, schools, colleges and workplaces, and recreational routes into the Countryside Park and along the seafront;

(viii) Strengthen the town centre's role, both as a commercial and cultural centre, in accordance with Policy BX2;

(ix)   Provide for employment and housing growth, in accordance with Policy BX3, with particular regard to the needs of families, affordable housing for younger people and a range of supported housing options for older households.

8.33   Marketing of the town's attributes and aspirations, or 'personality', should capture the above strategy themes.

8.34   More detail about the proposals for the Combe Valley Countryside Park is contained in Chapter 9: Hastings Fringes.

Bexhill Town Centre

8.35   Over time, the town centre has not seen much investment, due largely to competition from other centres; as a consequence, it has relatively low rental values, which further marginalises investment interest. Even so, the strong presence of independent retailers, as well as its range of services, has enabled it to continue to maintain a good level of occupancy.

8.36   There is retail investment potential in the town, as highlighted in the ['Shopping Assessment'](). This identified a capacity for some additional 2,000 m^2 retail floorspace for convenience (i.e. day-to-day) goods and 4,000 m^2 floorspace for comparison goods[15]. The quoted figures relate to 'net sales' area in both instances. The challenge is to provide the space for growth in and around the town centre, and the trading conditions and environment that will attract operators. These capacities are net of the floorspace provided by the recently completed Marks and Spencer store at Ravenside.

8.37   The position and physical fabric of the town centre, allied to its heritage value, limits opportunities for growth in the centre itself, although selective and sensitive redevelopment is not ruled out. The inter-relationship of conservation and development factors was considered in the Council's 'Bexhill Town Centre: A Framework for Regeneration and Development'.

8.38   Given retail growth potential and town centre constraints, expansion will be considered in edge of centre locations on the north side of the railway, within an area from Sea Road through to Terminus Road, including the southern end of Beeching Road.

8.39   Specific proposals will come forward though the Development and Site Allocations Plan. However, if a viable proposal within the town centre were not possible, then alternative locations would be considered in accordance with Policy EC7 (retail sequential test). This would include Ravenside Retail Park, particularly for the sale of bulky goods, and also subject to sufficient and sustainable transport capacity.

8.40   The strategy recognises that the town centre will continue to face competition from other larger centres. Even so, its retail 'health' can be improved through a number of measures to encourage 'footfall', greater spend and leisure time. These are currently being evaluated by the Council's Bexhill Town Centre Steering Group; potential measures include introducing a regular market, increasing parking capacity, environmental and access improvements, a 'hub' for community services, events and marketing of shops and restaurants in line with a distinct 'brand identity'. The development of proposals is being informed by wide-ranging engagement with local people, businesses and other stakeholders.

15 Comparison retailing is the provision of items not obtained on a frequent basis. These include clothing, footwear, house hold and recreational goods.

8.41   Closely linked to the well-being of the town centre is the spending power in and around the core area. Better connectivity, tourism and leisure developments, as well as office and high quality residential accommodation would be ways of assisting this.

8.42   The cultural offer provided by the De la Warr Pavilion contributes to both the profile of the town and to the local economy; this highlights the value of good links between the town centre and the seafront. Attention will also be given to the tenure mix and to enhancing existing residential streets, where appropriate.

8.43   A study undertaken for the Council has identified the potential for hotel investment, to support the role of the Pavilion and/or provide centrally situated accommodation for 'family and friends' visitors.

8.44   In combination with transport and environmental improvements along approaches to the town centre, especially London Road, the above initiatives should consolidate its cultural and service centre roles, as well as its accessibility to the town's residents for shopping.

8.45   Specific proposals will be brought forward by a range of measures; sites will be identified in the forthcoming 'Development and Site Allocations Plan'. In addition to funding by the relevant public agencies, development contributions will also be expected where proposals impact on the town centre.

Policy BX2:   Bexhill Town Centre

The Strategy for Bexhill Town Centre is to:

(i)   Promote a co-ordinated town centre initiative to improve its use for shopping, services and leisure, including through investment in the public realm, increased parking capacity, links to the seafront, activities and marketing;

(ii)   Develop a holistic pedestrian and traffic management strategy that combines improved accessibility for buses and additional parking capacity with ensuring a more attractive shopping environment;

(iii)   Provide for some 2,000 sq m additional convenience goods and 4,000 sq m comparison goods floorspace, primarily through 'edge of centre' retail expansion on the north side of the railway, as well as effective use of town centre accommodation;

(iv)   Provide for hotel accommodation, well related to the town centre and/or the De la Warr Pavilion;

(v)   Facilitate leisure, office and high quality residential developments within walking distance of the centre;

(vi)   Ensure that development and change respects and, where appropriate, enhances the late Victorian/Edwardian character of the Conservation Area.

Strategy for development

8.46   Physical growth at Bexhill is not heavily constrained by national environmental designations. Therefore, there is capacity for sustainable urban extensions to help meet the overall strategy objectives, in particular for economic development.

8.47   Housing growth may both stimulate business development as well as help otherwise achieve the vision for the town. However, large-scale growth would not be consistent with the objective of retaining its essential character, nor with the commercial property market. Even within these other sustainability parameters, the very limited highway capacity, primarily along the A259 trunk road towards Hastings but extending through the town, is a real constraint upon development at present.

8.48   Looking forward, the current substantial highway limitations will be addressed when the Bexhill to Hastings Link Road is completed, currently scheduled to be in 2015.

8.49   Delay in opening the Link Road impacts on the timing and, hence, overall quantum of housing growth, as the Highways Authorities have indicated that they do not believe that large new sites can be built ahead of the Link Road. The weakened property market following the recession also lessens the prospects for a high level of house building. The prospects for increased house building following the decision to build the Link Road has been assessed. This report on 'Housing Delivery in Bexhill and Hastings' recognises developers' plans to bring significant developments forward. It concludes that, over the remaining plan period, a housebuilding rate of up to 200 dwellings per year could be achieved.

8.50   A housing target of 3,100 new dwellings between 2011 and 2028 is considered appropriate, and equates to an average of some 182 dwellings a year. It is recognised that this is well above the average house building rate over the last 20 years and will place an added weight on initiatives to stimulate job growth. Hence, particular emphasis will be given to schemes that bring significant employment benefits.

8.51   It is anticipated that the rate of housing development will take place following construction of the Link Road will increase quickly to the annualised target.

8.52   There are outstanding commitments for almost 350 dwellings. Deducting these from the total leaves a requirement to identify sites for some 2,750 additional dwellings.

8.53   The current development strategy already provides for a major urban extension to the north east of the town (including some 1,300 dwellings and 50,000 sq m of business floorspace), It is still regarded as the most appropriate location for urban expansion of the town, as it secures vital new business land in an accessible location (to the A21 and A259, the urban area, the town centre, existing employment areas and areas of greatest job need), supports sustainable development, is most acceptable in environmental terms and integrates well with green space proposals.

8.54   Allowing a reasonable estimate for small sites coming forward, further allocations are needed for some 1,100 dwellings. The 2013 SHLAA indicates some potential within the existing built-up area, as well as sites and broad locations around the northern and western edges of the town. Development to the east would erode the marginal but critical open countryside gap to Hastings.

8.55   Further outward expansion to the north east of the town would threaten the integrity of the strategic gap with Hastings, the planned Countryside Park and clear topographical limits. However, it may be extended westwards adjacent to the urban area without undue impact on the wider landscape. This provides the opportunity to extend the proposed 'country avenue' serving the existing allocation in the area of Preston Hall Farm as far as the A269, Ninfield Road, thereby relieving Sidley of significant through traffic. Development extending west of the A269 will also be considered, if appropriate, linking to the Ibstock brickworks site.   Development in this area would also be expected to contribute to the extension of accessible green space from the Countryside Park towards the High Woods area.

8.56   Development to the west of Little Common, both north and south of Barnhorn Road (A259), will also be considered. Again, the area enjoys an attractive pastoral character, but without impacting on the wider landscape for the greater part. It also benefits from reasonable access to shops and services at the Little Common district centre. Access would need to be created directly off the A259, supplemented by existing estate roads. Whydown Road and Sandhurst Lane are unsuitable access roads.

8.57   These areas will be the focus of attention in accommodating the additional housing requirement. The scale, timing and locations will ideally be determined at the Site Allocations stage. This is the most appropriate time to assess in further detail the key issue of the capacity of the A259 and local roads, as well as specific development issues.

8.58   It is anticipated that further consideration will also be given to the future of the ex-United Arab Emirates training centre a little beyond the western edge of the town in preparing the Development and Site Allocations Plan as this has closed down.

8.59   In advance of the Link Road, the focus of employment growth will be within and adjacent to the town centre and at existing business sites. This will be complemented by a focus on public realm and town centre improvements, addressing deprivation issues, encouraging healthy, active lifestyles and securing housing in line with the strategy on urban sites.

> **Policy BX3: Development Strategy**
>
> **New residential and employment development will contribute to the overall strategy for Bexhill through:**
>
> **(i)   A total of at least 60,000 sq m of new business floorspace, focused on new strategic employment areas associated with construction of the Link Road, with further provision in and adjacent to the town centre and as part of other developments;**
>
> **(ii)   An overall level of housing growth of 3,100 dwellings between 2011-2028;**
>
> **(iii)   Over and above development opportunities within the existing urban area, new housing and business development will be focussed on a strategic site to the north east of the town (as already planned), together with further sites to the north and west of the town, the scale, timing and locations of which will ideally be determined through the Site Allocations process; and**
>
> **(iv)   In advance of construction of the Link Road, new opportunities for business growth, including office schemes, will be encouraged mainly within and adjacent to the town centre and existing employment areas.**

Scope and Issues

9.1 The built-up area of Hastings extends in most parts up to the Borough boundary, with a number of its peripheral areas extending over into Rother district. For the purposes of this chapter, the area defined as Hastings Fringes relates to those areas that are contiguous with the built up area of Hastings extending within Rother district. Consideration has been given to policy for these urban fringes that would help support Hastings Borough Council's aspirations, as well as help meet needs of Rother's residents and businesses in the fringe.

9.2 Bexhill and Hastings play complementary roles within the wider area and each town's prosperity is closely linked. A shared approach to the regeneration of Hastings and Bexhill has been agreed by the respective Councils (see chapter 7: 'Overall Spatial Strategy') and reflects a recognition that strategies for development and change for Hastings and Bexhill need to be consistent and complementary, to be fully effective.

9.3 Generally, these fringe areas are heavily constrained, principally by the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) designation. It is also considered important to retain effective countryside gaps between Hastings and Battle, Bexhill, Crowhurst and Fairlight. Potential development is also limited by access and topographical factors. In particular, further development off The Ridge may increase congestion at key junctions and on town centre approaches, and some emphasis should be afforded to access by non-car modes of transport. Also, although physically close to a large service centre, many peripheral areas relate far more to their rural surroundings than to the town and are important to its setting.

9.4 Further information relating to the detailed elements of this chapter can be found in the Hastings Fringes Background Paper.

Objectives

9.5 The Strategic Objective for the Hastings fringes falling within Rother district is:

'To provide attractive and accessible fringes of Hastings, consistent with environmental designations.'

9.6 The following objectives elaborate upon this.

Hastings Fringes Objectives:

i) To contribute to the setting of Hastings and, where appropriate, Bexhill;

ii) To provide accessible green space in line with identified needs and opportunities;

iii) To ensure that any development in the Rother district is well integrated with Hastings, and contributes to its regeneration wherever possible, and complements respective strategies for Hastings and Bexhill.

Policy Areas

Urban Fringe Management and Combe Valley Countryside Park

9.7   Part of the area between Hastings and Bexhill has been for a long time despoiled by established land raise and associated waste operations. Although its current operation is expected to cease operations in 2014, there will be continued use of land within this area used for waste collection, in line with the waste planning authorities' Waste and Minerals Plan. It is important that such operations should be contained and not conflict with the aims and objectives of the Combe Valley Countryside Park. This land is seen as potentially providing a valuable "green lung" between the towns, as well as helping to retain their distinct identities.

9.8   This area is being developed as the Combe Valley Countryside Park, which will be used as a countryside open space to serve both towns. It is a joint project between Hastings Borough Council, Rother District Council and East Sussex County Council. The project will develop and enhance the green space between Hastings, Bexhill and Crowhurst, an area of approximately 600 hectares. The space will be used for leisure, relaxation, sport, ecology and education. The Park will provide access to the countryside, whilst balancing the need to proactively manage wildlife habitats. Current plans envisage the Countryside Park consisting of an activity park in the vicinity of the landfill site, a coastal park to its south, a wetland wildlife area to the north and an environmental educational centre to the north east.

9.9   The Countryside Park will help to meet identified open space deficiency within the locality as identified within the East Sussex Open Spaces Strategy and is fundamental in achieving the shared approach to regeneration for Bexhill and Hastings.

9.10   Another area of potential for a joint urban fringe management approach is to the north of Hastings either side of the railway as it approaches The Ridge, with Rock Lane to the east and Ivyhouse Lane to the west. This area lies within the High Weald AONB, but its quality could be improved. Moreover, it could provide a valuable amenity for the surrounding areas, especially if access opportunities were increased. Potential development in this locality should be viewed in the context of an area-based initiative.

Development opportunities

9.11   Given the High Weald AONB designation and landscape constraints around the Hastings fringe areas, as well as traffic congestion issues, especially along The Ridge, it is considered that there is limited potential for growth in this area.

9.12   Earlier suggestions for development in the Breadsell Farm and Wilting Farm areas are not being progressed; due primarily to Hastings Borough Council's decision not to pursue the former following advice from Natural England and by the prospects of a new railway station at Wilting being unlikely in the foreseeable future. Notwithstanding this, the Council will work in partnership with key agencies to further investigate the business case for a new station.

9.13   In addition, while current evidence does not support the identification of development at Breadsell Farm, given the housing land supply position, provision is made for a sustainable scheme to come forward in the longer term at Breadsell Farm if the environmental, access to services and transport constraints were satisfactorily addressed. This is provided for by a range of housing growth that allows for up to 150 dwellings above the base target, to reflect the potential on the Rother part of any future comprehensive development.

9.14   The Government's recent decision to not pursue the Baldslow Improvement, which would have increased capacity at the junction of The Ridge with the A21 is also a factor. The Council will continue to lobby for improvements and will work with the respective highway authorities and Hastings Borough Council to investigate the potential for alternative means of increasing highway capacity in the Baldslow area. It means that improving bus services, and usage, on the outskirts of Hastings and between the western and northern parts of Hastings and Bexhill and Battle are the more important.

9.15   It is considered that there may be some potential for additional small-scale development, albeit limited by access issues and impact on the High Weald AONB and the wider landscape. Priority will be made for employment floorspace within the fringe areas, over other forms of development, in accordance with overarching agreed regeneration focus.

9.16   The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) Review 2013 identified only limited potential for sustainable housing development along the fringe in recognition of the constraints in this area. Hence, housing numbers are limited to 100-250 dwellings, some of which will be achieved through outstanding permissions with the potential to achieve higher number in the range being provided in the event that a comprehensive scheme, which is dependent on land coming forward in Hastings Borough, at Breadsell Farm, as discussed above.

9.17   Further allocations for both business and housing development will be considered within the Site Allocations and Development Plan.

Policy HF1: The Hastings Fringes

The strategy for conservation and development in the Hastings Fringes is to:

(i)   Continue to develop proposals for the establishment of the Combe Valley Countryside Park between Bexhill and Hastings, including through securing appropriate developer contributions;

(ii)   Take a holistic approach to the use and management of land between Ivyhouse Lane and Rock Lane to secure environmental and access improvements in association with any development in the locality;

(iii)   Maintain strategic countryside gaps between Hastings/St Leonards and Bexhill, Battle, Crowhurst and Fairlight;

(iv)   Further investigate opportunities to improve access to the A21 at Baldslow, including through bus improvements;

(v)   Retain and give priority to further employment creating development of at least 3,000 sq m, primarily by the expansion of existing sites, subject to satisfactory landscape impact and access arrangements;

(vi)   Provide 100-250 net additional dwellings between 2011-2028.

Scope and Issues

10.1   Rye is a historic market town in the eastern half of the district near the Kent border. The town is the main service and employment centre in eastern Rother. Rye Harbour is a satellite village to Rye and is located to the south east of the town. The area surrounding Rye is heavily constrained physically but in recent years has seen growth to the west of the town. The population of Rye Parish is recorded as being 4,469 in 2014. Some parts of Rye's built up areas encroach into other adjacent parishes (Rye Foreign, Playden and Icklesham) and the population figure rises to over 5,000. Compared to the district as a whole, there is a higher proportion (15.6%) of children up to 15, and adults aged 30-44 (15.3%), but less adults aged 45-64 (27.5%) and aged 65+ (27.7%) in Rye in 2014[16].

10.2   Rye is a successful market town attracting significant number of visitors in the summer months. As a Cinque Port town, the town centre around and including the ancient Citadel, forms the historic core, designated as a Conservation Area in 1969, and reviewed in 2006[17]. The town centre is of very high architectural value, with a predominantly medieval street layout and building stock, while equally important is the town's visual appearance in the landscape, with the Citadel on a sandstone outcrop rising like an island above the low lying surrounding salt marshes and tidal waters.

10.3   In Rye, there are significant pockets of social and economic deprivation within the town with high levels of child poverty, relatively low levels of income, high unemployment rates and significant barriers to housing and services[18].

10.4   The local economy of Rye and the surrounding areas is dominated by local tourism. Rye enjoys an abundance of high quality hotels and guest houses located within the town itself. Approximately 70% of the Guest Houses and Bed and Breakfasts located in Rye have been awarded a 4 star or higher rating, with 25% of these providers achieving the highest possible rating of 5 star GOLD. The main attraction is the historic core of the town and the surrounding countryside. The town boasts a high cultural offer, including a number of annual festivals, such as the high-profile Rye Arts Festival and the Rye Bay Scallop Festival, a strong arts and literary community, with several art galleries, and the long tradition of the Rye potteries. The Port of Rye and Rye Harbour Road Industrial Estate are also main centres of employment for the town and the surrounding settlements. However, the local economy suffers from high seasonal unemployment relating to the tourism sector and wages are relatively poor compared to County and regional levels.

10.5   The countryside surrounding Rye is subject to a number of environmental designations, signifying its landscape character and conservation importance. There are a number of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), and Sites of Nature Conservation Importance. There is a proposal from Natural England to designate a Ramsar site to the south east of Rye. In addition, much of the surrounding area to the north and west is classed as the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and there are a number of Ancient Woodlands.

16 ESIF Rye Parish 2014
17 Rye Conservation Area Appraisal 2006
18 ESIF Rye Parish 2014

10 - Rye and Rye Harbour

10.6   Rye is situated at the eastern end of the district making it an important crossroads for transport routes. The principal transport link is the A259 trunk road and carries the majority of medium and longer distance east-west traffic. The trunk road at certain sections experiences heavy congestion and journey times can be lengthy. During the summer months many visitors come to Rye in their cars and traffic management is a priority for the town. The town is also served by the East Coastway rail link between Ashford and Hastings. There is an aspiration to upgrade rail infrastructure to dual tracking and electrification to shorten journey times between major centres.

Objectives

10.7   The Strategic Objective with regard to Rye and Rye Harbour Village is:

> *'To improve the economic and social well-being of Rye and Rye Harbour, including in relation to its market town role, tourism and the Port of Rye, whilst fully respecting and sensitively managing its historic character, vulnerability to flooding and ecologically important setting.'*

10.8   The following objectives provide further detail on how the Strategic Objective will be realised:

Rye & Rye Harbour Objectives:

i)   To work with stakeholders to improve traffic management, tackle congestion and promote sustainable transport measures;

ii)   To work with agencies to support and promote strategic transport links from Rye to the wider locality;

iii)   To improve access to high quality education, employment and housing;

iv)   To enhance sustainable tourism and leisure;

v)   To improve the availability of day to day goods and services;

vi)   To secure investment in community facilities and in new and/or improved pedestrian and cycle routes linking residents to their facilities;

vii)   To conserve and enhance the unique built character and quality of the Citadel and its distinctive landscape setting;

viii)   To protect and sensitively manage the high quality ecological and landscape resources;

ix)   To continue to manage, and protect the community from, the risk of flooding.

General Strategy for Rye and Rye Harbour

10.9   The strategy for Rye and Rye Harbour is to retain and strengthen the role of Rye as a service centre supporting retail, culture and social infrastructure; provide modest and balanced employment growth to create jobs and opportunities to meet the needs of existing and new residents. There should be quality year round employment, with less reliance on seasonal/tourist activity and promotion of green tourism opportunities. Consideration will be given for residential development within the built up area while acknowledging and being sympathetic to the historic core and character of the town. Support will be given to additional sustainable tourist facilities and leisure development which extends the season by providing diverse year-round activities.

10.10   The Strategy will also promote the town's role as a wider visitor centre. Key assets such as the historic core will be respected and enhanced where possible. The high quality landscape setting that surrounds Rye contributes to the distinctive character of the town. An objective of the Strategy would be to maintain the high quality landscape surrounding Rye. In addition opportunities will be investigated to carefully develop leisure and tourism attractions at Rye Harbour Nature Reserve and the surrounding countryside.

10.11   Support will be given to promoting sustainable transport alternatives to the car in order to tackle the high levels of traffic congestion experienced in the area especially during the summer months. Priority will also be given to enhancement of accessibility across the town centre, the railway station and to employment areas. In addition, the Strategy will employ a strategic approach with the relevant agencies to seek improvements to the East Coastway Line, the strategic trunk road (A259), public transport links to other centres Hastings, Ashford and the surrounding villages, through effective and managed efficiencies on the existing network.

Key Development Sites

10.12   Due to its topographical and landscape context and statutory designations, Rye is heavily constrained and further opportunity for development on the periphery of the town is confined. The strategy for Rye and Rye Harbour is the development of key development sites and infill within the built up urban area. Given the environmental constraints surrounding Rye, the uncertainty surrounding the deliverability of existing allocations and limited further opportunities within the existing built-up area, as identified in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) 2013, it would be appropriate to adopt a range of housing growth to allow for some flexibility. An appropriate range for housing growth in Rye and Rye Harbour will be 355-400 dwellings up to 2028 including existing allocations. The range allows for scope to further redevelop existing commercial sites for mixed use, subject to detailed assessment. (See Appendix 3 for components of housing supply.) The process of identifying key sites suitable for development will be undertaken in the Rye Neighbourhood Plan.

Retail Requirement

10.13   Rye has limited choice in terms of convenience foodstores within the town. The Core Strategy will continue to support the town centre as the main retail development area. A significant number of residents do their main weekly food shop outside Rye at other centres such as Hastings, Tenterden and Peasmarsh. The Rother District Wide Retail Assessment, 2008 has identified a deficiency in convenience floorspace in the town and advocates a need for an additional 1,650 sq.m (net sales area) of convenience retail floorspace to address the shortfall. Retail developers have registered an interest in acquiring a presence in Rye and Rother District Council advocate working closely with interested parties to secure a viable, appropriate development for the community.

Connectivity and Traffic Management

10.14   The main policy framework for transport issues at a County wide level is Local Transport Plan 3. At a local level it is the Rye Local Area Transport Strategy (LATS). Rye experiences significant traffic congestion in the summer as the town's population expands due to visitors. The town is also relatively isolated from other major centres with inadequate infrastructure to support significant connectivity.

10.15   The Council will work with ESCC to improve accessibility and connectivity through greater efficiencies in the strategic network and effective traffic management to help reduce congestion on the local network.

The Economy and Employment

10.16   The main employment area in the area is Rye Harbour Road. Rye Commercial activity on Rye Harbour Road supports approximately 10% of the total jobs in Rye and the surrounding areas. At least 10,000 sq m of floorspace for employment is appropriate for Rye and the Harbour Road area within the plan period[19]. Further work on suitable sites will be investigated in the Development and Site Allocations Plan.

10.17   Employment will continue to centre on Rye Harbour Road industrial estate and consolidating the activities of the Port of Rye. The Council's strategy focuses on maintaining and strengthening Rye's main employment areas, whilst allowing a range of other sites to develop in order to provide a variety of opportunities. These are considered the most sustainable locations for employment and provide significant new employment opportunities. Consideration will be given to the potential for mixed use developments in some locations, including along Winchelsea Road, in order to make most effective use of urban land.

---

19 Hastings and Rother Employment Land Review 2008

10.18   The close proximity of the Port of Rye to the Dungeness Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Dungeness to Pett Level Special Protection Area (SPA) and proposed extension to the SPA and proposed Ramsar site requires that potential future expansion of port related activities and business expansion on Rye Harbour Road should give due consideration to Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2010. Schemes and proposals that would lead to an adverse effect on the integrity of Dungeness internationally designated sites must be fully mitigated and/or adequate compensatory provision would need to be made to ensure that the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 network was maintained.

10.19   Air quality is a specific issue that must be considered in future port expansion and business development applications (including increased shipping and associated road traffic within 200 m of the international sites). In order for compliance with Habitat Regulations it will be necessary, in particular, for future planning applications relating to port activity and business development related expansion to determine the number of vehicle movements per day[20] related to the proposal and whether:

    a)   the increase in vehicle movements along Harbour Road will cumulatively constitute less than 200 Heavy Duty Vehicles/day: or

    b)   they exceed 200 HDV's per day but make a contribution to nitrogen deposition equivalent to or less than 1% of the critical load for the most sensitive habitat within the site (i.e. less than 0.1 kgN/ha/yr).

Development of Green Tourism

10.20   Although Rye has a strong tourism economy, it is important that a range of industries are provided to help diversify and strengthen the economy. The existing main employment areas have an important role to play in continuing to provide new opportunities for employment. This includes the refurbishment, intensification and redevelopment of sites, especially for the more traditional types of employment that are still vital to the town's economy. However, other new, emerging sectors such as Green Tourism would be considered as appropriate, viable and sustainable for developing the local economy will provide a unique opportunity to attract high value firms to the town especially as Rye is enveloped by high quality landscapes with a wide range of bio-diversity. Support will be given to working with stakeholders to promote Rye as green tourism centre.

---

20 The standards identified above are taken from the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges and from Environment Agency Horizontal Guidance H1 regarding air quality impacts from point sources. It will also be necessary for an air quality assessment to be undertaken which includes increased nitrogen deposition from shipping emissions.

10.21   It is acknowledged that there is a requirement for the sensitive management of tourism (from local sources and those further afield) in the Dungeness complex of internationally important wildlife sites. To retain their conservation status and preserve their integrity there will be requirement for effective management measures to be implemented and agreed with the relevant stakeholders and agencies in parallel with the promotion of future tourism and recreational activity in the area around the Dungeness international sites. These may include increased wardening, dissemination of guidelines/advice to the public, screening of recreational activities, changes in site access/routing of footpaths or managing visitor numbers to areas of interest and will also involve the implementation of appropriate monitoring arrangements and the development of a sustainable access strategy to manage visitor numbers in order to ensure that increased recreational activity does not lead to an adverse effect on the integrity of the sites.

10.22   Further plans/projects promoting (or which are otherwise likely to lead to) increased tourist/visitor use of the Dungeness European sites and specific projects/developments will be required to undertake Habitat Regulation Assessments (HRA) to confirm that they will not lead to adverse impacts on the European sites. Plans and/projects will not be permitted until an HRA has been undertaken in conjunction with operators, Natural England and other relevant stakeholders. Further details are provided in the Habitat Regulations Assessment of the Core Strategy.

Environment

10.23   The district-wide strategy for the Environment is set out in Chapter 17, and this includes landscape, historic built environment, design quality, biodiversity and greenspace, and managing flood risk. Given the specific environmental context of Rye, with its high quality historic built environment and public realm, the distinctive character of its landscape setting, its proximity to internationally protected habitats and its exposure to potential flooding, the consideration of and compliance with these policies will be of paramount importance.

10.24 The following policy sets out how the Strategic Objective and objectives will be achieved.

Policy RY1: Policy Framework for Rye and Rye Harbour

Proposals for development and change in Rye and Rye Harbour Village will:

(i) Promote efficiencies and improvements to the strategic transport network to improve connectivity between Rye and other major urban centres;

(ii) Support traffic management on the local road network, promote sustainable alternatives to the car and implement the objectives stated in Local Transport Plan 3 and the Rye Local Area Transport Strategy;

(iii) Preserve and enhance the character and historic environment of the Citadel and wider Conservation Area, and the distinctive landscape setting of the town;

(iv) Retain the centre of Rye as the main focus for retail and services for the town, and increase the choice of convenience shopping in Rye by facilitating the increase of some 1,650 sq m net additional convenience floorspace within or adjacent to the town centre;

(v) Provide between 355-400 dwellings net additional dwellings between 2011 and 2028. Opportunities for growth will primarily be sought within the built up area of Rye;

(vi) Seek to secure and maintain effective flood defences for Rye and Rye Harbour, whilst also minimising and managing flood risk, including in relation to the location of new development in accordance with other criteria;

(vii) Promote at least 10,000 sq m of employment floorspace at Rye Harbour Road industrial estate to promote economic regeneration and job creation, having particular regard to protecting the integrity of internationally designated habitats;

(viii) Maintain and enhance navigation on the River Rother and the viability of the Port of Rye as a working harbour, having particular regard to protecting the integrity of internationally designated habitats;

(ix) Promote green tourism initiatives, including careful management of Rye Harbour Nature Reserve and, where feasible, new habitat creation and green infrastructure linkages, that protects and enhances the integrity of the internationally important ecological interests;

(x) Tackle social exclusion and promote opportunities for young people to access education, community facilities, employment and leisure;

(xi) Maintain and enhance the community, cultural and tourism assets of both Rye and Rye Harbour village; and

(xii) Maintain a strategic gap between Rock Channel and the industrial estate at Rye Harbour Road.

Scope and Issues

11.1   Battle is a small, historic market town. Although populated by just 5,280 people[21], it provides an important service centre role for its residents and those of surrounding villages. In addition, Battle is a popular tourist destination for domestic and foreign visitors. The town suffers from congestion, particularly in the peak summer tourist season, as traffic is channelled along The Ridge through the town centre.

11.2   The whole town of Battle and the immediate surrounding countryside is within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The town centre, the historic Battle Abbey and the designated battlefield form the historic core, and were first designated as a Conservation Area in 1971, reviewed in 2006[22]. Due to the way Battle has developed over the centuries in a linear fashion along one of the principal High Weald east-west ridges, it is visually exposed in the landscape.

11.3   The Strategy for the town has considered these factors in identifying how the town will meet the continuing expectations of its service centre role, whilst working within the context of very high environmental constraints.

Objectives

11.4   As outlined in Chapter 6, the Strategic objective with regard to Battle is :

> *'To support the market town and tourist centre role and character of Battle, and conserve its historic core and setting.*

11.5   The following objectives further elaborate upon the Strategic Objective:

---

21 Battle Ward 2014, ESiF
22 Rother District Council Conservation Area Appraisal: Battle, 2006

Battle Objectives:

i)   To reduce congestion and improve accessibility, especially by non-car modes;

ii) To enhance the commercial and tourism attractiveness of the town centre;

iii) To conserve the key characteristics of the town and its setting that contribute to the AONB;

iv) To provide increased opportunities for employment locally;

v)   To improve the level of community and sports/recreation facilities;

vi) To preserve and enhance the historic character of Battle Abbey and Battlefield and maintain the town's physical identity;

vii) To make an appropriate contribution towards meeting local housing needs.

General Strategy for Battle

11.6   It is clear that the combination of its AONB designation, historic core and accessibility limitations, make a high level of future growth for Battle inappropriate.

11.7   However, as the Battle Town Study demonstrates, there is a need to continue to support the town's role and foster economic vitality. This will entail allowing appropriate residential development, including affordable housing, as well as limited expansion of employment and retail floorspace. This would need to demonstrate an acceptable impact on congestion problems as well as acceptable environmental impacts.

Future Housing Needs

11.8   The level of housing growth for Battle identified by assessment of opportunities and based upon the relative service roles of towns and villages in the district suggests 475-500 dwellings to Battle over the Plan period particularly if there is found to be redevelopment potential in some broad locations. As evidenced in the Battle Town Study, Battle has a significant local housing need. The level of proposed development, coupled with effective affordable housing policies (see section 14) should greatly assist affordable housing to come forward.

11.9   As Appendix 3 shows, this level of growth is achievable over the Plan period largely through outstanding commitments as well as unimplemented allocations mainly at Blackfriars that are intended to be carried forward. Taking these allocations into account, there would remain a need to find land for 145-170 dwellings up to 2028.

11.10   This is likely to require extension to the current development boundary and the Battle Town Study discusses more detailed options of how and where this may be achieved. Suitable sites will be further investigated, and consulted upon, and brought forward in the forthcoming Development and Site Allocations Plan. To discourage unnecessary use of the car, locations within walking or cycling distance of the centre will be favoured, subject to other considerations.

Future Retail Needs

11.11   The Retail Assessment demonstrated that few Battle residents actually do their main food shopping in the town, most travelling to larger stores in the Hastings & St Leonards area. This suggests a need to enhance Battle's convenience retail offer to enable more residents to shop locally. The Retail Assessment advises that an additional 1,000 sq m net sales area would enhance Battle's local role as a service centre and reduce unsustainable and unnecessary car journeys to Hastings.

11.12   This may entail investigating opportunities within the forthcoming Development and Site Allocations Plan for increased shopping floorspace of some 1,000 sq m sales area (as outlined in the Retail Study and in the Battle Town Study) to be located within or adjacent to the town centre. However, in the event of opportunities within or adjacent to the town centre not being found, the desirability of clawing back trade from Hastings is not so great as to necessitate an out-of-town shopping development in Battle or encroachment into the AONB for this purpose. Further investigations on possible means of achieving this will be conducted as part of the Development and Site Allocations Plan.

Future Employment Needs

11.13   For the local economy, it is important to encourage and support innovation and entrepreneurial activity. At least 10,000 sq m of floorspace for employment is appropriate for the Battle area to 2028. There is some 7,000 sq m in the pipeline along Marley Lane and Rutherfords Business Park which serves the Battle employment market. Broadly speaking, this leaves a requirement for at least a further 3,000 sq.m, which would seem an appropriate target both to secure further land/premises for employment use, in keeping with the scale of housing growth. Sites located in sustainable locations in close proximity to the town centre will be preferred. The Battle Town Study discusses some potential options to meet the needs including the vicinity of Battle Station, and the Development and Site Allocations Plan will investigate these further.

Future Education Needs

11.14   ESCC (Children's Services) has advised that the Local Plan primary school allocation at Blackfriars is no longer required and therefore it is not necessary to carry it forward to the Local Plan (2011-2028). Instead it is proposed to construct a permanent extension to the existing Battle and Langton Primary School. The Core Strategy Consultation on Strategy Directions stated that Early Years facilities were still needed, based on a recommendation from County Council Education. ESCC is currently further investigating this need.

11.15   Therefore, in order to maintain a degree of flexibility and to be responsive to needs on the ground, consideration may be given to utilising the current primary school allocation site for general community/educational facilities. Claverham Community College provides secondary education for 11 to 16 years olds. The County Council has advised that additional housing will impact on secondary school provision, by more out-of-area pupils not gaining places.

Transport and Car Parking

11.16   The main thrust of the ESCC Battle Local Area Transport Strategy (BLATS) is to improve accessibility by alternatives to the car. Proposals in the BLATS are supported, particularly those that help reduce congestion in the High Street. Further investigations of the most effective use of land at Station Approach (particularly for employment floorspace) will also examine the potential to rationalise and improve car parking provision as a matter of priority.

Open Space, Sport and Recreation

11.17   In June 2007 the Council adopted an audit and assessment of Open Space, Sport and Recreation for the district.   The main findings in respect of Battle are:-

- Consideration to be given, in the longer term, to a new swimming facility;
- Consideration to be given to new provision for older children/teenagers;
- To concentrate on qualitative improvements to existing natural and semi natural open space sites, and to amenity green spaces;
- To provide, subject to demand, a new allotment site in south Battle, through new provision or the reallocation of existing provision.

11.18   The RDC Leisure Facilities Strategy also proposes the need for a synthetic turf pitch. The Battle Town Study identifies options for achieving these recommendations. These will be developed further in the forthcoming Development and Site Allocations Plan.

Tourism

11.19   Battle excels at attracting large numbers to annual events such as the 1066 Re-enactment and the Bonfire Parade. However, evidence suggests a relatively low proportion of visitors staying overnight, despite the fact that visitors have a high degree of satisfaction and are likely to recommend the town as a place to visit. Possibly linked to this, evidence relating to the tourist market in Battle suggests a relative under-supply of guest house accommodation and a need for more tourist accommodation within the town itself (as opposed to the rural periphery).

11.20   The town benefits from a Tourist Information Centre and Battle needs to capitalise on both its appeal and the investments made in Abbey facilities, whilst effectively managing pressures caused by significant numbers at peak times. The Battle Town Study elaborates further on the tourism issues.

11.21   The following policy sets out how the Strategic Objective and objectives will be achieved.

Policy BA1: Policy Framework for Battle

Proposals for development and change in Battle will:

(i)   Maintain the essential physical form, local distinctiveness, character and setting of the town, particularly in and adjacent to the Conservation Area;

(ii)   Implement the ESCC Battle Local Area Transport Strategy, particularly measures that minimise the demand for cross-town vehicular traffic; and improve pedestrian and cycle access to services/ facilities from new and existing development;

(iii) Provide for 475-500 net additional dwellings in Battle over the Plan period 2011-2028, by developing new housing via opportunities both within the development boundary, and modest peripheral expansion opportunities that respects the setting of Battle within the High Weald AONB and supports community facilities;

(iv)   Enable new local employment opportunities by providing for at least 10,000 sq m of employment floorspace within the town centre, adjacent to Station Approach, at sites on Marley Lane and at other sites as necessary (including by assessing the potential for mixed use with housing development);

(v)   Enable growth in sustainable tourism by allowing the development of new tourist accommodation, particularly by the conversion and extension of suitable properties closely related to the town centre;

(vi)   Maintain a vibrant and distinctive town centre and encouraging additional restaurants, cafes and/or retail service establishments as well as seeking opportunities for increased convenience shopping floorspace of some 1,000 sq m sales area within or adjacent to the town centre, as well as facilitating some additional comparison shopping floorspace;

(vii) Implement improvements to the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities, in accordance with adopted standards and strategies;

(viii) Ensure that new development does not put pressure on local infrastructure, and that it makes appropriate contribution to community and other infrastructure;

(ix)   Seek opportunities for habitat creation, restoration and enhancement, particularly in identified Biodiversity Opportunity Areas to the east and west of the town.

Scope and Issues

12.1   Rother is a district of predominantly rural character, and this chapter addresses those parts of the district that lie beyond the three main towns of Bexhill, Battle and Rye. This 'rural' area contains more than 40% of the district's population and most of its land area. It comprises both villages and intervening country-side, which each have distinct, yet inter-related, issues.

12.2   Rother district has a high number of villages and hamlets scattered across the High Weald and coastal belt. However, despite their often picturesque nature, the vitality of villages has tended to be undermined over time by a shortage of affordable housing, high levels of out-commuting, limited access to jobs and services, a decline in community services (particularly local shops) and limited public transport.

12.3   The surrounding countryside and undeveloped coast is highly valued for nature conservation, heritage, culture, and as a leisure resource for both residents and visitors. Agriculture has historically formed the core of the rural economy, but this has been challenged during the late twentieth century by changing practices and economies. This has resulted in more recent changes in the way the land is farmed and greater emphasis on environmental land management.

12.4   Social and economic change needs to benefit rural communities, to improve quality of life and maintain environmental quality.

Objectives

12.5   As outlined in Chapter 6, the Strategic Objective for the Rural Areas is:

> *'To meet local needs and support vibrant and viable mixed communities in the rural areas, whilst giving particular attention to the social, economic, ecological and intrinsic value of the countryside.'*

12.6   The following objectives further elaborate upon the Strategic Objective:

Rural Areas Objectives:

i)   To emphasise the significant contribution of both villages and countryside to the character and culture of Rother;

ii)   To recognise the individual distinctiveness of villages and to retain and enhance their rich cultural heritage;

iii) To support sustainable local employment opportunities and the economic viability of rural communities;

iv)   To promote thriving rural communities with a high quality of life, a strong sense of place and broad active civic participation;

v)   To be demographically balanced and socially inclusive, particularly in terms of access to housing;

vi)   To reduce both the need to travel and reliance on the private car, by promoting the use of public transport and supporting viable and accessible services and facilities within villages;

vii) To ensure rural communities have access to vital social, physical and green infrastructure, and realise ICT potential;

viii) To protect the open countryside and retain its intrinsic rural character for the benefit of residents and visitors;

ix)   To respect and conserve the historic landscape mosaic, particularly in the High Weald AONB;

x)   To support agriculture and foster other land-based industries;

xi)   To promote environmentally sensitive land management in a way that supports the diversity of natural habitats;

xii) To support sustainable tourism and recreation, including improved access to the countryside.

12.7   The objectives and policies for the rural areas overlap to a large extent with the objectives and policies of thematic chapters within this Core Strategy. Particular cross reference needs to be made to chapter 14 'Communities' (in terms of health, recreation & communities issues), chapter 15 'Local Housing Needs' (in terms of affordable housing, exception sites) chapter 16 'Economy' (in terms of tourism and the rural economy), chapter 17 'Environment' (in terms of environmental management and habitat protection and enhancement), and chapter 18 'Transport and Accessibility' (in terms of rural transport schemes).

12.8   For ease of presentation, there are separate strategies for the villages and for the countryside, as set out below. When read together these set out the overall strategy framework for the rural areas.

Villages

12.9   The publication of Parish Local Action Plans (LAPs), as well as the Council's [Rural Settlements Study Background Paper](#)[23], has provided evidence for the strategy by setting out the settlement patterns, and the social and economic contexts of individual settlements. This emphasis on local priorities has helped shape a distinctive agenda for each place. "Place-shaping" in this way is about promoting attractive, prosperous and vibrant villages where people want to live, work and do business. It is the responsibility of the relevant Councils and all local partners in the public, voluntary and the business sectors. Supporting vibrant and viable local village communities involves identifying and responding to community needs. Affordable housing is a particularly pressing community need in rural areas, but there are also demonstrable needs for improved accessibility, other local community facilities, as well as jobs and business provision.

12.10   The strategy has been developed in response to the national policy context, the Core Strategy consultation responses, and further liaison with key stakeholders such as the Parish Councils, the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Unit, East Sussex County Council and the utilities bodies.

12.11   The main areas that are considered in villages are the function of settlements, housing, economy, tourism, services/community development, historic environment and accessibility.

Function of Rural Settlements

12.12   The Rural Settlements Study (RSS) contains more detailed investigations of the role, function and needs of some fifty rural villages across the district. As part of this exercise, the RSS also defined key 'service centres', as set out in Figure 9.

Rural Service Centres	Robertsbridge
	Ticehurst
Local Service Villages	Burwash
	Hurst Green
	Sedlescombe
	Northiam
	Westfield
	Peasmarsh
	Catsfield

Source: Rural Settlements Study

Figure 9: Rural Function of Settlements

23 The Rural Settlements Study (RSS) Background Paper investigated and appraised over 40 villages across the District, including all of those with Local Plan defined development boundaries as well as many others. The RSS included all settlements with a population of at least 100, as well as some with smaller populations which benefitted from the presence of a key service. The RSS has helped inform the Core Strategy and define villages in terms of their role, appropriateness of development boundary and need/suitability for development.

Rural Housing

Overall Quantity of Housing

12.13   The district-wide distribution of housing in chapter 7 suggests that the villages should accommodate 1,670 additional dwellings over the period 2011-2028. While much of these dwellings have already been accounted for via existing commitments[24] there is a residual requirement for additional allocations for some 800 dwellings 2011-2028 (as set out in Appendix 3).

12.14   This level of new housing in the rural areas, which is higher than in earlier versions of the Strategy, responds to the need to maximise opportunities for sustainable growth and the further assessment of the potential sites through the SHLAA Review 2013. This level of growth is supported by the most recent Sustainability Appraisal, which also highlighted the increasing negative impacts of development on the character of both individual villages and of the wider countryside, virtually all of which contributes to the landscape and scenic quality of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Spatial Development Options

12.15   In addition to the district-wide spatial distribution options, various spatial distribution options for the villages were identified in the previous version of the Core Strategy (Consultation on Strategy Directions) and further elaborated upon within the Rural Settlements Study Background Paper. Following consultation, the preferred spatial development option for the villages remains 'to primarily focus on the service centres', whilst taking into account other factors. Other factors include local needs, accessibility, environmental factors, local opportunities and whether growth levels are proportionate to settlement size over the course of the plan period. Thus, the service led 'rural function of settlements' (see Figure 9) is not the sole criteria governing the spatial pattern of development. Moreover, a village's role can be fluid over time and some villages may still enjoy a reasonable level of facilities, although falling just outside the criteria to be defined a 'service village.'

12.16   The preferred option has been chosen since it is mindful of existing settlement patterns, of where population growth may best be served by a full range of day-to-day businesses and facilities, and where they may in turn benefit economically from increased local market and patronage. It is felt that these factors best support the overall aims and objectives for the rural area.

12.17   Potential site opportunities in and around villages have been investigated initially in the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), but it will be the role of the forthcoming Development and Site Allocations Plan and/ or Neighbourhood Plans to allocate sites for development. There are limited opportunities for sensitive infilling and redevelopment within development boundaries. New development will need to be sensitive of the need to protect and enhance the distinctive landscape character of the district, particularly the AONB, and should reflect the prevailing landscape quality and character.

24 Including unimplemented planning permissions and Local Plan allocations still considered developable

Phasing

12.18   In terms of phasing, it is generally assumed that existing housing allocations (provided they have been demonstrated in the SHLAA and through Housing Monitoring as deliverable) and outstanding permissions will be developed in the earlier phases of the Plan. In villages which have seen higher levels of development in the first few years of the plan period or have existing commitments in the pipeline, any new and additional allocations will normally be phased in the latter part of the plan period to ensure a balanced rate of development. It is considered that this will be beneficial to the social cohesion of existing villages. The Council will also be mindful of the need to demonstrate a '5 year supply' of housing.

Tenure and Mix

12.19   As background evidence such as the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) has identified, there is a need for both affordable housing and smaller dwellings in the rural areas. With cross-reference to the Local Housing Needs chapter, these needs will be addressed by the respective requirements in rural areas for 40% affordable housing, and for 30% one or two bed properties. There is also provision for allocations wholly or substantially for affordable housing on small sites and in settlements of particular need.

Rural Economy

12.20   Supporting local employment opportunities is a key objective for the rural areas and one that is frequently identified in Parish Local Action Plans (LAPs). Business space serves to support the vitality of rural communities and provide accessible jobs.

12.21   The Economy chapter of the Core Strategy outlines a number of policies that are of relevance to all areas of the district and rural areas in particular, such as the need to retain and make effective use of existing employment sites.

Overall Quantum of Employment Floorspace

12.22   The occupancy rate of business space in the rural areas is comparatively high. Evidence in the form of an Employment Strategy and Land Review (ELR) suggests the need for new employment floorspace within Rother's rural areas. It is estimated that at least 10,000 sq m additional business floorspace is required in rural localities, preferably within or at least well related to existing village development boundaries.

12.23   This is a net requirement and should also take account of the potential loss of some existing business floorspace as a result of recent changes in permitted development rights.

Type of Employment Floorspace

12.24   The evidence shows that small workshops and office units need to be encouraged to support the rural economy. This is most likely to be achieved via sensitive expansion/intensification of existing sites or as part of new mixed use developments. The re-use or re-build of former agricultural buildings collectively provide an important source of business space in the area, and policies in the section on 'Countryside' will continue to facilitate this.

Location of New Employment Floorspace

12.25   The Rural Settlements Study contains further evidence on the relative need for employment within individual villages based upon a number of factors including unemployment, economic activity rate, ratio of in:out commuting, economic base and broadband speeds. Villages that appear to have a particular need for employment include the following:

Settlement	
Broad Oak	Peasmarsh
Camber	Robertsbridge
Hurst Green	Sedlescombe
Icklesham Parish	Ticehurst / Flimwell area
Northiam	Westfield

Figure 10: Villages Demonstrating a Particular Need for Employment Floorspace

12.26   The search for employment sites in the Development and Site Allocations Plan and/or Neighbourhood Plans will therefore particularly focus on these locations.

Mixed Use, ICT and Home Working

12.27   The advent of ICT and new ways of working has significantly helped reduce the potential negative impacts of employment uses upon neighbours and surroundings. High quality ICT / telecommunications and faster broadband speeds have the potential to increasingly mitigate the area's relatively peripheral location by facilitating home working and high-value creative industries. Indeed, the Census indicated very high levels of home working in the district, and the Council could look to further develop this.

12.28   Development of employment generating uses will therefore be encouraged alongside housing development on mixed use sites. Encouragement and support of home-working will also help support viable rural economies and is increasingly feasible, particularly within the several villages that enjoy relatively fast broadband, including most of the identified service villages[25].

25 As of May 2011, Robertsbridge, Ticehurst, Northiam, Peasmarsh, Hurst Green and Burwash all have broadband speeds in excess of 5Mb per second, the highest of 4 speed categories defined by ESCC.

Rural Tourism

12.29   Tourism is an important component of the rural economy and benefits local services. Several Rother villages are popular tourist destinations due to the presence of cultural attractions, such as Bodiam Castle, Batemans at Burwash, the Kent and East Sussex Railway and the medieval town of Winchelsea. The aspiration to further develop the area as a tourist destination was an emergent theme in a number of Parish Local Action Plans. There is further scope to develop business and cultural tourism and "green tourism" particularly in the towns and the High Weald.

12.30   The coastal resort of Camber, with its golden sands, has long been a popular tourist destination for people from across the wider region and its summer population swells considerably. The eastern end has also become increasingly popular for extreme sports, particularly kite-surfing. Camber has potential to enhance its tourism offer and expand its role as a modern all year round leisure and tourist destination.

12.31   In all locations popular with visitors, there is a need to accommodate and manage tourist facilities and supporting services sensitively, in order to minimise impact upon the AONB, important habitats and wider countryside.

Rural Services and Community Development

12.32   Within villages, a decline in community services (particularly local shops) over the last few decades has resulted in ever more limited access for rural residents. The problems are exacerbated by limited public transport resulting in the unsustainable trend of residents driving further afield to services.

Village Shops and Public Houses

12.33   Survey evidence[26] confirms that residents generally travel to larger towns for their main weekly shopping but that they will typically use smaller village stores for secondary 'top-up' shopping. However, a local village shop can be a lifeline for the less mobile and those without access to a car. The lack of shops for day to day purchases is a particular concern amongst rural residents, as is the declining numbers of post offices and public houses. The Council has made proactive efforts to address this via the 'Rother Village Shop Forum' and the 'Village Shops and Post Offices Working Group'. The Local Plan (2011-2028) continues to recognise the vital role of village shops, services and public houses in rural community life and protects them in policy RA1. New development will be prioritised in locations that support key local services.

---

26 The Rother District Wide Shopping Assessment (2008)

Open Space, Recreation and Leisure

12.34   Many Parish Local Action Plans have identified a need for new leisure facilities, sports facilities and particularly a lack of activities for young people. Open Space needs have been set out in the Open Space, Sport & Recreation Study (2007) which suggests that in rural areas there is a shortage of children's play areas and amenity green space.

12.35   In the west of the district's rural areas there is a more localised deficit of outdoor sports facilities and allotments and in the eastern rural parishes a slight shortage of parks and gardens. The study has also produced more localised recommendations for new and improved facilities. These recommendations have been summarised in the Rural Settlements Study as they apply on a village by village basis. The forthcoming Development and Site Allocations Plan and/or Neighbourhood Plans will investigate opportunities to take these recommendations forward. Developer's contributions will be sought alongside development to address identified community needs.

Village Halls and Community Resource Centres/Hubs

12.36   Village and community halls also have a pivotal role to play in village community life. Policy continues to ensure their protection and the provision of new, extended or refurbished community/educational facilities in appropriate locations to meet present and expected needs. The need for specific provision of new community halls at Etchingham and Flimwell has already been identified and resulted in land allocations. Peasmarsh Parish, Crowhurst Parish and Ashburnham & Penhurst Parish have also subsequently stated within their Local Action Plans an aspiration to build new village halls.

12.37   There are other innovative ways to enhance rural services and community development that may become increasingly important.   A handful of 'hubs' or 'information points' have already been established in the district. If fully developed to their maximum potential, hubs have the potential to provide a focus for community activities, with a wide range of services (e.g. photocopying, access to computers and meeting rooms, access to official documents, information about services, etc).

Historic Environment in the Rural Areas

12.38   The locally distinctive character of historic villages, buildings and settings will be protected and the design of any new development will be expected to include appropriate response to local context. This is important in villages generally, but particularly Conservation Areas where proposals for development and change will continue to be informed by Conservation Area Appraisals, including the preparation of new appraisals at Burwash, Northiam and Ticehurst. The later section within Chapter 17: Environment, on 'Design Quality and Built Environment' contains more detailed strategies and policies in this respect.

Rural Accessibility

12.39 It is recognised that there is considerable local feeling in villages regarding the need to improve public transport. The strategy will seek to facilitate travel by public transport, cycling and walking and acknowledges the adverse impact that traffic can have on rural villages and on the AONB. The service centre based strategy is a key part of this and the Council will continue to work closely with the County Council, bus service providers and the Voluntary Sector. Cross reference is made to Chapter 18: Transport.

12.40 The following policy for rural villages sets out how the objectives will be achieved.

Policy RA1: Villages

The needs of the rural villages will be addressed by:

(i) Protection of the locally distinctive character of villages, historic buildings and settings, with the design of any new development being expected to include appropriate high quality response to local context and landscape;

(ii) Encouragement of high quality sustainable economic growth by the identification of sites for local job opportunities, particularly focussing on the villages listed in Figure 10. This may be achieved by sensitive expansion of existing employment sites, or new sites, particularly for small workshops and office units. Opportunities for business development, including home-working, will also be sought alongside new housing as part of mixed-use allocations where appropriate;

(iii) Ensuring thriving and viable rural communities, by retention of, and support for, local shops, services and public houses in villages;

(iv) Support for community, recreational and educational facilities that provide social and community benefits to villages (including village/ community halls and recreation areas). This may include provision of improvements to existing village halls or new halls, as well as support for further community resource centres / hubs, where appropriate;

(v) In order to meet housing needs and ensure the continued vitality of villages, the provision of 1,670 additional dwellings (comprising existing commitments, new allocations and windfalls) in villages over the Plan period 2011 to 2028. This will be located in accordance with Figure 12, subject to refinement in the light of further investigation via the Development and Site Allocations DPD and/or Neighbourhood Plans;

(vi) Improved access to basic day-to-day services, particularly by public transport, walking and cycling. In order to facilitate this, new development will be sited in close proximity to key facilities and in locations accessible via a range of transport options.

Figure 12: Distribution of Rural Housing Allocations

Base Date: 01/04/13

Settlement/Area See Footnote 1	All Net Completions in Plan Period (01/04/2011 to 31/03/2013)	Current Commitments See Footnote 2	Allocations (Remaining from 2006 Local Plan) See Footnote 3	Potential New Sites See Footnotes 4 & 7	Total New Housing 2011 - 2028 See Footnote 5
Robertsbridge	2	6	47 (+1)	100	155
Ticehurst	-10	6	0	87	83
Hurst Green	0	6	0	75	81
Northiam	9	61	0	72	142
Broad Oak	2	19	0	50	71
Peasmarsh	5	4	0	50	59
Netherfield	7	0	0	48	55
Catsfield	7	10	0	47	64
Westfield	24	51	0	40	115
Burwash	-7	22	0	35	50
Sedlescombe	12	29	0	35	76
Etchingham	1	22	0	30	53
Staplecross	2	10	0	25	37
Camber	47	32	0	20	99
Fairlight Cove	2	5	17	20	44
Beckley / Four Oaks	2	18	0	20	40
Crowhurst	1	1	0	20	22
Flimwell	0	1	26 (+2)	17	44
Iden	2	4	0	12	18
Three Oaks	0	8	0	0	8
Winchelsea Beach	0	8	0	0	8
Udimore	0	7	0	0	7
Pett Level	1	4	0	0	5
Pett	3	1	0	0	4
Icklesham	1	3	0	0	4
Brede	2	1	0	0	3
Stonegate	0	2	0	0	2
Woods Corner	0	2	0	0	2
Cackle Street	0	2	0	0	2
Mountfield	0	2	0	0	2
Fairlight	0	2	0	0	2
Whatlington	0	2	0	0	2
Ashburnham	0	1	0	0	1
Dallington	1	0	0	0	1
Bodiam	0	1	0	0	1
Guestling Green	0	1	0	0	1
Brightling	0	1	0	0	1
Ewhurst	0	1	0	0	1
Burwash Common	0	0	0	0	0
Normans Bay	0	0	0	0	0
Burwash Weald	0	0	0	0	0
Friars Hill	0	0	0	0	0
Johns Cross	0	0	0	0	0
Winchelsea	0	0	0	0	0
Rural Exception Sites Allowance See Footnote 6					65
Small Site Windfall Allowance in Years 5-15 (2018-2028)					242
TOTAL	**116**	**356**	**90**	**803**	**1,672**

1. Bold Font indicates village had a defined development boundary in the 2006 Local Plan.
2. Includes permissions and applications delegated to approve subject to S106. Full Details of all commitments contained in Part 2 of the SHLAA (page 112)
3. Subject to review and re-assessment as part of SHLAA process. Numbers in brackets indicate any revisions as part of re-assessment. See SHLAA Part 2 for details.
4. Estimated from suitable and developable (green and amber) SHLAA sites. Core Strategy policy expectation that new allocations are within or immediately abutting a village development boundary. See SHLAA Part 2 for details.
5. Individual village number may be higher as a result of additional windfalls and rural exception sites.
6. Rural Exception sites (which by definition are both locally driven by the community, and on sites that would not normally be suitable for housing) are considered seperately and in response to a locally specific need. The overall rural area target is derived from the Council's Housing Strategy.
7. Including 50 from 'Broad Location' at Peasmarsh. See SHLAA Part 2 for details.

12.41   'Potential new sites' in Figure 12 refers to sites expected to be formally allocated via the Development and Site Allocations Plan or Neighbourhood Plans. These will normally comprise development sites accommodating 6 or more dwellings.

12.42   Previously unidentified large sites (6 dwellings and over) in a village gaining planning permission before adoption of the relevant Plan may be deducted from the total 'Potential new sites' that an individual village is expected to achieve, depending on the stage reached and the suitability of other potential sites.

12.43   Developments of less than 6 dwellings, on currently unidentified sites, will count towards the overall rural housing numbers total as 'small-site windfalls'; an estimated allowance for them has been included for years 5-15. Therefore, to avoid double counting, they are in addition to the 'Potential new sites' for individual villages.

12.44   Affordable housing 'Exception sites' are typically between 6 and14 dwellings. In common with small site windfalls, they are dealt with in a separate row on Figure 12. Hence, they cannot be deducted from the 'Potential new sites' totals for villages, since to do would entail double counting. The estimated number of 65 dwellings on 'Exception sites' across the rural areas for the plan period is based upon figures derived from the Council's Housing Strategy.

Countryside

12.45   As a predominantly rural district, the countryside of Rother district is a defining characteristic. The district's countryside is a productive landscape and the prime function of the countryside is agriculture and the production of food; with some 70% of the area of Rother district being classed as farmed land by DEFRA[27]. Indeed of the 35,500 farmed hectares in the district, some 60% is grass/pasture, with 25% crops and 10% woodland.

12.46   The countryside, including the undeveloped coast, also has high intrinsic amenity value, and is an important resource for nature conservation, leisure and tourism.

12.47   The term 'countryside' is used here for those areas outside of villages and includes not only farmland and woodland but also scattered development outside the main confines of villages.

12.48   The physical nature of the countryside today reflects both the diverse underlying geology and soils, and the human influences that have taken place upon it over a long period of time, in particular, agricultural practices and communication routes. In the High Weald, the land was traditionally used for mixed farming, pastoral and arable with the woodland being a managed and valued resource, whilst on the low-lying, reclaimed marshes the emphasis was on pasture.   Much of the countryside we see today is a legacy from previous uses, resulting in historic landscape patterns which give the area its special qualities and character.

---

27 Agricultural & Horticultural Survey of England, June 2007, DEFRA

12.49   The importance of Rother district's countryside in terms of its high quality landscape character and high ecological value is described in more detail in the Chapter 17 'Environment'. Indeed, some 82% of the district is designated as part of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Features which contribute positively to the landscape character of the district, in particular of the High Weald AONB, include field patterns, native-species hedgerows and ancient woodland, green lanes, and watercourses, along with the undeveloped coastal character of sandstone cliffs separated by deep glens around Fairlight and Pett, and the low-lying wetland levels leading to drifts of coastal shingle around Pevensey and Rye. Such features should be retained and preserved. 'Environmental Stewardship' is the main current agri-environment scheme, which offers payments to farmers and land managers in England for effective land management to protect and enhance the environment and wildlife.

12.50   Approximately 10% of the population of Rother live in the countryside outside of the villages and towns, with only 1.2% of the Rother's population currently being employed in agriculture, forestry and fishing. However, the countryside also provides employment opportunities through rural business units and workshops.

12.51   The strategy for the Countryside seeks to balance the many diverse pressures and competing demands on the countryside, whilst ensuring the maintenance of its farming capacity and of its attractive landscape character, to create a living, working countryside.

Policy RA2: General Strategy for the Countryside

The overarching strategy for the Countryside is to:

(i)   Maintain the farming capacity of the district, and support the agricultural industry, including diversification within farming;

(ii)   Encourage agricultural practices, land-based economic activities and woodland management, and related agri-environmental schemes, that reinforce local distinctiveness, landscape character and ecology;

(iii)   Strictly limit new development to that which supports local agricultural, economic or tourism needs and maintains or improves the rural character;

(iv)   Retain traditional historic farm buildings by continued agricultural use or by appropriate re-use, in accordance with Policy RA4;

(v)   Support rural employment opportunities in keeping with rural character and compatible with maintaining farming capacity;

(vi)   Support enjoyment of the countryside and coast through improving access and supporting recreational and leisure facilities that cannot reasonably be located within development boundaries, such as equestrian facilities, compatible with the rural character of the area;

(vii) Support tourism facilities, including touring caravan and camp sites, which respond to identified local needs and are of a scale and location in keeping with the rural character of the countryside; and

(viii) Generally conserving the intrinsic value, locally distinctive rural character, landscape features, built heritage, and the natural and ecological resources of the countryside.

12.52   In applying this policy, it is important that the other parts of the Core Strategy are also referred to, in particular the opening sections of this chapter dealing with the introduction to rural areas and the villages (which deals with key services such as employment areas, ICT & broadband infrastructure, rural tourism, rural communities and services such as village shops, pubs, village halls, recreation & leisure, historic environment and accessibility). Cross-reference also needs to be made to the thematic chapters such as 15. Housing, 16. Economy and 17. Environment. Further consideration is given to development in the countryside, and specifically to the reuse of traditional farm buildings, in the following sections.

Development in the Countryside

12.53   Farming and woodland management are the predominant land uses in the district's countryside. The agricultural land is of mixed quality; mostly grade 3, but with significant areas of higher quality grade 2 towards the east of the district along the Brede Valley and East Guldeford Level.

12.54   Agricultural production of food and by-products is a key economic function of the countryside; the support of British farming and sustainable food production is one of the three key priorities set out in DEFRA's Business Plan,[28] and a number of national initiatives are in place to support this objective[29].

12.55   Changes in agricultural practices during the 20th century saw a decline in traditional land and woodland management, with a consequent decline in skills in environmentally sensitive land management. Maintaining and developing such skills, and practices, offers opportunities for local employment and has a vital part to play in maintaining the district's distinct landscape character, especially in the High Weald.

12.56   Meanwhile the shift towards more sensitive environmental land management over the previous 10 – 20 years has helped support the farming industry and the conservation of landscape features and ecology. DEFRA's programme of agri-environmental schemes, through a structured programme of payments to farmers, remains an important way of ensuring effective land management to protect and enhance the environment and wildlife in the district.

12.57   Modern farming practices often require new agricultural buildings to meet specific needs. To ensure viable farming industries, these will be supported in principle, though whilst the size and mass of such buildings is inevitably dictated by their function, care is still needed in their siting, design and materials, to minimise the visual impact on the landscape character of the countryside.

12.58   Development pressures in the countryside arise from a number of demands; agricultural, economic/tourism, recreational, and residential. The National Planning Policy Framework recognises the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

12.59   More generally, development in the countryside must have regard to impacts on both landscape character and natural resource management. 'Natural resources' in this context includes biodiversity, water resources, water quality, floodplains, coastline, air quality and minerals.

---

28 Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Business Plan 2011-2015, November 2010

29 including those supported by the Prince's Countryside Fund and the NFU 'Why Farming Matters' campaign

12.60   However, changing farming needs and development economics have meant that many former farm buildings, historic and modern, have become available for conversion and re-use. To support the rural economy in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, the policy presumption for such conversions is for uses which contribute to the local farming and rural economy, either by direct employment or by encouraging visitor spend. Such uses include workshops, farm shops or tourist facilities, and other employment uses such as offices. Buildings suitable for conversion should be generally in keeping with the rural character of the area in terms of scale, siting and appearance, be of permanent and substantial construction, and be capable of conversion without major or substantial reconstruction.

12.61   Occasionally, the replacement of such buildings for employment uses might be preferable to conversion where this would result in a development which is more acceptable in terms of landscape impact and visual appearance.

12.62   The range of activity operating within the district's countryside is wide; including food production, equestrianism, vineyards, horticulture, tourism and leisure, and a broad range of business activities. There is often high interdependency and mutual benefit between these industries. For example, a number of farmers markets and farm shops operate within the district, producing and supplying local foods and associated products. Vineyards, local food markets and plant nurseries help attract tourists into the district, while livery yards also offer rural employment opportunities, and help support wider industries such as vets, animal foodstuffs and also equestrian activities and events.

12.63   Tourism and recreation activities, such as holiday caravan and chalet developments, including the current trends for yurts and other forms of camping, equestrian facilities, and other recreational activities such as fishing, can add to the enjoyment and economic vitality of the district's countryside and rural communities, but can also lead to development and land-use pressures. For caravan and camping sites, the emphasis will be on improving the amenities of existing sites to maintain and enhance their tourism value, though consideration will be given to new small-scale provision to respond to modern market expectations, recognising environmental factors.

12.64   To protect the undeveloped and rural landscape of the countryside, new residential development, as for other forms of development in the countryside, must be limited to that which cannot be located in an urban area, as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework, and which positively contributes to maintaining the landscape heritage and character of the area. In particular, new dwellings may be essential for the proper functioning of land-based businesses (i.e. farming, forestry and equine-related activities). Such businesses should be demonstrably 'financially sound', which normally means that permissions will initially be on a temporary basis. Permanent dwellings will normally require the agricultural unit and activity to have been established for at least three years, have been profitable for at least one of them, be currently financially sound and have a clear prospect of remaining so. Careful consideration should also be given to the siting, size and design, as well as access. The siting of new dwellings should be well-related to existing farm buildings or other dwellings, wherever practicable. To ensure that a dwelling remains available to meet the recognised need, occupancy conditions will be applied.

12.65   The approach to the conversion and re-use of traditional historic farm buildings for residential use is discussed in the following section, and in Policy RA4. The conversion to residential use of modern or non-traditional farm buildings (normally considered to be post 1880) or of farm buildings requiring substantial or speculative reconstruction, would not serve to ensure the retention of features of acknowledged historic importance and value in landscape character. Therefore, this would not be an acceptable form of development in the countryside.

12.66   Changes to existing dwellings, be they extensions to dwellings, extensions to domestic curtilages into countryside, alterations to previously converted traditional former agricultural dwellings, ancillary works such as fences, walls and gates, or new outbuildings within curtilages, can, cumulatively, have a significant impact on the character of the countryside. It is therefore important to ensure that such proposals do not suburbanise the countryside, compromise the character, integrity or form of distinctive building typologies, nor compromise their contribution to the landscape character.

12.67   Similarly, replacement dwellings should not increase the visual prominence of the building in the countryside nor detract from the rural landscape character and local context of the area, and should take every opportunity to improve any existing adverse landscape impact.

Policy RA3: Development in the Countryside

Proposals for development in the countryside will be determined on the basis of:

(i)   Supporting new agricultural buildings and other non-domestic buildings demonstrably needed to support farming, woodland and other land-based industries that are of appropriate size, siting and design and materials and directly related to the enterprise;[30]

(ii) Supporting suitable employment and tourism opportunities in the countryside, including by the conversion, for employment use, of farm buildings generally in keeping with the rural character, and by the sensitive, normally small-scale growth of existing business sites and premises;

(iii) Allowing the creation of new dwellings in extremely limited circumstances, including:

(a) Dwellings to support farming and other land-based industries. Normally, accommodation will initially be provided on a temporary basis for a period of three years. Both temporary and permanent dwellings will be subject to appropriate occupancy conditions, and all applications should comply with the following criteria:

i.   Demonstrate a clearly established functional need, relating to a full-time worker primarily employed in the farming and other land-based businesses;

ii. Demonstrate the functional need cannot be fulfilled by other existing accommodation in the area;

iii. Demonstrate the unit and the agricultural activity concerned are financially sound and have a clear prospect of remaining so;

iv. Dwellings are of appropriate size, siting and design.

(b) The conversion of traditional historic farm buildings in accordance with Policy RA4;

(c) The one-to-one replacement of an existing dwelling of similar landscape impact; or

(d) As a 'rural exception site' to meet an identified local affordable housing need as elaborated upon in Chapter 15 – Local Housing Needs;

(*continued overleaf***)**

---

30 Conversion, replacement and extension of existing sites and premises all refer in this sense to buildings generally in keeping with the rural character of the area in terms of scale, siting and appearance, of permanent and substantial construction, and be capable of conversion without major or substantial reconstruction.

Policy RA3: Development in the Countryside *(continuation)*

(iv). Ensuring that extensions to existing buildings and their residential curtilages, and other ancillary development such as outbuildings, fences, enclosures, lighting and signage, would maintain and not compromise the character of the countryside and landscape;

(v). Ensuring that all development in the countryside is of an appropriate scale, will not adversely impact on the on the landscape character or natural resources of the countryside and, wherever practicable, support sensitive land management.

Historic Farm Buildings

12.68   Rother's countryside has a highly distinctive and important architectural character by way of settlement pattern and building typologies. The historic hamlets and farmsteads of the High Weald create a distinct and picturesque landscape, with the rolling pastureland and small ancient woodlands of the countryside interspersed with the rich clay-tiled roofs of medieval houses, barns and oasts. Building typologies reflect locally distinct historic agricultural practices, for example the distinctive brick roundels of the hop industry's oast-houses, fine timber-framed barns and modest brick cowsheds and outbuildings.

12.69   Traditional historic farm buildings are a vital element in defining the distinctive character of the district's countryside, as well as being a valuable economic resource. They have cultural and archaeological value, not just in their fabric, but also their location and setting, to help our understanding of the historical development of farming in the district. Traditional historic farm buildings are generally considered to be those dating from pre 1880, though there may be other pre-war buildings, either late Victorian or Edwardian that are of interest in a farmstead or landscape context and may be worthy of retention.

12.70   English Heritage have analysed the character of rural settlement and farming in the South East, and particularly in the High Weald, within which the majority of the district's countryside falls, in their Farmstead Character Statement[31]. This highlights the historic typical small farm sizes, leading to small 'farmsteads' of mostly dispersed cluster plans or loose courtyards, and typically consisting of just the farmhouse, one large multi-purpose barn, and perhaps an oasthouse or a small open-fronted outbuilding.[32]

12.71   In accordance with English Heritage advice in the document 'Living Buildings in a Living Landscape: finding a future for traditional Farm Buildings', the priority uses for traditional agricultural buildings are to retain such buildings in continued farming-related uses, and secondly to convert for employment uses, including tourism.

---

31 Historic Farmsteads Preliminary Character Statement: South East Region English Heritage & The Countryside Agency 2006

32 Further research available in 'Farm Buildings of the Weald 1450-1750' David and Barbara Martin Heritage Marketing & Publications Ltd 2006

12.72   Where such conversions are not suitable for the particular nature or location of the buildings or where the applicant has demonstrated that employment or tourism uses are not viable, residential conversions will be considered. In such circumstances, the applicant should demonstrate that every attempt has been made to secure an employment or tourism re-use first.

12.73   Different uses of a traditional farm building will inevitably have different physical impacts on the building, its setting and legibility; this is also reflected in the hierarchical approach to conversion uses described above. Continued farm use, workshop or light industrial uses are likely to require only limited alterations to building fabric and to the setting of buildings. In contrast, residential use usually brings greater pressure for internal subdivision of spaces, new openings, curtilage division and domestication which can greatly impact on the significance of these farm buildings and their appearance in the landscape.

12.74   It is important that in any conversion or re-use proposal, the distinctive character of traditional agricultural buildings; their farmstead and wider landscape setting, external appearance, internal character and features, be retained. Domestication of the building or its setting by means of inappropriate alterations, new development, access arrangements or boundary treatments should be avoided.

12.75   Specific advice in this respect is given in the English Heritage publication 'The Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings: A Guide to Good Practice'[33] and this should be interpreted alongside the specific advice given in the Farmstead Character Statement with regard to local building typologies and features. Of particular importance at a local level is maintaining the internal spatial qualities of timber framed barns, the elevational character of their cart-bay entrances, and the uninterrupted brick walling of oasthouse roundels.

12.76   Historic farm buildings can often also be important habitats for wildlife such as bats, barn owls and other nesting birds. The English Heritage document 'The Conversion of Traditional Historic Farm Buildings: A guide to good practice' also gives advice on wildlife legislation in this respect, and advises that an ecological survey should be carried out at project feasibility stage to establish whether there are protected species present.

12.77   Traditional farm buildings that have already been converted are also vulnerable to inappropriate alteration or development, for example extensions, new openings, garages, sheds and other outbuildings, boundary treatments and hard-surfacing, that would have an adverse impact on the intrinsic character of the building itself, or on the rural character of its countryside setting. Even a well-designed extension will usually undermine the form of, for example, a barn or oasthouse as an example of a particular building typology.

---

33 The Conversion of Traditional Farm Buildings: A Guide to Good Practice English Heritage 2006

Policy RA4: Traditional Historic Farm Buildings

Traditional historic farm buildings will be retained in effective and appropriate use, and proposals for their reuse and/or subsequent alteration should:

(i) Take a hierarchical approach for re-uses as follows:

> **(a) the priority use for traditional farm buildings is to remain in farm-associated use, or farm-related business purposes;**
>
> **(b) where there is a demonstrable lack of need for such uses, consideration will be given to non-agricultural commercial uses, including workshops, office use or tourism uses;**
>
> **(c) where such uses are not suitable, due to adverse impacts on amenity or rural landscape character, or not achievable due to viability, then residential use may be considered acceptable;**

(ii) Demonstrate that they are based on a sound and thorough understanding of the significance of the building and its setting, including in terms of history, layout, use, local relevance, fabric and archaeology;

(iii) Ensure retention of the building's legibility, form (as an example of a specific building typology), historic fabric and setting, and, through design, maintain the agricultural character and the contribution the building and its surroundings make to the wider rural landscape and countryside character;

(iv) Ensure proper protection of existing wildlife and habitats.

Part IV

Core Policies

13. **Sustainable Resource Management**
14. **Communities**
15. **Local Housing Needs**
16. **Economy**
17. **Environment**
18. **Transport and Accessibility**
19. **Implementation and Monitoring Framework**

Introduction

13.1   Managing the way people and organisations interact with natural resources to ensure their long-term availability is central to 'sustainable development'. This chapter deals with the conservation of natural resources and how they will be efficient and effective utilised and managed. In particular, it considers how energy generating resources may contribute to the reduction in carbon emissions.

13.2   Specific sections relate to:

a. Towards a Low Carbon Future;
b. Water Supply and Wastewater Management.

13.3   Environmental conservation, in respect of flood risk, biodiversity and landscape, is more fully addressed in Chapter 17: Environment, while encouraging more sustainable travel patterns is addressed in Chapter 18: Transport.

Objectives

13.4   The Strategic Objective in relation to sustainable resource management, as set out in Chapter 6 is:

'To mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts and to use natural resources efficiently'

13.5   This can be elaborated upon by the following objectives:

Sustainable Resource Management Objectives:

i)   To reduce carbon emissions and move towards a low carbon future

ii)   To maintain an adequate, safe water supply, use water resources efficiently, and avoid their pollution

Towards a Low Carbon Future

13.6   The UK is committed to a target to reduce carbon emissions by 34% by 2020, and by 80% by 2050, relative to 1990 levels[34]. It is also committed to supply 15% of its energy from renewable sources by 2020.

13.7   The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the contribution that planning can play at both national, regional and local levels in moving towards a low carbon future. It highlights the need to secure radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and provide resistance to the impacts of climate change, and support the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

13.8   The UK Climate Impacts Programme provides climate change projections looking forward some 70 years. Its 'medium emissions' scenarios indicate that all areas of the UK warm, especially in the summer months and in southern England. While annual precipitation will remain similar, it will increase in winter and decrease in summer, especially in the south of England. Relative humidity also decreases in southern areas in summer.

13.9   Locally, the Rother Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) has identified carbon reduction as one of its three priorities for action. It has formulated an 'action plan' embracing encouraging behaviour change, energy efficiency and a low carbon economy.

13.10   Sources of carbon emissions in Rother district are illustrated below.
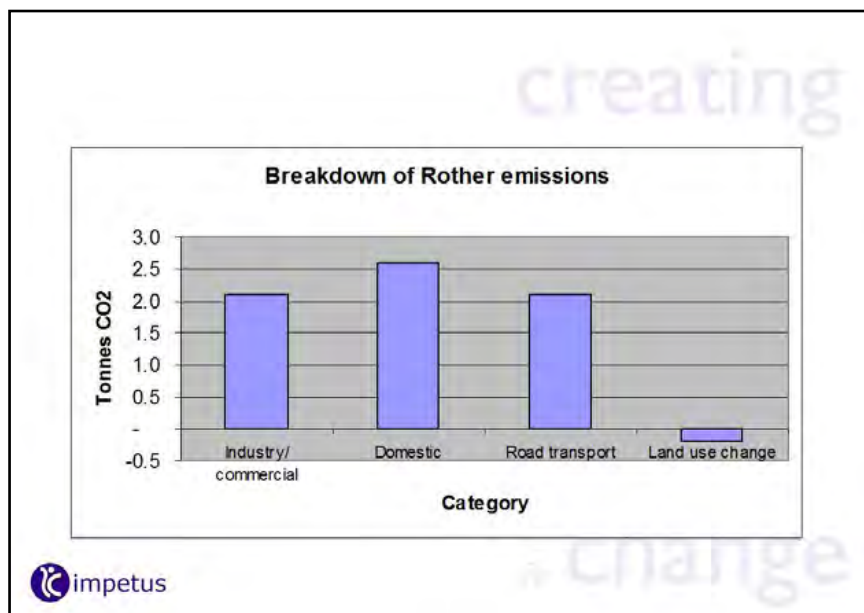
Figure 13: Breakdown of Rother Carbon Emissions

---

34 Climate Change Act, 2008.

13.11   The Council's 'Low Carbon and Renewable Potential Study' (January 2010) identifies that Rother has a carbon footprint of 623,000 tonnes; it also highlights that even a rigorous new build energy efficiency policy would only have a very limited impact on this. Hence, policy should consider how emissions can be reduced from existing buildings and from travel patterns.

13.12   The Study identifies good opportunities for low carbon and renewable technologies, particularly wind, biomass and solar energies. There is a substantial biomass resource associated with both farmland and woodland cover, while wind speeds are most favourable to energy generation around Bexhill, west of Hastings and Rye, as well as along the High Weald ridges.

13.13   It recommends that smaller schemes of up to 3 turbines, of the order of 1.5 - 2MW capacity, would be most appropriate. The large mixed use development to the north-east of Bexhill is regarded as offering potential for energy generation above current national standards, while the prospect of other larger sites should also be assessed.

13.14   The Study recommends the development of energy strategies for the developments over certain thresholds. It also recommends the scope of strategies, which should be based on the predicted energy demand as derived from building physics modelling. A local requirement to secure a proportion of energy in new developments from decentralised sources is regarded as unnecessary given ongoing changes through Building Regulations. However, it will still be important to support the deliverability of these new requirements in terms of the form and viability of development.

13.15   Travel-related emissions can be minimised by locating development in places with ready access by means other than the car to shops and services that meet day-to-day needs. The Government also encourages planning for charging points for electric and hybrid vehicles. The town centres and Ravenside Retail Park appear the prime areas for this.

Policy SRM1: Towards a low carbon future

The strategy to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change is to:

(i)   Require proposed developments of more than 10 dwellings or 1,000m^2 of non-residential floorspace to provide a comprehensive energy strategy and, for proposed developments of more than 100 dwellings or 50 apartments to require such a strategy to include an assessment of the potential for combined heat and power and district heating, subject to further assessment of the thresholds via a subsequent DPD and/or SPD;

(ii)   Ensure that all developments meet prevailing energy efficiency standards, and encourage them to meet higher standards and pursue low carbon or renewable energy generation, where practicable, by fully recognising related costs in assessing viability and developer contributions;

(iii) Support stand-alone renewable and low carbon energy generation schemes, particularly those utilising solar, biomass and wind energy technologies, that:

   (a)   do not have a significant adverse impact on local amenities, ecological and heritage assets or landscape character, and

   (b)   in respect of locations in or adjacent to the High Weald AONB and other sensitive landscapes, are generally small in scale;

(iv)   Achieve high levels of energy performance on the strategic mixed use developments to the north east of Bexhill, including by Combined Heat and Power (CHP) and/or wind energy generation;

(v)   Reduce the carbon emissions from existing buildings by encouraging application of prevailing standards to whole buildings when extending them, supporting adaptations to be energy efficient, promoting take-up of Government energy efficiency schemes and supporting community-based energy infrastructure initiatives;

(vi)   Adaptation through building in resilience to anticipated climatic changes, including through green infrastructure;

(vii) Promoting more sustainable travel patterns in accordance with transport policy TR2, and through widespread fast broadband coverage;

(viii) Expect new developments to provide and support recycling facilities.

Water Supply and Wastewater Management

13.16   Ensuring that robust and resilient water supply and waste water infrastructure is in place is essential to the well-being of residents and businesses. There are challenges in meeting demand from housing growth, safeguarding water sources from the threat of pollution, reducing usage, as well as meeting the challenge brought on from the impacts of climate change.

13.17   The approach towards water resources and infrastructure in general is based on making the most of the capacity of existing infrastructure, encouraging behavioural change where this will enable more efficient use of the existing infrastructure, remedying any major deficiencies in existing infrastructure and providing new infrastructure that is needed to serve new development. The Environment Agency has produced a report on the current state and future pressure on water resources. Pressures are greatest in south east and eastern England because they are the driest parts of England and Wales, coupled with the highest population density and household water use.

13.18   Within the area covered by South East River Basin Management Plan, (drawn up under the Water Framework Directive[35]) there are nine catchments and Rother traverses two catchments: the Cuckmere and Pevensey Levels catchment and the Rother catchment.

13.19   The south east river basin district has some of the highest levels of personal water use in the country; 72% of the public water supply comes from groundwater sources in its catchment, so it is essential to safeguard supplies from pollution.

13.20   Rother is supplied by both surface water and groundwater sources. The surface water sources within Rother comprise the three reservoirs - Bewl Water, Darwell Reservoir and Powdermill Reservoir.

13.21   Bewl Reservoir is situated at the northern edge of the district and straddles the adjacent authorities of Tunbridge Wells and Wealden. The reservoir is an important regional resource, but is also a significant recreational amenity, drawing upon a wide catchment area.

13.22   Both South East Water Management Plan (Dec 2010) and the Southern Water Management Plan (Oct 2009) identifies Bewl reservoir as a strategic option for enlargement to form part of a regional solution to water supply-demand balance. While noting that it will not necessarily come forward if subsequent modelling indicates it is not required, it would be prudent for the Council to safeguard it, to facilitate long term strategic planning and development.

13.23   Two water companies cover Rother district; Southern Water deals with wastewater collection and disposal, but the water supply service in Rother is split between Southern Water and South East Water.

---

35 The European Water Framework Directive came into force in December 2000 and became part of UK law in December 2003. The Water Directive is designed to improve and integrate the way water bodies are managed throughout Europe.

13.24   Water companies maintain statutory Water Resource Management Plans, which effectively set out their agreed investment plans for meeting their obligations to supply water. Water companies also produce Business Plans which set out the agreed investment plans. They adopt a twin-track approach of water supply and demand management of water consumption. The latter looks at demand management initiatives like universal metering, tackling leakages, rainwater harvesting and the promotion of water efficiency initiatives. These are complemented by investment in technology and infrastructure.

13.25   In Southern Water's Final Water Resources Management Plan Oct 2009 (page 10-70), the company has reaffirmed its commitment to the development of a regional solution:

> *'As a result of the preferred options identified from the WRSE[36] modelling work, we have included the following options in our company preferred regional strategy, over and above the company only least-cost solution and includes raising Bewl Water at the earliest start date of 2022.'*

> *'The actual start date required for the regional solution will be refined following the results of the further regional modelling work. However, this approach demonstrates our continued commitment to the development of a regional solution'.*

13.26   It follows that the Core Strategy should safeguard such expansion, at the same time highlighting the planning issues that would need to be addressed, including access, amenity and promoting recreational use. Any safeguarded area will be determined through the site allocations process, taking account of the latest Water Resource Management Plan.

13.27   Groundwater sources can be found across the district at Ticehurst, Brede, west of Battle and south west of Rye. A number of these groundwater sources have recorded high levels of nitrate concentrations as result of pollutants from urban and agricultural activities[37]. The threat from pollution is significant and could also potentially impact on the sensitive ecology of the adjacent wetland, lakes and streams. Particular regard should be given to the Environment Agency's 'Groundwater Protection: Policy and Protection (GP3)' document.

13.28   Foul sewerage should be by connection to the public mains system. Only exceptionally will other provision be allowed, where it is not feasible to connect. The rate of run-off from developments needs to be carefully controlled to avoid any adverse impacts on watercourses and increasing the risk of flooding downstream. It must not prejudice the integrity of floodplains or flood defences.

13.29   Given the pressures on water resources, it is important to use water efficiently. Further consideration of specific water efficiency measures, including the use of water efficient appliances, rainwater and grey water storage and recycling, will be made through the Development and Site Allocations Plan.

36 The WRSE group is made up of seven water companies1 that supply customers in the South East, led by the Environment Agency, with the engagement of Ofwat, the Consumer Council for Water, Natural England, SEEDA, and the South East Partnership Board.
37 Environment Agency - River Basin Management Plan, South East River Basin District – Rother Catchment - December 2009

Policy SRM2: Water Supply and Wastewater Management

Effective management of water resources will be supported by:

(i)   Ensuring that the relevant water companies are aware of and have capacity to meet demands for water, wastewater and sewerage arising from new development;

(ii) Ensuring that new development does not have an adverse effect on the water quality and potential yield of water resources, in line with the objectives of the South East River Basin Management Plan, including reference to groundwater 'source protection zones';

(iii) The promotion of sustainable drainage systems to control the quantity and rate of run-off as well as to improve water quality wherever practicable, and specifically for all development that creates impermeable surfaces within the hydrological catchment of the Pevensey Levels;

(iv) Safeguarding land for the possible raising of Bewl Water reservoir, and contributing to the development of plans that also secure Bewl Water as a recreational, economic and social amenity for the local community. (NB The safeguarded area will be defined through the Site Allocations process in conjunction with Wealden and Tunbridge Wells Councils); and

(v)   Ensuring that all development incorporates water efficiency measures appropriate to the scale and nature of the use proposed.

Other matters

Air quality

13.30   There are no specific localities within the district currently identified as having poor air quality. Nonetheless, the Council will support the respective Highway Authorities in their initiatives to reduce the environmental impacts of traffic and congestion, while Policy SRM1 above highlights opportunities to support the use of cleaner transport fuels. Also, air quality is put forward as a general development consideration in chapter 7. Hence, no specific air quality policy is put forward.

Waste reduction

13.31   Waste planning can contribute to carbon reduction, including through minimising construction and demolition waste and by generating energy from waste. The latter may be at both the community and farm scale. All such matters are the responsibility of East Sussex County Council and is addressed though the Waste and Minerals Plan.

Introduction

14.1 A proactive approach to maintaining and further strengthening communities is central to the Sustainable Community Strategy for Rother. It contains priorities relating to children and young people, community safety, culture and leisure, and health.

14.2 The Council's vision for the district seeks to achieve a better quality of life for its residents through greater economic prosperity, greater vibrancy with a more youthful, demographic, decreasing crime and anti-social behaviour, and more leisure and cultural opportunities.

14.3 This chapter looks at the role the planning system can play in helping to deliver these priorities, having regard to their spatial dimension. It also considers the support needed for older people in the district, recognising that most population growth over the plan period will be in these age groups.

Objectives

14.4 The Strategic Objective in relation to supporting communities, identified in Chapter 6 is:

> *'To continue to support and further develop vibrant, safe, balanced and inclusive communities.'*

14.5 The following objectives elaborate on this strategic objective, and will be used to guide strategy development.

Communities Objectives:

i) To develop inclusive community life including support networks

ii) To promote healthy, active lifestyles

iii) To support older people, particularly to live independently

iv) To be more attractive to young people as a place to live

v) To maintain low crime levels and improve the feeling of safety

14.6 Hence, the following policy areas are addressed in turn below:

- Community Facilities, Health and Recreation
- Young People
- Older People
- Community Safety

14.7 Developing community life is crucial to the success of the Strategy and policies in this chapter are heavily interlinked with core policies in other sections. In addition, more location specific aspects of community development are addressed in the individual spatial strategies.

Community Facilities, Health and Recreation

Scope and Issues

14.8   The evidence indicates a close inter-relationship between the provision, and use, of community buildings, health facilities and recreation activities in the creation of vibrant, balanced and inclusive communities.

14.9   There are also wider linkages; leisure and sports facilities, along with outdoor spaces, help make the local area more attractive places to live, work and visit, promote the enjoyment of more healthy lifestyles and are integral to the physical and mental well-being of any community.

14.10   Therefore, while each aspect is presented below separately, there is a common theme of effective use of all these resources.

14.11   Evidence collected from a number of surveys and strategies have been used to inform this section and can be seen below (this list is not exhaustive).

- Local Plan (2011-2028) Core Strategy Consultation on Strategy Directions
- Rother District Council Corporate Plan (2006-2016)
- Rother District Council Youth Strategy (2010-2016)
- Rother Place Survey (2008)
- Primary Care Development Plan
- Parish Council Local Action Plans
- Rother Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (2007)
- Hastings & Rother – Leisure Facilities Strategy (2009-2020)
- Children and Young People's Play Policy and Strategy (2007-10)

Community facilities

14.12   Participation in community activities, at community halls, village halls, places of worship and other buildings dedicated to community use, has a key role to play in the vitality of settlements. Priorities in relation to community facilities are often set out in Local Action Plans.

14.13   These community facilities[38] are located throughout the district, in both urban and rural areas and are considered important social and recreational venues for a range of local groups, such as nursery and pre-school groups and uniformed associations (such as scouts and guides) for example. They can also provide a focal point for support services.

---

38 The definition of 'community facilities and services' ranges from basic health and social services to education, arts, culture and religious facilities (classed as C2, D1 and D2 in the Use Classes Order 2005).

14.14   Community facilities play a particularly important role for both young and older people, for educational and recreational purposes, and socialising, whether that be in a small rural community or within a larger urban area.

14.15   Given the large predominantly rural nature of Rother district with many small communities, the provision of community facilities for people to gather and interact, and the opportunity to form links across generations, should be available as locally as possible. This also contributes to reducing the need to travel.

14.16   The policy approach is therefore to strongly support the modernisation, improvement and, where appropriate, replacement of such facilities in order that their availability for community use is maintained and maximised. This recognises that new or improved community services and facilities will be required over time.

14.17   The loss of facilities that meet a local community need will also be resisted, as this could have a significant impact upon the ability of local residents to access services. In order to fully test the prospect for continued community use, efforts should be made to let and/or sell a property for its continued community use at a realistic price for a minimum period of 12 months.

14.18   In maximising opportunities to access community facilities, there is the potential for the dual use of existing facilities.
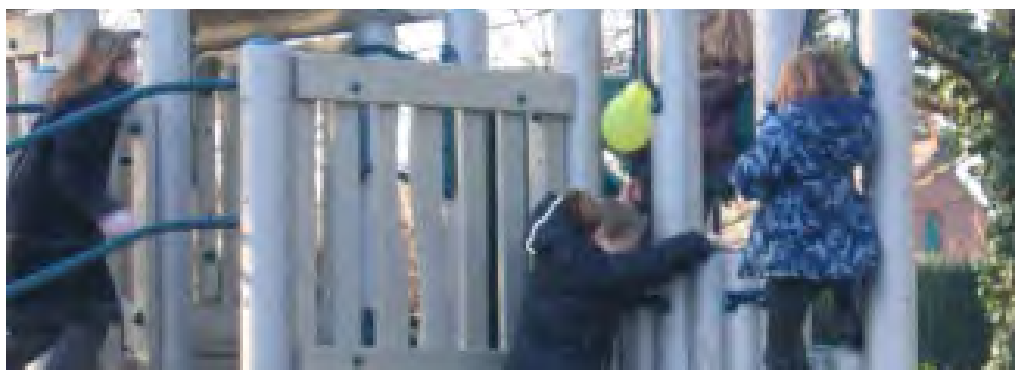
14 - Communities

> **Policy CO1: Community Facilities and Services[39]**
>
> **The availability of community facilities to meet local needs will be achieved by:**
>
> **(i) Permitting new, improved or replacement community facilities in appropriate locations where they meet identified community needs, having regard to population characteristics, Local Actions Plans and recognised standards of provision;**
>
> **(ii) Facilitating the co-location of facilities to meet the needs of a broad a range of community activities, as far as reasonably practicable, particularly when considering new buildings;**
>
> **(iii) Not permitting development proposals that result in the loss of sites or premises currently or last used for community purposes unless:**
>
> > **(a) alternative provision of the equivalent or better quality is available in the local area or will be provided and made available prior to the commencement or redevelopment of the proposed scheme; or**
> >
> > **(b) it can be demonstrated there is no reasonable prospect of retention for the current use and that no other community use of the site is suitable or viable.**

Health provision

14.19   Rother's residents are generally healthier and have a greater life expectancy than the national average. However, life expectancy in the most deprived areas of the district is 9 years lower than those in the least deprived areas.

14.20   Good healthcare facilities, as well as encouraging active lifestyles, will be particularly important in the context of an ageing population, especially taking into account the incidence of households with a limiting long-term illness, which is relatively high in Bexhill and Fairlight.

14.21   Access to primary healthcare facilities, particularly doctor's surgeries, are important within any community, but particularly to one that has a high proportion of older people. The Primary Care Development Plan identifies a number of doctor's surgeries that will need upgrading, re-locating or replacing in the next few years. Central Bexhill has been highlighted as an area that is expected to require additional or improved provision. Access to the Conquest Hospital (located within Hastings Borough) and Pembury Hospital (located in Tunbridge Wells Borough) are also important, not least for accident and emergency, and maternity services.

---

39 For the purposes of defining Community Facilities and Services, The definition of ranges from basic health and social services to education, arts, culture and religious facilities (categorised as C2, D1 and D2 in the Use Classes Order 2005).

14.22   Recent national changes to the structures responsible for identifying and responding to healthcare needs, involving the demise of the local Primary Care Trust, mean that investment plans are presently uncertain. Therefore, further consultation will be undertaken with the relevant health authorities in due course, when bringing forward specific site proposals, to ensure that there is the health service infrastructure to meet the needs of the changing population.

> **Policy CO2: Provision and Improvement of Healthcare Facilities**
>
> **New or improved primary healthcare facilities, particularly doctor's surgeries, as proposed in prevailing health development plans or otherwise identified as being necessary to meet the needs of the future population, will be supported though allocations, permissions and/or developer contributions in accordance with policy IM2 in Chapter 19 and the latest Infrastructure Delivery Plan.**

Recreation facilities

14.23   Leisure and sports facilities, along with outdoor spaces, can provide a number of functions within the urban fabric of towns and villages. As well as providing both formal and informal recreation opportunities, and thereby promote the enjoyment of more healthy lifestyles, they can contribute to a network of accessible high green space (see Environment chapter), help make places more attractive to live, work and visit, and are integral to the physical and mental well-being of any community.

14.24   They also perform an important function in terms of the structure of urban and rural areas. Open spaces in more urban areas play an important role in mitigating the impacts of climate change as their cooling and shading effects are likely to become increasingly important with hotter summer temperatures.

14.25   Demographic change within the area will affect future potential demand for open space, sports and recreation facilities. Trends indicate that the numbers of young people (0-29) years will increase as a proportion of the total population as will the proportion of people over 65, whereas the proportion of those aged 35-49 will reduce by over 30%.

14.26   In strategy terms, consideration is given to a number of common themes running through local strategies that bear upon recreation. These are:

- Giving attention to the needs of young people
- Providing the infrastructure which allow residents to be more active
- Maximising the use of existing school and leisure facilities
- Recognising the importance of high quality countryside in the district
- Making effective use of planning obligations.

14.27   The [Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study](#) has categorised open spaces within Rother under a number of facility types:

- Indoor sports facilities
- Parks and gardens
- Amenity green space
- Allotments & community gardens
- Green corridors

- Provision for children and young people
- Natural & semi-natural open space
- Outdoor sports facilities
- Cemeteries and churchyards
- Beaches and coastal areas

14.28   The Council has adopted the quantitative standards of the Study, which take into account current use and future potential, as well as its recommendations in terms of access and quality. These include both district-wide and more geographically specific standards for Bexhill, Battle, Rye, East Rural Rother and West Rural Rother.

14.29   In terms of indoor sport, the study indicates there are a number of shortfalls in existing provision, which is set to worsen when projected to 2026 if there is no intervention. No sites were identified as surplus to requirements. It also identifies accessibility, quantity and quality issues in relation to play areas, which are particularly significant given the increasing number of young people in the district. The Play Strategy responds to most aspects of play including indoor provision.

14.30   Taking into account the characteristics of the district, the overall strategy context and the findings of the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study, the main priorities for the provision of both indoor and outdoor sport are:

- Providing sufficient infrastructure to meet the wide ranging recreational needs of the growing population within the district regardless of age;
- Providing sufficient infrastructure in order to ensure there are opportunities for residents to be more active;
- Improving areas which are deficient in sport and recreation provision in overall quantity terms, both now and in the future;
- Where there is no identified need for additional provision, but a demonstrated lack of quality, making provision to improve quality in this area;
- Providing public open space, sports and recreation facilities near to where people live to reduce the impact of visitors on the most environmentally sensitive areas such as the Dungeness to Pett Level Special Protection Area (SPA) and the Dungeness Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

14.31   Shortfalls at the more local level are considered in relation to the relevant locality, while specific proposals will be looked at further in the forthcoming Development and Site Allocations Plan.

Policy CO3: Improving Sports and Recreation Provision

The provision of sufficient, well-managed and accessible open spaces, sports and recreation facilities, including indoor sports facilities, will be achieved by:

(i)   Safeguarding existing facilities from development, and only permitting their loss where it results in improved provision (in terms of quantity and quality) as part of a redevelopment or elsewhere within the locality;

(ii)   Allocating land for open space, sports and recreation purposes, and permitting proposals for the improvement of existing or provision of new facilities, in localities where deficits in facilities are identified;

(iii)   Application of the quantity, access and quality standards of Rother's Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study across all open spaces, including indoor sports facilities within the district;

(iv)   Requiring either direct provision or financial contributions towards improvements to existing open space, sport and recreation provision to ensure adopted standards are maintained within the locality;

(v)   Increasing access to the countryside by promoting improvements to the rights of way network, especially around the urban areas, particularly in reference to Combe Valley Countryside Park;

(vi)   Giving particular support for water-based recreation along the coast near Camber Sands and Bexhill, and at Bewl Water, having due regard to environmental considerations.

Young People

14.32   The importance of young people within Rother is set down within the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Rother District Council Corporate Plan, which seeks to create a place of greater vibrancy with a more youthful demographic profile.

14.33   To achieve this, Rother will need to reflect the needs and aspirations of the district's young people.

14.34   For the purposes of the plan, the term 'young people' encompasses a range of different age groups each with different needs, from children in families needing nurseries and play areas, to independent young adults and their families seeking homes and jobs.

14.35   Current population estimates (mid 2013) show that there is a relatively low proportion of young people within the district, with only 15.3% of the population aged 0-15 and 12.4% aged 16-29, compared to 19.1% and 17.0% respectively for the South East. These figures also highlight that the district is "losing" a proportion of its young adults. The maps below show the distribution of young people in Rother.
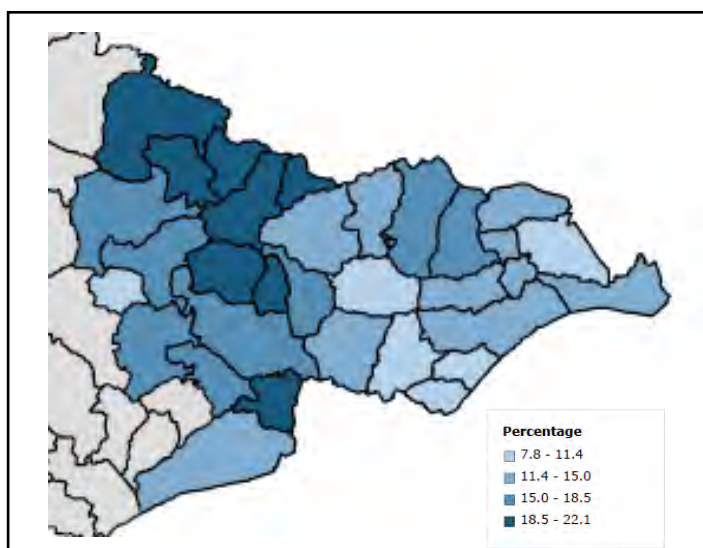
Dataset: Population by resident type, age and gender in 2011 - parishes

Figure 14a: Distribution of Young People in Rother (aged 0-14)
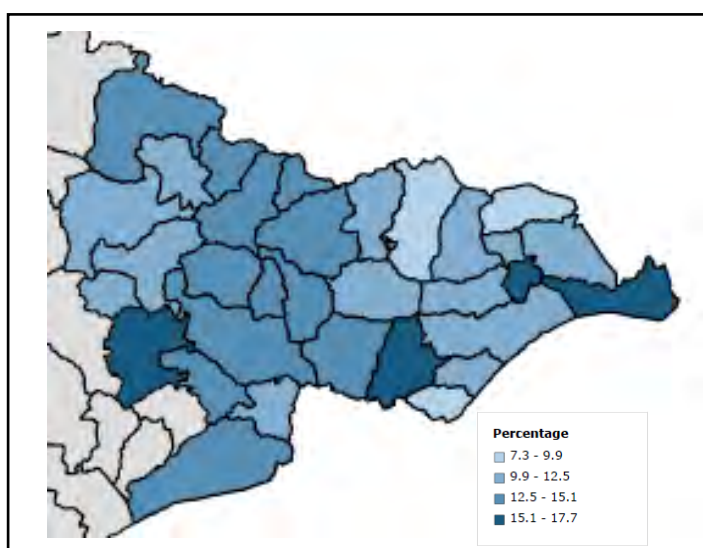
Dataset: Population by resident type, age and gender in 2011 - parishes

Figure 14b: Distribution of Young People in Rother (aged 15-29)

14.36　Population projections based on planned housing growth indicate that Rother is likely to experience a small increase, by 8%, in its number of children aged 0-15 years over the Plan period. The numbers in the 16-29 age group are expected to be virtually unchanged over the same period.

14.37　Typically, young people move away in order to seek opportunities elsewhere, such as better job prospects and more opportunities in relation to education and training. This resultant out-migration affects the social and economic balance of the district.

14.38　Evidence collected from a number of stakeholder meetings and strategies have been used to inform this chapter and is shown below (please note that this list is not exhaustive).

- East Sussex and Rother Sustainable Community Strategies
- Local Plan (2011-2028) Core Strategy Consultation on Strategy Directions (2008)
- Local Plan (2011-2028) Targeted Consultation with Schools and Colleges – April 2008
- Rother District Council Corporate Plan 2006-2016
- Children and Young People's Play Policy and Strategy for Rother 2007-10
- Rother Place Survey (2008)
- Rother Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (2007)
- Hastings & Rother – Leisure Facilities Strategy (2009 – 2020)
- Rural Youth Conference – October 2008
- Workshop of Activities for Young People – March 2009
- East Sussex Children and Young People's Plan 2008 – 2011 (CYPP)
- Rother District Council Youth Strategy (2010-2016)

14.39　Survey evidence also indicates that over half of young people are dissatisfied with the job prospects and sports and leisure facilities within their area. Consultation events held with local school children and college students as part of preparing this strategy showed that, for secondary school age children, public transport and access to services came out as a key concern, as well as sufficient recreation facilities. For college students, local nightlife was seen as something that could most be improved, as well as wage levels and local cost of living. Public transport was also a significant concern.

14.40　Within the context of an increasingly ageing population, the challenge is to provide the necessary measures that make the district an attractive place for younger people and their families to live and remain in the district. This is a particular issue for Bexhill and further detail can be found in Chapter 8: Bexhill.

14.41　Key areas of support should relate to job prospects, affordable housing, education and training, transport links and recreation facilities, as well as health care, in order to attract and retain young people and their families to remain within the district.

14.42   Young people have a particular need for affordable housing. Some 71% of concealed households[40] within the district are young people (aged 29 or under). The main housing need is for owner-occupied housing, but there is a significant proportion, of almost 30%, identifying a need for affordable housing (both social-rented and intermediate tenures). The type of accommodation required points mainly towards flats and terraced properties with 1 or 2 bedrooms, with over 50% stating their preferred location as Bexhill.

14.43   Rother's prosperity will depend on its young people's education and skills that will equip them for the workplace. GCSE attainment in the district is improving and consistently higher than East Sussex averages. In 2010, 60.6% of students achieved 5+ A*-C grades including English and Maths compared to 56.2% in 2009.

14.44   The number of 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEETs) is a priority in East Sussex and figures for Rother in 2010 showed an increase to 8.81% compared to 7.0% in 2009. This is above the East Sussex average of 7.3%. The establishment and expansion of University Centre Hastings has provided a boost for the wider area in terms of higher education in recent years. It is also vitally important that there are local training and job opportunities for young people to reach their full potential.

14.45   In terms of the welfare of children and young people within the district, whilst overall poverty in Rother is below the England average, over 2,400 children are living in low income households. In Bexhill Central, the proportion of 0-15 year olds living in poverty is 26.3%, in Rye is 24% and in Sidley is 42%. This can have a negative impact on children's lives and their life chances.

14.46   Families in the rural areas can be disadvantaged through poor access to services. Key services that particularly affect the young include access to schools (including nursery schools), play, sport, leisure and community facilities, as well as public transport. Good accessibility to existing services, including locating new development close in locations accessible by a range of transport modes is therefore particularly important for young people.

14.47   The East Sussex Children and Young People's Plan 2008 – 2011 (CYPP) has identified priorities for Rother which include reducing teenage pregnancy, improving mental health, reducing child poverty, identifying the problems for NEETs, as well as responding to youth homelessness.

---

40 Concealed households are people living within a household wanting to move to their own accommodation and form a separate household. A concealed household is taken as a proxy for the extent of concealment of housing need within the District because these households represent a pent up and unmet demand for housing

Policy CO4: Supporting Young People

Priority will be given to making growing up, living and working in Rother attractive to young people and families, including through:

(i)   Provision of housing options, including affordable homes, suited to the needs of young people, especially in Bexhill and the rural areas;

(ii)   Accessible employment opportunities;

(iii)   Continued investment in quality education and training facilities;

(iv)   A good range of community, health and recreational facilities, including play areas, sports pitches and youth facilities;

(v)   Prioritising investment in public transport and/or cycling to key services, such as education, health and leisure facilities;

(vi)   Making safety and community integration a priority in urban design.

Older People

14.48   The next 15 years will see a distinct population shift in Britain as we move towards an ageing society. Evidence nationally shows, between 2001 and 2011, the population aged 65 and over increased from 15.9% to 16.5% of the population. The average age of the UK population increases by 3 months every year.

14.49   Rother's own demographic profile shows that there is a high proportion of older people within the district. Rother has the largest and fastest growing number of people over 65 in the county. Most recent estimates (ESiF, 2014) indicate that 30.6% of the population are aged over 65, compared to 18.6% in the South East and 17.6% in England and Wales as a whole. The map below shows that the largest proportion of older people live in the coastal area, notably in Fairlight (46%), Iden (40%) and Bexhill (34.3%).
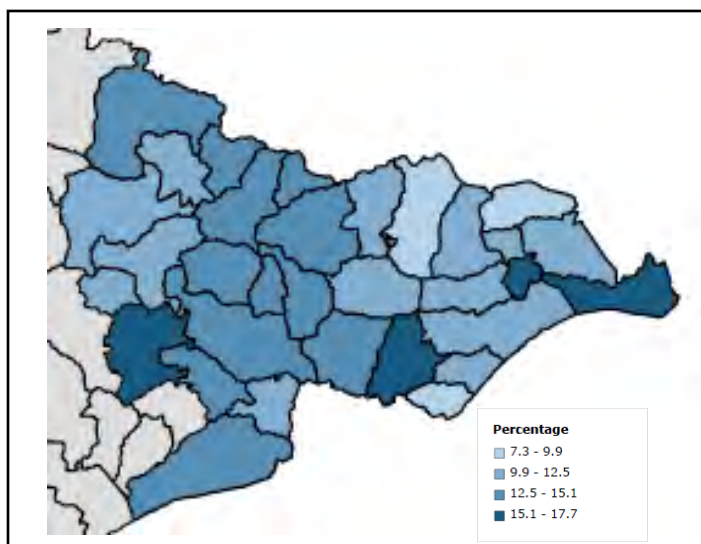
Figure 15: Distribution of Older People in Rother (aged 65+)

14.50   Population projections indicate that a high proportion of future population growth will be in older age groups; the percentage of those aged 60/65-74 will increase by some 3,300 people between 2011-2028, while the proportion of those aged 75+ will increase by nearly 5,000.

14.51   In 2013, the elderly dependency ratio[41] in Rother was 55.9 is the highest in East Sussex, which has an average of 41.4, while the South East average is 29.1.

14.52   The majority of Rother households aged 65+ are owner-occupiers whilst the remaining 15% of households rent from an RSL or from the private rented sector. In terms of specialist accommodation, the majority of sheltered housing provision is centred around the towns in the district, with a limited supply within rural Rother.

---

41 The "elderly" dependency ratio is calculated as the sum of all aged 65+ as a percentage of all people of working age (16-64). A ratio of 50 shows that there are two people of working age for every dependant, a ratio of 100 shows that there is one person of working age for every dependant, a ratio of over 100 indicates there are more dependants than people of working age. Source: ESiF

14.53   Evidence collected from a number of strategies have been used to inform this chapter and can detailed below (please note that this list is not exhaustive).

- Local Plan (2011-2028) Core Strategy Consultations
- Rother District Council Corporate Plan 2006-2016
- Pride of Place – Rother Sustainable Community Strategy to 2026
- Delivering Housing Solutions, 2007-2012 - Housing Strategy
- Staying home, living well – Housing and Support Strategy for Older People and carers in Hastings and Rother – 2007-2027
- East Sussex Supporting People Strategy (2005-2010)
- Joint Commissioning Strategy for Older People (2007)
- Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods - National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society

14.54   The most recent Place Survey (2008/09) indicates that residents in the district aged over 65 believe that improving public transport, affordable decent housing and job prospects are in the top 10 priorities for improvement in Rother.

14.55   The Hastings and Rother Housing and Support Strategy (2007-2027) seeks to enhance the social inclusion, well-being, dignity, choice and independence of older people in Hastings and Rother. It indicates that the majority of people want to remain in their own homes as they age, and that this helps maintain people's links with their community and friends to prevent them from becoming isolated. Hence, it seeks to enable them to remain in their own homes for as long as possible or move to a more suitable home, whilst developing a range of sustainable options for housing, care and support in later life.

14.56   The Council's Housing and Homelessness Strategy (2014-2019) identifies working in partnership to deliver specialist accommodation, including via adaptations.

14.57   It is clear that that mainstream housing provision must meet the requirements of older households, particularly as disability is strongly linked to age. 'Lifetime homes' standards are intended to help people adapt to their changing needs as they age without the need to move home.

14.58   The SHMA suggests that there is a clear trend towards retirement migration within Rother. This has implications for the vitality of settlements and level of healthcare and other service requirements. It also has implications in terms of housing pressures, rising prices and declining economic activity rates. However, there are also potential benefits with the stability, social capital and cohesion that older households can bring to local neighbourhoods.

14.59 Consideration can be given to the need for alternative housing models to deliver a range that meets the varying needs of an ageing population. More older person households is likely to increase the demand for supported and other specialist accommodation, such as sheltered housing. The Housing and Support Strategy seeks to develop an extra care housing scheme in the area, also with provision for older people with dementia and learning disabilities.

14.60 In order to support older people in their independence and good health, it is important that development is located so that older households can have good access to a suitable range of facilities. This can be particularly challenging in rural areas.

14.61 The well-being of older people in Rother's communities is influenced by opportunities for activity and social engagement. Access to community facilities play a large part in maintaining and promoting active and social communities. They provide a valuable resource for older people who either volunteer or participate in the activities or services which it provides.

> **Policy CO5: Supporting Older People**
>
> **Initiatives and developments will be supported which:**
>
> **(i)   Enables older people to live independently in their own home;**
>
> **(ii)   Increases the range of available housing options with care and support services in accessible locations;**
>
> **(iii) Promotes active lifestyles;**
>
> **(iv) Increases older people's engagement in community life, including through "hubs".**

14.62 Consideration will be given to the allocation of sites specifically for the delivery of older persons (including extra care) housing given any demand arising through the Development and Site Allocations Plan.

14.63 Attention is drawn to the other chapters which contribute to this policy, including the promotion of lifetime homes, grants for refurbishment or adaptation (Housing), regard to safety, security, and connectivity in urban design (Environment), providing good quality healthcare and promoting healthy active lifestyles (Community facilities).

Community Safety

14.64 A key objective is:

> *'to maintain low crime levels and improve the feeling of safety across the district'.*

This echoes the Community Strategy and the results from the Place Survey (2008/09) which indicate that the 'level of crime' is one of the most important factors in making an area a good place to live.

14.65 Rother is relatively safe. The Place Survey reveals that over nine in ten (92%) residents say they feel safe when outside in their local area during the day, with only 3% saying they feel unsafe. Unsurprisingly, residents feel less safe when outside after dark, with 61% feeling safe and 22% feeling unsafe.

14.66 Residents in Bexhill feel the least safe at night (54% feel safe), with significantly more residents in Rye & Eastern Rother (63%) and Battle & Northern Rother (72%) feeling safe. Safety during the day is fairly even across the three ward groups; 91% safe in Bexhill and 94% safe in both Rye and Eastern Rother and Battle and Northern Rother.

14.67 Recorded crime figures, set out below, confirm that Rother is a relatively safe place to live, with lower levels of crime than regional and national averages.

Crime	Violence against the person	Robbery	Burglary dwelling	Theft of a motor vehicle	Theft from a vehicle
England/Wales	15.7	1.4	4.9	2.2	6.2
South East	15.4	0.6	3.4	1.7	5.3
East Sussex	11.8	0.5	1.8	1.5	4
Rother	7.4	0.2	1.8	1.1	3.2

Figure 16: Recorded crime by key offences - rate per 1,000 population (2009/10)

14.68 Although local crime levels are low, the fear that an incident may occur, including anti-social behaviour, is amongst the most important concerns of local communities and influences people's view of their safety It can deter people from using streets, spaces, places and facilities in the district. This is socially damaging and detrimental to quality of life and the economy. Therefore, it is still important locally to maintain and improve on the levels of crime within the district and to ensure that communities feel safe from crime.

14.69 Evidence collected from a number of strategies has been used to inform this chapter and is detailed below (please note that this list is not exhaustive).

- Local Plan (2011-2028) Core Strategy Consultation on Strategy Directions
- Rother District Council Corporate Plan 2006-2016
- Pride of Place – Rother Sustainable Community Strategy
- Rother Community Safety Plan 2008-2011 (Safer Rother Partnership)

14.70 The Safer Rother Partnership has produced the Rother Community Safety Plan 2008-2011, which focuses on four key areas: violent crime, property crime, road safety, and anti-social behaviour (including youth diversion).

14.71 Physical factors can be employed to promote community safety within Rother. Consideration to the management of the built environment, promoting social well-being and inclusion into the design of services and infrastructure will all help reduce crime.

14.72 For people to be confident of their safety when using community facilities, parks, open spaces, public transport and when they go out at night, it is important that developments are planned in an inclusive way whilst ensuring that people are not unduly concerned for their safety. Schemes should be designed which provide good lighting and natural surveillance, but avoid excessive or dominant security measures, such as steel roller shutters and blank walls at street level.

14.73 Community safety should also consider issues around fire and road safety, particularly for children, pedestrians and cyclists. The management of the public realm should contribute to enhancing community safety in designing all public areas in town centres, housing and employment developments. New development will be expected to integrate crime prevention measures detailed in national guidance, Secured by Design, along with other proven principles of good design. Their use and purpose should be set out in Design and Access Statements.

> **Policy CO6: Community Safety**
>
> **A high level of community safety will continue to be strongly promoted through effective partnership working. A safe physical environment will be facilitated by:**
>
> **(i) The creation of safe environments which benefit from natural surveillance, visible open spaces, streets and pedestrian routes, appropriate design and level of lighting in all development;**
>
> **(ii) Ensuring that all development avoids prejudice to road and/or pedestrian safety;**
>
> **(iii) Reducing traffic speeds and other traffic impacts, particularly in town centres, villages and residential areas;**

14.74 Specific policy relating to design quality and stewardship of the built environment can be found within Chapter 17: Environment.

Scope and Issues

15.1   Rother district is attractive to people relocating from other parts of the country, particularly people over the age of 45, who are generally able to out-bid local people for housing. This particularly affects the availability and affordability of housing for local people on lower incomes. As a result evidence suggests that 40% of households cannot affordable to rent or buy property within the district[42].

15.2   This chapter addresses the approach to meeting local housing need within the district, for both open market housing and affordable housing, within different spatial areas. It recognises that a failure to provide affordable housing for local people will have negative impacts on the district, in that more people, particularly young people, will be excluded from the housing market, which in turn does not support balanced, inclusive or vibrant communities.

15.3   There are also high proportions of older people within the district; providing housing which meets their needs is also important. Specific policies relating to housing for older people can be found in the Communities chapter.

15.4   Clear feedback from local people suggests housing should be provided in a way that supports local priorities and provides choice, including affordable housing.

15.5   The key is to create a balance between providing adequate affordable housing provision to meet need across the whole district, whilst ensuring that other Core Strategy objectives such as regeneration, job creation, and supporting local services are met, both now and in the future. This recognises the linkage between earnings and the affordability of housing.

Objectives

15.6   The **Strategic Objective** for in relation to local housing need, as set out in chapter 6, is:

> *'To provide housing in a way that supports local priorities and provides choice, including affordable housing.'*

42 Strategic Housing Market Assessment, 2010

15.7   This can be elaborated by the following specific housing objectives:

Local Housing Needs Objectives:

i)   To provide and maintain a housing stock that supports sustainable, inclusive, communities in both towns and rural areas;

ii) To respond to the changing mix and needs of households, including more older person households;

iii) To increase the availability of affordable housing;

iv) To provide housing choices that encourage young people to live locally;

v)   To make effective use of existing housing stock, including bringing empty homes back into use.

Providing a mix of housing to meet local need

15.8   By 2028, the number of projected households in Rother is expected to be 46,215 which equates to an increase of around 5,300 households between 2011-2028. This amounts to a household growth rate of around 312 households per year.[43]

15.9   Projected household growth suggests that new households are likely to occupy broadly equal proportions of 1, 2 and 3+ bedroom homes[44].

15.10   There is a much greater stock of smaller and rented property in urban areas than the rural areas and this works against the need to attract younger people, particularly to rural areas. Housing affordability in rural Rother is especially acute, particularly as a product of high house prices associated with a stock of larger dwellings in these areas[45]. Providing smaller dwellings (both market and affordable), as well as more affordable housing, should go some way to provide for this need. It could allow older residents to downsize and stay within villages, as well as provide housing for young people.

15.11   Evidence suggests that the housing market is weaker in Bexhill[46], where property values are lower. There is also a large stock of private rented property within Bexhill (much higher than proportions found in the rural areas) and this provides a valuable supply of cheaper housing stock to households in the area, although much of this stock is provided in small houses and flats. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) suggests that is appropriate to provide more accommodation for families and younger households in Bexhill, in order to support wider policy objectives.

---

43 ESCC Projections for Proposed Modifications, July 2013
44 Strategic Housing Market Assessment, 2010.
45 Housing Market Assessment, 2006, Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update 2010
46 Affordable Housing Viability Study, 2010

15.12   It is appropriate to seek to redress the limited number of smaller homes in the rural areas of the district by setting a target of 30% 1 and 2 bed market homes in rural areas, mainly 2 bed homes. This approach offers flexibility in terms of occupation in the long-term, relevant to both young and older households.

15.13   The stock of social rented accommodation is biased towards smaller properties and the pattern of re-lets is biased towards the smallest properties. However, unlike Rother's market stock, the social rented stock is biased towards smaller dwellings, with only 40% having 2 bedrooms or more.

15.14   Therefore, new social/affordable rented housing should focus on larger dwellings in order to address broad imbalances in the stock. An appropriate strategic target mix is:-

i).   10-30% 1 bedroom properties
ii).   30-50% 2 bedroom properties
iii).   20-30% 3 bedroom properties
iv).   20-30% 4 + bedroom properties

15.15   Given the totality of housing need within the district, the SHMA recommends a broad spilt of 65%:35% (social rented and intermediate tenures respectively), although indicates there should be flexibility in this split. However, in some rural areas, it may be appropriate to seek all affordable housing as 100% social/ affordable rented accommodation given the shortage of social rented homes in these areas.

15.16   There are specific sectors of the community with specific residential needs. These are often related to the more vulnerable members of society, or those who would benefit from a higher level of on-site support. The Council's Housing and Homelessness Strategy sets out what it will be doing to tackle housing and homelessness issues over the next 5 years. It is important to encourage increased housing choices in terms of helping people continue to live at home and, where necessary through specialist accommodation.

15.17   The SHMA recognises the need to plan for different types of housing in order to develop a more balanced housing stock in both the private and social sectors. As well as issues of the stock of smaller and rented property in rural areas, it considers the need to plan to promote economic development, which could indicate the desirability of building houses attractive to potential in-migrants and hence, family housing.   This is particularly relevant to Bexhill.

15.18   In determining the appropriate housing mix within new developments, an assessment should be made within the context of the surrounding area, including the following:

- Local tenure mix and whether there is a concentration of a particular tenure of housing that could benefit from diversification or greater choice

- Local household characteristics and whether there is a bias towards certain types of households

- Local economic performance and whether there are any issues around deprivation and regeneration which need to be taken into account

- Site specific viability

Policy LHN1: Achieving Mixed and Balanced Communities

In order to support mixed, balanced and sustainable communities, housing developments should:

(i)   Be of a size, type and mix which will reflect both current and projected housing needs within the district and locally;

(ii)   In rural areas, provide a mix of housing sizes and types, with at least 30% one and two bedroom dwellings (being mostly 2 bed);

(iii)   In Bexhill, contribute to increased provision of family dwellings, unless site circumstances make this inappropriate;

(iv)   In larger developments (6+ units), provide housing for a range of differing household types;

(v)   In relation to affordable housing, contribute to an overall balance of 65% social/affordable rented and 35% intermediate affordable housing[47];

(vi)   Ensure that affordable housing is integrated with market housing, where practical;

(vii) Provide a proportion of homes to Lifetime Homes Standard.

15.19   In calculating the number of smaller dwellings in rural areas to be provided in accordance with policy LHN1, where a scheme does not provide a whole unit on site, the requirement applies to the nearest whole unit.

---

47 The scope of affordable rented housing within the NPPF now includes 'affordable rented' as well as social rented housing

15.20   There is a large stock of empty homes in the district and the Council has an Empty Homes Action Plan to make best use of existing housing stock. Whilst a reduction in empty homes cannot count towards housing completion figures, the initiative will increase the available housing stock. Improvements to the condition of private sector stock can also help drive regeneration and renewal and are therefore encouraged.

15.21   In terms of levels of homelessness within the district, homelessness applications are low compared to the national average[48]. This is the result of pro-active prevention of homelessness activities through a range of services in line with the Housing and Homelessness Strategy.

15.22   Housing for both younger and older people, including specialised housing, is considered in the Communities chapter.

Affordable housing provision

15.23   'Affordable housing' is defined as housing with a subsidy to enable the price or rent to be substantially lower than the prevailing market prices or rents in the district and where mechanisms exist to ensure the housing remains affordable for those who cannot compete in the existing housing market.

15.24   The recent Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA 2013), undertaken in accordance with the NPPF, identified a net need for up to 1,647 affordable homes over the period 2011-2028[49]. The scale of housing proposes in this Core Strategy, allied with its affordable housing policy requirements, should meet this need.

15.25   In determining the appropriate thresholds and percentages for affordable housing in the district, regard is made to the evidence, particularly in terms of the SHMA and Affordable Housing Viability Assessment, whilst also considering the aims and objectives relating to regeneration and job creation. Further consideration of these matters can be found within the 'Affordable Housing Background Paper'.

15.26   Both the SHMA and the Affordable Housing Viability Study make the distinction between the differing needs and circumstances of the identified spatial areas of the district and the need for distinct approaches in these areas.

15.27   These studies show that there is a real need for affordable housing in the district, and the potential to deliver affordable homes as part of new housing. Affordability issues are amplified in the rural areas. Therefore, while it is considered right to keep the threshold in Bexhill at 15, lower thresholds in Rye and, Battle, of 10 dwellings, and in the rural areas, where contributions will be expected from all (1 or more net units) housing schemes, will help address local needs.

---

48 Rother District Council Homelessness Strategy 2008-2013.
49 Hastings and Rother SHMA Update, June 2013; Figure 8

15.28   At the same time, given the need for regeneration and job creation in the district, it is concluded that lowering percentage requirements for affordable housing in Bexhill (30%), Battle (35%) and Rye (30%), will help kick-start the regeneration effort in these areas, as well as support overall housing supply. In addition, where housing is used as enabling development in mixed use schemes, consideration may be made to other factors, notably the importance of providing jobs locally.

15.29   In all cases, affordable housing should be provided on-site, with the exception of sites in rural areas, where schemes of less than 5 units should provide a payment in lieu of on-site provision. Further advice on the provision of commuted payments and the mechanisms for the delivery of affordable housing will be set out in a revised Supplementary Planning Document. The Council will continue to develop categories of local designations for key workers through its Housing Allocation Policy, with the intention that this will include land based workers.

15.30   All affordable housing should be indistinguishable from market dwellings and 'pepper potted' individually, or in clusters of no more than 5% of the total housing on the site, up to a maximum cluster of 5 houses or 10 flats. Successfully integrating the affordable rented and shared ownership units provides a sustainable, balanced and mixed community which brings many social and economic benefits.

Policy LHN2: Affordable Housing

On housing sites or mixed use developments, the Council will expect the following percentages of affordable housing within the district:

(i)   In Bexhill and Hastings Fringes, 30% on-site affordable housing on schemes of 15 or more dwellings (or 0.5 hectares or more);

(ii)   In Rye, 30% on-site affordable housing on schemes of 10 or more dwellings (or 0.3 hectares or more);

(iii)   In Battle, 35% on-site affordable housing on schemes of 10 or more dwellings (or 0.3 hectares or more);

(iv)   In the Rural Areas:

(a)   40% on-site affordable housing on schemes of 5 dwellings or more;
or
(b)   A financial contribution, on a sliding scale up to the equivalent of providing 40% affordable housing, in lieu of on-site provision on all residential schemes of less than 5 dwellings.

Where it can be demonstrated that these requirements would either render otherwise suitable development unviable, or where the local need for affordable housing would no longer justify the above levels, the Council will respectively expect the proportion of affordable housing to be the most that does not undermine viability, or is needed locally. An exception to this may be made when the main purpose of the housing is to support business development, where job creation is a priority.

In normal circumstances, the full affordable housing obligation should be met on-site, and of a comparable design quality to the market units onsite. Affordable units should be 'pepperpotted' individually, or in small clusters. In all cases, planning permission will be subject to a legal agreement to ensure nomination rights and that the affordable housing will remain available.

Note: If a site comes forward as two or more separate development schemes, of which one or more falls below the appropriate threshold, the Council will seek an appropriate level of affordable housing on each part to match in total the provision that would have been required on the site as a whole.

Where proposals are made for fewer than 15 dwellings in Bexhill and 10 dwellings in Rye and Battle, the Council will have regard to whether size of the site would make it capable to accommodating more than that number.

Rural Exception Sites

15.31 The delivery of affordable housing in rural areas has been limited over recent years, being generally a reflection of the smaller scale of housing development in these areas. The Council has a 'Rural Exception Sites' Project specifically devised to tackle the problem of the lack of affordable rural housing.

15.32 These are small sites which may exceptionally be granted consent outside settlement development boundaries contrary to normal planning policies, specifically to secure local needs affordable housing. These sites are a proactive step towards helping to address the issue of affordable housing shortages in rural areas.

Policy LHN3: Rural Exception Sites

In exceptional circumstances, planning permission may be granted for small site residential development outside development boundaries in order to meet a local need for affordable housing in rural areas. Such development will be permitted where the following requirements are met:-

(i)   It helps to meet a proven local housing need for affordable housing in the village/parish, as demonstrated in an up-to-date assessment of local housing need;

(ii)   It is of a size, tenure, mix and cost appropriate to the assessed local housing need;

(iii) It is well related to an existing settlement and its services, including access to public transport;

(iv)   The development is supported or initiated by the Parish Council;

(v)   The local planning authority is satisfied that the identified local housing need cannot be met within the settlement development boundary; and

(vi)   The development does not significantly harm the character of the rural area, settlement or the landscape, and meets other normal local planning and highway authority criteria, in line with other Council policies.

In all cases, planning permission will be subject to a legal agreement to ensure that the accommodation remains available to meet local housing needs in perpetuity, and that people with the greatest local connection are given highest priority in both initial and future occupancy.

Allocations for Affordable Housing

15.33   To further encourage much needed affordable housing in rural areas, another appropriate and effective means of addressing rural local housing need is through allocating land specifically for affordable housing.

15.34   Such allocations may also include a small amount of open market housing to incentivise development. It is considered that such an approach will encourage landowners to bring sites forward. Such sites may be allocated through the Development and Site Allocations Plan.

15.35   Allocating larger sites (of 15 or more dwellings) for wholly or substantially affordable housing, particularly social rented housing, would likely be contrary to the aim of mixed, balanced communities. In smaller settlements, it may be appropriate to allocate proportionally smaller sites so not to harm the character of the area.

15.36   In general, schemes allocated wholly or substantially affordable homes can be expected to secure grant, since there is less value available to cross-subsidise the provision of affordable housing.

> **Policy LHN4: Sites for Wholly or Substantially Affordable Housing**
>
> **In order to meet identified local need for affordable housing, specific sites may be allocated within the rural areas for wholly or substantially affordable housing either within or adjacent to settlement boundaries. Affordable housing provided on these sites should remain available in perpetuity.**

Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Scope and Issues

15.37   The District Council is required by national policy to include policies and site allocations for Gypsies and Travellers where necessary to meet identified needs. The Housing Act (2004) introduced the requirement that local authorities undertake Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments (GTAAs) alongside reviews of the housing needs of the rest of the community.

15.38   Currently, there is one County Council owned permanent Gypsy and Traveller site within the District, and is situated in Redlands Lane, Robertsbridge off the A21 and has existed for 20 years. The site itself consists of 8 permanent pitches[50] each with its own amenity building.

---

50   The site was subdivided (2011) to provide for 8 pitches, utilising a double pitch into 2 separate pitches.

15.39 Since 2006, there have been 2 permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitches granted planning permission, 1 pitch at Buckholt Lane, Bexhill and 1 additional pitch at Redlands Lane, totalling 8 pitches on this site. As at 1st April 2011, there were 3 additional pitches with temporary planning permission within the District.

Identifying local need

Permanent[51] site provision

15.40 The Council has been working with the other Local Authorities in East Sussex (including Brighton and Hove) in order to assess the local needs for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople across the County. Information relating to the methodology for determining the level of pitch provision can be found in the Gypsy and Traveller Background Paper.

15.41 The evidence base[52] considers that 7 additional permanent pitches should be provided for Gypsies and Travellers within Rother between 2006-2016. Taking account of the permanent provision already made since 2006, this leaves an outstanding need for a further 5 permanent pitches to 2016.

15.42 In line with the general provisions for the identification of land for housing and the maintenance of a sufficient, continuous supply of available sites in line with targets, it is also proposed to increase permanent pitch provision beyond 2016 based on projected increases in local Traveller households. This equates to 6 permanent pitches (based on 3% compound growth per annum) over the period 2016-2028.

15.43 The GTAA identified that the main need was for small sites for individual families or small family groups.

Transit[53] site provision

15.44 There is currently no transit provision within the District; however, East Sussex County Council owns and manages a transit site on behalf of all the authorities in East Sussex - a nine pitch transit site with a resident site manager just outside Lewes, called Bridie's Tan. The site is one of only a few in the region, and has recently been completely rebuilt following a successful bid for capital funding from the government.

15.45 In terms of transit provision, a need has been identified for 8 pitches (potentially in 2 sites of 4 pitches) across East Sussex in order to create a network of sites across the County and the wider South East region in the vicinity of the A27/A259 corridor. The Council will continue to work with other Local Authorities across East Sussex to allocate land to meet the countywide transit needs, particularly through collaborative working.

---

51 Sites where the same Gypsy and Traveller families occupy all year round.
52 Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Background Paper
53 These are permanent sites that allow Travellers to stay for short periods (up to 12 weeks) when they are passing through an area.

Travelling showpeople provision

15.46   Consideration should also be made to the needs of travelling showpeople within the District, under the provisions of Planning policy for traveller sites, 2012. Although the work of travelling showpeople is primarily nomadic, they nevertheless require secure, permanent bases for the storage of their equipment and more particularly for residential purposes. Evidence suggests that there is a single Travelling Showperson's site in the District and there is no identified need for additional pitches. However, if and when they arise, Policy LHN6 provides an appropriate criteria-based policy to determine site suitability.

> **Policy LHN5: Sites for the needs of Gypsies and Travellers.**
>
> **Provision will be made for 5 permanent pitches within Rother for Gypsies and Travellers over the period 2011-2016, and a further 6 pitches between 2016 and 2028.**
>
> **Sites will be allocated in the Development and Site Allocations Plan, taking into account any sites granted permission in the interim.**
>
> **Site selection will take into account the Strategy objectives, the future needs of occupiers and the likely availability of sites for its intended occupiers. Sites should meet the criteria set in Policy LHN6.**

15.47   Sites will need to be deliverable, either through being (or proposed to be) publicly owned, owned by gypsies/travellers, have a willing landowner or, possibly, promoted by developers as part of a comprehensive scheme that addresses the full range of housing need. The Council will maintain an up-to-date 5-year supply of Gypsy and Travellers sites for the District through its Local Plan Monitoring Report.

15.48   Evidence from the GTAA[54] considers that small-scale sites (less than 10 pitches) are preferred by the Gypsy and Traveller community to ensure family bonds are retained and to encourage integration with the local community.

Site Selection Criteria

15.49   The Council must provide location criteria for the development of sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. In all cases, the location requirements of gypsy sites will be similar to those for housing sites.   These criteria have been developed to ensure that they complement and are consistent with other policies in the Core Strategy including policies EN1, EN5, EN7 and TR3.

---

54 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2005)

15.50   Whilst the Council recognises that accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople should be provided within existing settlements in the first instance, it recognises that this may be impractical, particularly as local Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople may not be able to financially compete for sites where all residential development is acceptable. Therefore, an exceptions site approach to providing sites will be adopted.

Policy LHN6: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Criteria

Site allocations will be made and/or planning permission granted for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites, when all of the following criteria are met:

(i)   The site is not located in a nature conservation designated area, in an area at risk from flooding (flood zones 3a & 3b or a functional floodplain), in close proximity to a Source Protection Zone or significantly contaminated land;

(ii)   The site should not result in an unacceptable visual or landscape impact, especially in the High Weald AONB taking account of proposed landscaping or screening;

(iii) The site is located within or close to an existing settlement and is accessible to local services by foot, by cycle or by public transport;

(iv)   The site can be adequately accessed by vehicles towing caravans and provides adequate provision for parking, turning, and access for emergency vehicles;

(v)   The site is not disproportionate in scale to the existing settlement;

(vi)   Mixed use sites should not unreasonably harm the amenity of adjoining properties;

(vii) In the case of sites for Travelling Showpeople, the site must also be suitable for the storage of large items of mobile equipment;

Where planning permission is granted, appropriate conditions or planning obligations will be imposed to ensure occupation of the site is restricted to those persons genuinely falling into the definition of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

15.51   These criteria are specifically incorporated in the Core Strategy to assist the allocation of sites and/or the determination of planning applications for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites, and should be read in conjunction with other policies in the Plan.

Scope and Issues

16.1   National policies for sustainable economic growth are contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. There is also a strong emphasis on addressing the County's and Rother district's economic weaknesses in the 'Integrated Sustainable Community Strategy for East Sussex'.

16.2   The economic weaknesses of the district reflect relatively low skill levels and average earnings, especially in the dominant service sectors. Also, the number of VAT-registered firms is relatively small, and has seen only marginal net growth over the last 10 years.

16.3   There is a high reliance on jobs outside the district, with net out-commuting of 5,484 workers (in 2011), equivalent to 16.4% of the resident workforce. At the same time, a higher proportion (17.2%) of people work mainly at or from home than in any other district in the County, and also well above the South East average of 11.9%.

16.4   Hastings is the centre of the labour market area covering all but the north-western part of the district (which is more oriented towards Tunbridge Wells). It is the main destination of commuting flows. However, it is particularly weak in economic terms; it is identified as one of the twenty the most deprived districts in the country, with relatively low educational achievement and skill levels

16.5   Further details of the condition of the local economy, workforce and jobs forecasts, and the demand and supply of employment land are contained in an 'Employment Strategy and Land Review' prepared jointly with Hastings Borough Council. The original 2008 Review was updated in 2011 to take account of more recent economic circumstances and projections. A further review of employment land requirements in the light of the current housing targets was completed in July 2013.

16.6   Reference is also made to the new 'Rother Economic Regeneration Strategy 2010-2015' and to the information and analysis contained in the East Sussex Local Economic Assessment. It is also noted that economic development of the wider sub-region is being carried forward by the South East Local Enterprise Partnership, covering East Sussex, Kent and Essex.

16.7   This chapter focuses on uses that are central to the economic development[55] of the district, with specific attention to business, uses[56], tourism and retailing. More spatially specific policies, including the distribution of retailing, are presented in the relevant spatial chapters, while community uses are considered in chapter 14. The potential for retail growth in each of the towns has been highlighted by 'A Shopping Assessment' undertaken for the Council by GL Hearn.

---

55 Economic development is defined in the NPPF and includes that within the B Use Classes, public and community uses, and main town centre uses but excluding housing development.

56 Business uses are those essentially within Class B of the Use Classes Order, including offices, research and development uses, light manufacturing, general industry, warehousing/storage and similar "sui Generis" uses

16.8   Stakeholder meetings have been held with a range of businesses, with specific workshops relating to tourism and land-based industries.[57]

Objectives

16.9   Chapter 6 puts forward as a Strategic Objective:

'***To secure sustainable economic growth for existing and future residents and provide greater prosperity and job opportunities for all***''

16.10   This Strategic Objective is elaborated upon by the following objectives:

> **Local Housing Needs Objectives:**
>
> i)   To raise aspirations and improve educational attainment, where needed
>
> ii)   To increase skill levels
>
> iii)   To expand the business base and overall productivity, to include fostering high growth sectors
>
> iv)   To increase the supply and range of job opportunities across the district, as part achieving a more sustainable pattern of development and activity
>
> v)   To increase local earnings, relative to living costs
>
> vi)   To develop key existing sectors, including tourism
>
> vii)   To realise economic opportunities and mitigate against locational disadvantages

Providing for jobs

16.11   The total number of additional jobs estimated as being required over the period 2008-2028 is some 6,300 jobs within the district. This is based on workforce projections with allowances for achieving higher activity rates and a reduction in net out-commuting. While commuting will inevitably continue, and brings wealth into the area, a better balance of homes and jobs locally is regarded as desirable.

16.12   Labour demand forecasts suggest that the majority of job growth will be in financial and business services, other (mainly public) services, distribution, hotels and catering, and construction.

---

57 Reports of these are contained in the Core Strategy 'Consultation Statement'

16.13   However, these are based on past trends and are not necessarily a true representation of what may happen in the future, particularly given the ongoing regeneration agenda.

16.14   In particular, there is considerable regeneration activity centred on Hastings that is expected to continue and have spin-offs for Bexhill and other parts of Rother. It has already had successes in developing important educational, media and eco-industries sectors. Key sectors are considered further below.

16.15   The main policy areas relative to these job needs are regarded as being:

- Fostering economic activity and growth
- Business land and premises
- Economic activity outside recognised employment sites
- Support for key sectors
- Tourism, leisure and culture
- Retail development

Fostering economic activity and growth

16.16   It is clear that the provision of employment land and premises needs to be supported by an equally vital and complementary range of other interventions to succeed. Ensuring a better business environment includes having an appropriately skilled workforce and the necessary infrastructure, especially transport and ICT, as well as business support and training.

16.17   Effective utilisation of existing infrastructure and investment in IT infrastructure are vital to help compensate for the area being relatively peripheral.

16.18   There is a broad agreement between the key agencies to co-operate in providing businesses with the requisite support for investment and growth. The Council's own role in fostering economic development is set out in its Regeneration Strategy 2010 – 2015.

Policy EC1: Fostering Economic Activity and Growth

Economic activity and growth vital to the district's future prosperity will be coordinated in terms of:

(i)   Investment in education, training and development, especially in areas of lower attainment levels and skill levels;

(ii)   An extension of vocational training and sector skills programmes;

(iii) Continued collaborative working between education, training, business and inward investment agencies, notably through the Local Enterprise Partnership, Rother Local Strategic Partnership, and with partners in Hastings;

(iv) Effective business support services and business networks;

(v)   Greater promotional activity of the opportunities for business in the district in line with increasing capacity;

(vi) Priority given to investment in transport infrastructure and services which provide effective economic benefits;

(vii) Facilitating investment in high quality ICT connections, especially to business locations, new residential development and as part of infrastructure projects.

Business land and premises

16.19   Improved availability of a range of accommodation is a necessary component of the economic strategy for the area. Because of the poor state of the economy and the pressing needs of businesses for more, and more modern, accommodation, this should be provided as soon as possible.

16.20   The overall amount of business floorspace, its nature and timing, as well as broad distribution, is assessed in the Employment Strategy and Land Review as well as in the subsequent [Review of Employment Land Requirements in light of Proposed Revised Housing Targets July 2013](#). The amount of land identified should provide for employment growth that at least matches workforce growth, facilitates higher levels of economic activity and reduces reliance on out-commuting.

16.21   The Employment Strategy and Land Review, referred to above, concluded that in order to meet the economic objectives for the Rother and Hastings area, provision should be made for at least 100,000 sq. m. of net additional business floorspace across the district, with at least 60,000 sq. m. at Bexhill, 10,000 sq. m. at Battle, 10,000-20,000 sq. m. at Rye and 10,000 sq. m. in the rural areas. It also highlights that there is a particular need for serviced land.

16.22 These targets relate primarily to business accommodation. Land-based industries, notably, agriculture are considered in the Rural Areas chapter.

> **Policy EC2: Business Land and Premises**
>
> **A suitably broad and readily available supply of business land and premises will be achieved by:**
>
> **(i)   provision for some 100,000 sq m of employment floorspace over the Plan period, with the majority following on from construction of the Hastings Bexhill Link Road;**
>
> **(ii)   increasing the supply of high quality employment sites, including new major business sites at Bexhill;**
>
> **(iii)   securing a range of incubation space, small and medium sized sites and units across the District in line with the respective spatial strategies, and particularly in settlements with good strategic access, including through mixed use developments;**
>
> **(iv)   providing for business development in locations that make effective use of rail and water transport opportunities, notably at the Port of Rye;**
>
> **(v)   seeking town centre, or edge of centre, sites for offices, including as part of mixed-use developments.**

16.23 Existing employment sites make a particularly valuable contribution to the supply of business land and premises because of the often marginal viability of new commercial developments. Hence, there is a presumption to retain existing sites, as well as providing for more effective employment space through mixed use schemes where this is demonstrated to be needed. A full review of the use of existing business sites will be undertaken as part of the site allocations process.

Policy EC3: Existing Employment Sites

Effective use of employment land and premises will be secured by undertaking a full review of existing and potential sites for employment use and allocating sites in the Development and Site Allocations Plan and/or Neighbourhood Plans. Until those plans are in place the following policy will apply:

(i) Land and premises currently (or last) in employment, including tourism, use will be retained in such use unless it is demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of its continued use for employment purposes or it would cause serious harm to local amenities;

(ii) Permitting intensification, conversion, redevelopment and/or extension having regard to other policies of the Plan;

(iii) Facilitating access/environmental improvements, where appropriate;

(iv) Where continued employment use of a site/premises is demonstrated not to be viable, permit complementary enabling development as part of an overall scheme to make most effective use of the property for employment purposes; if a mixed use scheme is not viable, prioritise alternative community uses, affordable housing and then market housing, subject to local needs.

16.24 In relation to (iv) above, attention is also drawn to Policy LHN2 regarding the priority to economic potential rather than affordable housing potential in such situations.

Sustainable economic activity outside recognised employment sites

16.25 Employment is well dispersed across both urban and rural areas in Rother, with a significant amount of working at or from home. This is typical of a rural area, although Rother has the highest proportion of its workforce working at or from home of any district in the South East.

Policy EC4: Business Activities Elsewhere Within the District

Business activities will be promoted elsewhere within the district by the following:

(i) **Continuing to give priority to the re-use and adaptation of suitable buildings in the countryside for employment, including for tourism purposes, in accordance with the Rural Areas policies;**

(ii) **Incorporate an appropriate level of business development within residential allocations and developments to contribute to the overall development strategy, where such accommodation is otherwise appropriate in the site circumstances;**

(iii) **Facilitating (where permission is required) business activities operating from residential properties wherever there is no adverse impact on local character and amenities, including by traffic generation.**

Support for key sectors

16.26 There are a number of sectors that are vital to the local economy and/or have the potential to contribute significantly to future economic growth. These are generally in the high value and knowledge-based sectors and include engineering, the academic sector, eco-industries, the care sector, land-based industries that draw on local resources/character and professional occupations.

16.27 The tourism sector is a specific sector that warrants attention, and is discussed below. Land-based industries, which focus on food production but can also relate to forestry, equestrianism and traditional land management, are supported through Rural Areas policies as well.

> **Policy EC5: Support for Key Sectors**
>
> **Particular regard will be given to key sectors, notably "enviro-industries", engineering, financial and business services and other growth and knowledge-based businesses, and those that are directly related to sensitive land management, as part of the consideration of sites for employment development and determination of planning applications for employment sites.**

Tourism

16.28   Visitors to Rother contribute significantly to the local economy. In 2009[58], tourism activity is estimated to have supported a business turnover worth some £262million and the equivalent of nearly 4,500 full time jobs. Visitors come for the area's arts and culture, history and heritage, seaside (notably Camber Sands), literary connections, events, gardens and local crafts/produce.

16.29   The vast majority of visits (over 5.2 million) are day trips, although there were still nearly 0.5 million staying trips made in 2009. While many overnight visitors stay with family and friends, there are still demands for both serviced and self-catering accommodation. These demands have been the subject of respective reports by tourism consultants, Hotel Solutions.

16.30   There is a renaissance in the UK holiday market, as transport costs, exchange rate pressures, environmental and security concerns put a brake on overseas travel. The south east, with a relatively favourable climate, and proximity to London, could be a major beneficiary of these so-called 'staycations'.

16.31   For Rother, a selective approach is proposed, focussing on higher quality markets and those that are related to, and support, the area's high environmental qualities. This is promoted through the '1066 Country' programme.

16.32   It is recognised that there can be tensions between tourism and local community life and/or environmental objectives. However, tourism development can often also provide local amenities and improve the range of leisure facilities, thereby integrating such developments into local communities. Environmental concerns may be addressed by careful consideration of the environmental impacts of tourism uses. Hence, the following policy should be read in conjunction with Policy EN1 in respect of landscape, including AONB, impacts and Policy EN5 in respect of nature conservation. Particular regard to the potential impact of tourism and recreational proposals on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites is addressed in paragraph 10.21.

---

58 Source: The Economic Impact of Tourism Rother 2009

Policy EC6: Tourism Activities and Facilities

Proposals relating to tourism activities and facilities will be encouraged where they accord with the following considerations, as appropriate:

(i)   It provides for the enhancement of existing attractions or accommodation to meet customer expectations;

(ii)   It supports active use along the coast, consistent with environmental and amenity factors;

(iii)   It develops markets for local produce, particularly that which supports land-based industries and cultural assets;

(iv)   It does not involve the loss of tourism accommodation, unless there is no prospect of its continued use;

(v)   It increases the supply of quality serviced and self-catering accommodation;

(vi)   Appropriate controls are in place that restrict occupancy to that for holiday purposes, whilst not unduly restricting operators from extending their season (subject to visual impact and flood risk considerations, where applicable); and

(vii)   Compatibility with other Core Strategy policies.

16.33   There are particular opportunities for suitable proposals for:

- self-catering and serviced accommodation across the district
- existing accommodation to upgrade and enhance their offer
- the expansion of country house and golf hotels
- larger self-catering holiday lets and barn conversions
- replacement of older caravan provision with log cabins/lodges and luxury camping
- both family and boutique hotels, and holiday flats, in Bexhill
- upgraded accommodation and facilities at Camber
- the extension of the Kent and Sussex Steam Railway
- development in support of activity breaks, both on the coast and inland

Retail development

16.34   This chapter identifies the hierarchy of shopping centres in the District and sets out a generic policy approach for the relative growth of these, as well as for retail development elsewhere. Policies specific to individual centres are contained in the respective settlement chapters.

16.35   National planning policies for retail development in the NPPF aim to promote competitive town centre environments, duly recognising town centres as the heart of communities. Policies should support their viability and vitality.

16.36   The clear focus in favour of town centres also applies to other uses, including leisure, entertainment and more intensive recreation uses, offices and arts, culture and tourism development. Particularly relevant locally is supporting a diverse range of uses, planning for a strong retail mix, supporting service uses, creating markets, and managing the night-time economy.

16.37   Patterns of retailing are largely determined by the network of centres within a sub-region. Strategic centres include Tunbridge Wells, Ashford and Eastbourne, together with Hastings and Folkestone. The town centres of Bexhill, Battle and Rye provide the main retail and other services to their local area.

16.38   Having regard to their local Town Centre roles, a district-wide Shopping Assessment undertaken for the Council has identified some potential growth in each of Bexhill, Battle and Rye. In each case, a scale of growth is identified that would retain the town centres' roles and "clawback" some trade lost to Hastings and Eastbourne and other centres over recent years. The Assessment was undertaken in 2008 and updated in 2013. Consumer retail spending and the forecast growth in spending have been reviewed downward in response to recessionary economic effects and their impact upon consumer spending, particularly discretionary spending on comparison goods. The Update also had regard to the current housing targets.

16.39   The recession has been particularly strong and as a consequence there has been a downward shift in the consumer spending trend line. This has the effect of extending somewhat the expected timeframe within which the quantitative need for additional retail floorspace should be met. It is also noted that, given that the overall level of retail provision for town centres has not changed substantially since 2008, the quantitative needs are still supported in terms of qualitative needs.

16.40   Reducing trade "leakage" from the district's towns is regarded as consistent with meeting shopping needs sustainably and with helping them remaining competitive. In all cases, the potential to accommodate the identified additional floorspace will require careful site evaluations, given space and heritage constraints on town centre expansion. Hence, while every effort will be made to accommodate additional floorspace within the respective town centres, sequential approaches will involve then looking at edge of centre locations with good links to the centre and then out-of centre locations with a good access by different modes, with preference to locations most likely to encourage linked trips to the town centre. Access to more deprived areas will also be a factor.

16.41   At Bexhill, consideration will be given to locations in or adjoining Sidley and Little Common district centres ahead of out-of-centre locations. The only significant out-of-centre shopping area is the Ravenside Retail Park. This attracts trade from across Bexhill and St Leonards, for both convenience and comparison goods. Its established role and potential for linked trips within the Retail Park would place it ahead of other out-of-centre locations in Bexhill. However, the priority is to focus on town and district centres (both in Bexhill and Hastings), and related edge of centre sites. Further consideration or retailing in Bexhill is contained in the chapter 8.

16.42   The Jempsons store at Peasmarsh also represents an out-of-centre retailing development. It is a single large food store on a 2 hectares site. Any significant expansion beyond this would be subject to careful assessment of its impacts on nearby centres including Rye town centre.

16.43   Given the relatively small scale of town centres in the district, then retail developments of considerably less than the national threshold of 2,500 sq m outside the centres are likely to impact on them. In terms of considering retail applications which are outside existing town centres, a threshold of 500 sq m (Gross External Area) is considered appropriate given the small nature of existing shops within existing centres within the District.

16.44   Village shops and services are also important to the vitality and sustainability of rural communities. Further consideration to these, and polices to retain and support them, are contained in Chapter 12: Rural Areas.

Policy EC7: Retail Development

The overall strategy for retail and related service uses in Rother district is to:

(i)   Support the Town Centres of Bexhill, Battle and Rye in maintaining and increasing the proportion of retail spend available within their respective local catchments, consistent with the wider hierarchy of centres and their capacity for increasing and recovering trade in a sustainable manner;

(ii)   Plan for the amount of additional floorspace in each of the town centres, as set out in the respective town chapters;

(iii) If there are no sites available (or will be available within a reasonable period of time) in town centres to meet identified retail needs, to firstly look at edge of centre locations and then out-of-centre locations, with priority to those with greatest accessibility in each category;

(iv)   Require retail development proposals in excess of 500sqm to undertake a retail impact assessment;

(v)   Actively promote Town Centres through appropriate interventions in close collaboration with town centre businesses and local communities.

Scope and Issues

17.1   The Rother district contains a blend of some of the most beautiful countryside and coastline in South East England. The landscape character of the district varies from low-lying flat marshland to the east, with expansive fields divided by occasional hedgerows, through the ancient mosaic landscape of the High Weald, with gently undulating pasture punctuated with species-rich hedgerows, copses and ancient woodland, to the more steeply contoured land around the sandstone ridge-top.

17.2   The district also has a rich architectural legacy, including as it does the historic market towns of Battle and Rye, the Victorian and Edwardian seaside town of Bexhill-on-Sea, a host of picturesque villages, listed buildings, including many isolated farmsteads dispersed throughout the High Weald, together with modernist buildings from the 1930s and 1960s, and a number of strong examples of contemporary architecture.

17.3   The importance of the natural and built environment in Rother district is evidenced by the extent of the district (some 82%) which is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), a Conservation Area, or an Archaeologically Sensitive Area and by the key role which the district's architectural heritage and natural environment play in the tourist industry.

17.4   Meanwhile, the district's countryside also includes areas both of international and national, as well as local, importance in terms of their ecological value. The international designations (variously Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, and Ramsar Site/candidate Ramsar site) apply to large parts of the low-lying areas of the Pevensey Levels and Walland Marshes, whilst a number of areas within the district are classed as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), along with other, local designations.

17.5   The environmental qualities that make the district so special are under considerable pressure from a number of factors. These include development, flooding, pollution, the challenges of climate change, and a changing agricultural economy. The custodianship of such a valued natural and built district requires a high level of environmental stewardship, alongside the development of robust strategies, to ensure that such positive characteristics are preserved and successfully managed for future generations.

Objectives

17.6   Chapter 6 presents the following Strategic Objective with regard to the Environment:

'To maintain the high quality, and improve the long term stewardship, of the natural and built environment, with full regard to potential future consequences of climate change'

17.7   The following objectives further amplify the Strategic Objective:

Environment Objectives:

i)   To conserve, manage and, where appropriate enhance, the high quality landscape resources, including the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the historic built environment

ii)   To protect important ecological resources in the district and, where appropriate, enhance these as part of a wider approach to 'green space'

iii) To place strong emphasis on design quality in all development

iv)   To protect communities from flooding and effectively manage risk

17.8   The main policy areas relative to these objectives are regarded as being:

- Landscape Stewardship
- Design Quality and the Built Environment
- Biodiversity & Green Space
- Flood Risk

Landscape Stewardship

17.9   Rother's landscape has great environmental and economic importance, as well as contributing to our sense of identity and well-being and providing inspiration. Though the landscape character is based in the distinct local geography and topography of the area, the landscape also charts the continuing history of the relationship between people and place.

17.10   Most of the Rother district falls into two of the National Character Areas defined by Natural England (formerly Joint Character Areas), that is NCA 122 High Weald and NCA 123 Romney Marshes, though a small amount of the district also falls within NCA 124 Pevensey Levels, and Natural England have provided detailed countryside and landscape character statements for each of these areas, identifying key characteristics.

17.11   Meanwhile the ESCC Landscape Assessment progresses this analysis at a more detailed level, seeking to improve understanding of our local landscape. This is in order to better manage change and to ensure that change and development do not undermine what is distinctive about landscape, as well as informing ways of enhancing character.

17.12   The Assessment identifies a number of areas of distinct landscape character within the Rother district, including:

- The High Weald
- The Upper and Lower Rother Valley
- The Brede Valley
- The Darwell Valley & Combe Valley Basin
- The Rye and Winchelsea Levels

and recommends specific Landscape Action Priorities tailored to the special characteristics and pressures facing each area. The document also identifies relatively remote areas within the district where current human impact is relatively limited, including the Upper Rother and Dudwell valleys, the Dallington-Ashburnham area and the Walland Marsh. Such areas contribute significantly to quality of life and local character.

17.13   The High Weald AONB Management Plan 2014-2019 addresses the primary purpose of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty - the conservation and enhancement of the special features that represent its natural beauty. In doing so it sets out key guidelines for the management of the landscape by defining "Natural Beauty" in terms of its key features. The principal components are: Geology and Water Systems, Settlement, Woodland, Routeways and Field and Heath, and their combined contribution to forming the cultural landscape of the High Weald.

17.14   The [Rother Ancient Woodland Inventory 2010](#) identifies that 15.5% of Rother is ancient woodland, having been in continuous existence since 1600. This is the highest percentage of any district in the South East and provides a rich environment for a broad range of flora and fauna.

17.15   Meanwhile, English Heritage have produced a range of best practice guidance on Historic Landscape Characterisation and understanding the archaeology of landscapes, to help inform future management.

Landscape Pressures

17.16   A particular challenge for new development in sensitive environments is maintaining the visual character of settlements in the landscape and in particular settlement edges. New development also brings the threat of suburbanisation of landscape character, with roads, light pollution, gentrification of buildings and loss of tranquillity.

17.17   Further pressures on landscape character come from recreational land-uses, including tourism and leisure. It should be recognised that such uses can create awareness of landscape management issues and provide investment to implement improvements, as well as being crucial for the wider rural economy.

17.18   Landscape character is also under pressure from changing agricultural practices, and from declining management of landscape features, including coppice woodlands, small ponds and meadows. This is addressed specifically in Chapter 12: Rural Areas.

Policy EN1: Landscape Stewardship

Management of the high quality historic, built and natural landscape character is to be achieved by ensuring the protection, and wherever possible enhancement, of the district's nationally designated and locally distinctive landscapes and landscape features; including

(i)   The distinctive identified landscape character, ecological features and settlement pattern of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;

(ii) The distinctive low-lying levels to the east of the district with particular regard to the landscape setting of Rye and Winchelsea;

(iii) Nationally designated historic sites including listed Parks and Gardens, Scheduled Ancient Monuments and the Registered Historic Battlefield at Battle;

(iv) The undeveloped coast;

(v)   Open landscape between clearly defined settlements, including the visual character of settlements, settlement edges and their rural fringes;

(vi) Ancient woodlands;

(vii) Tranquil and remote areas, including the dark night sky;

(viii) Other key landscape features across the district, including native hedgerows, copses, field patterns, ancient routeways, ditches and barrows, and ponds and water courses

Design Quality and the Built Environment

17.19   Rother district has a valuable and extensive historic building stock. Towns and villages display particular relationships with their landscape surroundings, while the pattern, form, appearance and use of individual buildings and the materials of their construction are peculiar to both the regional and local location and contribute to the unique sense of place, cultural identity and local distinctiveness of both the district as a whole and of each settlement.

17.20   The landscape setting of individual towns and villages varies from the linear form most usually associated with ridge-top development, to the less common valley setting associated with river crossings. Particularly distinct settlements are the nucleated hill-top setting of the ancient town of Rye, and the formalised medieval grid plan of Winchelsea. Historic farmsteads with farm building typologies representing locally distinctive historic agricultural practices are prolific within the undulating pastureland.

17.21   Meanwhile, the architectural profile of the district has grown with a number of recent innovative and contemporary developments, including individual buildings, small-scale sites and public realm projects.

17.22   New development in the district can simultaneously pose a potential threat and an opportunity: a potential threat to the integrity, character and appearance of the historic built environment and its landscape context; and an opportunity to create new places and buildings with their own positive architectural character and place-making qualities that respect their local context and setting, or which take opportunities to improve areas of poor visual character.

Historic Environment

17.23   The historic built environment within the Rother district is highly valued amongst the community. It benefits from a high level of statutory protection, including as it does over 2,000 Listed Buildings, 10 Conservation Areas, a number of Scheduled Ancient Monuments and the 'Historic Battlefield' at Battle. However, there remain many other non-designated buildings and archaeological assets which contribute positively to the physical, historic and socio-cultural character of the district, and which warrant retention and interpretation. Such features of the historic environment, both designated and non-designated, are referred to as 'Heritage Assets' in the National Planning Policy Framework

17.24   The management of the historic environment requires understanding of its local and regional significance and character, and consideration of the impact of new development, including impact on historic fabric and impact on wider setting, on this significance and character.

17.25 Particularly locally distinctive building typologies and features include long sweeping catslide roofs, oasthouses, timber-framed barns and other agricultural buildings associated with local historic farming practices, and medieval Wealden Hall Houses, found either as rural farmhouses, or incorporated into the fabric of villages and towns, and often much disguised through later alterations. Archaeological survey and investigation is invaluable in such instances to understand the history and significance of these timber-framed buildings.

17.26 Historic buildings in the district generally deploy a limited palette of materials associated with the local High Weald geology, namely timber-framing, clay tiles (for roofs and wall hanging) and brickwork. In specific pockets to the east of the district, white-painted weatherboarding is prolific, and to the west of the district are distinctive groups of buildings constructed from the local Brightling sandstone.

17.27 Meanwhile, the coastal resort town of Bexhill-on-Sea has a rich heritage of late Victorian and Edwardian villa architecture, imposing in scale and ornate in detailing, which plays an important role in defining the local character and street scene.

Policy EN2: Stewardship of the Historic Built Environment

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

(i)   **Reinforce the special character of the district's historic settlements, including villages, towns and suburbs, through siting, scale, form and design;**

(ii)   **Take opportunities to improve areas of poor visual character or with poor townscape qualities;**

(iii) **Preserve, and ensure clear legibility of, locally distinctive vernacular building forms and their settings, features, fabric and materials, including forms specific to historic building typologies;**

(iv)   **Make reference to the character analysis in Conservation Area Appraisals, where relevant;**

(v)   **Reflect current best practice guidance produced by English Heritage and HELM[59];**

(vi)   **Ensure appropriate archaeological research and investigation of both above and below-ground archaeology, and retention where required.**

---

59 Historic Environment Local Management

Design Quality

17.28   It is not just in historically sensitive areas that design is important; Planning Practice Guidance clearly indicates that design quality is a crucial planning consideration on all sites. High quality architecture and design has the power to inspire and enrich lives, through the creation of visually attractive, safe, accessible and characterful places that people enjoy living in and visiting.

17.29   Ensuring that design quality is a fundamental consideration in the planning process and to ensure constantly improving design standards, calls for development proposals to demonstrate standards of design against recognised criteria. This will also improve clarity of design assessment.

17.30   To this end, the Council has identified 'Key Design Principles' below, which should be seen as a critical starting point for any successful design project. The principles, which it is intended will be further developed through a Supplementary Planning Document, have been based on current best practice guidance, including the design objectives listed in By Design – Urban Design in the Planning System, and the 'Building for Life' Standard developed by CABE and HBF, and in Manual for Streets (DfT) and Streets For All: South East (EH & DfT).

17.31   The Council's Key Design Principles are identified as being:

- • Character (Identity & Place-Making) & Legibility
- • Continuity & Enclosure
- • Quality of Public Realm & Ease of Movement
- • Diversity
- • Landscape Setting of Buildings and Settlements
- • Design in Context
- • Building Appearance & Architectural Quality
- • Sustainable Design

17.32   The principles are elaborated upon in Appendix 4. They can be met through a variety of aspects of development form including site layout, disposition of development, landscape structure, scale, height, massing, and careful consideration of building appearance in terms of details and materials. Additionally, a high quality design will rely on the skill of the designer to interpret site context and their design brief to create a robust architectural solution which contributes positively to the character of the site and surroundings.

17.33   The principles relate to development of all scales, whether a housing development of many units, or a modest extension to an individual building, though clearly some are more relevant in certain cases.

Policy EN3: Design Quality

New development will be required to be of high design quality by:

(i)   Contributing positively to the character of the site and surroundings, including taking opportunities to improve areas of poor visual character or with poor townscape qualities, and

(ii) Demonstrating robust design solutions tested against the following Key Design Principles as appropriate (expanded in Appendix 4), tailored to a thorough and empathetic understanding of the particular site and context:

   (a)   Character, Identity, Place-Making & Legibility

   (b)   Continuity and Enclosure

   (c)   Quality of Public Realm, Ease of Movement, and 'Secured By Design'

   (d)   Diversity

   (e)   Landscape Setting of Buildings and Settlements

   (f)   Design in Context (Understanding & appraisal of site and wider setting, and incorporation of existing site features into proposals)

   (g)   Building Appearance & Architectural Quality

   (h)   Sustainable Design and Construction

Public Realm

17.34   It is important to recognise that the character of the built environment is informed by both the architectural qualities of individual buildings and the design and management of the spaces in between. The public realm can be considered to encompass open spaces, streets, pavements, and other routes, street furniture and equipment, signage, lighting, railings, and such other features. The quality of the public realm, in terms of circulation, connectivity, activity and visual appearance, is a key component of successful places, and is highlighted in the document 'Streets for All: South East'[60], which promotes a coordinated approach to public realm management, the design of street furniture, and the reduction of street 'clutter', in particular road signage, within legislative requirements.

60   'Streets for All: South East' published by English Heritage & Department for Transport 2005

17.35   Rother district is fortunate to possess a number of quality historic public realm features and surface treatments, including the listed cobbled streets of Rye, brick paving in Winchelsea and Robertsbridge, and raised pavements in Battle, which all are important in defining the special character and local distinctiveness of individual settlements. The retention and sensitive repair, and, where appropriate, reinstatement of such features is important in maintaining such character.

17.36   However, it's not just within the urban context that public realm is important in defining local character and sense of place. Rural areas can suffer suburbanisation through inappropriate creation of footways with raised kerbs, the loss of grass verges, and excessive road signage, while historic features such as milestones, historic fingerpost signs and red telephone kiosks and letterboxes contribute positively to the character of the rural public realm, and should be retained and restored as per central government guidance.[61]

17.37   Meanwhile new development and public investment offers the opportunity to create new public spaces and routes which can help meet regenerative and urban design aims of better connecting town centres, improving pedestrian circulation, providing venues for market place and street activity, and promoting local pride and sense of place.

17.38   The Council will liaise with the relevant agencies to maintain the amenity of the public realm and use its relevant enforcement powers to protect the amenities of the area.

> **Policy EN4: Management of the Public Realm**
>
> **Priority will be given to working with the relevant agencies to:**
>
> **(i)   Apply the principles of 'Streets for All: South East', to ensure high quality management and maintenance of the district's public realm, with appropriate materials and strategic design vision, to ensure local distinctiveness in both urban and rural areas is respected, and historic features are retained;**
>
> **(ii)   Develop investment programmes in public realm improvements and enhancements, including reduction of street clutter and road signage;**
>
> **(iii) Continue to bring forward programmes to enhance activity and the use of public space.**

---

61 Department for Transport Traffic Advisory Leaflet 6/05 'Traditional Directional Signs', & English Heritage / Royal Mail Joint Policy Statement 'Royal Mail Letter Boxes'

Biodiversity and Greenspace

17.39   Much of Rother district is covered with significant areas of biodiversity interest including coastal habitats and ancient woodland. This rich and distinctive natural environment functions as both an important ecological habitat and an attractive visual resource and amenity, important to both the tourism economy and the local community.

17.40   European and national legislation and national guidance set out how biodiversity will be protected and enhanced. Rother District Council aims to protect and enhance biodiversity in accordance with national guidance and have regard to the targets of the Sussex Biodiversity Action Plan (SBAP).

17.41   The internationally protected sites comprise the Pevensey Levels 'Ramsar' Site (Wetland of International Importance), the Dungeness to Pett Level Special Protection Area (SPA) and the Dungeness Special Area of Conservation (SAC). There are also proposals for new international habitat designations, namely Dungeness Romney Marsh and Rye Bay potential Special Protection Area (pSPA) and proposed Ramsar site. National designations include several Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). In addition, over 80% of the District is covered by the High Weald AONB, with Rother having one of the highest concentrations of 'ancient woodland' in the country, and the highest in the South East. Ancient woodland is a nationally important habitat. Local designations include Rye Harbour Local Nature Reserve and a number of Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCIs) across the District.
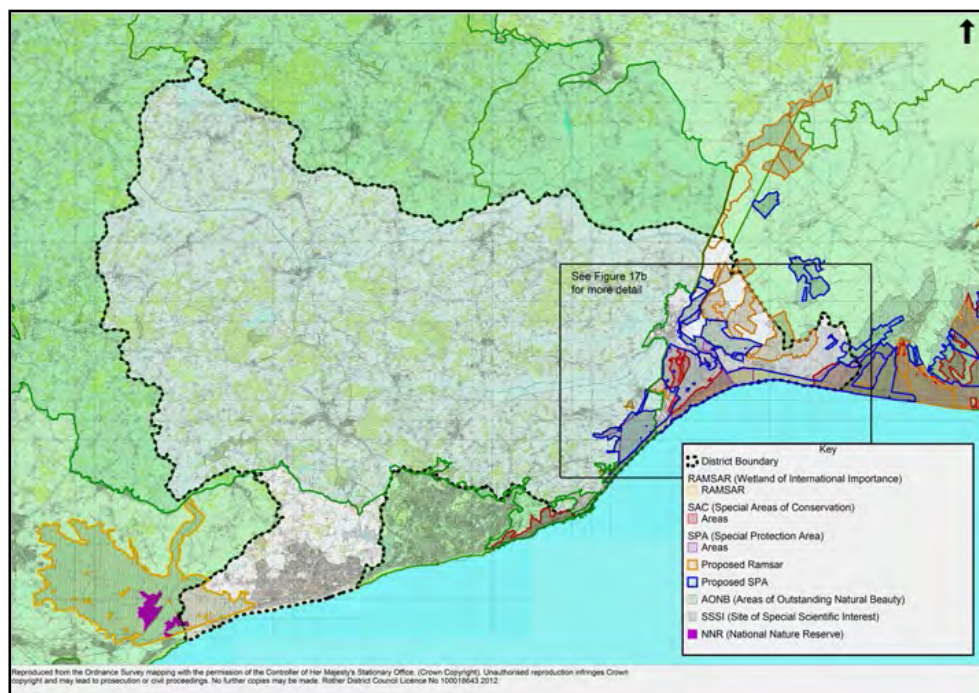
Figure 17a: Designated nature conservation sites in Rother District
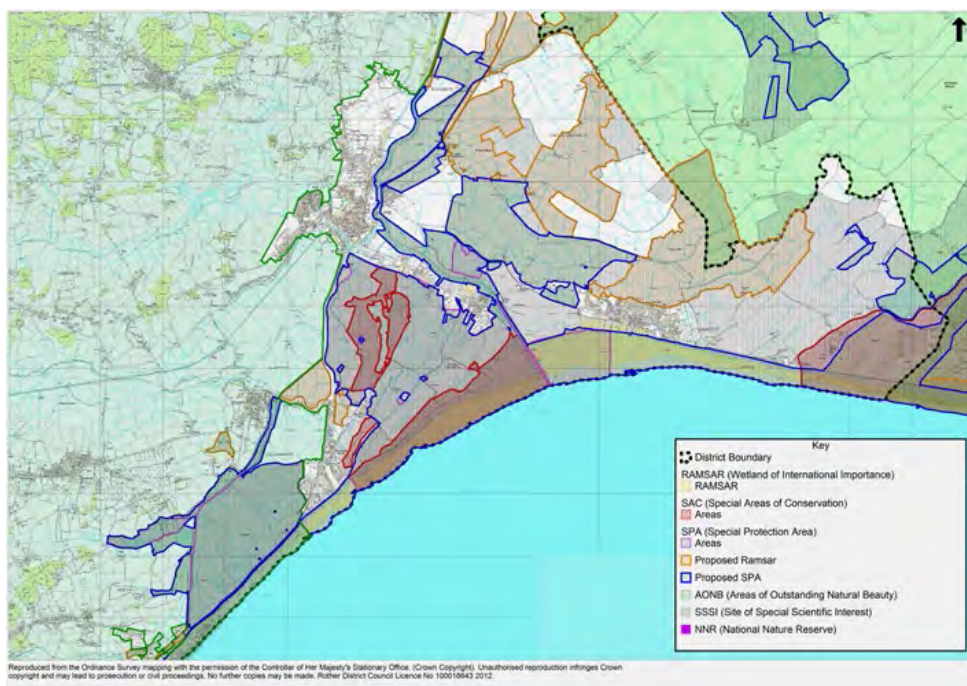
Figure 17b: Designated nature conservation sites in Eastern Rother

17.42   Rother has a number of designated sites of international significance within the district and is required to undertake an Appropriate Assessment (AA) to ensure that plans or projects either individually or in combination will have no adverse effect on the integrity of the international sites. The AA process has identified a number of potential impacts which have been addressed in the Core Strategy. There is a requirement for the sensitive management of tourism and recreational activity upon the International sites. To preserve the integrity of the International sites the Council alongside other agencies and stakeholders, will implement a Sustainable Access Strategy to monitor visitor numbers arising from all sources, and ensure responsible management of the Dungeness complex. Further elaboration can be found in Paragraph 10.21.

17.43   In addition to the above policy designations, the Sussex Biodiversity Action Plan also brings essential local context and complementary targets to support locally important habitats. 'Biodiversity Opportunity Areas' have been identified as the key areas for Biodiversity Action Plan habitat enhancement across the South East region and are set out in the South East Biodiversity Strategy.

17.44   An example of an initiative within a Biodiversity Opportunity Area is the 'Romney Marshes Living Landscape' project, Romney Marshes being a coastal wetland of regional-scale with potential for enhancement, restoration and re-creation of wetland habitats.

17.45 New development provides an opportunity to create or restore habitats based on the targets set out in the SBAP and to contribute, on a smaller scale, to the formation of green infrastructure. It would be expected that developers integrate biodiversity into development schemes, by protecting existing habitats and features in development sites, and by enhancement to improve habitat and biodiversity, including measures to mitigate for any losses.

17.46 Effective management of habitats may be seen within a wider approach to 'green infrastructure'. This is defined as a strategic network of multi-functional green space which supports a wide range of purposes:

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

17.47 Areas of natural and semi-natural green space, and locally derived standards of provision in the district, are set out in the Council's Open Space, Sports and Recreation Study 2007.

17.48 Regard is also had to targets set out in Natural England's standard for accessible natural green space (ANGSt) and East Sussex County Council's Strategic Open Space Study. The analysis in the Green Infrastructure Background Paper highlights the key strategic initiatives that will address local green space needs, including the proposed Combe Valley Countryside Park, further nature conservation initiatives in the Romney Marshes area, and at Bewl Water.

Policy EN5: Biodiversity and Green Space

Biodiversity, geodiversity and green space will be protected and enhanced, by multi-agency working where appropriate, to:

(i)   Maintain and develop a district-wide network of green infrastructure where possible linking areas of natural green space;

(ii)   Protect and enhance the international, national and locally designated sites, having due regard to their status;

(iii)   Establish a major area of accessible open space at Combe Valley Countryside Park, between Bexhill and Hastings;

(iv)   Enhance the nature conservation value and multi-functional nature of the Romney Marsh Biodiversity Opportunity Area;

(v)   Support opportunities for management, restoration and creation of habitats in line with the opportunities identified for the Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs) and targets set out in the Sussex Biodiversity Action Plan;

(vi)   Continue to develop the wetland habitat at Bewl Water Reservoir, with compatible recreational uses;

(vii)   Increase accessibility to the countryside from urban areas, especially in the Hastings and Bexhill fringes;

(viii)   Ensure that development retains, protects and enhances habitats of ecological interest, including ancient woodland, water features and hedgerows, and provides for appropriate management of these features;

(ix)   Require developers to integrate biodiversity into development schemes by avoiding adverse impacts from development on biodiversity or habitat, or where wholly unavoidable, provide appropriate mitigation against or compensation for any losses. In any event, developers will also be expected to consider and promote opportunities for the creation and/or restoration of habitats appropriate to local context.

Flood Risk Management

17.49   Flooding from rivers and coastal waters is a natural process that plays an important role in shaping the natural environment. However, flooding can threaten life and cause substantial damage to property.

17.50   The low-lying and coastal nature of parts of Rother district makes it particularly vulnerable to flooding. The steeper slopes of the High Weald can also bring flood risk to settlements in its valleys.

17.51   Climate change scenarios predict an increased frequency and severity of storm events leading to higher risks of fluvial, tidal and localised flooding when rivers, drainage and/or sewers become overloaded or when coastal defences are overwhelmed.

17.52   The NPPF seeks to direct development away from areas at highest risk and ensure flood risk is not increased elsewhere. Local authorities are required to apply a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development.

Flood Risk

17.53   The main threats of flooding in Rother are fluvial flooding along the River Rother, the combination of fluvial and tidal flooding in the lower catchment and in the Marshes, and tidal flooding along the coast. The upper catchment area of Rother is mainly woodland, grassland and natural floodplains. Modern farming practices and urban development have changed natural floodplains leading to increased run-off to the lower part of the catchment area. The villages of Robertsbridge and Etchingham have experienced severe flooding since the 1940s.

17.54   In the lower Rother catchment there are several minor tributaries that can cause minor isolated flood incidents. Rye is situated at the confluence of the Rivers Rother, Brede and Tillingham and as a consequence is at risk from fluvial and coastal flooding.

17.55   Rother falls into two Catchment Flood Management Plan areas: Cuckmere and Sussex Havens, and Rother and Romney respectively. Both CFMPs are strategic plans which the Environment Agency and their partners use, as part of their function, to assess current and future flood risk within their respective catchment areas over the next 50-100 years.

17.56   The Rother and Romney CFMP states Robertsbridge, Etchingham and Hamstreet have all experienced significant flooding problems in the past. In the lower Rother catchment there are several minor tributaries and drains that can cause isolated flood incidents and the Romney and Walland Marshes are prone to both river and coastal flooding.

17.57   The Cuckmere and Sussex Havens catchment cover all or parts of the Rother, Lewes and Wealden districts and the boroughs of Hastings and Eastbourne. The area is home to approximately 260,000 people with urban centres located on the coast including Eastbourne, Bexhill and Hastings. Serious flooding does not occur very often in the Cuckmere and Sussex Havens CFMP area, and extreme flooding is very rare. However notable flood events have occurred including in June 2003 when over 50 properties were flooded in Bexhill and Hastings caused by intense localised rainfall leading to surface water flooding.

17.58   Water levels are critical to the protection of the important natural flora and fauna of the Pevensey Levels. The Romney and Walland Marshes are similarly low lying areas. A complex network of drains and management of water levels in the Royal Military Canal control water movement within the Marshes. The fluvial flood hazard within the Marshes is low. Flood risk in the area is much more significant from tidal inundation.

17.59   The policy for management of Rother's coastline has been developed in conjunction with other Local Authorities and the Environment Agency and set out in the South Foreland to Beachy Head Shoreline Management Plan and Folkestone to Cliff End Flood and Erosion Management Strategy. As a priority Rother District Council will work with the Environment Agency and stakeholders to enforce a 'hold the line' strategy along the district's coastline in accordance with the SMP and FEMS. Where tidal flooding is a significant risk to communities it is proposed to improve existing defences to the 1 in 200 year extreme event standard and this includes raising the eastern bank of the River Rother, Rye, improving defences at Broomhill Sands and constructing new timber groynes at Winchelsea Beach and Cliff End as well as placing shingle on the beach. An earth embankment has been built between Winchelsea Beach and Rye Harbour to form a secondary defence behind the shingle beach and has a design life of 50 years. The Council acknowledges there are particular land stability and coastal erosion issues specific to Fairlight Cove and will engage with local stakeholders and statutory bodies to consider detailed policies for Fairlight as part of the Development and Site Allocations Plan, in line with Policy OSS3 (viii).

17.60   In this area, the entire frontage is routinely monitored as part of the South East Strategic Coastal Monitoring Programme. Data collected will inform the Shoreline Management Plan objective to determine and recommend sustainable coastal defence policy options to reduce flood and erosion risks to people, the developed and natural environments, and to identify habitat mitigation and compensation measures, including potential habitat creation sites. The review of the SMP would nominally be a 5 to10 year process, however monitoring may bring a reassessment of this timescale should an earlier review be considered necessary.

17.61   The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 introduces new statutory responsibilities for managing flood risk. The Act establishes a lead role for local authorities in managing flood risk and a strategic overview role for the Environment Agency. Structures either natural or man-made which help manage flood risk will be protected and cannot be altered without consent. The Act also introduces a requirement for drainage systems for all new developments.

Policy EN6: Flood Risk Management

An effective and integrated approach to flood risk management in Rother district will be achieved by working with the relevant agencies and strategic partners to ensure that:

(i)   The levels of flood risk protection for Rother's coast, and coastal settlements, set out the South Foreland to Beachy Head Shoreline Management Plan are delivered through appropriate schemes and maintenance regimes;

(ii)   Protect communities wherever practicable from flooding to a level consistent with predicted sea level rise, increased river flows arising from climate change and in accordance with the Folkestone to Cliff End Flood and Erosion Management Strategy;

(iii)   Fluvial flood risk is minimised by implementing the policies of the Rother and Romney Catchment Flood Management Plan, Cuckmere and Sussex Havens Catchment Flood Management Plan;

(iv)   Proposed flood protection measures should have full regard to sensitive areas designated with specific nature conservation and biodiversity interests such as RAMSAR, SAC, SPC, LNR or SSSI.

Flood Risk and Development

17.62   The NPPF stipulates the Local Plan should take account of climate change over the plan period including factors such as flood risk. Local Plan policies are informed by a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, in directing development away from areas at highest risk but where development is necessary, mitigation is in place to ensure it is safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere. The Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) will also inform the application of the Sequential and Exception Test as set out in the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

17.63   Where new development is, exceptionally, necessary in flood-risk areas, it must be made safe, without increasing flood risk elsewhere and, where possible, reducing flood risk overall in line with the 'sequential test' outlined in the PPG. This may, exceptionally, include development on previously-developed land within areas vulnerable to flood risk, which is important to the economic or social needs of the community. In any event, all development in flood risk areas should be appropriately flood resilient and resistant, and demonstrate that any residual risk can be safely managed.

Policy EN7: Flood Risk and Development

Flood risk will be taken into account at all stages in the planning process to avoid inappropriate development in areas at current or future risk from flooding, and to direct development away from areas of highest risk.

Development will be permitted providing the following criteria are met:

(i)   Where development is proposed in an area identified as at flood risk, the applicant will be required to submit a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment which demonstrates that the development will be safe, will not increase flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flooding;

(ii)   When development is, exceptionally, acceptable in flood risk areas, consideration is paid to the layout and form of development to minimise flood risk;

(iii)   Drainage systems and sustainable drainage systems[62] for all new development are in accordance with the Flood and Water Management Act 2010[63];

(iv)   Where it is appropriate, contributions will be sought for improvements to infrastructure to mitigate against flood risk.

---

62 Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (c. 29) Schedule 3 — Sustainable Drainage- Para 1 (1)(2)(3)(4), Para 2 (a-e)
63 Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (c. 29) Schedule 3 — Sustainable Drainage Para. 7 (1)(2)(3)(4)(5)

Scope and Issues

18.1   A sustainable, functional and viable integrated transport system that serves the residents of Rother is crucial to support the economic, social and environmental aspirations of the residents of Rother, as represented in the East Sussex Sustainable Community Strategy: Pride of Place.

18.2   The transport strategy is based on deliverable and realistic improvements to the existing transport network, and will be co-ordinated with regeneration efforts to stimulate the economy of Rother's main settlements and surrounding rural hinterlands.

18.3   Rother is predominantly rural with three main settlements: Bexhill, Battle and Rye, although nearby Hastings is the centre of the 'travel to work area' for much of Rother district and there are significant movements between the districts.

18.4   Figure 18 shows the County's main settlements with main road and rail links. In 2001 it was recorded that there are significant journey to work movements out of East Sussex[64] and Rother[65] creating pressure on the district's transport network.
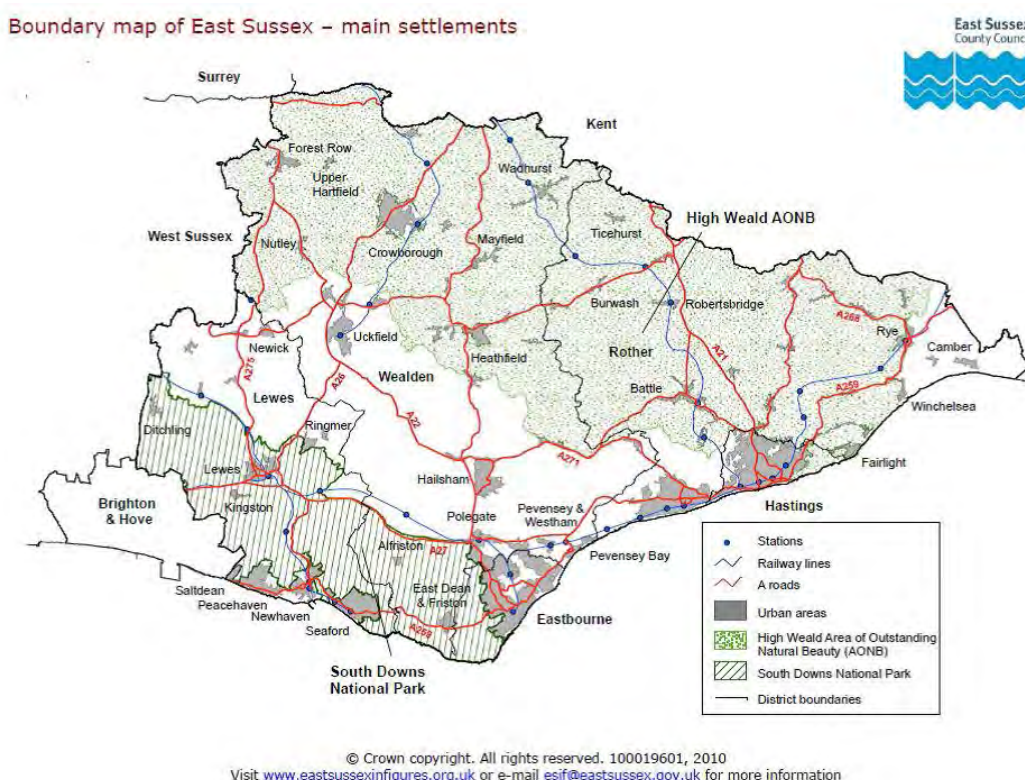
Figure 18: Map showing Main Settlements with Rail and Road Links

---

64 Commuting flows in 2001 showed there was a net flow going out of East Sussex for travel to work purposes (-32,279). Source: ESIF 2010
65 Commuting flows in 2001 showed there was a net flow going out of Rother for travel to work purposes (-5824). Source: ESIF 2010

18.5 Population and economic growth will put further strain on transport capacity, and hence on achieving the development potential and desired regeneration of the area. The linkages connecting Rother with the main settlements in East Sussex and the rest of the South East currently offer unreliable and sometimes protracted journey times and are widely regarded as significant impediments to its future regeneration and growth of local businesses[66]. There is also a high level of serious traffic accidents on roads in Rother.

18.6 The challenge will be to take a co-ordinated approach to transport, increasing capacity where it is possible, and managing constraints on the main movement arteries across the district.

18.7 Hastings and Bexhill need integrated strategies for sustainable regeneration to fulfil their joint role as a significant centre for commercial, industrial and economic activity, as discussed in chapter 7. However, the Six Point Plan[67] recognises that unlocking the area's full development potential as a business location will not be properly realised without investment in the transport infrastructure.

18.8 Critical additional capacity to alleviate congestion along the A259 Trunk Road corridor can be achieved through the completion of the Link Road between Bexhill and Hastings.

18.9 The Link Road was granted planning permission in 2009 and has been the subject of a public inquiry into Compulsory Purchase Orders. This scheme received provisional approval, but in June 2010, the Secretary of State announced a suspension of major transport schemes other than those under construction. However, in March 2012, the Department for Transport approved a funding contribution of £56 million, as sought by East Sussex County Council, towards the scheme. DfT announced full funding approval for the Bexhill Hastings Link Road in April 2013. Work has commenced and the road is scheduled to be completed in 2015.

18.10 Transport is also a significant issue for some communities in rural Rother. An inadequate public transport system makes it difficult for some communities to reach jobs or shops, or to meet appointments or to visit friends. People on lower incomes are likely to be reliant on public transport to access jobs and services.

18.11 The busy market towns of Battle and Rye suffer from congestion during summer months, detracting from the very qualities that make the area attractive to visitors. Many villages and rural areas suffer from heavy, fast-moving traffic volumes on unsuitable roads, making it dangerous to walk or cycle.

---

66 Transport issues can be seen as contributing to the barriers to growth that some East Sussex businesses face. 19% identify journey times as an important constraint on the growth of their business over the next year, with 70% noting that this issue is likely to have "some effect" on their business. Source: Section 5. The East Sussex Economic Study 2008 – 2009 Nov 2008

67 The Six Point Plan for the regeneration of Hastings and Bexhill (which, together, are home to nearly 130,000 residents) was developed by a special task force (Seaspace) and approved by Government in March 2002. In aiming to provide the catalyst for lasting economic, social and physical regeneration, it presents a ten-year strategy around five main themes: urban renaissance, business and enterprise development, excellence in education, broadband connectivity and transport

18.12   At a countywide level the transport policy framework is currently provided by Local Transport Plan 3[68] (LTP3). LTP3 is a statutory document and will guide transport provision in East Sussex up to 2026. At a local level, there are the Local Area Transport Strategies (LATS) for Battle and for Rye.

Objectives

18.13   The Local Plan can contribute towards re-balancing of the transport system through the preparation and implementation of policies that facilitate transport investment, provide for development in accessible locations, and promote sustainable transport choices.

18.14   The Strategic Objective for transport in Rother, as set out in chapter 6, is:

To provide a higher level of access to jobs and services for all ages in both urban and rural areas, and improve connectivity with the rest of the region.'

18.15   This can be refined in terms of seeking to:

Transport Objectives:

i)   improve connectivity between Rother and the wider South East region, both along the coast and towards London

ii)   achieve a re-balancing of the transport system in favour of sustainable modes as a means of access to employment, health services, recreation and community facilities

iii)   maximise transport choice and otherwise provide for efficient and safe movement, in both urban and rural areas

---

68 Local Transport Plan 3 (adopted June 2011)

18 - Transport and Accessibility

Strategic Accessibility

18.16   Improving transport networks to the wider South East is a key component of East Sussex Community Strategy: Pride of Place.

18.17   Two transport corridors cross the district, one being south – north, the other east – west: the former comprises the A21 trunk road and the Hastings to Charing Cross rail corridor. The East to West corridor comprises of the East Coastway rail line and the A27/A259 trunk road.

18.18   Rail infrastructure is co-ordinated through Network Rail. Rother falls between two rail utilisation strategies (RUSs): Kent RUS and Sussex RUS respectively. It is the responsibility of the RUSs to identify gaps in the service and recommend a range of options to bridge these gaps, including train lengthening and additional services to address capacity and line-speed improvements at key points to improve capability and shorten journey times. However, desirable schemes to improve rail links to Rother and Hastings are not currently programmed. Consultants have examined the viability of a new rail station at Glyne Gap and the proposal has been found to have a relatively poor business case and is consequently unviable.

18.19   In relation to road transport, key delivery agencies include the Highways Agency, East Sussex County Council and private bus operators. A number of significant infrastructure schemes were at various stages of development, but these have been dramatically knocked back.

18.20   Following the Comprehensive Spending Review, the A21 Baldslow Improvement and the Flimwell to Robertsbridge upgrade have been cancelled. Work to implement the A21 Tonbridge to Pembury Bypass is underway.

18.21   The economic downturn has brought into question the prospect of significant investment in infrastructure in the immediate future. To realise the objectives of the transport strategy, the relevant agencies, stakeholders and communities will be required to work together to make best use of the existing capacity through more efficient use of the network and smaller schemes to increase capacity, at the same time as continuing to promote investment along key arteries.

18.22   Of particular significance is the A21 corridor, where the Council will continue to lobby for improvements. Increasing capacity of the connection between The Ridge and the A21 at Baldslow is a particular priority and the Council will work with the respective highway authorities, South East LEP and Hastings Council to investigate the potential for alternative means of increasing highway capacity in the area.

18.23   As the Local Transport Authority, East Sussex County Council has a statutory duty to produce a Local Transport Plan.   LTP3 sets out the strategy for delivering both the County Council's and Government's transport objectives. LTP3 will continue to pursue and lobby for strategic road, rail and public transport improvements to help deliver sustainable economic growth. It is acknowledged some of the schemes are long term aspirations and the means of funding and delivery is uncertain, such schemes however may be realised due to future changes in national policy or funding becomes available during the lifetime of LTP3.

Policy TR1: Management and Investment in Strategic Accessibility

Support will be given to the improvement of strategic infrastructure that will strengthen the role of Rother, and especially Bexhill, as an area of economic activity and investment opportunity. Priority will be to improve connectivity along key transport corridors; enable regeneration and reduce entrenched economic and social disparities. This will include:

(i)   Support for early implementation of the Bexhill to Hastings Link Road and associated bus and cycle improvements;

(ii)   Working with agencies and stakeholders to deliver effective management of strategic transport corridors;

(iii)   Investment into providing transport choice; and

(iv)   Working with agencies to upgrade the capacity and capability of the East Coastway and Hastings to London rail corridors.

Integrated Transport

18.24   In 2008, there were 428 road casualties[69] on Rother's road network, approximately 20% of the County's total. In terms of road safety, indicators demonstrate Rother is significantly worse than the regional and national average.

18.25   In 2008/09, 33% of respondents in Rother cited public transport as a Priority for Improvement in the Local Area[70]. Access to rural transport and road safety have also been identified as key to improving the quality of life for residents of Rother[71]. However there appears to be a poor perception of public transport in Rother; a car is seen as a "necessity" for the majority of people[72].

18.26   Access to facilities and services relates not only to where they are located, but also to the provision of transport to access those services. In 2011, 19% of households in Rother did not have a car. Such households can find it difficult to access jobs, services and other facilities. This can exacerbate rural poverty and social disadvantage. Studies have demonstrated an insufficient public transport network can impact disproportionally on deprived communities.

18.27   In 2010, a survey of businesses across East Sussex found that the most common transport concerns for businesses are accessibility for customers/clients visiting a business and staff travelling to work.

---

69 East Sussex in Figures - Recorded Road Casualties between 1994-2008 by district
70 East Sussex in Figures – Priorities for Improvements in the Local Area - Place Survey 2008/09
71 East Sussex Pride of Place A Sustainable Community Strategy for East Sussex 2008 – 2026 Rother Section
72 Hastings and Rother Accessibility Assessment June 2007

18.28   The [Hastings and Rother Accessibility Assessment](#) completed by the County Council in 2007 found that in rural parts of the district, households without a car found access to services quite or very difficult.

18.29   Recognising that within the context of a rural area where, for many trips, there are limited alternatives to the car, attention may be focussed on altering the perception that a car is vital for most if not all journeys, and on reducing barriers to public transport. This can be achieved through promotion of walking and cycling for local trips, particularly within towns and villages, traffic management schemes and investment to reduce the impact of traffic on the rural and urban environment, and by promoting public transport and sustainable development.

18.30   The rebalancing of the transport system to walking, cycling and public transport can deliver better health and quality of life for local residents and make more attractive, competitive places with less congestion and better air quality. Locating development in accessible locations, and good urban design, will encourage people to make short journeys on foot or by bike; for example, by employing green infrastructure to link homes, schools, employment and local services.

18.31   Central to a strong integrated transport system is maximising ease of access and transfer between different modes as well as the quality of the amenity experience. The public realm can appear fragmented and cluttered with excessive street 'furniture', making for an unpleasant experience for people travelling between spaces. Improving the quality public realm[73] is seen as part of a wider transport and townscape agenda which encourages walking and cycling.

18.32   Since 1991, there has been an increase in the number of commuters[74] across East Sussex and a high proportion of commuting journeys is by car. In Rother 6% of commuters use rail to travel to work.[75] It is important to tackle the high proportion of commuting journeys by car by making improvements to public transport, including rail travel. Across the rail industry, passenger numbers have gradually increased over the last decade; however in the last two years, this has decreased slightly and can be attributed to the economic downturn[76].

18.33   Encouraging commuters in Rother to switch to rail will result in additional pressure on rail infrastructure. Capacity at some of the district's station car parks is at or near capacity. Many commuters choose to travel to the train station by car and park in the station car park or on residential streets nearby. It is a significant local issue[77] because of the high levels of congestion generated around peak travel times and road safety concerns.

---

73 [Manual for Streets 2007](#) and [Street for All: South East](#) 2005

74 Since 1991, East Sussex has seen a significant increase in the number of people commuting to work. The number of people travelling into the county to work increased by around 4,500 to just under 16,400 by 2001. Focus for East Sussex 2010 Annual Monitor Report

75 Source: 2001 Census - Table 3.1 Local Transport Plan 2 East Sussex. Rail travel patronage in Rother is above the County average.

76 [National Rail Trends 2009-10 Yearbook](#)

77 Battle LATS

18.34   Passenger Focus, the independent passenger watchdog, commissioned a survey amongst passengers (South East - 2010) to identify elements of the service they would like to see improved. Adequate car parking facilities was identified as one of the issues where passenger's expectations were not being met. The Kent and Sussex Route Utilisation Strategies have recommended any proposal to expand parking facilities at stations should be given detailed consideration at local level.

18.35   At a local level, there may be scope to increase parking at railway stations. However in some cases, the expansion of car parking facilities may not be physically possible or economically viable. Priority will be to encourage passengers to access stations by bus or cycle, with suitable provision.

Policy TR2: Integrated Transport

Improvements in the provision and use sustainable transport will be achieved through:

(i)   Maximising the best and most effective use of the existing transport network and facilitating enhancements with priority given to improving bus, community transport and rail network;

(ii)   The promotion of public transport patronage and associated infrastructure;

(iii)   Supporting the provision of a high quality cycle network to encourage a modal shift away from the car;

(iv)   Improvements to the pedestrian environment and wider public realm to encourage integration between different modes of transport, employment areas and settlement centres;

(v)   Promotion of road safety through education and design; and

(vi)   Safeguarding sites and routes with the potential to contribute towards the provision of an efficient and sustainable public transport network.

Access and New Development

18.36   Government transport guidance seeks to reduce the need to travel especially by car, with the aim of reducing congestion, improving the environment, increasing social inclusion and improving health. As part of planning applications, applicants are expected to assess the transport impact of their development proposals and mitigate the impact of any material increase in traffic on the district's roads.

18.37   The Spatial Strategy indicates new development will be directed mainly to the district's towns and villages where there is a good range of services, facilities and jobs. This will contribute to reducing the need to travel and journey lengths. It will also help achieve a more sustainable form of development and support the viability of public transport.

18.38   Paragraph 36 of the National Planning Policy Framework sets out that all development which generates significant amounts of transport movement should provide a Travel Plan and be supported by a Transport Statement or Assessment.

18.39   Where existing transport infrastructure is inadequate to meet the needs of new development, conditions or planning obligations will be used to ensure that proposals are made acceptable through securing the provision of necessary improvements.

18.40   The design and layout of road and street networks, in accordance with DfT's 'Manual for Streets', is considered in Chapter 16 – Environment, under 'Design Quality'.

> **Policy TR3: Access and New Development**
>
> **New development should minimise the need to travel and support good access to employment, services and communities facilities, as well as ensure adequate, safe access arrangements. Development will be permitted where mitigation against transport impacts which may arise from that development or cumulatively with other proposals is provided. This will be achieved through the submission of a transport assessment, transport statement or travel plan[78], and where it is appropriate through:**
>
> **(i)   Ensuring that new developments in their design and layout prioritise the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and minimise the distance to local public transport nodes;**
>
> **(ii)   Working with the relevant agencies to seek funding for contributions for improvements to local infrastructure needed to facilitate highway capacity and safety and/or public transport accessibility and capacity, where this is necessary to serve the new development; and**
>
> **(iii)   Provision of electric vehicles charging infrastructure.**

---

[78] Threshold criteria definition contained in the "Guidance on Travel Plans for New Development" East Sussex County Council, Sept 2008

Car Parking

18.41   Given the rural nature of the district, it is likely that the car will continue to be the main form of transport for some communities in Rother. It is important that sufficient parking provision is provided at all new developments. The 2011 Census found that over 81% of households in Rother have access to a car. Given the limitation to existing public transport infrastructure, a car is seen as a necessity in many rural parts of the district.

18.42   In January 2011, the Government announced changes in relation to parking standards. The onus is now on local authorities to determine standards, taking account of local circumstances. The previous requirement to express "maximum" parking standards for new residential development has been deleted.

18.43   East Sussex County Council has reviewed and updated its parking standards guidance, conforming to recent guidance, adopting an evidence-based approach, which draws upon site visits, surveys undertaken by County Council officers and 2011 Census data. The new guidance will be used in assessing parking provision in new developments; the earlier interim guidance adopted by Rother District Council is rescinded.

Policy TR4: Car Parking

Planning permission will be granted for development where the provision for parking accords with the following principles which will be elaborated upon in the form of Supplementary Planning Document. Proposed development shall:

(i)   Meet the residual needs of the development for off-street parking having taking into consideration localised circumstances and having full regard to the potential for access by means other than the car, and to any safety, congestion or amenity impacts of a reliance on parking off-site whether on-street or off-street;

(ii)   Provide for reduced parking provision where a high level of accessibility to jobs, services and facilities exists, or will be provided as a result of the development, including any offsite measures;

(iii)   Ensure that the approved parking provision is retained for the future where that would be necessary to prevent harm to the safety or free-flow of the highway;

(iv)   Include a number of parking spaces designed and signed for disabled people;and

(v)   Provide for commuted payments towards providing and/or managing off-site parking, including on-street parking, where this is justified to meet the needs of the development.

Scope and Issues

19.1   It is not sufficient for the Core Strategy to just make proposals and policy guidance, there is a requirement to establish a framework to:

i).   Ensure that the proposals are put into action at the right time and delivered;

ii).   Identify infrastructure requirements during the plan period;

iii).   Assess risk to the spatial strategy if policies are not performing as intended and implement contingencies.

19.2   A Core Strategy must set out clear arrangements for monitoring the effectiveness of policies in meeting plan objectives, identifying the needs, opportunities and constraints affecting the area and for reporting results to the public and other key stakeholders.

19.3   Delivery strategies should contain clear targets or measurable outcomes to assist this process. This 'plan, monitor and manage' approach allows for flexibility over the lifetime of the Core Strategy. In accordance with Government guidance, Local Authorities must publish, at least annually, a monitoring report that shows progress with Local Plan preparation, reports any activity relating to the duty to cooperate and shows how the implementation of policies in the Local Plan is progressing.

19.4   In addition to monitoring, another key element of the process is to ensure the necessary infrastructure is delivered to support new and existing communities. The Core Strategy should be supported by evidence of what physical, social and green infrastructure is needed to enable the amount of development proposed for the area, taking account of its type and distribution. The infrastructure planning process should identify, as far as possible infrastructure needs and costs, phasing of development, funding sources and responsibilities for delivery.

19.5   The Spatial Strategies sets out how the district will develop up to 2028 in order to ensure that the overall vision and objectives for the Core Strategy are achieved.

19.6   In April 2010, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations 2010 came into force. These new regulations give local planning authorities the means to raise funds via a development levy from developers undertaking new building projects in their area. The money can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure that is needed as a result of development. This includes transport schemes, flood defences, schools, hospitals and other health and social care facilities, parks, green spaces and leisure centres.

19.7   CIL is a tariff-based approach and provides the framework to fund new infrastructure to unlock land for growth. CIL is fairer, faster and more certain and transparent than the system of planning obligations which can be lengthy because of lengthy negotiations between different parties.

Framework for Monitoring and Delivery of Infrastructure

19.8   The following framework is set out to ensure that the strategy is robust in terms of ensuring the effective and timely delivery of development and infrastructure.

Framework for Monitoring and Delivery of Infrastructure:

i)   To have a clear monitoring framework, linked to the Community Strategy, as well as to the Core Strategy's vision and objectives;

ii)   To ensure a continuity of supply of housing and business land;

iii)   To ensure that there is, or will be, adequate infrastructure to meet the needs of communities and of development;

iv)   To integrate infrastructure programmes of key agencies;

v)   To provide requisite flexibility in the strategy together with contingencies based on a risk assessment that still meet the overall vision;

vi)   To implement a Community Infrastructure Levy framework to secure infrastructure and deliver the vision for Rother.

Monitoring Framework

19.9   Monitoring of the Core Strategy is an essential element of the Local Plan process. It is important to assess whether the Core Strategy is being implemented satisfactorily.

19.10   Recent guidance from Central Government has indicated monitoring will be a matter for each Council to decide what to include in their monitoring arrangements. Through the Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR), Rother will employ the use of indictors and targets to measure performance; a set of appropriate indicators has been chosen from a number of sources.

19.11   A monitoring framework of policies should employ a measure of contextual indicators - relating to the social, economic and environmental conditions in the district, and output indicators – measurable changes and outcomes resulting from implementing planning policies. The Council will adopt a set of indicators to be used to monitor progress towards the vision for an "improved quality of life" for the residents of Rother district[79].

---

79 Measuring Quality of Life in Rother - Towards a core set of 'vision-led' indicators

19.12   The identification of a set of indicators that reflect local aspirations and the establishment of a process for determining these should be of real assistance to decision-makers – officers, councillors and LSP Board members – in developing and evaluating strategies, plans and actions.

19.13   The locally accountable LPMR will be the principal component in the monitoring framework, bringing together all the necessary information to successfully monitor the implementation of the Local Plan (2011-2028) in one place. The LPMR will be able to measure whether a Core Strategy policy is meeting the spatial objectives; need adjusting or replacing because they are not working as intended; or need changing to reflect changes in national or regional policy.

19.14   In addition to the LPMR, the Council publishes a bi-annual assessment of housing land supply to assess and demonstrate the extent to which existing plans fulfil the requirement to identify and maintain a rolling five year supply of deliverable land.

19.15   The Monitoring Schedule relating to the spatial objectives, targets and the use of indicators can be found in Appendix 5 of this document.

Policy IM1: Monitoring Framework

The Council will continually assess the effectiveness of the Core Strategy policies in achieving its strategic objectives principally by monitoring the indicators set out in the Monitoring Schedule and report through the annual Monitoring Report.

Where Core Strategy policies are found not to be contributing positively to the strategic objectives, or are no longer appropriate in the light of more recent national policies or local circumstances, appropriate amendments will be made.

Implementation and Infrastructure

19.16   The spatial strategy set out in the Core Strategy will be achieved through the policies set down in the document. An important component will be to ensure the necessary infrastructure is provided to support existing and new development. This will be achieved through a number of mechanisms including developer contributions through Section 106 Agreements or a Community Infrastructure Levy to absorb additional stress on infrastructure capacity.

19.17   The Core Strategy should demonstrate what 'essential' infrastructure will be delivered in the lifetime of the Core Strategy to deliver the spatial strategy. Sound infrastructure planning should be underpinned by flexibility and deliverability.

19.18   An Infrastructure Schedule can be found in Appendix A of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and is a summary of infrastructure capital critical to the delivery of the Vision for the District. It includes information on costings, phasing, identification of possible funding sources and who would be responsible for bringing forward the scheme. At the time of writing the information will be as accurate as it is possible but given the lengthy timescales and economic uncertainly some of the figures will be subject to change. Changes will be updated through the annual Monitoring Report.

19.19   A separate document entitled the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) will provide further details on current capacity and identify shortfalls in provision to accommodate addition future growth in population, industry and commerce. This will be considered as a 'live' document and updated periodically through the LPMR. It is intended the IDP will eventually inform a future Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), as well as Section 106 Agreements.

Policy IM2: Implementation and Infrastructure

Where new or improved infrastructure, including community facilities, is needed to support development, appropriate provision or contributions will be required. This will be secured by planning obligation or by condition attached to the planning consent or by any other appropriate mechanism such as a development tariff.

Infrastructure requirements will be set out in an Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which will be a 'live' document and will:

(i)   Identify planned infrastructure provision;

(ii)   Identify future infrastructure requirements to support housing, population and economic growth, as detailed in Development Plan Documents;

(iii)   Provide an indication of the potential costs and means of funding the required infrastructure through public funding, developer contributions and other sources;

(iv)   Identify contingencies if there is a failure to deliver key infrastructure.

Phasing

19.20   Government guidance promotes a "plan-monitor-manage" approach to ensure that decisions keep in line with the vision and objectives. For example, where there is an identified 5-year supply of land for housing, the Council may consider whether granting further permissions would undermine achievement of its strategy objectives. However, it should not refuse applications purely on grounds of prematurity.

19.21   It is particularly important to give consideration both to assist the absorption of development in social and infrastructure terms into communities, and to ensure a continuity in the supply of residential land.

19.22   It is generally assumed that outstanding permissions and existing housing allocations (which have been demonstrated in the SHLAA and through Housing Monitoring as deliverable) will be developed in the earlier phases of the Plan. Particular care should be taken in villages which are also still absorbing recent and ongoing developments. Hence, for some settlements with recent or committed higher levels of development, any additional allocations will normally be phased in the latter part of the plan period.

19.23   The supply of available land will be assessed through the preparation of the annual Monitoring Report, bi-annual Housing Land Supply Position Statements and review of the Council's SHLAA (Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment).

Policy IM3: Phasing of Development

In allocating sites and considering planning applications, the Council will seek to provide for new development in a timely manner, insofar as it contributes to overall and local development strategies, and is or will be served by the infrastructure needed to support the development. In particular, it will:

(i)   Maintain a supply of available housing land in compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework;

(ii)   Consider phasing further housing land releases where it is important for the assimilation of development into a community;

(iii)   Normally give priority to the release of employment land where infrastructure capacity is limited;

(iv)   Seek agreement with developers, and infrastructure providers where appropriate, to ensure that any infrastructure improvements to support development are brought forward at the time they are needed and linked to the timing of development.

19.24   A' trajectory' for housing completions over the period 2011-2028 will be based on the annual average of development rates set out in the Overall Development Strategy.

19.25   The trajectory of housing completions to meet the Core Strategy target is reviewed and updated yearly and set out in the Council's 'Monitoring Report'. Account is taken of further allocations needed to meet the target. The anticipated distribution of completions shown in Appendix 3 illustrates potential take-up over the period 2011-2028 on this basis, also having regard to outstanding planning permissions. This is likely to be optimistic in the early years of the strategy due to the general slowdown in the house-building market, but is accepted on the basis of not unduly restricting development that will contribute to economic recovery and sustainable growth.

Appendices

1. Superseded Local Plan Policies
2. Glossary of Terms
3. Components of Housing Supply
4. Key Design Principles
5. Monitoring Schedule

All policies in the Rother District Local Plan were originally saved by Direction.
The following policies are superseded by policies in this Core Strategy:

RDLP Policy
Chapter 4 – Development Strategy
Policy DS1   Development principles
Policy DS2   Overall spatial strategy
Policy DS4   Proposals outside development boundaries
Chapter 5 – General Development Considerations
Policy GD1   General development criteria
Policy GD2 – Availability of Infrastructure and services
Chapter 6 – Housing Developments
Policy HG1   Affordable housing
Policy HG2   Affordable housing outside development boundaries
Policy HG3   Housing mix
Policy HG4   Principles of sustainable residential environments
Policy HG6   Sites for gypsies and travelling showpeople
Policy HG10   New dwellings in the countryside
Policy HG11   Residential re-use and adaptation of buildings in the countryside
Chapter 7 – Community Facilities
Policy CF1   New community facilities
Policy CF2   Safeguarding of community facilities
Policy CF3   Proposals for sports and recreation facilities
Chapter 8 – Transport Developments
Policy TR2   Improvements to sustainable transport
Policy TR3   Provision of parking facilities
Chapter 9 – Employment Developments
Policy EM1   New business development including through mixed uses
Policy EM2   Retention of employment sites and buildings
Policy EM3   Employment, including tourism, use of rural buildings in the countryside
Policy EM6   Businesses in residential areas
Policy EM7   New and extended tourist attractions and visitor facilities
Policy EM9   Tourist accommodation
Policy EM11   Occupation of holiday chalets, static and touring caravans
Policy EM14   Retail development outside town and district centres
Policy EM15   Retail development in within town and village development boundaries
Chapter 10 – Bexhill
Policy BX1   Planning strategy for Bexhill
Chapter 11 – Battle
Policy BT1   Planning strategy for Battle
Chapter 12 – Rye and Rye Harbour
Policy RY1   Planning strategy for Rye
Policy RY2   Planning strategy for Rye Harbour

Note 1: The progress of development allocations in the Rother District Local Plan will be reviewed as part of preparation of the Development and Site Allocations Plan.

5 Year Housing Supply – The policy on identifying and demonstrating a 5 year supply of land is set out in the NPPF. This says that a 5 year supply should be deliverable (available, suitable and achievable). Local authorities should be able to defend their land supply evidence based on published policy and guidance.

1066 Country – 1066 Country is recognised throughout the world as a leading brand of historical experience; its spectacular coast and countryside are littered with relics and ruins from the Norman invasion.

1066 Enterprise – the Enterprise Agency for Hastings and Rother, and also the Chamber of Commerce for Hastings and St Leonards.

1066 Group – the Steering Group for the partnership of Local Authorities (Wealden, Rother and Hastings), the tourist attractions and accommodation providers that cooperate in setting a marketing strategy for 1066 Country.

Accessibility – the ability of people to move around an area and reach places and facilities, including elderly and disabled people, those with young children and those encumbered with luggage or shopping.

Action in Rural Sussex (AiRS) – Sussex Rural Community Council was formed in 1931 as a registered charity. In 2002 SRCC changed its name to Action in Rural Sussex. Its role is to identify problems and to respond to the needs of rural communities.

Affordable housing – Affordable housing includes social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to specified eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Affordable housing should:

- Meet the needs of eligible households including availability at a cost low enough for them to afford, determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices.

- Include provision for the home to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or, if these restrictions are lifted, for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision'.

Rother District Council housing service requires affordable housing to be provided through a "registered provider".

Affordable Housing Viability Study (AHVS) – A Study to reflect the likely economic viability of land for housing within the area, taking account of the risks to delivery and drawing on informed assessments of likely levels of finance available for affordable housing, including public subsidy and level of developer contribution that can be reasonably secured.

Agri-Environmental Schemes – a term used to describe national (or local) schemes that pay farmers to farm in an environmentally sensitive way.

AiRS – see Action in Rural Sussex.

Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) – areas to be established by borough and district councils following local assessment of air quality where individual pollutants are forecast to exceed standards defined in the National Air Quality Strategy.

Ancient Woodland – woodland that is likely to have existed before 1600AD and contains trees and shrubs that are predominately native not obviously planted but have arisen through natural regeneration or coppice re-growth.

Appropriate Assessment – Appropriate Assessment (AA) refer to stage 2 of the Habitat Directive process. It considers whether the impacts of a plan or project are assessed against the conservation objectives of a European Site, in order to identify whether there are likely to be any adverse effects on site integrity and site features. The purpose of appropriate assessment of local plans is to ensure that protection of the integrity of European sites is a part of the planning process at a regional and local level. The European sites concerned are known as Natura 2000 sites.

AQMA – see Air Quality Management Areas.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) – areas of national importance for their landscape character and appearance, within which the conservation and enhancement of their natural beauty is a priority. These are designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 by the Secretary of State for the Environment

Backland Development – can usually be defined as development on land behind the rear building line of existing housing or other development, and is usually land that is formally used as gardens, or is partially enclosed by gardens. It does not include sites where development, as opposed to access to the development, adjoins a public high-way.

Baldslow Improvement – The Highways Agency is currently developing options for the Queensway to Baldslow link to the A21 Trunk Road.

Bexhill to Hastings Link Road – the current scheme by East Sussex County Council for a new road that will link the outskirts of Bexhill and Hastings. The link road will be 5.5km long and start at the A259 in Bexhill and end at Queensway just north of Crowhurst Road.

Biodiversity – the whole variety of life encompassing all genetic, species and ecosystem variations, including plants and animals.

Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) – a strategy prepared for a local area aimed at conserving and enhancing biological diversity. The Sussex BAP is prepared by the Sussex Biodiversity Partnership. It applies the national targets and actions for each of our important habitats and species identified in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) and adapts to a local level.

Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA) – Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs) represent the targeted landscape-scale approach to conserving biodiversity in Sussex. Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) targets are often linked to BOAs. BOAs were identified through mapping work carried out by the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre, to assess the existing biodiversity resource and the potential for restoration and creation.

BLATs – Battle Local Area Transport Strategy

Brownfield Land/Site – land which has previously been developed (see Previously Developed Land)

Building Regulations – regulations which are separate from planning but which have to be adhered to in the construction of development.

Catchment Flood Management Plan – A Catchment Flood Management Plan (CFMP) is a strategic planning tool through which the Environment Agency will seek to work with other key decision-makers within a river catchment to identify and agree policies for sustainable flood risk management.

CDRP - Crime Disorder Reduction Partnership – aims to provide information and resources to help practitioners involved in, or working with, partnerships to make them the most effective possible vehicle for tackling crime, anti-social behaviour, behaviour that adversely affects the local environment and substance misuse (including drugs & alcohol) at a local level.

CHP – see Combined Heat and Power.

Combined Heat and Power – CHP plants incorporate both power and heat from a single heat source.

Commitments – all proposals for development which are the subject of a current full or outline planning permission or are allocations in an existing Local Plan.

Community Infrastructure Levy – The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a new levy that local authorities can choose to charge on new developments in their area. The money can be used to support development by funding infrastructure that the council, local community and neighbourhoods want.

Community Strategy – a strategy all Local Authorities are required to produce in response to the Local Government Act 2000, with the aim of improving the future economic, social and environmental well being of the local area.

Commuted Payments – are monetary payments made through a legal agreement with the Council, which are ring-fenced to pay for specific infrastructure improvements, e.g. developers can sign a legal agreement that they will pay for highway improvements, for example a pedestrian crossing.

Comparison shops – Comparison shops provide items not obtained on a frequent basis. These include clothing, footwear, household and recreational goods.

Conservation Area – an area designated under the Town and Country Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 on account of its special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is intended to preserve and enhance.

Conservation Area Appraisal – this is a written and pictorial assessment of the special interest, character and appearance of a particular Conservation Area.

Contaminated Land – land that has been polluted or harmed in some way making it unfit for safe development and usage unless cleaned.

Convenience Shops – Convenience shops provide everyday essential items, including food, drinks, newspapers/magazines and confectionery

Core Strategy Development Plan Document – sets out the long–term vision for the future of the area, the spatial objectives and strategic policies to deliver that vision.

Cumulative Impact – where there are a number of developments in a locality, or a continuous activity over time that together may have an increased impact on the environment, local community or the local economy.

DEFRA – Department for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs – the UK Government department tasked with issues such as the environment, rural development, the countryside, wildlife, animal welfare and sustainable development.

Developer Contributions – contributions made to mitigate the impacts of development. This can be means of contributions of land, finance and works (aka "in-kind") and/or commitments regarding the future use and/or occupation of development(s) that are necessary, in planning terms, to enable the development concerned to go ahead.

Development Plan – the statutory development plan is the starting point in the consideration of planning applications for the development or use of land. The development plan consists of Regional Spatial Strategies prepared by the regional planning bodies; and Development Plan Documents prepared by the District Council, with Minerals and Waste Development Plan Documents, prepared by County Councils.

Development Plan Documents (DPDs) – These will replace the Local Plan and have the same status for decision-making. More than one DPD can be used to provide for the Development Plan at the local level. Types of DPDs include the Core Strategy, Site Specific Allocations and Area Action Plans.

Diversification – a term used to suggest the variation in use of a facility e.g. a playing field can be used by a variety of users for different recreational and sporting activities.

DPDs – see Development Plan Documents

EA – see Environment Agency

ESCC – East Sussex County Council

EH – see English Heritage

Employment Land – that which is in use for the following purposes – office, industrial and warehousing.

Employment Land Review – an assessment of the demand for and supply of land for employment purposes. The suitability of sites for employment development are assessed to safeguard the best sites in the face of competition from other higher value uses and help identify those which are no longer suitable for employment development which should be made available for other uses.

English Heritage (EH) – government advisors with responsibility for all aspects of protecting and promoting the historic environment. English Heritage is responsible for advising the government on the listing of historic buildings.

Environment Agency (EA) – incorporating the former National Rivers Authority, this body is responsible for wide-ranging matters, including the management of water resources, surface water drainage, flooding and water quality.

Environmental Stewardship Schemes – are agri-environment schemes which provide funding to farmers and other land managers in England who deliver effective environmental management on their land.

ESiF – East Sussex in Figures (ESiF) is the County Council's website of searchable statistics on the social, economic and demographic character of East Sussex.

Evidence Base – The information and data gathered by local authorities to justify the "soundness" of the policy approach set out in Local Development Documents, including physical, economic, and social characteristics of an area.

Exception Site – a site, located outside a development boundary that should only be used for affordable housing to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection.

Farm Diversification – the development of farm-based, non-agricultural activities to help sustain the farm holding.

Floodplain – an area of land over which water flows in time of flood or would flow but for the presence of flood defences where they exist.

Flood Zone 1 (Low Probability) – this zone comprises land assessed as having a less than 1 in 1000 annual probability of river or sea flooding in any year (<0.1%).

Flood Zone 2 (Medium Probability) – this zone comprises land assessed as having between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000 annual probability of river flooding (1% – 0.1%) or between a 1 in 200 and 1 in 1000 annual probability of sea flooding (0.5% – 0.1%) in any year.

Flood Zone 3a (High Probability) – this zone comprises land assessed as having a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding (>1%) or a 1 in 200 or greater annual probability of flooding from the sea (>0.5%) in any year.

Flood Zone 3b (Functional Floodplain) – this zone comprises land where water has to flow or be stored in times of flood (land which would flood with an annual probability of 1 in 20 (5%) or greater in any year or is designed to flood in an extreme (0.1%) flood)

Greenfield Land or Site – Land (or a defined site) usually farmland, that has not previously been developed, also include allotments.

Gypsies and Travellers – Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling show people or circus people travelling together as such. (Planning policy for traveller sites, 2012).

Habitat – the natural living space of a plant or animal

Hastings and Bexhill Task Force – a partnership of public sector organisations which came together in September 2001 to improve the area's economy. Its members are Hastings Borough Council, Rother District Council, East Sussex County Council, the MP for Hastings & Rye and the MP for Bexhill & Battle.

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) – The Habitats Directive protects habitats and non-avian species of European importance and applies to Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and the European Directive (79/409/EEC) on the Conservation of Wild Birds (Birds Directive), protects bird species of European importance and applies to Special Protection Areas (SPAs). These are known as the network of Natura 2000 Sites or "European Sites".

Highways Agency – An executive agency of the Department of Transport. The Highways Agency is responsible for operating, maintaining and improving the strategic road network of England.

Housing Association – a non-profit making, independent organisation that provides housing; generally they provide accommodation for people in housing need who are unable to afford to buy or rent housing on the open market.

ICT – Information and Communication Technology.

Infill Development – development of a vacant site in a substantially developed frontage or area.

Infrastructure – the basic requirements for the satisfactory development of an area and include such things as roads, footpaths, sewers, schools, open space and other community facilities.

IDP – An Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) will identify what infrastructure is required to enable development proposed in the Core Strategy. The IDP will identify existing deficiencies and surpluses, identify what is required for the future, when it is needed, who is responsible for its provision, and how it will be funded. Infrastructure and services are provided by many different organisations, and the IDP is a vehicle through which integration between organisations can be achieved.

Intermediate Housing – housing at prices and rents above those of social rent, but below market price or rents. This can include shared equity schemes, such as HomeBuy, other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent.

Key Workers – The Government's definition of key workers includes those groups eligible for the Housing Corporation funded Key Worker Living programme and others employed within the public sector (ie outside of this programme) identified by the Regional Housing Board for assistance.

Landscape Character Assessment – an assessment to identify different landscape areas which have a distinct character based on a recognisable pattern of elements, including combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement.

LAP – see Local Action Plans.

Listed Building – a building of special architectural or historic interest as designated by English Heritage on behalf of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, this is a statutory listing.

LDS – see Local Development Scheme

Local Action Plans (LAPs) – aim to help local communities take stock of their parish, or locality, and identify ways of enhancing it over the next few years. Many parishes in the district have produced or are producing Parish Plans/Action Plans.

Local Plan 2006 – old-style Local Plan adopted in 2006, some saved policies of which still form part of the development plan for the district.

Local Plan (2011-2028) – The collective terms for documents prepared by each Local Planning Authority to provide the framework for delivering the spatial planning strategy for the Local Planning Authority area

Local Development Scheme (LDS) – A document setting out the programme for the preparation of the Local Development Documents. It sets out a 3-year programme and includes information on consultation dates.

Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR) – produced by the local authority this will assess the impact of policies and whether targets are being met, and where necessary identify adjustments or revision to policies/proposals. (Previously known as the Annual Monitoring Report.)

Local Distinctiveness – the particular positive features of a locality that contributes to its special character and sense of place, distinguishes one local area from another.

Local Nature Reserve (LNR) – an area designated by local authorities, in consultation with English Nature, under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949, to provide opportunities for educational use and public enjoyment, in addition to protecting wildlife or geological and physiographical features of special interest.

Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) – a partnership of stakeholders who develop ways of involving local people in shaping the future of their neighbourhood in how services are provided. They are often single, multi-agency bodies which aim to bring together locally the public, private, community and voluntary sectors.

Local Transport Plan (LTP) – A five-year integrated transport strategy, prepared by local transport authorities in partnership with the community, seeking funding to help provide local transport projects. The plan sets out the resources predicted for delivery of the targets identified in the strategy. Local transport plans should be consistent with the policies and priorities set out in the Regional Transport Strategy as an integral part of the Regional Spatial Strategy.

Locate East Sussex – is a service provided on behalf of the East Sussex Economic Partnership Limited (ESEP), the company set up to improve the economy of East Sussex. ESEP funding partners are the district and borough councils of East Sussex, East Sussex County Council and the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA).

LPA – Local Planning Authority – The local government body responsible for formulating planning policies (in a local development framework), controlling development through determining planning applications and taking enforcement action when necessary. This is a district council, unitary authority, metropolitan council or national park authority.

LTP – see Local Transport Plan.

Market Housing – Private housing for rent or for sale, where the price is set in the open market.

Material Consideration – a matter that should be taken into account in deciding a planning application or on an appeal against a planning decision.

Mitigation Measures – those which are put in place to reduce or eliminate any harm caused e.g. building a house in an area of flood risk, the developer could build the house on stilted foundations to minimise the risk as a mitigation measure.

Mixed Use – area or site where a mixture of commercial, retail and/or residential uses predominates.

National Nature Reserve (NNR) – NNRs contain examples of some of the most important natural and semi-natural terrestrial and coastal ecosystems in Great Britain. They are managed to conserve their habitats or to provide special opportunities for scientific study of the habitats, communities and species represented within them. NNRs are declared by the statutory country conservation agencies under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Natural England – is a Non-Departmental Public Body of the UK Government. It was formed (vested) on 1 October 2006. It is responsible for ensuring that England's natural environment, including its land, flora and fauna, freshwater and marine environments, geology and soils are protected and improved. It also has a responsibility to help people enjoy, understand and access the natural environment.

Natura 2000 – European Union network of sites designated by Member States under the Birds Directive and under the Habitats Directive.

NEET – 16 to 18 year olds not in education, employment or training.

NVQ - National Vocational Qualifications – are work-related, competence-based qualifications. They reflect the skills and knowledge needed to do a job.

Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study – The Study undertook an audit and assessment of open space across the Rother district in accordance national guidelines. The Study assessed open space, sport and recreational needs of people living, working and visiting Rother, produced local provision standards and identified areas of surplus and deficiency based on quantity quality and accessibility across the district.

Parish Council – A type of local authority found in England which is the lowest, or first, tier of local government. They are elected bodies and are responsible for areas known as civil parishes. They cover only part of England; corresponding to 35% of the population, but cover all of Rural Rother excluding Battle and Rye (which are covered by Town Councils) and Bexhill.

Place-Shaping – The "place-shaping" of settlements is the responsibility of the Council and all local partners in the public, voluntary and the business sectors. It is about creating attractive, prosperous and vibrant places where people want to live, work and do business.

Planning Obligations and Agreements – Legal agreements between a planning authority and a developer, or undertakings offered unilaterally by a developer, that ensure that certain extra works related to a development are undertaken, for example, the provision of highways. Sometimes called "Section 106" agreements

Previously Developed Land – land which is or was occupied by a permanent (non-agricultural) structure and associated fixed surface infrastructure, including the curtilage of the development, in urban and rural areas, but excluding garden land. It excludes land and buildings that have been used for agricultural purposes, forest and woodland, and land in built-up areas, which has not been developed previously

RUS - Route Utilisation Strategies (RUSs) seek to balance capacity, passenger & freight demand, operational performance and cost, to address the requirements of funders and stakeholders. Network Rail develop Route Utilisation Strategies to cover the rail network, in conjunction with rail industry partners and wider stakeholders.

Ramsar Site – a wetland site of international importance (especially as a waterfowl habitat) designated by the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Registered Historic Battlefield – the English Heritage Register of Historic Battlefields identifies forty-three important English battlefields. Its purpose is to offer them protection and to promote a better understanding of their significance.

Registered Parks and Gardens – since the 1980s, there has been a national record of the historic parks and gardens which make such a rich and varied contribution to our landscape. This record, known as the Register of Parks and Gardens of special historic interest in England and now containing nearly 1450 sites, was established, and is maintained by, English Heritage.

Appendix 2 - Glossary of Terms

Registered Providers – Independent housing organisations that deliver, own and manage affordable housing across the UK. Housing Providers (HPs) register with the Homes & Communities Agency under the Housing Act 1996. Most are housing associations, but there are also trusts, co-operatives and private companies. The old definition of registered social landlord ("RSL") has been replaced with the concept of registered providers of social housing.

Renewable Energy – is energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment, for example from the wind, water flow, tides or the sun.

Run-off - that part of precipitation, snow melt, or irrigation water that runs off the land into streams or other surface water. It can carry pollutants from the air and land into the receiving waters.

Safer Rother Partnership – statutory members of the Partnership were Rother District Council, Sussex Police and East Sussex County Council – now also includes East Sussex Fire & Rescue, Hastings & Rother Primary Care Trust and Sussex Police Authority. The role of the Partnership is to work with other statutory and voluntary agencies within the Rother district to develop and implement a crime and disorder strategy.

Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) – is a building or structure, above or below ground, whose preservation is of national importance. Listed in a schedule that is compiled by the Secretary of State for Culture, Sports and Recreation.

Section 106 Agreement – A legal agreement under section 106 of the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act. Section 106 agreements are legal agreements between a planning authority and a developer, or undertakings offered unilaterally by a developer, that ensure that certain extra works related to a development are undertaken.

Sea Change Sussex – is the regeneration and development company for East Sussex.

Sequential Approach – a planning principle that seeks to identify, allocate or develop certain types or locations of land before others. For example, brownfield sites before greenfield sites or town centre retail sites before out-of-centre sites, or areas at low risk of flooding before areas of medium and high risk of flooding.

Shared Ownership – this is a scheme operated by a Housing Association where the borrower owns part of a property, and pays the mortgage on this, while a Housing Association owns the rest of the property, and the borrower pays rent on this.

SHLAA – See Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

SHMA – See Strategic Housing Market Assessment

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – an area of special interest by reason of its flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features as identified by Natural England (formerly English Nature) and designated under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) – an area (non-statutory) designated by the Surrey Nature Conservation Liaison Group as being of county or regional wildlife value.

Small Market Town – the term 'market town' is used to mean towns roughly between 2,000 and 20,000 in population, with a history of, or potential of, supporting and servicing a rural hinterland. A 'small market town' is usually understood as above but with a population below 10,000.

SMART Growth – Smart growth means using comprehensive planning to guide, design, develop, revitalize and build communities for all that: have a unique sense of community and place; preserve and enhance valuable natural and cultural resources; equitably distribute the costs and benefits of development; expand the range of transportation, employment and housing choices in a fiscally responsible manner; value long-range, regional considerations of sustainability over short term incremental geographically isolated actions; and promote public health and healthy communities. Compact, transit accessible, pedestrian-oriented, mixed use development patterns and land reuse epitomize the application of the principles of smart growth.

Social and affordable rented – housing provided by a landlord, where access is on the basis of housing need, with rents no higher than 80% of market rent in the case of affordable rents.

Soundness – a Development Plan Document is considered sound if it is based upon good evidence and has been prepared in accordance with all the necessary procedures including the measures set out in the authority's Statement of Community Involvement.

South East Plan (SEP) – Now revoked in March 2013, the SE Plan previously provided the Regional Spatial Strategy for the south east of England.

Spatial Planning – spatial planning goes beyond traditional land use planning to bring together and integrate policies for the development and use of land with other policies and programmes which influence the nature of places and how they function. This will include policies which can impact on land use, for example, by influencing the demands on or needs for development, but which are not capable of being delivered solely or mainly through the granting of planning permission and may be delivered through other means.

Special Area of Conservation (SAC) – designated natural habitat areas to comply with the EEC Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora Directive (92/43/EEC). Member States are required to identify sites for designation and establish measures necessary for conservation. (Together with SPAs, SACs form a network of European sites known as Natura 2000.)

Special Protection Area (SPA) – designated wild bird areas to comply with the EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds - (79/409/EEC); (Together with SACs, SPAs form a network of European Sites known as Natura 2000.)

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) – sets out the ways in which the Local Planning Authority will consult the community and stakeholders, not only on other LDDs but also on major planning applications.

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) – A background evidence study that examines the suitability of potential new sites for housing.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) – A background evidence study to the Local Plan (2011-2028) examining the state of the housing market and housing needs of the district.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) – these can be produced to provide policy guidance to supplement the policies and proposals in DPDs. However they do not form part of the Development Plan although they must undergo a formal process of consultation.

Sussex Enterprise – the largest business organisation in the county, they support and represent businesses in Sussex. Established as a business-led membership organisation in 1946, they are owned by Sussex businesses through their membership.

Sustrans – Sustrans is the UK's leading sustainable transport charity. As a registered charity, Sustrans is dependent on funding from a wide range of sources including charitable trusts and companies, local and central government, non-departmental public bodies, and the European Union.

Statutory Development Plan – the Local Plan for an area which has been taken to statutory adoption. In other words, it has been through all the formal stages and has been approved by the relevant Government office and adopted by the Council.

Statutory Organisations/Consultees – organisations the Local Authority has to consult with at consultation stages of the Local Development Framework.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) – An assessment of the likelihood of flooding in a particular area so that development needs and mitigation measures can be carefully considered.

Strategic Gap – area of largely open land between settlements, which helps to maintain the separate identity and amenity of settlements and prevent them merging together. The boundaries are defined in the Local Development Framework.

Submission – the final stage in preparation of Development Plan Documents and the Statement of Community involvement. The documents are sent to the Secretary of State and an Independent Examination will be held.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) – Local Planning Authorities are required to assess the environmental and sustainability impact of policies and proposals in Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents. This is a tool for appraising policies to ensure that they reflect sustainable development objectives, i.e. social environmental and economic factors.

Sustainable Communities – Places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.

Sustainable Construction – Construction that has due reference to the environment, for example in the materials it uses, the methods of construction and the installation of energy efficient and water conservation systems, e.g. use of solar panels and SUDS

Sustainable Development – Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs; ensures a better quality of life for everyone now and for generations to come.

Sustainable transport – Often meaning walking, cycling and public use of transport, which is considered to be less damaging to the environment and that contributes less to traffic congestion than one-person car journeys.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) – They include a range of different drainage systems that are designed to promote the filtration and evaporation of water as close to the source as possible and to break down pollutants. SUDS are an alternative to drainage through pipes directly to a watercourse and will help enhance water quality and biodiversity, maintain groundwater levels and reduce the risk of flooding.

Town Council – In England, town councils are civil parish councils, where the civil parish has declared itself to be a town. Civil parishes are the most local level of elected governance, under the district, unitary or county level. There are two in Rother district covering Rye and Battle.

Travel Plan – a document most commonly produced by/for a large employer which tends to generate a large number of journeys by car. The plans include measures to reduce car dependency and facilitate transport choice, by encouraging more sustainable alternatives to car use.

Travelling Showpeople – Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family's or dependants' more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined in Planning policy for traveller sites, 2012.

Tree Preservation Order (TPO) – an Order made by a planning authority specifying trees which may not be lopped, topped or felled without consent, except where they become dead, dying or dangerous, when replacements may be required.

VAT Registered Business – a business must register for VAT (Value Added Tax) if their turnover for the previous 12 months is above £67,000. This is known as the VAT registration threshold. It changes regularly.

Vitality and Viability – in terms of retailing, vitality is the capacity of a centre to grow or to develop its level of commercial activity. Viability is the capacity of a centre to achieve the commercial success necessary to sustain the existence of the centre.

Wildlife Trust – Each of the 47 Wildlife Trusts (in the UK) is an independent, autonomous charity with its own trustees, whose primary concern is the conservation of nature within its own geographical area.

Windfall Site – a site not specifically allocated for development in a development plan, but which unexpectedly becomes available for development during the lifetime of a plan. Most "windfalls" are referred to in a housing context. They tend to be small sites for a small number of homes.

Appendix 3 - Components of Housing Supply

Housing Requirements for Plan Period 2011 to 2028

Housing Requirements	Number of dwellings					
	Bexhill	Hastings Fringes	Battle	Rye & Rye Harbour	Villages	Total
Total housing requirement 2011 - 2028	3100[1]	100 - 250	475 - 500	355 - 400	1,670	at least 5,700
Completions (1/4/2011 – 31/03/2013)	64	1	11	83	116	275
Total Outstanding Permissions	337	43	275	119	356	1,130
Current allocations	1,450	0	14	53	90	1,607
Total Completions, Commitments and Allocations	1,851	44	300	255	562	3,012
Estimated small site windfalls in years 5-151	153	2	30	33	242	460
Rural Exception Sites Allowance	0	0	0	0	65	65
Total completions, permissions, allocations and windfalls	2,004	46	330	288	869	3,537
Total allocations required (existing and new)	2,546	54 - 204	159 - 188	120 - 165	891	3,770 - 3,994
Further allocations required	1,096	54 - 204	145-170	67 - 112	801	2,163 - 2,383

[1] Based on rate of small site windfalls at 50% of rate over period 2000-2010.

Appendix 4 - Key Design Principles

The key design principles referred to in Policy EN3 are elaborated upon below:

a)   Character (Identity & Place-Making) & Legibility

This is concerned with ensuring that the individual character and local distinctiveness of the various towns and villages within the district is respected and positively contributed to, in new development. Meanwhile new development itself should have a clear image, create a strong sense of place and be easy to understand and navigate around. Streets should have a clear hierarchy, and a coherent and well-structured layout.

b)   Continuity & Enclosure

Successful places depend on the creation of streets and spaces with clearly defined public and private space, typically using the 'traditional' model of continuous street frontages to define and enclose space. Again, developments within existing settlements need to respect local context and positive character, and the historic form of development.

c)   Quality of Public Realm & Ease of Movement and 'Secured by Design'

New development should involve the creation/enhancement of public spaces and routes, including areas of both hard and soft landscaping, which are visually attractive, safe, uncluttered and usable. The design of the space around any building should be as important a consideration as that of the building itself.

Pedestrian-friendly accessibility and local permeability is critical both within new development and to link new development with its 'parent' community, for successful integration. The place-making function of streets, both existing and new, should be capitalised on, with particular reference to the concepts of active streets and shared space. Car-parking should be well-integrated in the design approach so as to support the character of the street scene and its functions.

d)   Diversity

Larger new development should seek to create variety, choice, and adaptability to local needs, in terms of site layout and mix of uses, sizes of units, and design of buildings within the overall coherent design vision, to ensure physical and social integration within the development as a whole.

e)   Landscape Setting of Buildings and Settlements

The individual settlements within the district have strong landscape settings which new development must understand, respect and reinforce. The landscape setting is valuable for both its visual appearance and its historic form as archaeological evidence of landscape management. Development should be located so as respond positively to the existing settlement pattern and form, landscape character, topography and long views.
Positive landscape characteristics within and outside the site, such as trees, hedgerows, copses, field patterns, streams, rivers and ponds, and longer countryside views, should be retained and should influence the layout of the site such that they give the design identity and character.

f)   Design in Context

All design proposals should be based on robust site and context analysis, evidenced in the 'Design & Access Statement' where applicable, or in other submission material. This should form the basis of any design strategy or process.

The siting, scale, layout, height and mass of new development should respect the wider appearance of new development in the context of the street scene, and the wider locality, together with the character and setting of existing buildings on or adjacent to the site, and this should be clearly evidenced in development proposals.

In relation to the historic environment, the impact of development on the fabric, legibility, character and setting of the particular heritage asset will be a consideration.

g)   Building Appearance & Architectural Quality

The visual appearance, both in terms of architectural style and form, massing and scale, of individual buildings is a key component to people's enjoyment of places.

Both traditional and contemporary design approaches might be successful in a particular location, depending on the skill of their execution, and the quality of the site and context analysis. However, there may be some instances where, due to the particular sensitivities of the site, or the nature of the development, the design approach may need to respect more closely the local vernacular in terms of construction and materials.

High architectural quality, beauty and inspiration, and the clear following-through of an architectural vision in materials and detailing will be expected regardless of building style.

h)   Sustainable Design

New development should be located so as to minimise environmental and ecological impact. Individual buildings should be designed so as to enable the efficient use of renewable or sustainably managed energy sources, while larger developments should have at their core appropriate infrastructure for renewable energy generation, and efficient resource management measures as detailed in Chapter 13 'Sustainable Resource Management'

In relation to the historic environment, reference should be made to the best practice guidance regarding climate change and energy efficiency produced by English Heritage (www.climatechangeandyourhome.org.uk) and proposals to improve energy efficiency should not adversely impact on the significance or character of the heritage asset.

Strategic Objective (Aim)	Core Strategy Objective	Policy	Target	Indicator	Source
Overall Spatial Strategy					
'To achieve a pattern of activity and development that contributes to the Sustainable Community Strategy and the 'Spatial Vision', and responds to local circumstances and environmental resources.'	To guide sustainable development and help build more sustainable communities, with a balance between homes and jobs;	OSS1 (i-iii)	Maintain a rolling five year housing land supply against CS targets. Provide employment floorspace in accordance with Core Strategy policies	Housing completions by size and type Total amount of additional employment floorspace by type	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR) Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR)
	To maintain and enhance the character of settlements, the relationship between them and with their landscape settings;	OSS2 (i-viii)	All SSSI's to achieve favourable condition	Condition of designated SSSIs	Natural England
	To give particular attention to promoting economic regeneration and growth for the Hastings/Bexhill area;	OSS1 (iii)	Provide 60,000sq.m employment floorspace within Bexhill over the plan period.	Total amount of additional employment floorspace by type Employment by sectors	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR) ESiF
	To give particular attention to supporting the 'market town' roles and environmental qualities and settings of Battle and Rye;	OSS1 (iii)	Deliver housing and employment targets set for Rye and Battle.	Housing completions by size and type (Battle and Rye)	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR)
	To promote vital, mixed communities in the rural areas, whilst also giving particular attention to the distinctive characteristics of the High Weald AONB and the intrinsic value of the wider countryside	OSS1 (iv) OSS3	Provide affordable housing in accordance with Policy HO2	Housing completions by size and type Affordable housing completions by size and type Population demographic mix by Ward/Parish	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR) Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR) ESiF

Strategic Objective (Aim)	Core Strategy Objective	Policy	Target	Indicator	Source
Overall Spatial Strategy					
'To achieve a pattern of activity and development that contributes to the Sustainable Community Strategy and the 'Spatial Vision', and responds to local circumstances and environmental resources.'	To improve the level of community and sports/ recreation facilities.	BX1 (ii)	Delivery of sport and recreation facilities in accordance with shortfalls identified by Open Space, Sports and Recreation Study and Leisure Facilities Strategy	Net completions of community facilities	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR)
Hastings Fringes					
	To contribute to the setting of Hastings and, where appropriate Bexhill;	HF1 (iii)	Define strategic gaps and areas for urban fringe management through Development and Site Allocations Plan	Progress on Development and Site Allocations Plan.	RDC
'To provide attractive and accessible fringes of Hastings, consistent with environmental designations'.	To provide accessible green space in line with identified needs and opportunities	HF1 (i)	Delivery of Combe Valley Countryside Park	Record milestones in the delivery of Combe Valley Countryside Park	RDC
	To ensure that any development in Rother District is well integrated with Hastings	HF1 (ii) (iii)(v)	45-80 dwellings between 2011-2028 in Hastings Fringes Provide at least 3,000sq. m of employment floorspace	Housing completions by size and type Total amount of additional employment floorspace by type	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR)

Rye and Rye Harbour

Strategic Objective (Aim)	Core Strategy Objective	Policy	Target	Indicator	Source
'To improve the economic and social well-being of Rye, including in relation to its market town role, tourism and the Port of Rye, whilst fully respecting and sensitively managing its historic character, vulnerability to flooding and ecologically important setting'.	To work with stakeholders to improve traffic management, tackle congestion and promote sustainable transport measures	RY1 (i)	Targets in LTP3 Delivery Programme and Rye LATS implementation	Delivery of relevant Transport schemes to timescales set out LTP3 and Rye LATS	ESCC
				% of population with reasonable access to town centres by public transport/walk	ESiF
	To work with agencies to support and promote strategic transport links from Rye to the wider locality	RY1 (ii)	Increase the number of rail passenger journeys taken year on year.	Commuting Flow	ESiF
				Travel to work mode	ESiF
	To improve access to high quality education, employment and housing;	RY1 (ix)	Provide at least 10,000sq.m of employment floorspace in Rye by 2028	Total amount of additional employment floorspace by type	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR)
			Provide affordable housing in accordance with Policy HO2		
			Provide between 250-350 dwellings between 2011 and 2028	Housing Completions by size and type (Rye)	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR)
	To enhance sustainable tourism and leisure;	RY1 (viii)	Increase the number of tourist accommodation establishments that are accredited nationally to raise the standard of accommodation on offer across Rye.	Number of hotels, B&B's and other tourist accommodation which have national quality accreditation (%)	SEETB/RDC
	To improve the availability of day to day goods and services;	RY1 (iv)	Provide 1650sq.m of convenience floorspace in Rye	Total amount of floorspace for town centre uses	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR)

Rye and Rye Harbour

Strategic Objective (Aim)	Core Strategy Objective	Policy	Target	Indicator	Source
'To improve the economic and social well-being of Rye, including in relation to its market town role, tourism and the Port of Rye, whilst fully respecting and sensitively managing its historic character, vulnerability to flooding and ecologically important setting'.	To secure investment in community facilities and in new and/or improved pedestrian and cycle routes linking residents to their facilities;	RY1 (i-ii)	Increase D1 and D2 floorspace in Rye	Total amount of completed floorspace for town centre uses (D1 and D2 – Gross and Net)	ESiF/Rother
	To conserve and enhance the unique built character and quality of the Citadel and its distinctive landscape setting;	RY1 (iii)	100%	Success of Design Quality Policy at Appeal	RDC
	To protect and sensitively manage the high quality ecological and landscape resources;	RY1 (iii)	All SSSIs to reach favourable condition	Condition of designated SSSIs	Natural England
	To continue to manage, and protect the community from, the risk of flooding;	RY1 (vi)	Reduce the number planning permissions contrary to EA advice. Reduce properties at risk from flooding.	No. of planning permissions granted contrary to EA advice (%). Properties at risk from flooding (%)	Environment Agency and RDC. EA

Strategic Objective (Aim)	Core Strategy Objective	Policy	Target	Indicator	Source
Battle					
	To reduce congestion and improve accessibility, especially by non-car modes	BA1 (ii) (vii)	Increase % of population with reasonable access to town centres by public transport/walk	% of population with reasonable access to town centres by public transport/walk	RDC – Quality of Life Indicator
	To enhance the commercial and tourism attractiveness of the town centre;	BA1 (I, ii, iv, v)	Increase % Business start-ups in Battle	Number of business start up	ESiF
			Increase town centre floorspace in Battle	Total amount of floorspace for town centre uses.	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR)
	To conserve the key characteristics of the town and setting that contribute to the AONB;	BA1 (i) (iii)	Reduced the number of Listed Buildings at risk.	No of listed buildings at risk (%)	English Heritage
	To provide increased opportunities for employment locally;	BA1 (iv) (vi)	Deliver 10,000 square metres of employment floorspace required by 2028	Total amount of additional employment floorspace, by type	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR)
'To support the market town and tourist centre role and character of Battle, and conserve its historic core and setting'.	To improve the level of community and sports/ recreation facilities.	BA1 (vii) (viii)	Delivery of sport and recreation facilities in accordance with shortfalls identified by Open Space, Sports and Recreation Study and Leisure Facilities Strategy	Net completions of community facilities	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR)
	To preserve and enhance the historic character of the Abbey and Battlefield and maintain the town's physical identity.	BA1 (i, vi)	100%	Success of Design Quality Policy at Appeal	RDC
	To make an appropriate contribution towards meeting local housing needs	BA1 (iii)	On all sites of 10 or more dwellings at least 35% affordable housing provision should be made.	Housing Completions by size and type	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR)
				Affordable Housing completions by size and type	
			Reduce persons on the Housing Register.	Housing Register	RDC

Rural Areas

Strategic Objective (Aim)	Core Strategy Objective	Policy	Target	Indicator	Source
'To meet local needs and support vibrant and viable mixed communities in the rural areas, whilst giving particular attention to the social, economic, ecological and intrinsic value of the countryside'.	To emphasise the significant contribution of both villages and countryside to the character and culture of Rother;	RA1 RA2 RA3 RA4	To be in line with Core Strategy Deliver 950-1000 dwellings in rural settlements between 2011 and 2028 to support vitality of rural villages.	Proportion of housing development in villages Housing Completions by type and size	RDC Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR)
	To recognise the individual distinctiveness of villages and to retain and enhance their rich cultural heritage;	RA1 (i), (iii) (vi)	100%	Success of Design Quality Policy at Appeal	RDC
	To support sustainable local employment opportunities and the economic viability of rural communities;	RA1 (ii) RA2 (ii) RA3	Increase % of residents with internet connection	No. of business start up % of all adults over age 18 with internet connection at home	ESiF ESiF/RDC – Quality of Life Indicator
	To promote thriving rural communities with a high quality of life, a strong sense of place and broad active civic participation	RA1 RA2 (i, ii)	Increase % who give unpaid help to a group or club at least once a month Achieve 100% of rural parishes with LAPs	% who give unpaid help to a group or club at least once a month Number of rural communities with a Local Action Plan	RDC - Quality of Life Indicator RVAG
	To be demographically balanced and socially inclusive, particularly in terms of access to housing;	RA1 (v)	Deliver 40% affordable housing on all schemes of 5 dwellings or more in rural areas	Affordable housing completions by size and type	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR)

Rural Areas

Strategic Objective (Aim)	Core Strategy Objective	Policy	Target	Indicator	Source
'To meet local needs and support vibrant and viable mixed communities in the rural areas, whilst giving particular attention to the social, economic, ecological and intrinsic value of the countryside'.	To reduce both the need to travel and reliance on the private car, by promoting the use of public transport and supporting viable and accessible services and facilities within villages;	RA1 (ii), (iv), (vi)	Increase % of new development within 30 minutes public transport time by public transport to GP services, primary and secondary school, employment and a major retail centre.	% of new development within 30 minutes public transport time by public transport to GP services, primary and secondary school, employment and a major retail centre.	ESiF/Rother
				% out-commuting by modes	ESiF
	To ensure rural communities have access to necessary infrastructure;	RA1 (vi, vi)	Increase % of new residential development with 30 minutes of public transport	% of new development within 30 minutes public transport time by public transport to GP services, primary and secondary school, employment and a major retail centre.	ESiF/Rother
	To protect the open countryside and retain its intrinsic rural character for the benefit of residents and visitors	RA1 (i) RA2 (ii, viii) RA3 RA4	100%	Support of countryside policies at appeal	RDC
	To respect and conserve the historic landscape mosaic, particularly in the High Weald AONB;	RA1 (i) RA2 RA3 RA4	100%	Support of AONB policy at appeal (EN1)	RDC

Rural Areas

Strategic Objective (Aim)	Core Strategy Objective	Policy	Target	Indicator	Source
'To meet local needs and support vibrant and viable mixed communities in the rural areas, whilst giving particular attention to the social, economic, ecological and intrinsic value of the countryside'.	To support agriculture and foster other land-based industries;	RA2 RA3 RA4	Maintain or increase % of population in farming or land based industries.	DEFRA surveys - % land area of district in active farming	RDC/DEFRA
				Employment by sector	ESiF
			Provide affordable housing in accordance with Policy HO2	% population employed in farming and land-based industries	DEFRA
				Housing Completions by type and size	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR)
	To promote environmentally sensitive land management in a way that supports the diversity of natural habitats;	RA2 (I, ii, viii) RA3 (v) RA4 (ii) (iv)	All SSSIs to achieve favourable condition	Condition of designated SSSIs	Natural England
			Maintain or increase	Uptake of Higher Level Stewardship (HLS)	Natural England
	To support sustainable tourism and recreation, including improved access to the countryside.	RA2 (iii), (vi), (vii) RA3 (ii) RA4(b)	Increase access to woodland	Access to woodland	Woodland Trust
	To promote environmentally sensitive land management in a way that supports the diversity of natural habitats;	RA2 (I, ii, viii) RA3 (v) RA4 (ii) (iv)	All SSSIs to achieve favourable condition	Condition of designated SSSIs	Natural England
			Maintain or increase	Uptake of Higher Level Stewardship (HLS)	Natural England
	To support sustainable tourism and recreation, including improved access to the countryside.	RA2 (iii), (vi), (vii) RA3 (ii) RA4(b)	Increase access to woodland	Access to woodland	Woodland Trust

Sustainable Development

Strategic Objective (Aim)	Core Strategy Objective	Policy	Target	Indicator	Source
'To mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts, and to use natural resources efficiently'.	To reduce carbon emissions and move towards a low carbon future	SRM1 (i-vii)	Reduce CO2 emissions per capita in the LA area	Per capita reduction in CO2 emissions in the LA area	ESiF RDC – Quality of Life Indicator
	To maintain an adequate, safe water supply, use water resources efficiently, and avoid their pollution	SRM2 (i)	Increase % of river length of high quality and good quality (EA)	Water Consumption per Capita	ESiF Collected by OFWAT
				Quality of river water length – ecological, physico-chemical and biological quality	
			Improve bathing quality at beaches	Bathing quality at beaches (EA)	ESiF collected by EA

Communities

Strategic Objective (Aim)	Core Strategy Objective	Policy	Target	Indicator	Source
	To develop inclusive community life including support networks	CO1, CO2, CO3,	Increase C2,D1 and D2 floorspace in the district	Total amount of completed floorspace for town centre uses (C2, D1 and D2 – Gross and Net)	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR)
	To promote healthy, active lifestyles	CO1, CO2, CO3	Delivery of sport and recreation facilities in accordance with shortfalls identified set by Open Space, Sports Recreation Study and Leisure Facilities Strategy	Resident satisfaction with sport and leisure facilities	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR)
				Access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling	

Strategic Objective (Aim)	Core Strategy Objective	Policy	Target	Indicator	Source
Communities					
	To support older people, particularly to live independently	CO1, CO2, CO3, CO5	Increase C2 floorspace in the district	Number of net new specialist housing schemes delivered (C2)	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR)
				% of population with reasonable access to town centres by public transport/walk	RDC ESiF Quality of Life Indicator
'To continue to support, and further develop, vibrant, safe, balanced and inclusive communities'.	To be more attractive to young people as a place to live	CO1, CO2, CO3, CO4	Provide affordable housing in accordance with Policy HO2	Housing completions by size and type	
				Amount of land developed for employment by type (B uses)	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR)
				Total amount of floorspace for 'town centre uses' (A1, A2, B1a, D2)	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR)
					ESiF
				% 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET)	ESiF
	To maintain low crime levels and improve the feeling of safety	CO6	**Reduce actual crime rates**	**Percentage of residents who said in a survey that they feel fairly safe or very safe outside their area after dark (RM12)**	**British Crime Survey**
			Reduce fear of crime	**Crime by key offences per 1,000 population**	**British Crime Survey**

Housing

Strategic Objective (Aim)	Core Strategy Objective	Policy	Target	Indicator	Source
'To provide housing in a way that supports local priorities and provides choice, including for affordable housing'.	To provide and maintain a housing stock that supports sustainable, inclusive, communities in both towns and rural areas	LHN1 (i-vii) LHN5 LHN6	Achieve housing targets set by Core Strategy	Housing Completions by size and type	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR)
				Net additional dwellings in previous years, for the reporting year and in future years. Managed delivery target	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR)
				Net additional pitches (Gypsy & Traveller)	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR)
	To respond to the changing mix and needs of households, including more older person households	LHN1 (I, vii)	To provide a proportion of residential schemes suitable for elderly occupants conforming to Lifetime Homes standard	Achieving independence for older people through rehab/intermediate care	ESiF
				Housing completions by size and type	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR)
	To increase the availability of affordable housing	**LHN1 (v) LHN (i-iv) LHN4**	**850 affordable dwellings between 2011-2028, roughly equating to 50 dwellings per annum**	**Affordable housing completions by size and type**	**Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR)**
				Lower quartile property price to earnings ratio	**DCLG via ESiF**

Housing

Strategic Objective (Aim)	Core Strategy Objective	Policy	Target	Indicator	Source
'To provide housing in a way that supports local priorities and provides choice, including for affordable housing'.	To provide housing choices that encourage young people to live locally	LHN1 (i) LHN3	Contribute to an overall balance of 65% social rented and 35% intermediate affordable housing	Lower quartile property price to earnings ratio	ESiF
				Average House Prices	ESiF
				Affordable Housing Completions by size and type	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR)
	To make effective use of existing housing stock, including bringing empty homes back into use		Increase number of empty homes brought back into use.	Number of empty homes brought back into use	RDC

Economy

Strategic Objective (Aim)	Core Strategy Objective	Policy	Target	Indicator	Source
'To secure sustainable economic growth for existing and future residents and provide greater prosperity and employment opportunities for all'.	To raise aspirations and improve educational attainment, where needed	EC1 (i)	Increase % Year 11s achieving 5 or more GCSEs, including English & Maths, at grades A*-C	Achievement 78 points across Early Years Foundation Stage	ESiF
				% Year 11s achieving 5 or more GCSEs, including English & Maths, at grades A*-C	ESiF
	To increase skill levels	EC1 (I, ii, iii, viii) EC5	Increase % students 16+ in full time education	Participation of 17 year olds in education or training	ESiF
				% students 16+ in full time education	ESiF
			Reduce % of working population with no qualifications	% of working population with no qualifications	ESiF
				% employment in knowledge-based industries	ESiF

Strategic Objective (Aim)	Core Strategy Objective	Policy	Target	Indicator	Source
Economy					
'To secure sustainable economic growth for existing and future residents and provide greater prosperity and employment opportunities for all'.	To increase the business base and overall productivity	EC1 (i-vii) EC2 (i-v) EC4 EC5	Increase employment floorspace by type	Total amount of additional employment floorspace – by type	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR) ESiF
			Reduce % long term unemployment rate within Rother	Unemployment rate in Rother	
	To increase the supply and range of job opportunities across the district as part of achieving a more sustainable pattern of development and activity	EC1 (v) EC3	Delivery employment floorspace in accordance with Core Strategy targets	Total amount of additional employment floorspace	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR)
	To increase local earnings, relative to living costs.	EC1-EC6	Increase household income over the plan period	Average (median) annual household income	ESiF
	To develop key existing sectors, including tourism	EC5 EC6	Increase proportion of employment in growth sector	**Employment by Sector**	**ESIF**
	To realise economic opportunities and mitigate against locational disadvantages	**EC5**	**Increase average weekly earnings**	**% of all adults over age 18 with internet connection at home**	**ESiF.**
				Average (median) weekly earnings for all employees, workplace based	**ONS**

Environment

Strategic Objective (Aim)	Core Strategy Objective	Policy	Target	Indicator	Source
'To maintain the high quality and improve the long term stewardship of the natural and built environment, with full regard to potential future consequences of climate change'	To conserve, manage and, where appropriate enhance, the high quality landscape resources, including the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the historic built environment	EN1 EN2 EN4 EN5	All SSSIs to achieve 'favourable condition'	Condition of designated SSSI	Natural England
			Increase access to woodland	Area of Ancient semi-natural woodland	Woodland Trust
				Number of Listed Buildings at Risk	RDC/EH
			Increase % of residents seeing improvement in town centres	% of residents seeing improvement in town centres	RDC
			100%	Support of AONB policy at appeal (EN1)	RDC
	To protect important ecological resources in the district, and, where appropriate, enhance these as part of a wider approach to 'green space'	EN1 EN5	All SSSIs to reach favourable condition	Condition of designated SSSIs	Natural England
	To place strong emphasis on design quality in all development	EN2 EN3 EN4	100%	Success of Design Quality Policy at Appeal	RDC
	To protect communities from flooding and effectively manage risk	EN6 (i-iv) EN7 (i-iv)	Reduce the number planning permissions that contrary to EA advice.	**No. of planning permissions granted contrary to EA advice**	**EA and RDC**
			Reduce properties at risk from flooding	**Properties at risk from flooding register at EA**	**Environment Agency for Govt.**

Strategic Objective (Aim)	Core Strategy Objective	Policy	Target	Indicator	Source
Transport					
	Improve connectivity between Rother and the wider South East region, both along the coast and towards London	TR1 (i-iv)	Delivery of Link Road	Developing the Bexhill to Hastings Link Road. Key dates and targets	RDC
'To provide a higher level of access to jobs and services for all ages in both urban and rural areas, and improve connectivity with the rest of the region'.	Achieve a re-balancing of the transport system in favour of sustainable modes as a means of access to employment, health services, recreation and community facilities	TR2 (i-vi) TR3 (i-ii)	Increase the % of new development within 30 minutes public transport time by public transport to GP services, primary and secondary school, employment and a major retail centre.	% of new development within 30 minutes public transport time by public transport to GP services, primary and secondary school, employment and a major retail centre.	ESiF/RDC
			Increase % of children travelling to school by walking/cycling	Mode of travel to school - % walking/cycling	ESiF/RDC – Quality of Life Indicator
	Maximise transport choice and otherwise provide for efficient and safe movement, in both urban and rural areas	TR1 (iii – iv) TR3 (ii)	Targets in LTP3 Delivery Programme and Rye LATS implementation	LTP3 targets and Implementation programme	ESCC
			Improve road safety record in Rother	Road injuries and deaths - Casualties per million population	ESiF
			Increase % of population with reasonable access to town centres by public transport/walk	% of population with reasonable access to town centres by public transport/walk	ESiF/RDC – Quality of Life Indicator

Strategic Objective (Aim)	Core Strategy Objective	Policy	Target	Indicator	Source
Implementation and Monitoring					
A framework to ensure that the Core strategy is robust in terms of ensuring the effective and timely delivery of development and infrastructure	n/a	IMP2	Delivery of infrastructure to support development growth	Review of Infrastructure Delivery Plan	Local Plan Monitoring Report (LPMR)

Maps

MAP 2: BEXHILL INSET DIAGRAM

Proposed Station at Glyne Gap deleted as part of Main Modifications

MAP 1: DISTRICT KEY DIAGRAM