

ROTHER LOCAL PLAN 2025 - 2042 REGULATION 18 VERSION. PUBLISHED JANUARY Public Consultation – 26th January - 23rd March 2026

Welcome!

In Summer 2024 we carried out a public consultation on the first version of the draft Rother Local Plan. This included policies about many different topics, including the environment, housing and the economy. Now, we are carrying out a second public consultation on another part of the draft Local Plan – this time, focusing on proposed sites for development.

After this, we will consider all comments received to both the first and second consultations, and use these, together with technical evidence, to help us produce a final version of the draft Local Plan.

This will include topic policies and site allocations. This final version will be published for public comment before being submitted to the Government for independent examination. All being well, we hope to be able to adopt the new Local Plan in 2027/28.



How To Participate

1. Attend the exhibition.
2. Visit the official **consultation webpage**:
www.rother.gov.uk/draftlocalplan2026
3. Explore the plan, share your thoughts, and provide feedback.



Hard Copies Available

You can view **hard copies of the Local Plan** at:

1. Bexhill Town Hall
2. Libraries in Bexhill, Battle, Rye and Wadhurst
3. Community Library in Northiam.



Have Your Say

Your opinions matter!

Whether you find something positive or have concerns, we want to hear from you. You don't need to comment on every aspect, focus on what matters most to you.

Visit the consultation webpage: www.rother.gov.uk/draftlocalplan2026 and submit your comments.

Paper feedback forms are also available



Scan for Local Plan

Introduction

This is an introduction to our draft Local Plan. While it won't provide you with all its content, we hope it will be of interest and encourage you to explore the comprehensive documents we are consulting on.



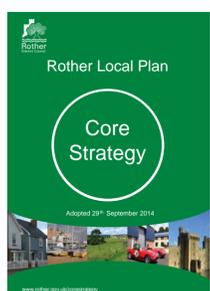
The Geography of Rother



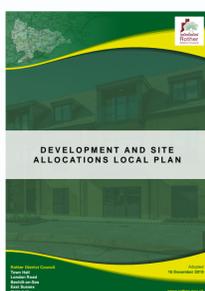
The Local Plan responds to the unique circumstances of Rother – where around half of the population lives in Bexhill and the other half in small towns, villages, hamlets and in open countryside, the majority of which is in the High Weald National Landscape (NL), the new name for this designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Rother also has a high number of visitors, but poor connections by road or rail to and from surrounding areas. Along with Hastings, we have areas with high levels of deprivation and a chronic affordable housing shortage.



What is the Local Plan for?



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Once adopted, the new Rother Local Plan will replace Rother's Core Strategy (2014) and Development and Site Allocations (2019) Plans. Therefore, it is vitally important and will significantly influence what is built in Rother in the future.

This draft version of the new Local Plan will not be used to decide planning applications.

Introduction

The Council is legally required to have an up-to-date plan. This will ensure planning decisions reflect local aspirations, including protection of the environment, local character and the National Landscape. It will also help to avoid 'planning by appeal' – where the Council would have less control over where new development goes.



How Much Growth is Being Planned For?

Housing:

- The Government aims to significantly boost housing supply – it has set housing targets for all local authorities that they must seek to meet through Local Plan
- Rother's target is 912 new homes per year – up from 335 homes in our current Local Plan
- The draft Local Plan proposes land for 495 homes per year - this is roughly half of the Government's target

Economic Development:

- Our current evidence suggests 25 hectares of land for business (office and industrial uses), or 75,000 square metres of floorspace is required – the Plan seeks to meet this.

Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation:

- The Council is legally required to meet the needs of this group
- Our current evidence shows that 18 new permanent pitches are required (10 have already been provided by planning permissions)



Ensuring the Timely Delivery of Infrastructure to Support Growth

- The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) sets out the infrastructure required to support the levels of growth being planned for
- This includes community facilities and services, transport, utilities, flood defences and wastewater, and green infrastructure
- The IDP will help us to secure new and improved infrastructure from developers and other providers, where and when it is needed

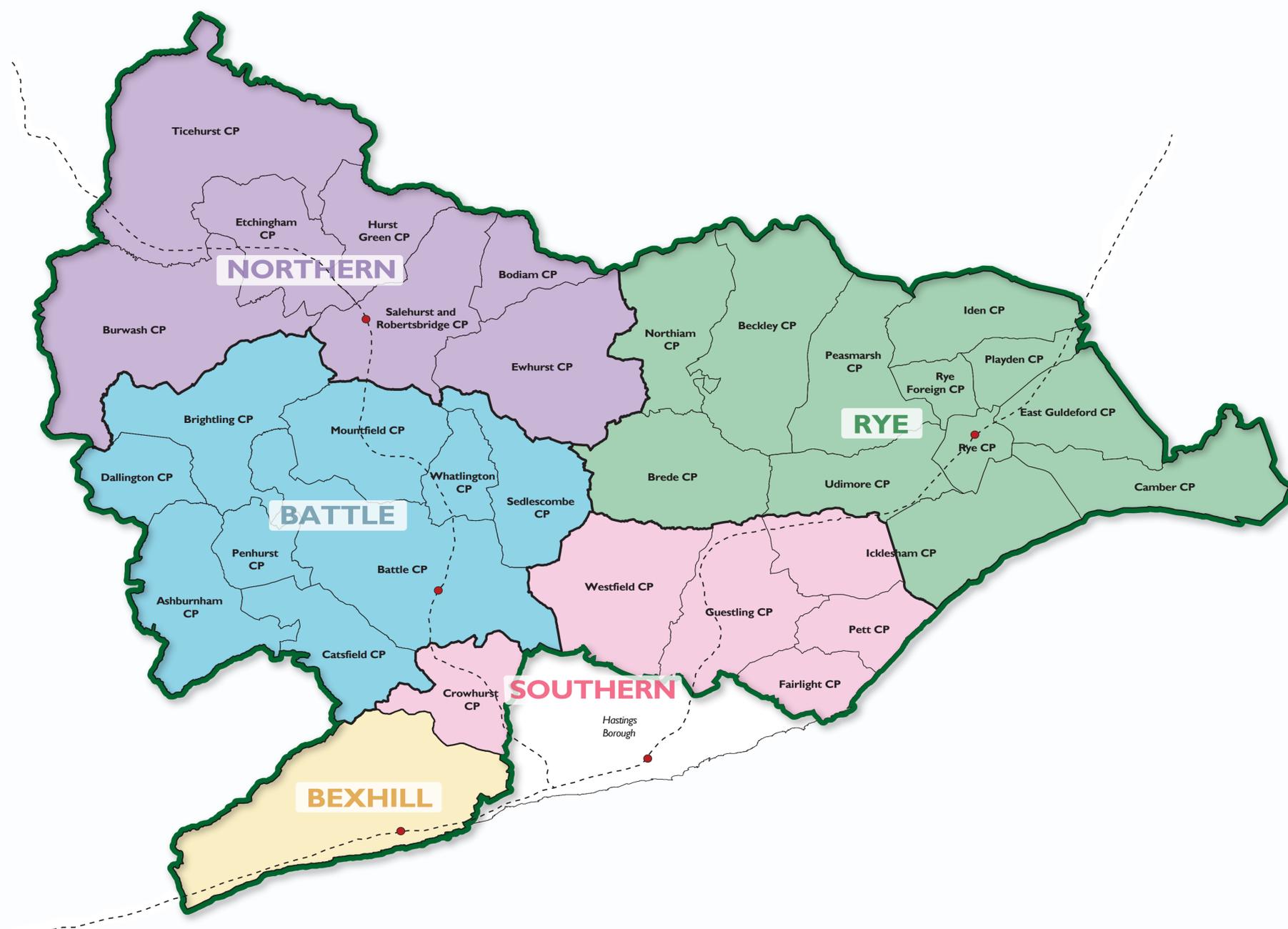


An Evidence-Based Local Plan

- A wide range of studies and technical information have been prepared
- This includes the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA), Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA), and Sustainability Appraisal – all available to view on our website.

Five Spatial Sub-Areas

The draft Local Plan proposes a Development Strategy which splits Rother into five sub-areas, each containing clusters of towns and villages. This is an intentional shift from the current Core Strategy vision. The new Local Plan seeks to emphasise the interconnectedness of communities and the relationships between different places.



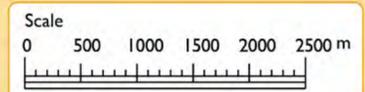
Each of these spatial sub-areas has their own vision statement and an identified and potential amount of development.

In all five sub-areas there is open countryside. It relates to those areas outside of villages with development boundaries and includes farmland, woodland, hamlets and scattered development. Open countryside has its own vision and would remain protected from most forms of development.

Bexhill Sub-Area



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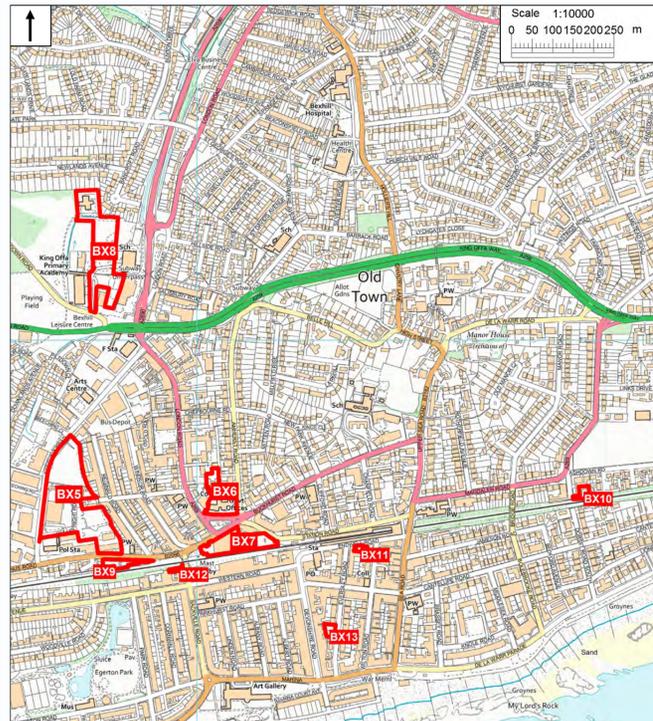
Rother District Boundary	Areas of Built Form	A Road	District Centre
Sub Area Boundary	Rail Line	Other Roads	Town Centre
Bexhill (Sub Area)	Rail Stations	West Bexhill Potential Development Growth Area	<3km from Bexhill Station*
Rother District	Bus Routes	North Bexhill Potential Development Growth Area	<i>*Each white dashed concentric circle line represents a further 3km from Bexhill Station.</i>
Areas Outside of Rother District	Bus Route Number		
Combe Valley Countryside Park	Cycle Path		

The **Bexhill sub-area's vision** is for:

- Bexhill to be the key focus for **sustainable** residential and commercial growth. Supporting infrastructure will cater to the needs of those living, working, and visiting Bexhill.
- The 'broad locations' of west and north Bexhill will serve as 'live well locally' urban extensions. These areas will be well connected to the main urban areas and local neighbourhoods through sustainable transport options. Growth will only occur in areas that are well connected to the existing transport network.
- The **Combe Valley Countryside Park** will play a vital role in providing recreational space and supporting biodiversity.
- The draft Local Plan identifies potential to deliver some 4,764 dwellings and 54,672 sqm of employment floorspace across the Bexhill sub-area.

Bexhill Sub-Area: Proposed Sites

Bexhill Central Urban



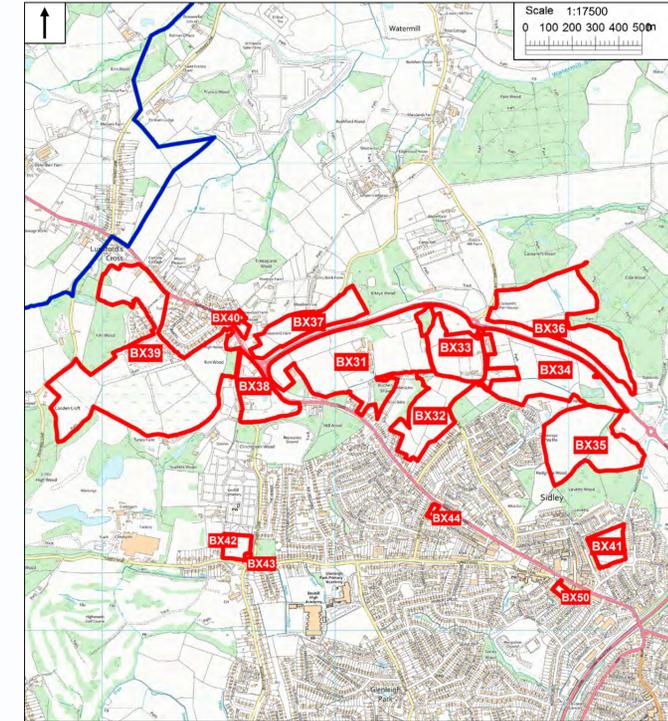
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Bexhill Suburban



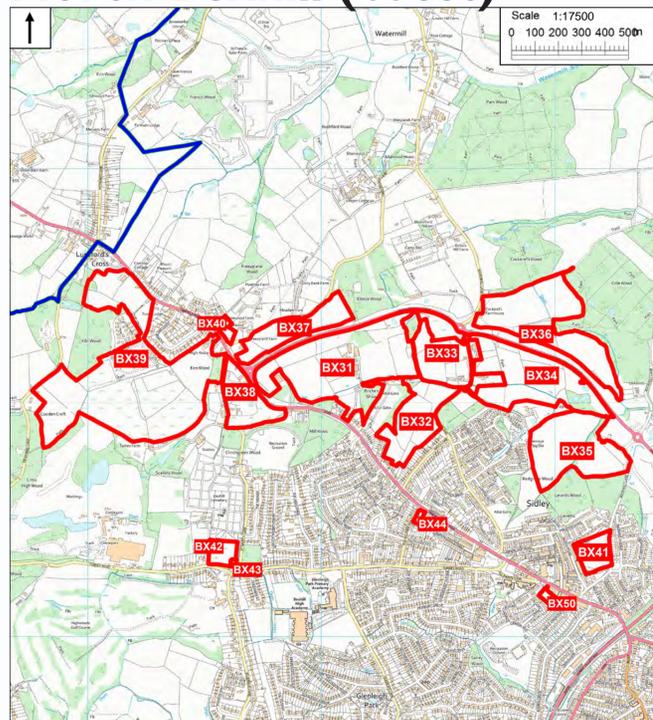
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West Bexhill



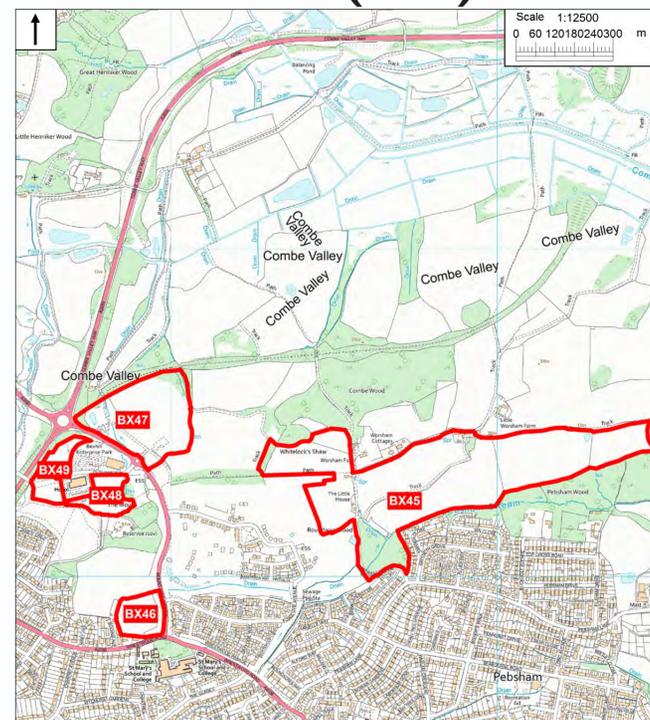
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North Bexhill (West)



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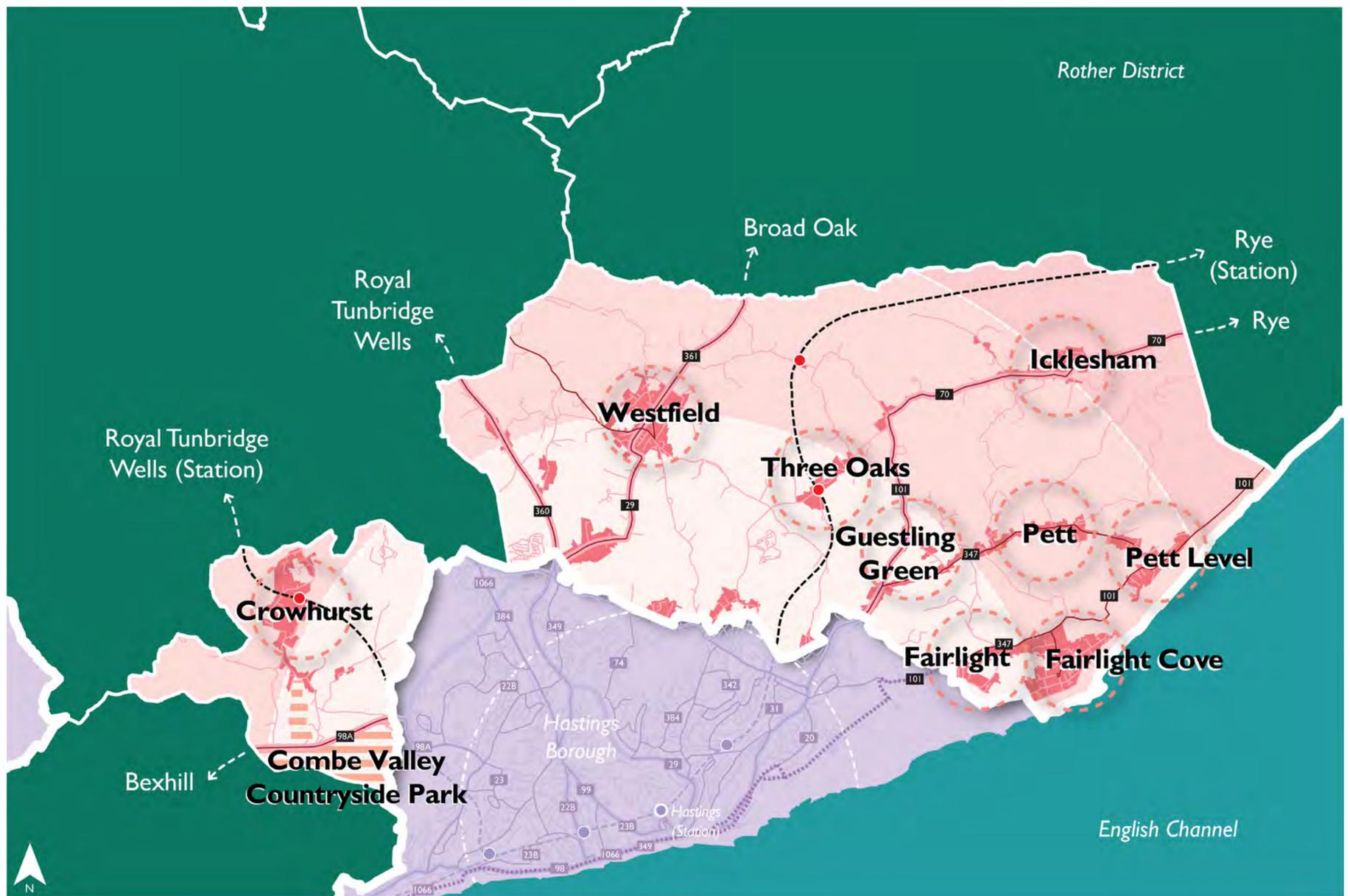
North Bexhill (East)



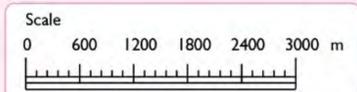
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These maps show the locations of the sites included in the draft Local Plan, which could be suitable for development. Please look at the draft Local Plan for full details, and make your comments at: www.rother.gov.uk/draftlocalplan2026

Southern Rother and Hastings Fringes Sub-Area



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Rother District Boundary	Areas of Built Form	A Road	Bus Route Number (Hastings)
Sub Area Boundary	Rail Line	Other Roads	A Road (Hastings)
Hastings Fringes (Sub Area)	Rail Stations	<3km from Hastings Station*	Other Roads (Hastings)
Rother District	Bus Route Number	Rail Line (Hastings)	Cycle Path (Hastings)
Areas Outside of Rother District	Bus Routes	Rail Stations (Hastings)	<i>*Each white dashed concentric circle line represents a further 3km from Hastings Station.</i>
Combe Valley Countryside Park	Population 0 - 3500	Bus Routes (Hastings)	

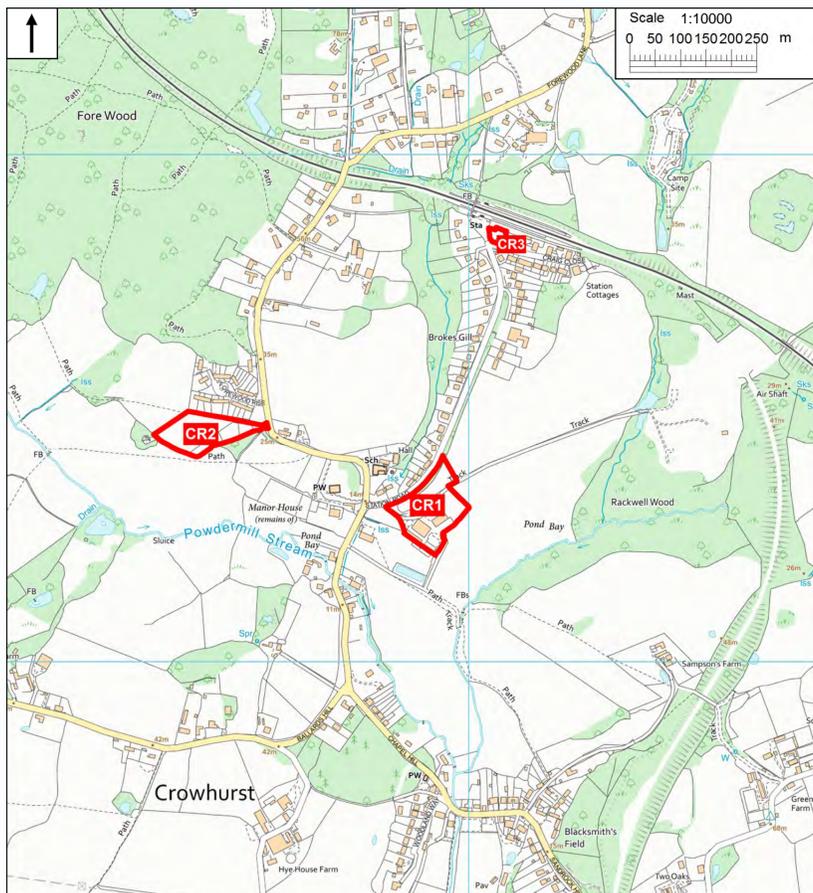
The **Southern Rother and Hastings Fringes sub-area's vision** is for:

- **Sensitive** development, however, opportunities for development are limited due to the landscape setting of the High Weald National Landscape, which wraps around Hastings.
- Sensitive small-scale development can be delivered in villages surrounding Hastings.
- Residential development can play a vital role in supporting existing facilities and services within the villages. Additionally, it can enhance connections to Hastings.
- The draft Local Plan identifies potential to deliver some 382 dwellings and 5,300 sqm of employment floorspace across the Southern Rother sub-area.

Southern Rother & Hastings Fringes Sub-Area: Proposed Sites

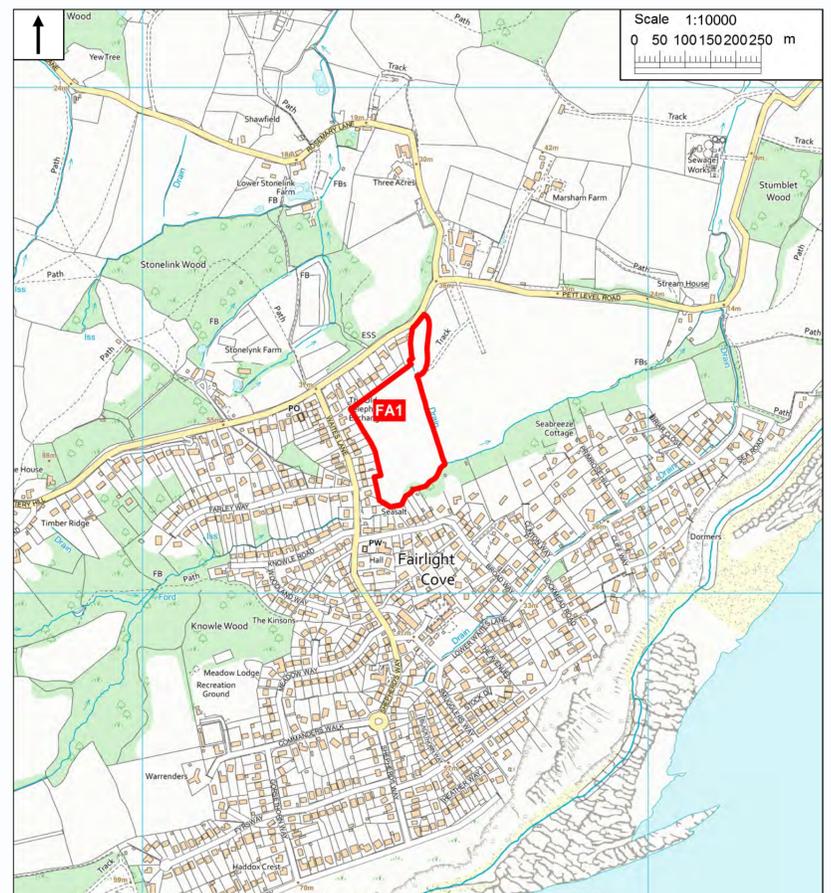
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Crowhurst



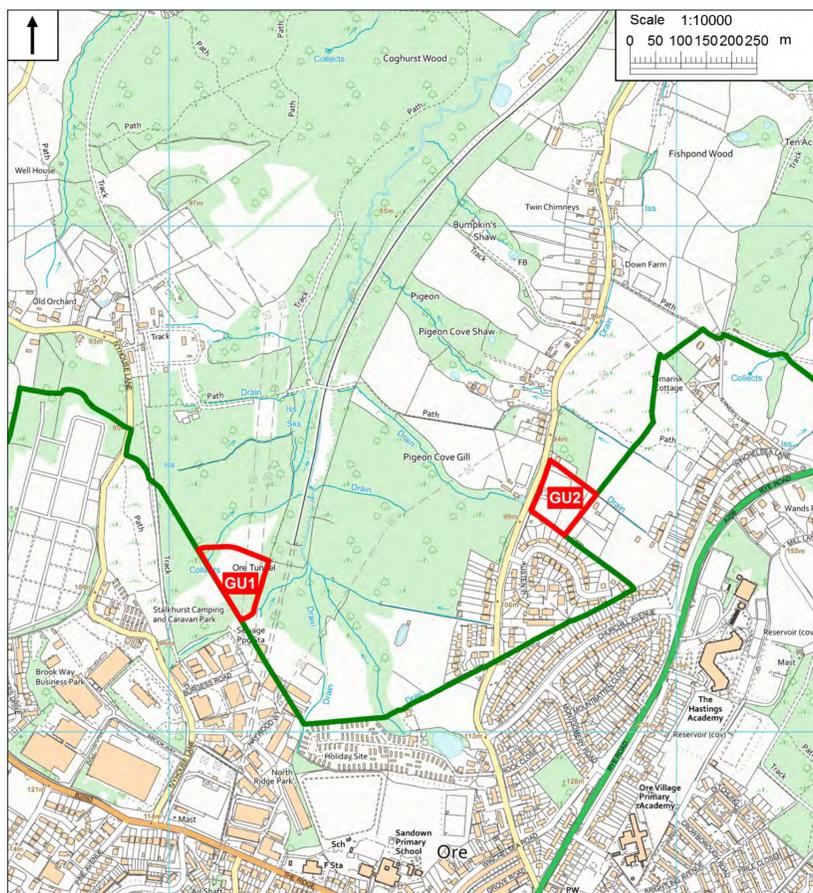
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Fairlight Cove



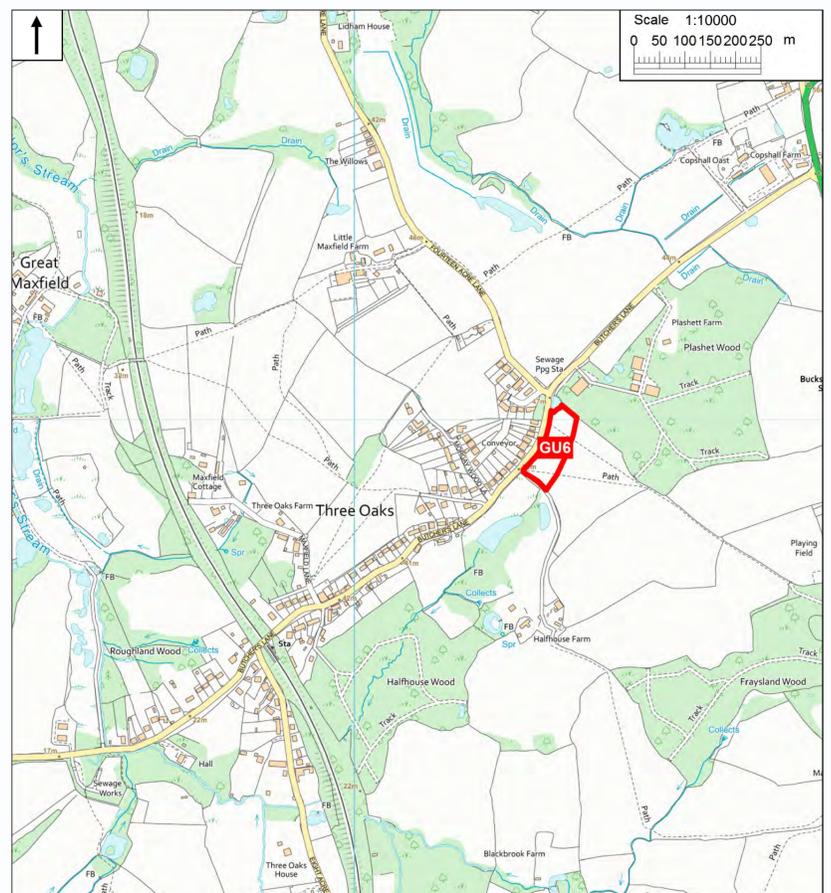
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Guestling Parish



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Three Oaks

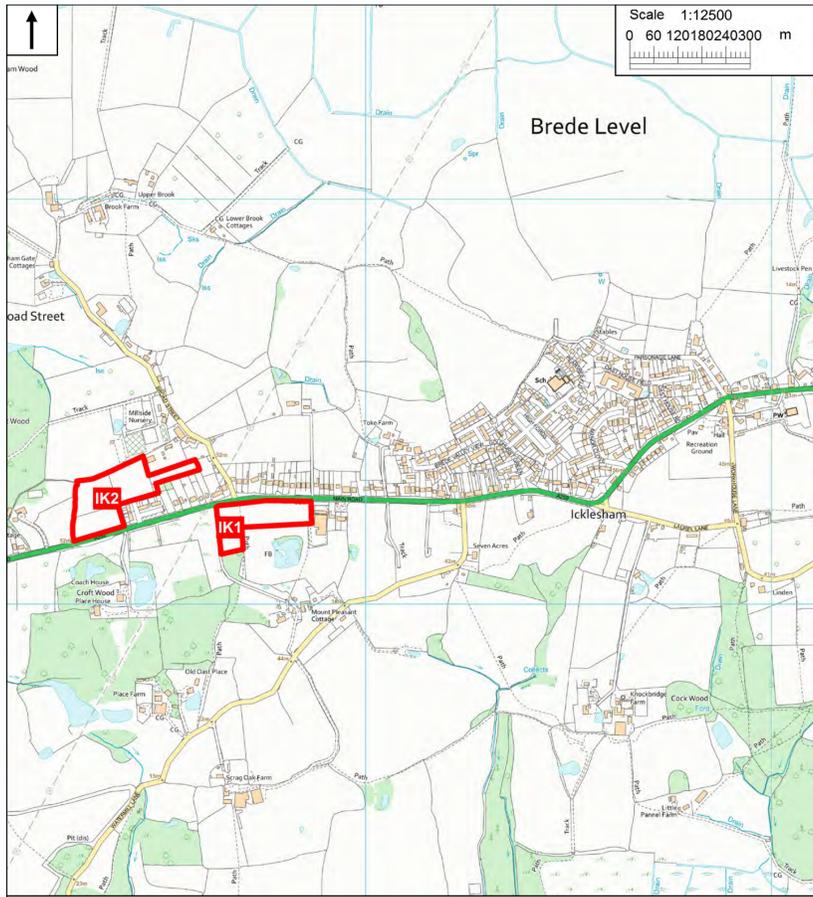


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Southern Rother & Hastings Fringes Sub-Area: Proposed Sites

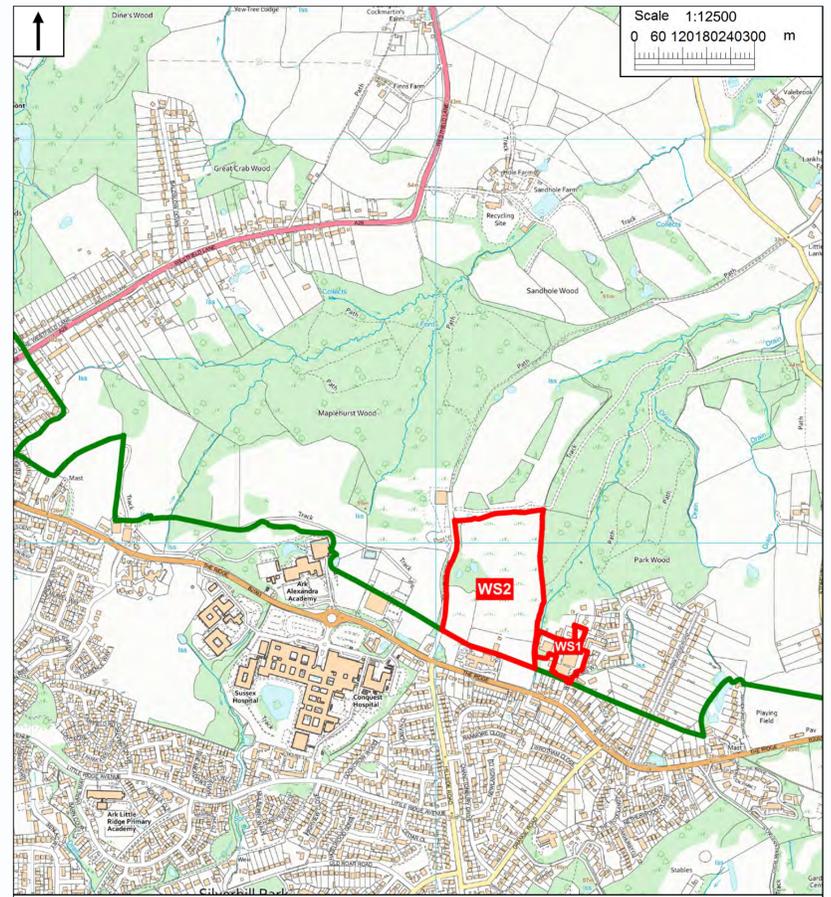
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Icklesham



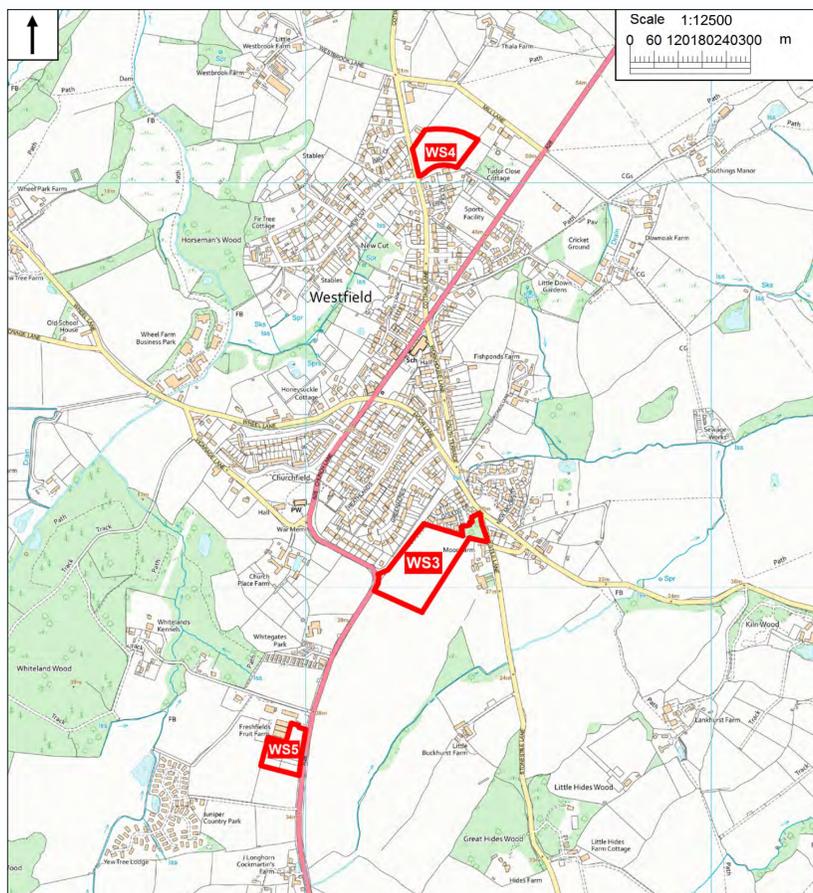
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Westfield Parish



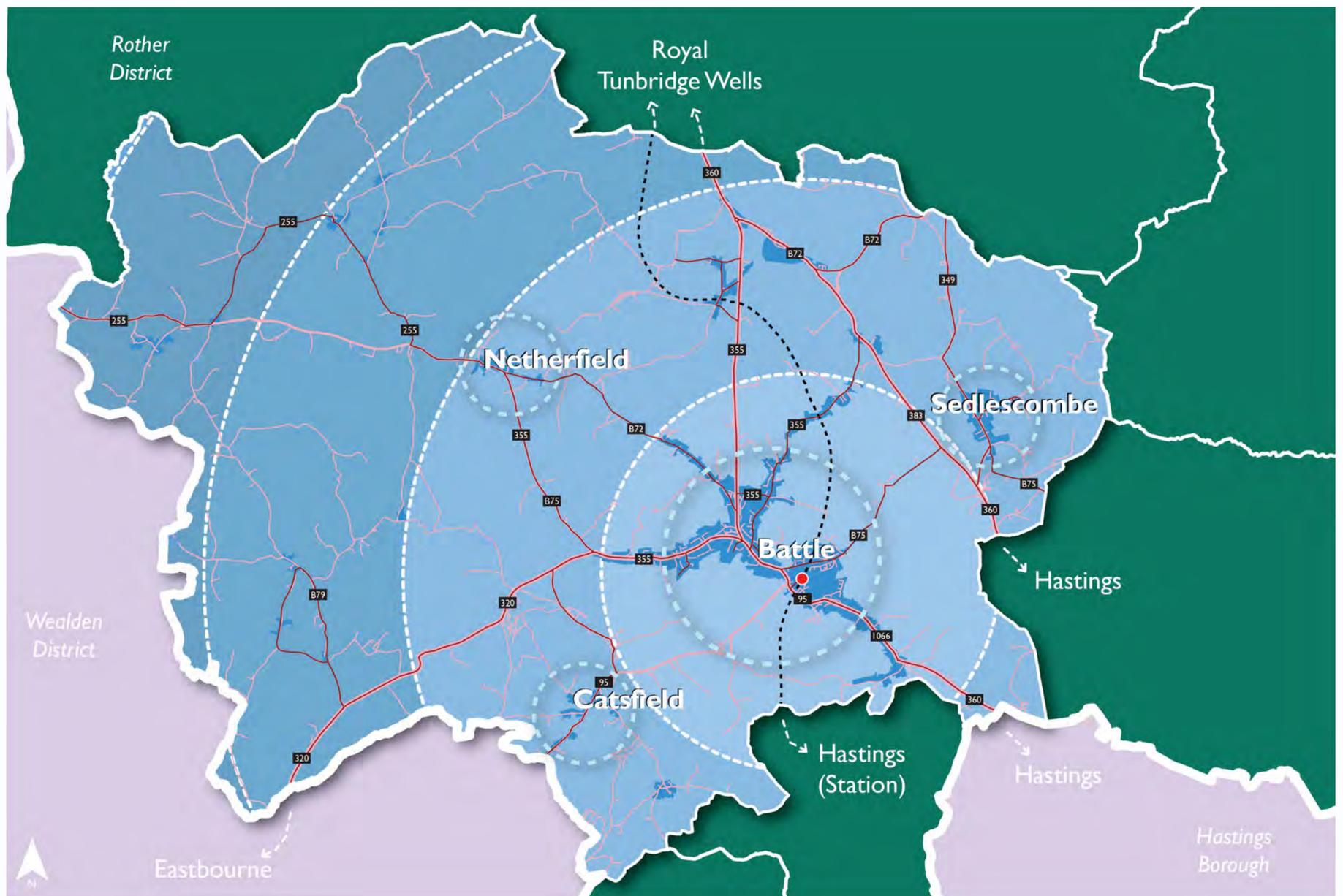
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Westfield

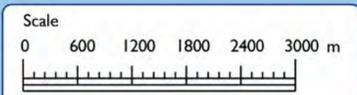


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Battle and Surrounding Settlements Sub-Area



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Rother District Boundary	Areas Outside of Rother District	Bus Routes	Population 0 - 3500
Sub Area Boundary	Areas of Built Form	Bus Route Number	Population 3500 - 7000
Battle (Sub Area)	Rail Line	A Road	<3km from Battle Station*
Rother District	Rail Stations	Other Roads	<i>*Each white dashed concentric circle line represents a further 3km from Battle Station.</i>

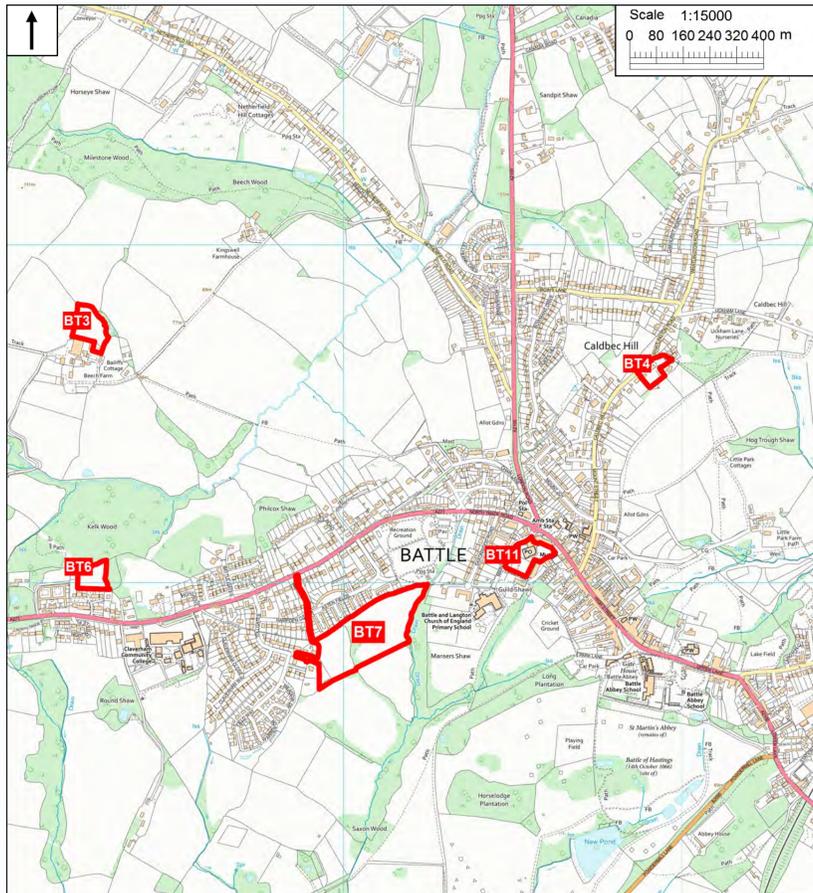
The **Battle and Surrounding Settlements sub-area's vision** is for:

- Battle to retain the historical character of its core and preserve its local distinctiveness.
- Sensitive growth could occur in Battle, including west of Hastings Road.
- In the villages surrounding Battle, sensitive small-scale development will be undertaken. It will support existing services and facilities while also delivering developer contributions for wider community benefit, thereby maintaining and improving health, wellbeing and community cohesion.
- The draft Local Plan identifies potential to deliver some 948 dwellings and 12,971 sqm of employment floorspace across the Battle and Surrounding Settlements sub-area.

Battle & Surrounding Settlements Sub-Area: Proposed Sites

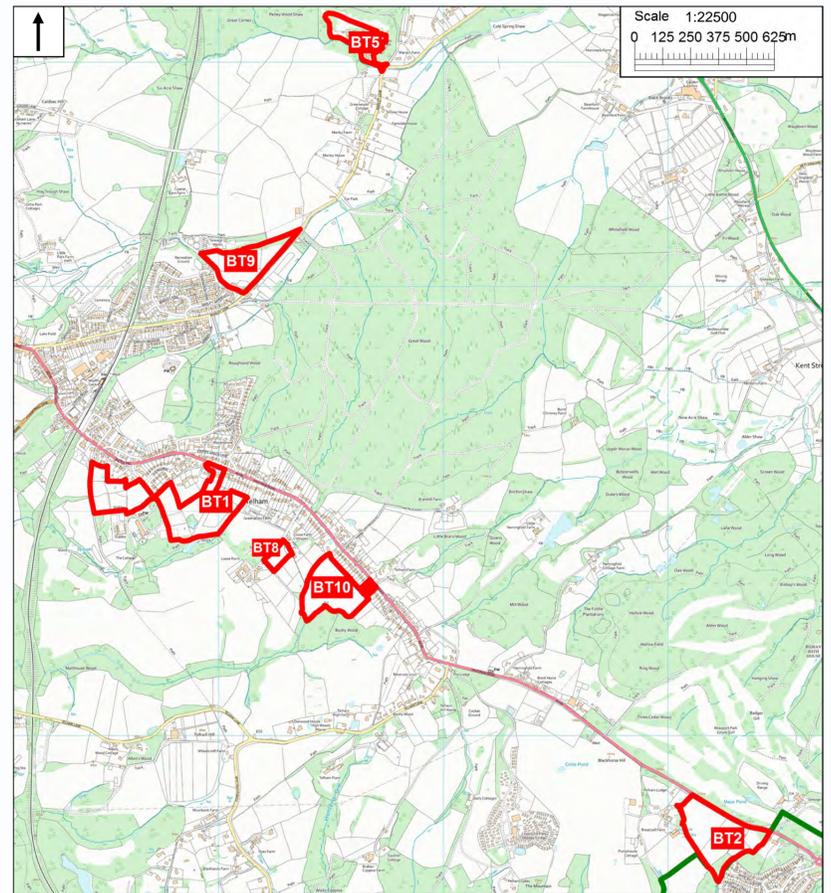
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Battle



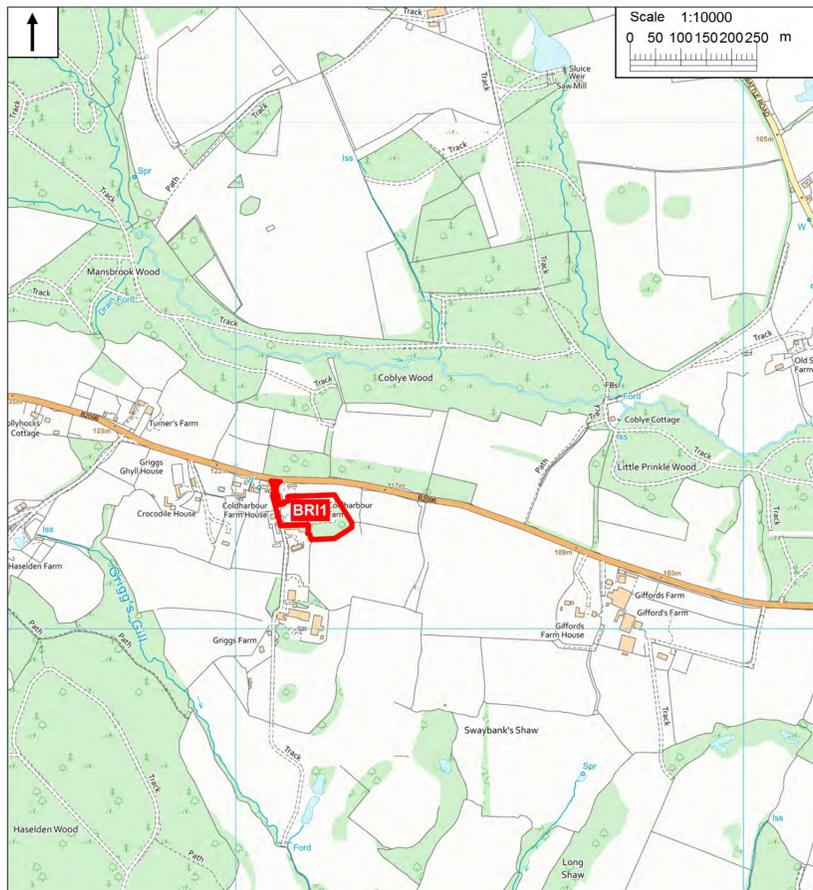
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Battle



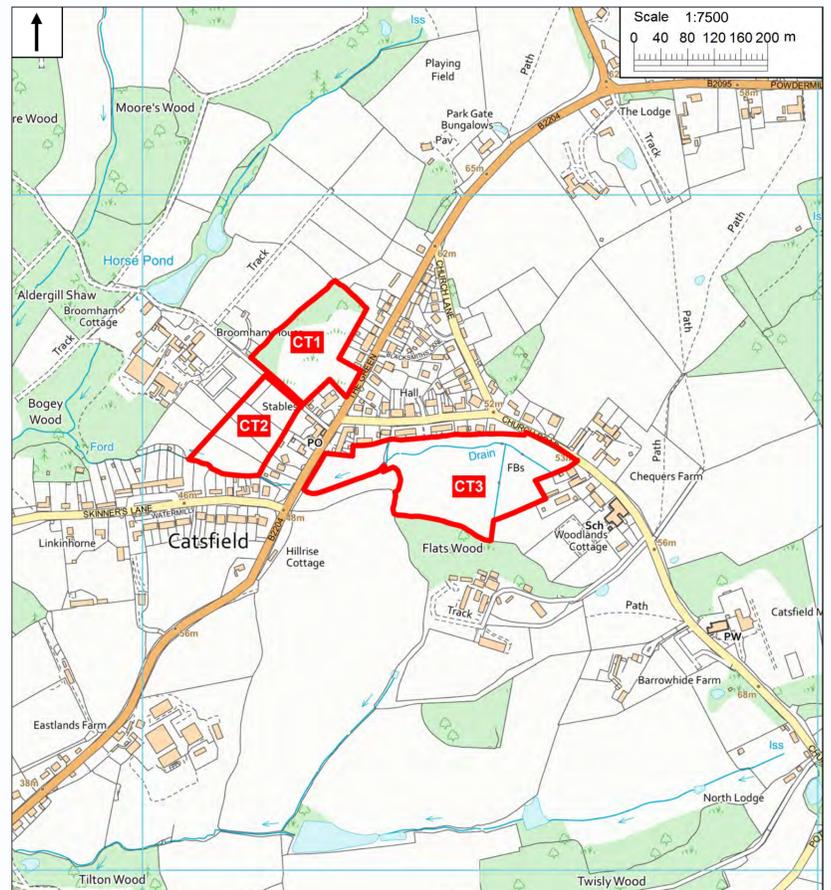
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Brightling



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Catsfield

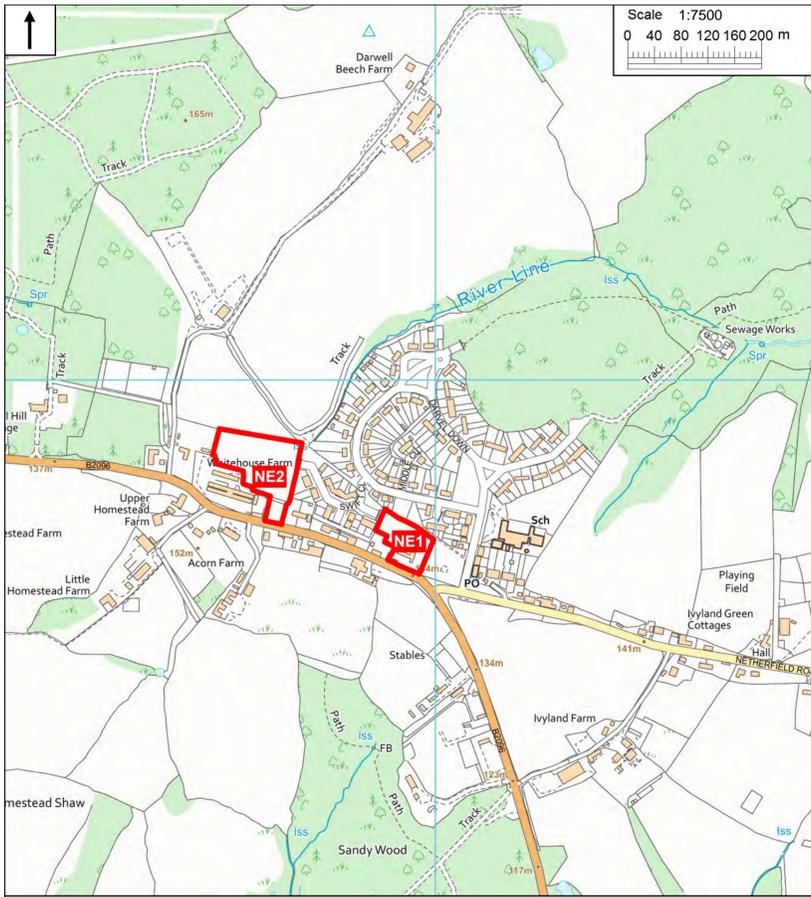


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Battle & Surrounding Settlements Sub-Area: Proposed Sites

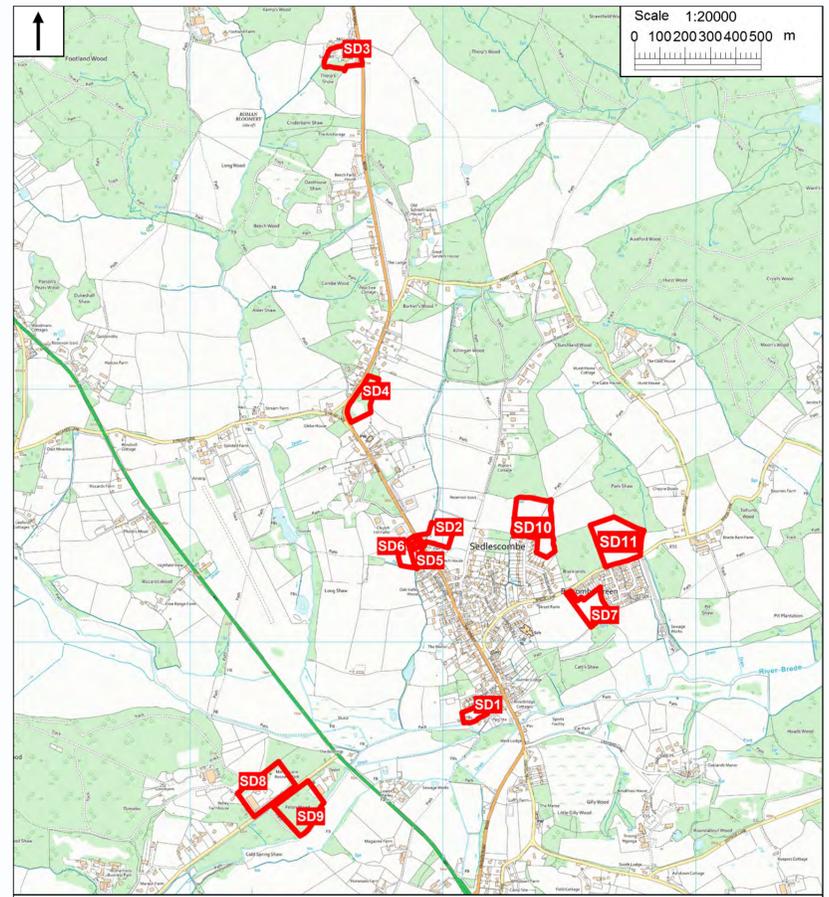
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Netherfield



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Sedlescombe

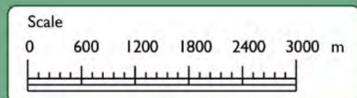


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Rye and the Eastern Settlements Cluster Sub-Area



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Rother District Boundary	Areas of Built Form	Bus Route Number	<3km from Rye Station*
Sub Area Boundary	Rail Line	A Road	<i>*Each white dashed concentric circle line represents a further 3km from Rye Station.</i>
Rye (Sub Area)	Rail Stations	Other Roads	
Rother District	Cycle Path	Population 0 - 3500	
Areas Outside of Rother District	Bus Routes	Population 3500 - 7000	

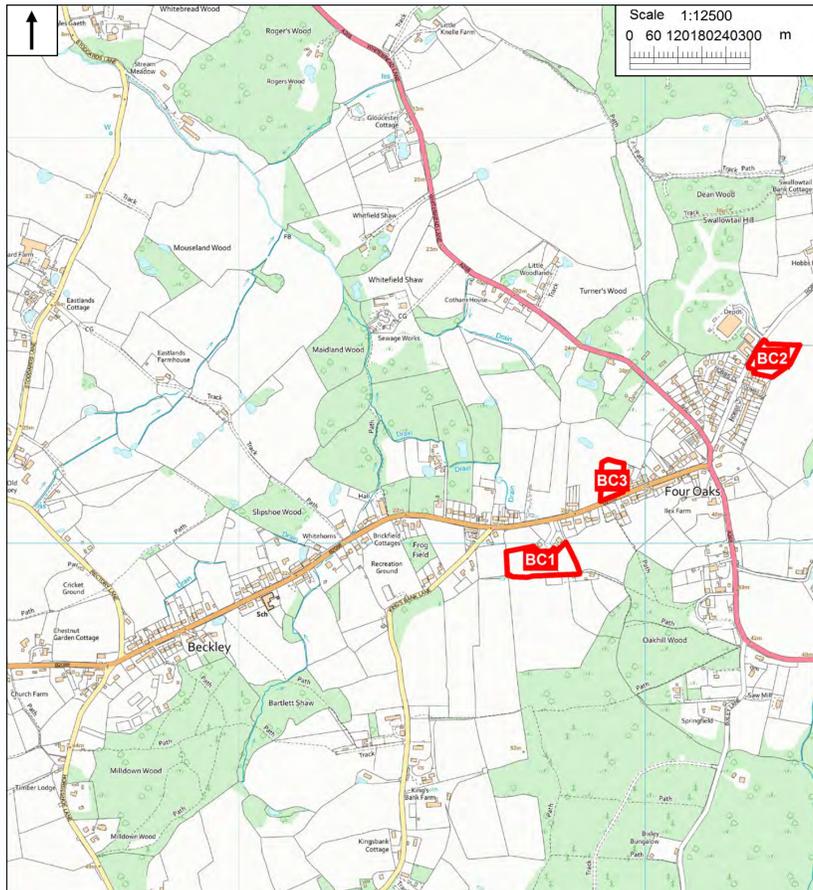
The **Rye and the Eastern Settlements Cluster sub-area's vision** is for:

- The important **historical character** of Rye to be preserved and enhanced, with a strong retail and services core, access to sustainable tourism and leisure opportunities.
- The key employment areas within Rye Harbour should be retained, along with other commercial areas across the town. Additionally, key tourism areas like Camber should be promoted, emphasising improved accessibility to reduce car dependency.
- The eastern cluster of settlements should be better connected through sustainable transport, with Rye serving as a pivotal transport hub.

Rye and the Eastern Settlements Sub-Area: Proposed Sites:

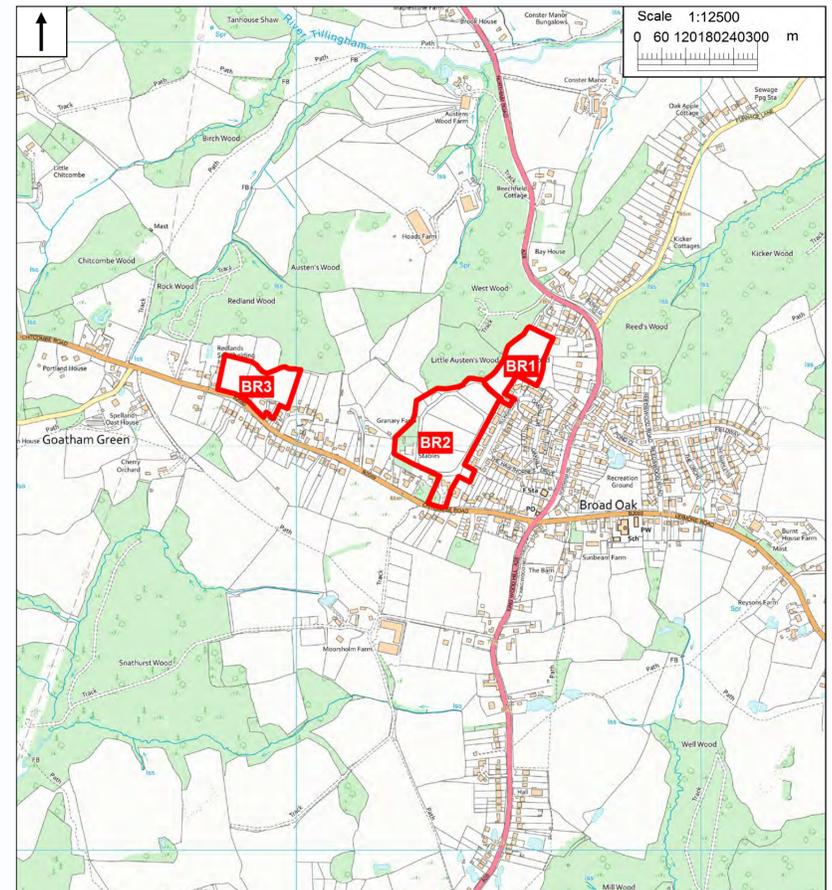
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Beckley and Four Oaks



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Broad Oak



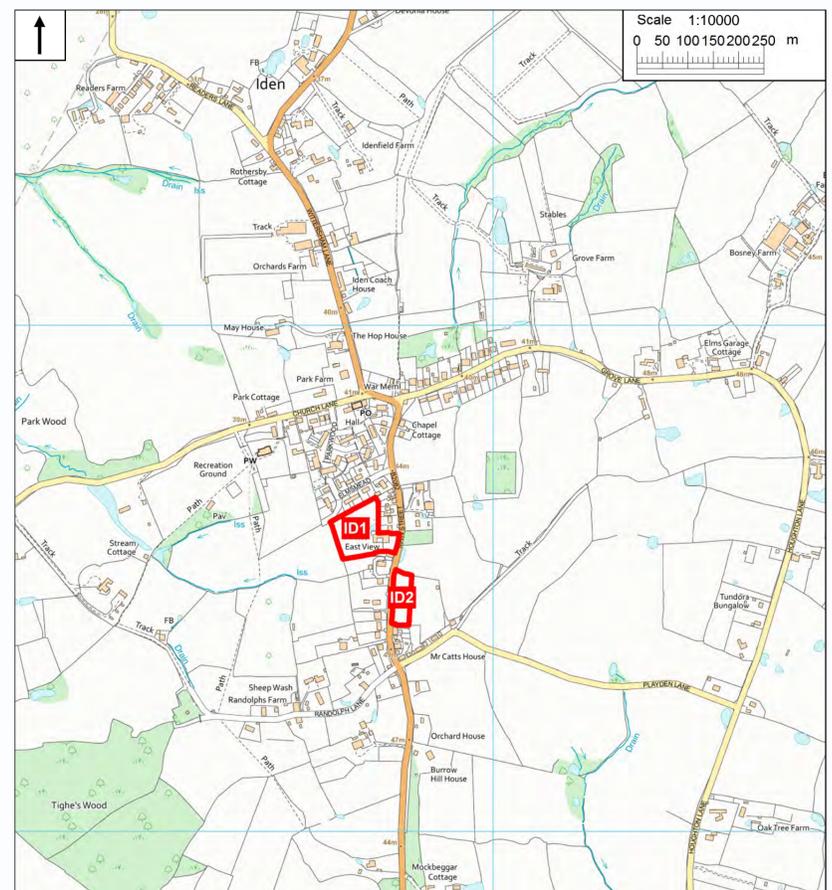
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Camber



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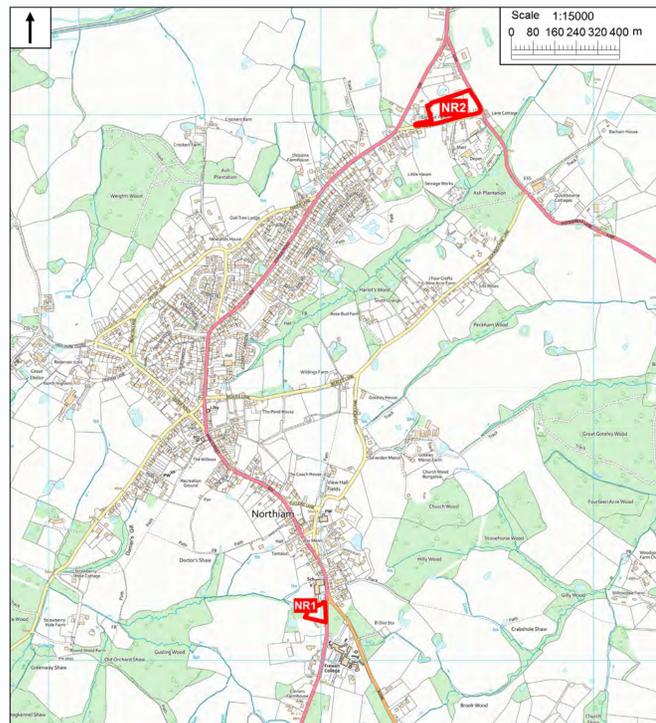
Iden



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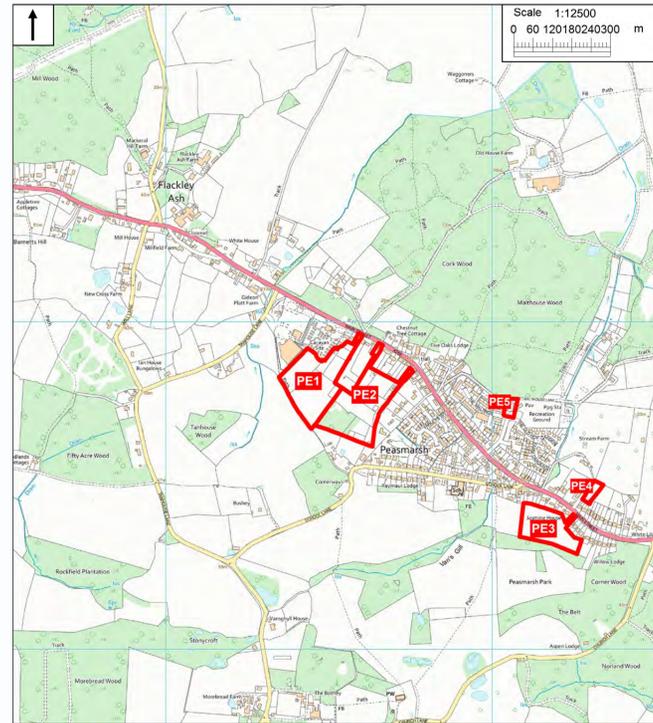
Rye and the Eastern Settlements Sub-Area: Proposed Sites

Northiam



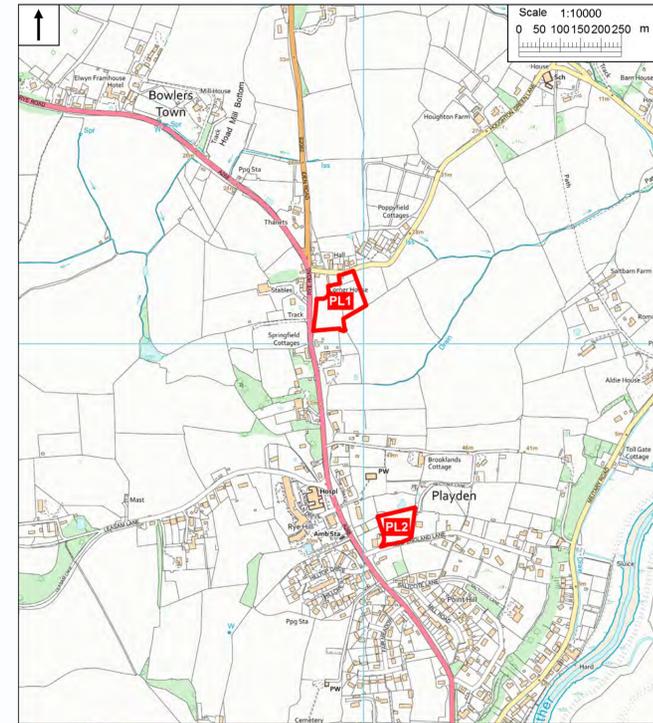
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Peasmarsh



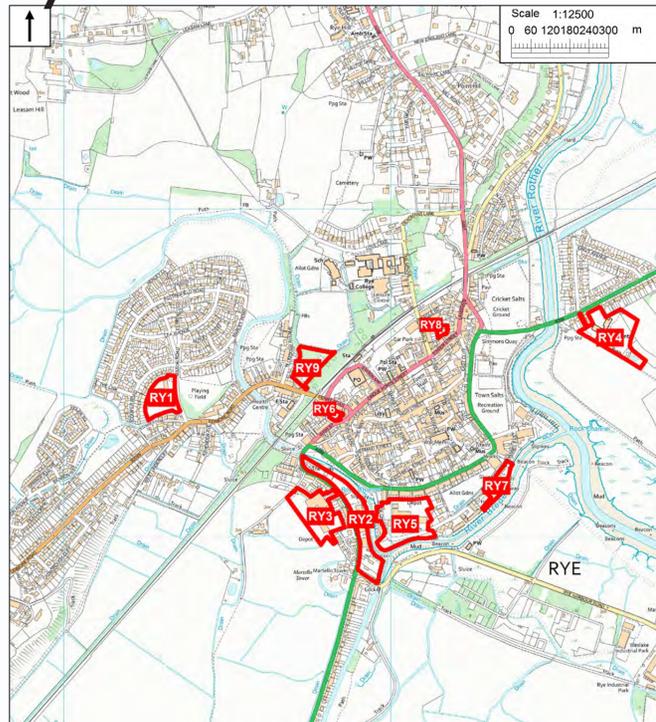
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Playden



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Rye



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Rye Harbour



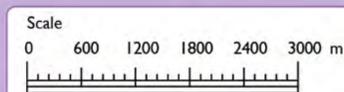
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These maps show the locations of the sites included in the draft Local Plan, which could be suitable for development. Please look at the draft Local Plan for full details, and make your comments at: www.rother.gov.uk/draftlocalplan2026

Northern Rother Sub-Area



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Rother District Boundary	Areas Outside of Rother District	Bus Routes	A21 Corridor
Sub Area Boundary	Areas of Built Form	Bus Route Number	Population 0 - 3500
Northern (Sub Area)	Rail Line	A Road	
Rother District	Rail Stations	Other Roads	

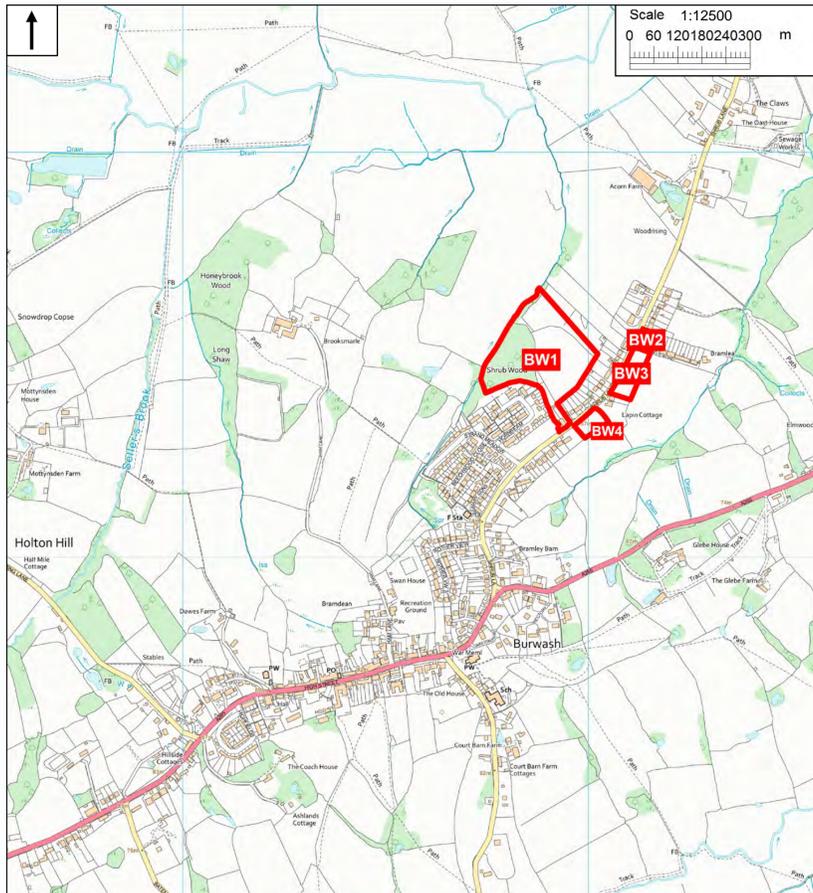
The **Northern Rother sub-area's vision** is for:

- Its settlements and communities to continue to thrive, through sensitive residential development and growth in villages. The aim is to maintain and improve health, wellbeing and community cohesion.
- Enhanced **connectivity** between rural settlements and the Hastings-London rail line is a priority. This will involve promoting and improving sustainable and active transport infrastructure.
- The Etchingham and Robertsbridge stations will continue to serve as essential transport hubs.
- The draft Local Plan identifies potential to deliver 996 dwellings and 4,350 sqm of employment floorspace across the Northern Rother sub-area.

Northern Rother Sub-Area: Proposed Sites

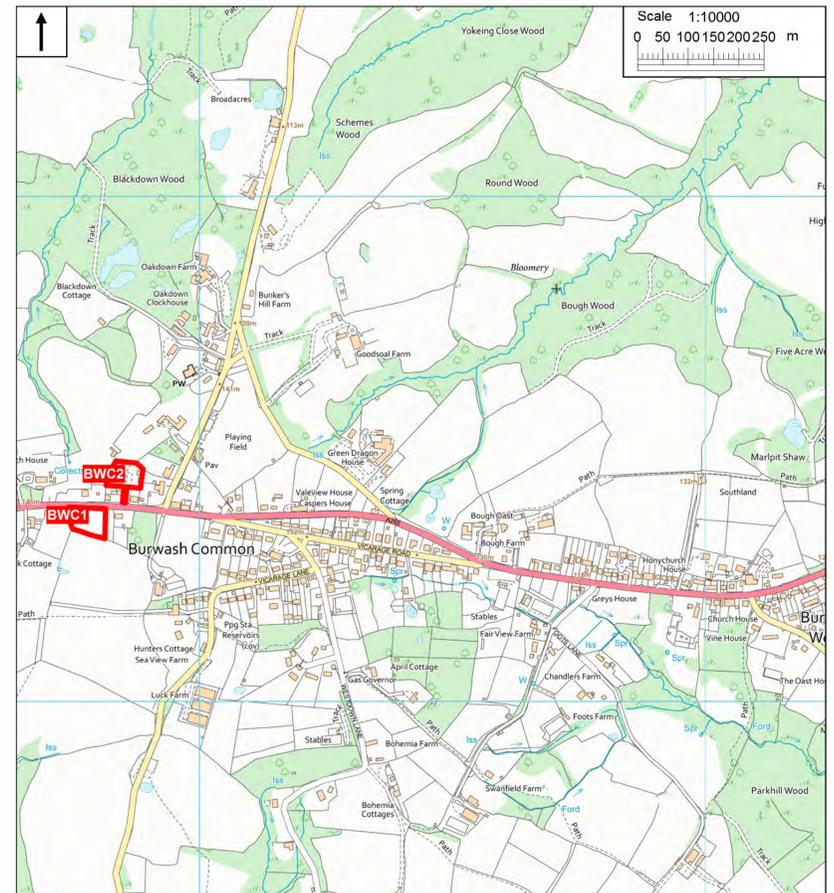
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Burwash



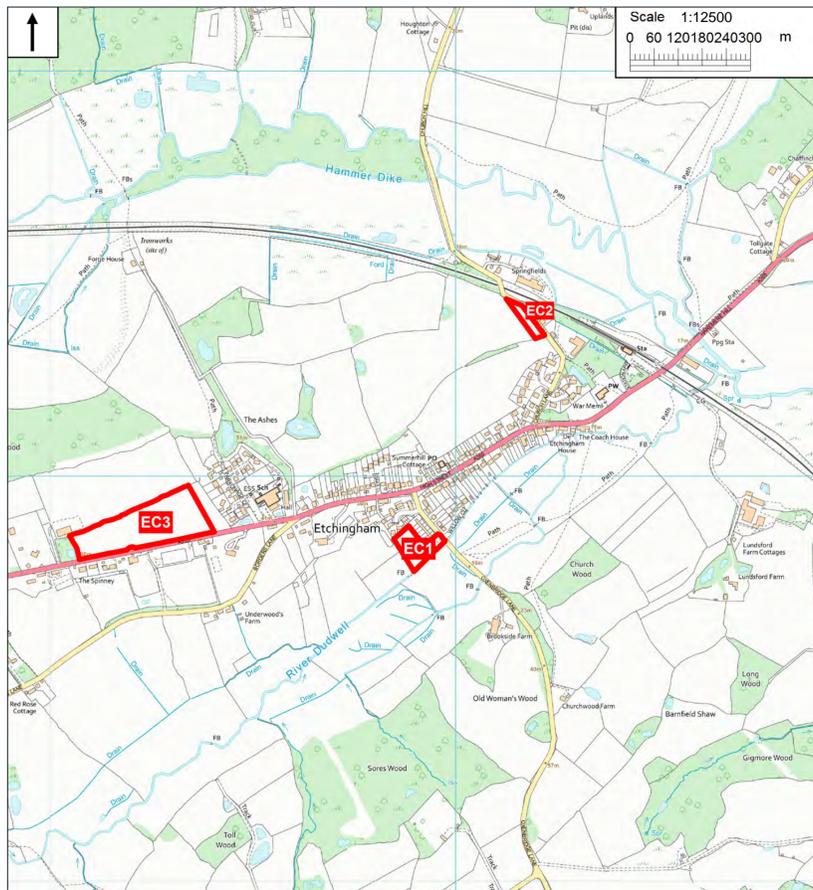
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Burwash Common



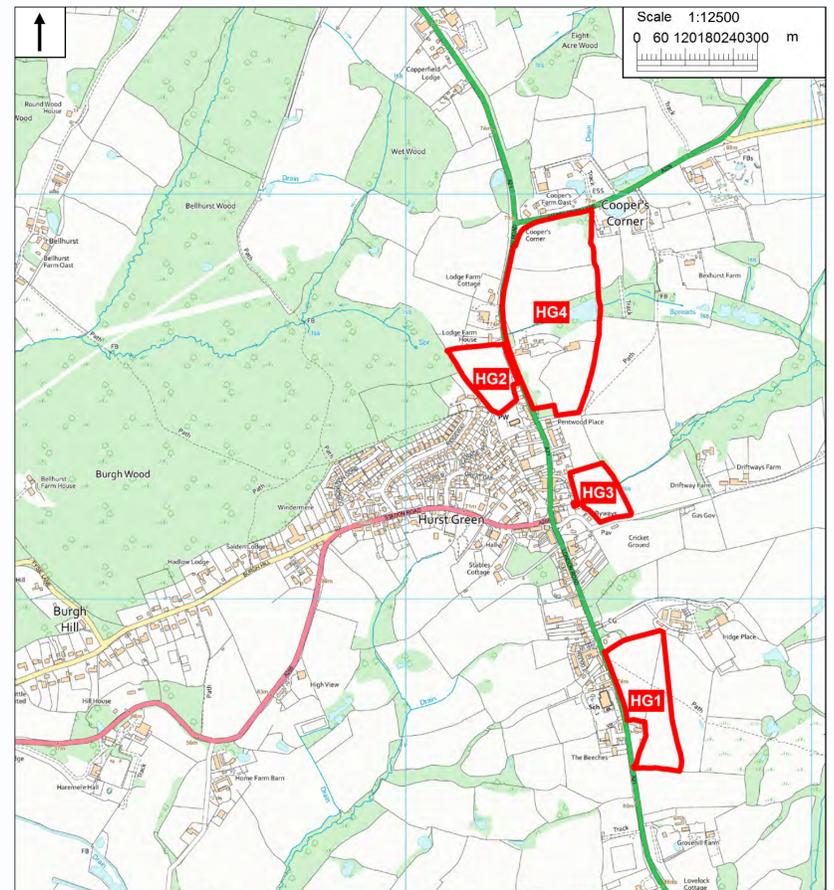
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Etchingam



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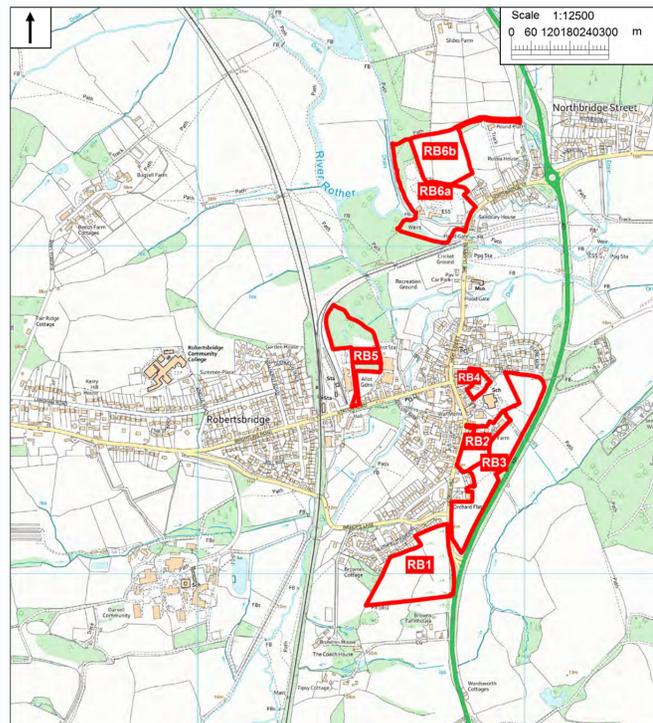
Hurst Green



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Northern Rother Sub-Area: Proposed Sites

Robertsbridge



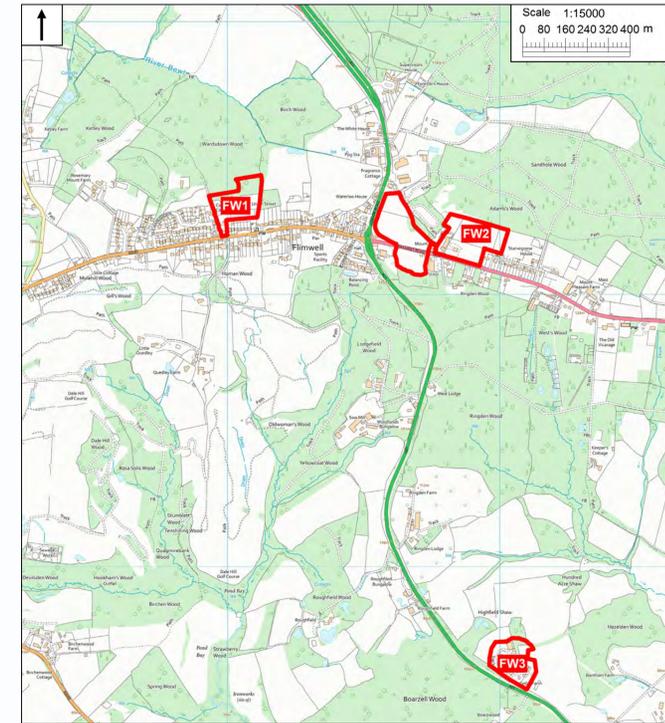
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Staplecross



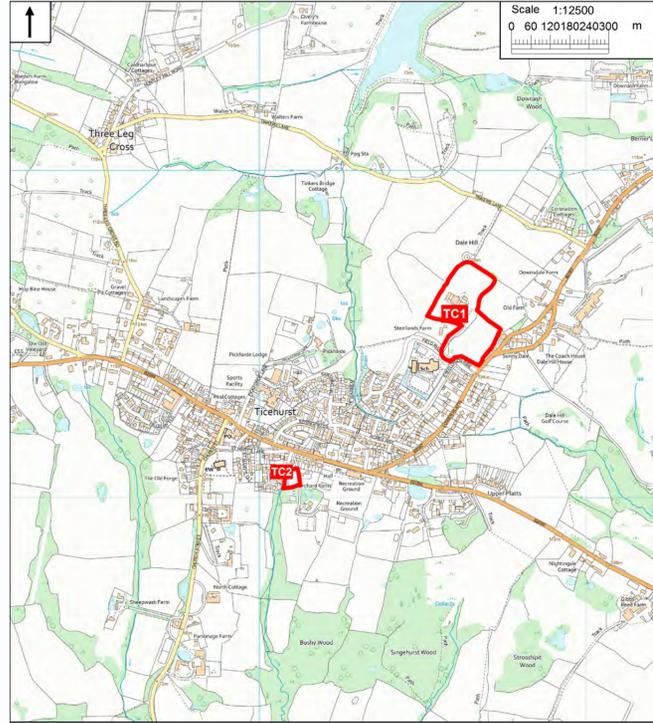
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Flimwell



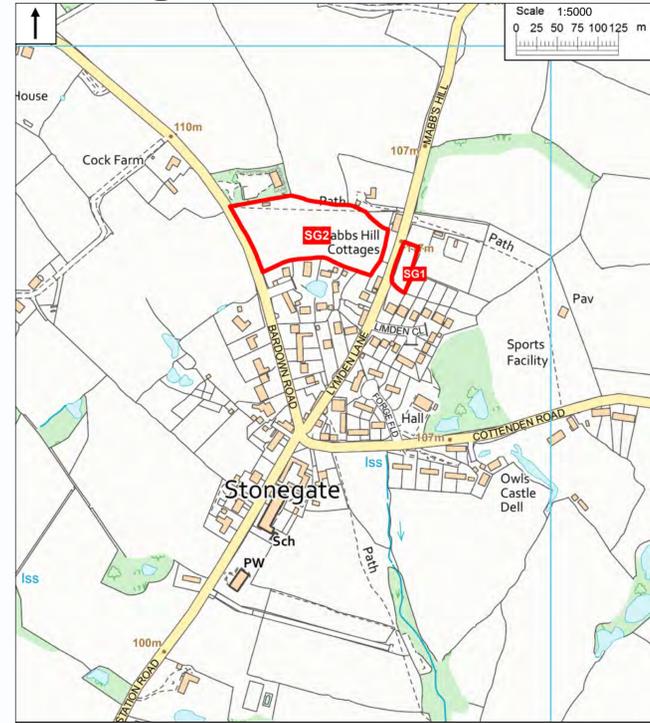
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Ticehurst



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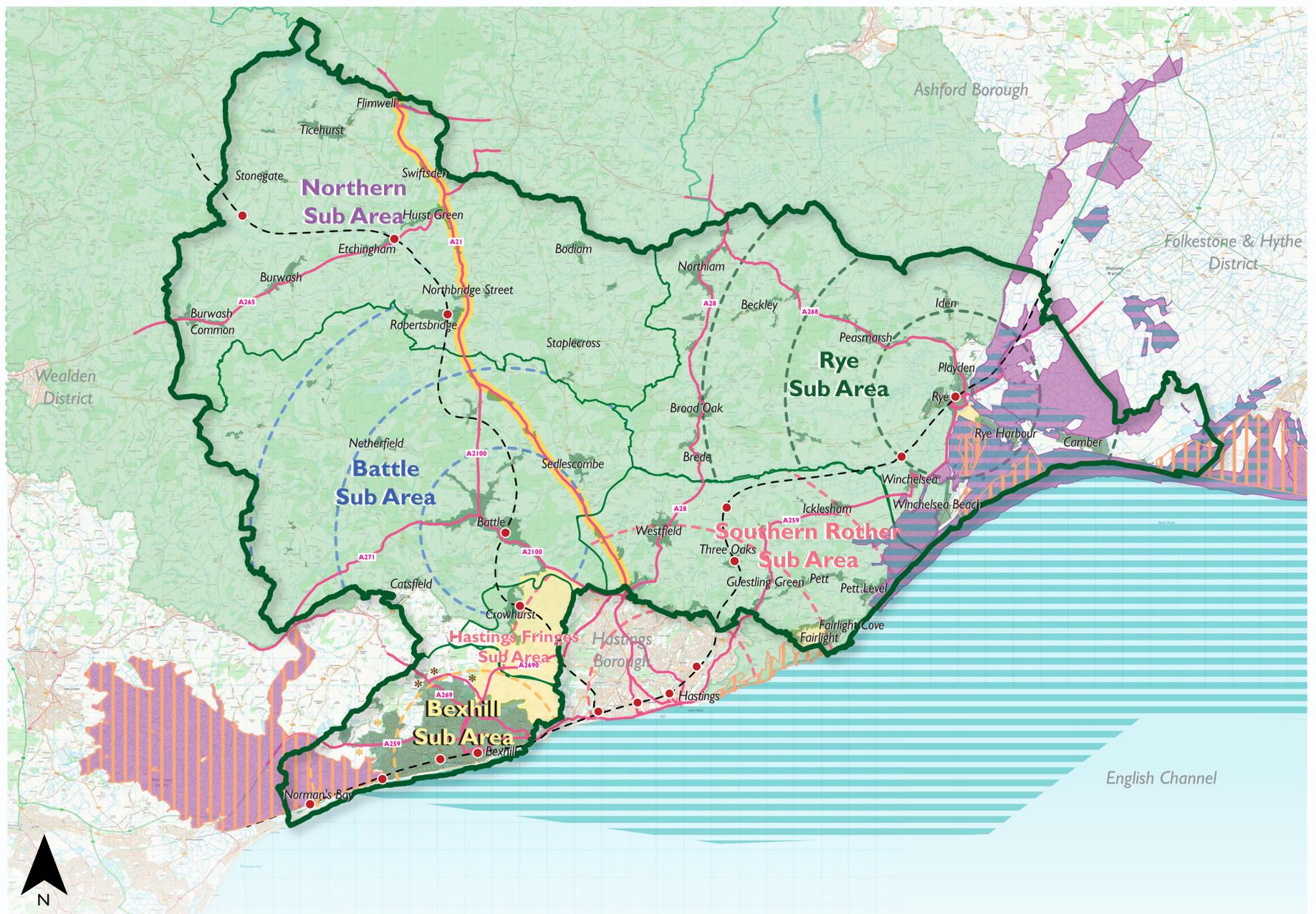
Stonegate



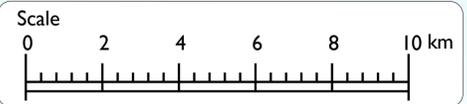
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Key Diagram Of Rother



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- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|--|--|
| Rother District Boundary | Ramsar Site | A21 Corridor | Neighbouring Authority Boundary |
| Areas of Built Form | Special Protection Area | Sub Area Boundary | <3km from a Train Station* |
| High Weald National Landscape (AONB) | Rail Stations | West Bexhill Potential Development Growth | <i>*Every dashed concentric circle line represents a further 3km from each of the train stations of Bexhill, Hastings, Battle and Rye.</i> |
| Strategic Gaps | Rail Line | North Bexhill Potential Development Growth | <i>Yellow - Bexhill, Pink - Hastings, Blue - Battle, Green - Rye.</i> |
| Special Area of Conservation | A Roads | | |

Next Steps

Once the consultation finishes, in **March 2026**, we will review and consider all comments received. At the same time, we will continue to refine our proposed policies and work on new evidence base documents. In **Autumn 2026** we expect to publish the final draft of the new Local Plan, (known as the 'pre-submission' version). All representations received on that version will be submitted to the Secretary of State for examination, along with the proposed draft Local Plan. It is anticipated that this will be in **December 2026**. If the submitted Local Plan is found sound at examination, it will then be for the Council to formally adopt the Plan - this is currently programmed to occur in **2027/2028**.