

Chapter 19

Villages

Context

19.1 Many people choose to live in a rural area and the wide range of villages and smaller settlements in Wealden are home to a large section of the population. Whilst some of these are of a scale which provide local services and employment to their residents and the surrounding areas, many have become dormitory in nature with the loss of local shops, post offices and employment opportunities. Greater mobility through the car has allowed this to happen with many residents travelling further afield to services and jobs.

19.2 The lack of affordable housing is equally a significant issue for the villages. While many villages experience pressure for new housing development this is normally for larger market housing. There is often great concern amongst residents about the impact of new housing on the character of the villages.

19.3 In response a number of village communities have sought to tackle these issues by setting up local revitalisation groups, undertaking village appraisals, preparing design guidance and looking for sites for affordable housing.

19.4 In terms of their form and character, the villages are diverse and many retain a distinct local identity based on historic buildings, traditional settlement patterns and attractive landscape settings, often within the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Strategy

19.5 In line with Structure Plan policy, the Local Plan strategy focuses major housing and employment growth on the Low Weald towns but also recognises the potential of villages to accommodate some development where this is compatible with conserving village character and on meeting local housing and employment needs.

19.6 In this regard, the strategy for the villages seeks to achieve more balanced and sustainable communities by providing for a mix of housing

types, sizes and tenures, and maintaining and enhancing employment opportunities and local services.

19.7 As part of the work for the distribution of development strategy, an assessment was made of the ability of the villages and smaller settlements to accept new housing growth. For reasons of sustainability and local character this assessment revealed the potential for a relatively small number of dwellings in the villages, amounting to almost 250 dwellings. In addition, a number of sites have been identified as being suitable for small allocations for affordable housing under policy HG6. These allocations will provide for about a further 80 - 93 dwellings in about 12 villages across the District.

19.8 The Plan's objectives for the villages having regard to Government guidance, Structure Plan policies and the Local Plan strategy itself are:

(1) *to ensure that any development conserves the established character of the villages, their surrounding countryside and landscape settings;*

(2) *to provide in total for around 350 new homes in the villages to include affordable housing and appropriate infrastructure, community services and facilities, minimising the impact of development on the landscape setting of the villages.*

(3) *to maintain and, where appropriate, improve the level and choice of local employment opportunities;*

(4) *to maintain and, where possible, improve the level and range of local services and facilities;*

Village Allocations

19.9 The level of housing growth proposed in the villages will be achieved by new allocations at Buxted, East Hoathly, Five Ash Down, Isfield and Maresfield where in total some 200 dwellings are proposed. In addition, up to 20 dwellings are proposed on sites within the confines of the villages which have been identified through the

Urban Capacity Study. The allocations are put forward below.

19.10 A key consideration in the provision of housing in the villages is ensuring as far as possible that it meets local needs. On new allocations this can be achieved by requiring a proportion of new homes in the affordable and small dwelling category in accordance with Policies HG4 and HG7. In addition, further allocations for between 80 and 93 dwellings are proposed solely for affordable housing in the rural areas under Policy HG6. Elsewhere only small scale housing development is likely to come forward through infilling and other 'windfall' sites. In some of these cases the thresholds for affordable housing in the rural areas will allow for the provision of a proportion of affordable housing on those sites in line with policy.

19.11 However, the provision of affordable housing in the villages on allocations and windfall sites will still not meet the significant need in the rural areas and the 'exceptions' policy, Policy HG5, will continue to be important in allowing affordable housing outside the development boundaries in certain circumstances.

19.12 The existing development boundaries in the adopted Wealden Local Plan have been reviewed as part of the village assessments and are considered later in this chapter.

19.13 It is especially important that new development should respect and harmonise with the particular character of the village. The Council will have careful regard to the density, scale, form and detailed design of the proposed development, together with the materials used and the quality of the environment being created.

Urban Capacity Sites and Allocations within Villages

19.14 In line with Government guidance, the Urban Capacity Study identified the potential for housing within the towns and villages from a variety of sources, including previously-developed or vacant land. Within the villages the potential was found to be principally for development of relatively small-scale 'windfall' sites, and only two of the larger sites, in Forest Row and Maresfield, are considered suitable as housing allocations.

19.15 In addition, land within the development boundary south of the Mews at East Hoathly, part of which is currently vacant with the remainder used for business purposes, has also been identified for a mixed use development (policy V2). This site could provide for up to 45 new dwellings as well as business space.

19.16 The allocations within the existing limits of the villages are set out below.

Five Oaks, Park Road, Forest Row and land between The Drive and Parklands, Maresfield

19.17 The two sites identified in policy V1, which comprise largely of extensive garden areas, could accommodate some – up to about 20 dwellings subject to meeting the relevant policies in the Plan. As the sites are located within the development boundaries and are subject to all the relevant policies in the Plan, specific site-based criteria are not considered necessary.

Policy V1

The following sites, as defined on the Proposals Map are allocated for housing purposes:-

- (1) Five Oaks, Park Road, Forest Row**
- (2) land between The Drive and Parklands, Maresfield**

Developers will be required to provide affordable housing, including by commuted payment where appropriate, in accordance with the Plan's policies and developer contributions to any required off-site provision will be required in accordance with the Plan's policies for foul and surface water requirements, highways and transportation works and schemes, education, public open space and conservation and wildlife.

Land south of The Mews

19.18 This site, as shown on Figure 19.1, lies to the east of South Street, south of The Mews. It currently comprises a mixture of business premises, some of which have been vacant for a considerable period of time. Whilst the retention of suitably located business land is an important priority, the Council believe that access and other constraints limit the prospects of finding suitable employment uses to make effective use of the

site. In line with existing and emerging Government guidance, the Council consider that the employment potential of the site can best be realised through a comprehensive approach to the site, allowing for a mix of business, residential and community uses. The intention is that at least one quarter of the site would continue to be used for business purposes to provide sustainable local employment opportunities, through the provision of a range of smaller B1 units. The remainder of the site will be suitable for a mixture of housing and/or community uses. It is estimated that the site can accommodate up to about 45 dwellings. The development will include provision of a doctor's surgery and associated parking to replace the temporary surgery in the village. Other suitable community uses could include a village hall, should suitable funding opportunities arise.

19.19 Whilst a planning brief is to be prepared to confirm the detail of how the site should be developed, Figure 19.1 illustrates a number of the key principles to which development will be expected to adhere. Vehicular access will be provided from South Street, to be designed to the satisfaction of the local highway authority in the light of appropriate assessments and safety audits carried out by the developer. The layout of development should minimise the potential for the mixing of business and residential traffic for safety reasons. Developer contributions will be required towards traffic calming measures on South Street and other accessibility improvements in line with County Council guidance. There is an existing pedestrian right of way through the site which the Council expects to be retained. Some realignment and hence a formal Footpath Diversion order may be necessary to suit the design and layout of the site. This would also allow the opportunity to realign the most northerly section of the footpath through the site itself, rather than its current less obvious route through the grounds of residential properties to the north.

19.20 Existing trees and hedgerows should be retained and strengthened along all of the boundaries of the site, to minimise the impact of development on surrounding occupiers and the landscape. Children's play space and other public open and amenity space should be provided in accordance with the Plan's standards, as set out in Policies LR2 and LR4. Given the multiplicity of land ownerships affecting the site, the Council will require a land owners' agreement to be secured prior to planning permission being granted. This will need to address the access arrangements for the site, the

phasing of house building in line with the provision of business premises, the provision of land for the doctor's surgery and the extinguishment of any existing B2 or B8 use rights on the site, which would be incompatible with the mixed use development concept.

Policy V2

Land south of The Mews, as defined on the Proposals Map, is allocated for a mix of business (use class B1), residential and community uses (class D1). Proposals for the comprehensive development of the site will be permitted subject to provision being made for all of the following:

- (1) At least one quarter of the total developable area of the site shall be developed for business purposes (Use Class B1);**
- (2) Approximately 45 dwellings of which around 14 shall be affordable and around another 9 shall be small dwellings;**
- (3) the development shall include 0.125ha of land for a doctor's surgery and associated car parking;**
- (4) Vehicular access shall be taken off South Street, as indicated on the Proposals Map to be designed to the satisfaction of the local highway authority;**
- (5) A new pedestrian and cycle link to the site from South Street, as indicated on the Proposals Map;**
- (6) A pedestrian right of way shall be maintained through the site, with provision for enhancement where appropriate;**
- (7) A traffic calming scheme shall be implemented on South Street;**
- (8) Existing trees and important hedgerows shall be retained and strengthened. New landscape buffers shall be provided along the boundaries of the site and to help define and separate business and housing areas where appropriate;**
- (9) Children's play space together with other public open space and amenity**

space as an integral part of the development in accordance with the Plan's standards.

Developer contributions will be required in accordance with the Plan's policies to secure the provision of off-site highways and transportation works and schemes, new primary school places, public open space, together with off-site foul and surface water requirements.

A Planning Agreement will also be sought with all relevant land owners to address the access arrangements for the site, to phase occupancy of the dwellings with the provision of business floorspace and to extinguish existing or established B2 or B8 use rights.

Village Extensions

19.21 The following five sites comprise peripheral extensions to existing village development which together could accommodate around some 200 dwellings subject to meeting the site-based criteria stated below and other relevant policies in the Plan.

Land off Church Road, Buxted

19.22 The site as shown in Figure 19.2 comprises open pasture on the western edge of the village, contained by existing development along Church Road and the High Street. The land slopes towards the railway and development would not significantly affect the landscape setting of the village. In view of its proximity to Buxted railway station and existing business activity, this site is considered suitable for mixed use development comprising around 40 dwellings, approximately 2,000 sq.m. of business floorspace, a new doctors' surgery and an extension to the station car park.

19.23 Vehicular access to the site should be from a new junction on the High Street. This would necessitate the closure of the existing access to the railway station and the adjacent business unit, and the provision of a replacement access from the distributor road through the allocated site. Measures designed to slow the speed of traffic approaching the new junction from the west will also be required. A pedestrian/cycle route through the site linking Church Road and the station should be provided.

19.24 A significant landscape buffer will be required along the northern edge of the site in order to reduce the impact of development upon the open countryside beyond. This should incorporate amenity space and a children's play area. Measures to prevent unauthorised access to railway land will also be needed.

Policy V3

Land to the west of Church Road, Buxted, as defined on the Proposals Map, is allocated for mixed use development, comprising housing, business, a doctors' surgery and an extension to the railway station car park. Proposals for development will be permitted when provision is made for all of the following:

- (1) approximately 40 dwellings, of which around 12 dwellings shall be affordable and around another 8 shall be small dwellings;**
- (2) approximately 2,000 sq.m. of B1 business floorspace;**
- (3) 0.125ha of land for a doctors' surgery and associated car parking;**
- (4) additional car parking spaces to serve the railway station;**
- (5) vehicular access shall be taken from the High Street;**
- (6) new vehicular access from the distributor road to the railway station and adjacent business unit;**
- (7) safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle access through the site, linking Church Road with the railway station;**
- (8) a comprehensive landscape scheme, incorporating a significant landscaped buffer along the northern boundary of the site;**
- (9) public amenity space and an equipped children's play area;**
- (10) measures to prevent unauthorised access to railway land.**

Developer contributions will also be required in accordance with the Plan's policies to secure the provision of new secondary

school places, new primary school places, playing fields, and off-site highway and transportation works and schemes, and off-site foul and surface water drainage requirements. Subject to advice from the Education Authority at the time of the application for planning permission, developer contributions may also be required to secure the provision of new primary school places.

Land off Church Marks Lane, East Hoathly

19.25 This proposed extension to existing development off Church Marks Lane is on a well-contained site adjacent to Moat Wood. The site is shown on Figure 19.3. Part of the site is already allocated in the adopted Wealden Local Plan. The whole site could accommodate some 30 dwellings.

19.26 Development will include an extension to the Primary School required for the additional pupils, a children's play space, and an enclosure for recycling facilities. The existing tree boundary to the recreation ground will be strengthened to help screening and buffer/amenity areas provided to Moat Wood to lessen the impact of development on this ancient woodland.

19.27 Access will be taken via Church Marks Lane where improvements to the footpaths will be required.

Policy V4

Land between Church Marks Lane and Moat Wood, East Hoathly, as defined on the Proposals Map, is allocated for housing purposes. Proposals for development will be permitted when provision is made for all of the following:

- (1) approximately 30 dwellings of which around 9 shall be affordable and around another 6 shall be small dwellings;
- (2) the development shall include 0.4ha of land for primary school purposes;
- (3) vehicular access shall be taken off Church Marks Lane which shall be improved. Provision shall be made for vehicular access from the new distributor road to the proposed primary school expansion;

- (4) safe and convenient pedestrian access shall be provided linking the housing to the primary school, the existing public footpath at the north-east boundary of the site, and to Church Marks Lane;
- (5) a children's play area;
- (6) landscaped buffers/amenity areas at the boundaries of the site.

Developers contributions will also be required in accordance with the Plan's policies to secure the provision of off-site highways and transportation works and schemes, primary school places, public open space, off-site foul and surface water requirements, conservation and wildlife.

Land to the West of Oakleigh, Five Ash Down

19.28 The site consisting of two large gardens and a paddock is enclosed by boundary trees, residential properties and the A272 road and development would not adversely impact on the wider countryside. The site as shown on Figure 19.4 is considered suitable for a low-density scheme of some 15 dwellings to reflect the existing character of the surrounding area.

19.29 There are many trees within the site and at the site boundaries which should be retained to preserve the character of the site. The boundary tree lines should also be strengthened to provide additional screening. Wide planted buffer areas will be provided at the north-eastern part of the site which is elevated and more sensitive to views, and at the southern boundary to protect the amenities of future residents from the A272 road. The development of this site shall respect the setting of an adjacent listed building, Coopers Cross House.

19.30 Access shall be from the old A26 using the existing entrance to "The Walled Garden".

Policy V5

Land to the west of Oakleigh, Five Ash Down, as defined on the Proposals Map, is allocated for housing purposes. Proposals for development will be permitted when provision is made for all of the following:

- (1) approximately 15 dwellings of which around 5 shall be affordable and around another 3 shall be small dwellings;**
- (2) vehicular access to the site shall be taken from the old A26;**
- (3) landscaped buffers shall be provided along the north-eastern and southern boundaries to include the planting of additional trees to strengthen the existing tree screen. Existing trees at the site boundaries and within the site shall be retained;**
- (4) the development of the site shall not adversely affect the character and setting of the adjacent listed building, Coopers Cross House.**

Developers contributions will also be required in accordance with the Plan’s policies to secure the provision of off-site highways and transportation works and schemes, new secondary school places, public open space, and off-site foul and surface water drainage requirements. Subject to advice from the Education Authority at the time of the application for planning permission, developer contributions may also be required to secure the provision of new primary school places.

Former Army Camp, Isfield

19.31 This “brownfield” site as shown on Figure 19.5 is well-contained by existing development and a disused rail line to the north and east, and by tree cover to the west and south, which helps to screen the site. The site is mainly disused and could accommodate around 30 dwellings. Development will include a children’s play area and an enclosure for recycling facilities.

19.32 The existing trees will be retained and additional trees planted to maintain the character of the site and provide screening. Development should be set back from the existing rail bed by approximately 20 metres to protect the amenities of future residents should the railway be re-instated and regard will need to be given to further noise abatement measures.

19.33 The significant planted buffer areas should incorporate an amenity area and public access. The development provides the

opportunity for an area of amenity space, possibly in the form of a “village green”.

19.34 Development will require improvements to the visibility of the site access with Station Road for highway safety reasons, and a “traffic calming” scheme will also need to be implemented on main roads in the village.

19.35 Due to the previous use of the site as an Army Camp, investigations will be needed regarding any possible ground contamination, and appropriate remedial measures taken.

Policy V6

Land at the former army camp in Isfield, as defined on the proposals map, is allocated for housing purposes. Proposals for development will be permitted when provision is made for all of the following:

- (1) approximately 30 dwellings of which around 9 shall be affordable and around another 6 shall be small dwellings;**
- (2) vehicular access from Station Road;**
- (3) existing trees shall be retained and additional trees planted at the southern, western, and eastern boundaries;**
- (4) an area of amenity open space and a children’s play area shall be provided;**
- (5) appropriate measures shall be provided to alleviate noise from the re-instated railway;**
- (6) further investigation into, and the removal of, contamination on the site shall be undertaken before development commences.**

Developers contributions will also be required in accordance with the Plan’s policies to secure the provision of off-site highways and transportation works and schemes, secondary school places, public open space, off-site foul and surface water requirements.

Land at Park Farm, Maresfield

19.36 The site as shown on Figure 19.6 comprises open land and buildings at Park Farm, together with a landscaped area adjacent to

existing housing at 'The Paddock'. It is generally well-contained by existing development to the north, east and west, whilst the A22 Maresfield by-pass is located to the south. Development would not adversely affect the surrounding countryside and would provide an opportunity to soften the existing urban edge through new planting. The site can accommodate some 80 dwellings.

19.37 Vehicular access to the development should be either via Field End or via the access road to the Maresfield Leisure Centre. Both access arrangements will require the provision of a new mini-roundabout at the junction with Batts Bridge Road, together with further traffic calming measures will be required along Batts Bridge Road and enhanced pedestrian links to the village primary school. If access to the development is taken from the access road to Maresfield Leisure Centre, appropriate provision should be made on land outside of the allocated housing site for a new car park immediately adjacent to the Leisure Centre to accommodate any parking spaces lost at the Leisure Centre, and for a pedestrian and cycle link to Field End.

19.38 Care should be taken to respect the setting of Maresfield Conservation Area and the group of listed buildings to the south-east of the site. A significant area of open space has been retained between the allocated site and the boundary of the Conservation Area in order to maintain the open setting of the Conservation Area and views of St Bartholomew's church tower from the south. A mounded landscaped buffer area will be required to the south of the site, both to enhance the setting of Maresfield and to protect the amenities of future residents from the effects of traffic travelling along the A22.

Policy V7

Land at Park Farm, Maresfield, as defined on the Proposals Map, is allocated for housing purposes. Proposals for development will be permitted when provision is made for all of the following:

- (1) approximately 80 dwellings, of which 24 shall be affordable and around another 20 shall be small dwellings;**
- (2) vehicular access from either Field End or the Maresfield Leisure Centre access road;**

- (3) safe and convenient pedestrian links to Field End and public footpaths to the north and south of the site;**
- (4) public car-parking spaces adjacent to Maresfield Leisure Centre if required to replace those spaces lost through the provision of vehicular access from the Maresfield Leisure Centre access road;**
- (5) a comprehensive landscape scheme, incorporating a significant buffer with mounding and landscaping along the southern boundary of the site;**
- (6) amenity open space and a children's equipped play area;**
- (6) the site shall be assessed for possible contamination and any necessary remedial measures undertaken before development commences.**

Developer contributions will also be required in accordance with the Plan's policies to secure the provision of new secondary school places, public open space, off-site highway and transportation works, and off-site foul and surface water drainage requirements. Subject to advice from the Education Authority at the time of the application for planning permission, developer contributions may also be required to secure the provision of new primary school places.

Low-Density Housing Policy Areas

19.39 There are a number of residential areas within the development boundaries of the villages with a distinctive low-density character where detached properties are set within large extensive gardens. The established character has been created by the spacious setting of development, together with mature tree cover, hedgerows and other planting which has resulted in many cases in a high quality parkland or arcadian environment. These areas are as follows:

- (1) Pound Green, Buxted
- (2) Old Willingdon Road and Western Downlands Estate, East Dean and Friston
- (3) Park Road, Forest Row
- (4) Florance Lane, Groombridge
- (5) Maresfield Park, Maresfield
- (6) The Warren, Mayfield

- (7) Station Road, Mayfield
- (8) Knowle Park Road, Mayfield
- (9) Mayfield Road, Wadhurst

19.40 It is considered essential that special regard is had to the impact of new development on the character of these areas within the development boundary. Policy V8 gives emphasis to the preservation of the character of these areas when considering development proposals on a similar basis to policies in the adopted Wealden Local Plan.

19.41 Although each of the policy areas share a low-density character of development, some of these areas have particularly distinguishing characteristics which should be taken account of in any development proposals. Old Willingdon Road and Western Downlands has informal grass verges and hedges which are an integral part of its character; hedges would be the most appropriate form of enclosure and new walls would not be appropriate.

19.42 Similar considerations apply to The Warren at Mayfield where open plan schemes would not be appropriate in the majority of cases. On the south side of Station Road, Mayfield the frontage development makes a significant contribution to the character of this principal approach to the historic core through its design and general appearance, and redevelopment will be resisted.

Policy V8

Within the Housing Policy Areas, as defined on the Proposals Map, the established low-density character will be protected and proposals which adversely affect their character will not be permitted. Proposals for development will be permitted when:

- (1) the form, scale, site coverage and siting of the proposed development should reflect the character of adjoining buildings and the spaces around them and, where appropriate, existing building lines and characteristic frontage widths;**
- (2) the proposed development should not result in the loss of trees, shrubs, hedges or other features which contribute to the special character of the area;**
- (3) landscaping should remain a dominant element of any scheme in accordance with the character of the area;**

(4) the proposed frontage and other boundary treatment should have regard for the established character of the area;

(5) the proposed development should not have an adverse visual impact on the surrounding countryside.

Pevensey Bay Housing Policy Area

19.43 A long ribbon of properties extends along Coast Road atop the shingle bank overlooking the sea. Mainly built as holiday homes of light construction, many have subsequently been renovated or rebuilt and extended towards the road. An assortment of garages have also been erected adjacent to Coast Road. The relatively elevated position of these properties makes them prominent in views across the Levels inland as well as from the beach itself.

19.44 In order to preserve and enhance the particular character of the area, it is considered the low profile, linear form of development should be essentially retained, along with the other criteria referred to in the following policy.

Policy V9

Within the Pevensey Bay Coast Road housing policy area, as defined on the Proposals Map, development proposals including redevelopment and extensions, will be permitted when the following criteria are met:

- (1) the proposed development retains the essentially linear form and the existing building line towards the sea;**
- (2) the proposed development does not exceed a single-storey aspect to the sea, but may incorporate dormer bedrooms;**
- (3) roofs shall be oriented with a gable or hip facing north-south;**
- (4) the design and materials are in keeping with the beach-side location.**

Development Boundaries

19.45 Where new development would be considered acceptable in principle, either within the settlement or at its periphery, a development boundary has been drawn. As explained in Chapter 3, a development boundary does not attempt to define the physical or social limits of a village but defines the area to which Policy GD1 applies to give a sound basis for development control decisions.

19.46 In general terms, a development boundary seeks to prevent inappropriate outward encroachment into the surrounding countryside, an intensification of development in peripheral areas and ribbon development along roads. It excludes areas of more scattered development where the spaces and gaps around buildings contribute to a more rural character.

19.47 In addition to identifying land for housing allocation purposes, the existing village development boundaries have also been reviewed to determine whether other small-scale amendments were justified. Other settlements which currently do not have a development boundary in the adopted Plan, were also reviewed to determine whether a development boundary should now be drawn in the light of any changed circumstances. This review has resulted in very few changes being made due largely to landscape and character considerations.

Villages with Development Boundaries

19.48 The villages listed below have development boundaries. Each development boundary is shown on separate Inset Maps at the end of this chapter.

Alfriston	Isfield
Berwick Station	Lower Dicker*
Blackboys	Lower Horsebridge
Broad Oak	Maresfield
Buxted	Mark Cross
Cross-in-Hand	Mayfield
East Dean and Friston	Maynards Green
East Hoathly	Ninfield
Fairwarp	Nutley

Five Ash Down	Pevensey
Five Ashes	Pevensey Bay
Forest Row	Punnetts Town
Framfield	Rotherfield
Groombridge	Stone Cross
Hadlow Down	Upper Dicker
Halland	Vine Cross
Hartfield	Wadhurst
Herstmonceux	Westham
Hooe Common	Windmill Hill
Horam	

* Whilst not having a development boundary around the settlement, Lower Dicker has been included in this list in view of the defined business area.

Settlements without Development Boundaries

19.49 There are a large number of other smaller villages and settlements where development boundaries have not been defined as the Council considers that new housing or commercial development would be inappropriate. This is normally because new development would be damaging to the character of the settlement and its rural environment, but may also reflect the lack of services and facilities.

19.50 In these cases, the more restrictive Plan-wide 'countryside' policies outside the development boundaries apply which seek to prevent new development which would harm the character and appearance of such areas.

Employment

19.51 Many of the villages within the District are important employment centres for their local communities and surrounding rural areas. However, there has been a trend over the years for local employment in villages to decline and in some cases employment sites have been developed for housing. In order to avoid the

villages becoming increasingly dormitory in their nature and help avoid residents having to travel to employment centres further afield it is particularly important to retain as many village employment sites as possible in accordance with Policy BS4.

19.52 Wealden has a wealth of attractive and historic villages, many of which benefit from the employment and income generated by tourism and also from the support that visitors give to local services and facilities. However a careful balance needs to be struck between the needs of the visitor and those of the local community, and tourism proposals should be sympathetic and in keeping with the character of their surroundings.

Main Business Areas

19.53 A number of business areas are identified in the larger villages which provide the focus for development within the rural area. The Council recognises the importance of these areas for maintaining and enhancing business opportunities in the villages through new development, redevelopment and extensions to existing buildings. The business areas are:

Station Road, Forest Row
Durgates, Wadhurst
Wadhurst Business Park
Merrydown, Horam
Mountney Bridge, Westham
Ashdown Business Park, Maresfield
Hackhurst Lane, Lower Dicker

19.54 All proposals for development within the main business areas should comply with Policies BS1 and BS2 in Chapter 8. Outside the main business areas small scale employment uses will be permitted elsewhere within the village development boundaries subject to environmental considerations including traffic, access and impact on residential amenities and village character in accordance with Policy BS3.

19.55 In view of the residential character of the villages, the need to prevent encroachment into the countryside, and economic viability there is often little scope to expand opportunities for local employment outside the main business areas and allocated areas of land. However, opportunities for small scale proposals may arise through work with the Parish Councils and Revitalisation Groups.

Business Land Allocations

19.56 In view of the character of the villages in the District and their sensitive countryside setting, particularly in the Sussex Downs and High Weald Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, there are no opportunities to allocate further land for new business development. The Council considers that further development would harm the appearance of the surrounding countryside, the setting and character of the village, residential amenity, or would not be adequately located in terms of access and highways. Existing allocations in the adopted Wealden Local Plan at Forest Row and Lower Dicker have planning permission and are not therefore retained in this Plan. In addition, an existing allocation in the adopted Local Plan at Mountney Bridge, Westham, has not been retained in this Plan as it is located within the indicative floodplain, where development could be at risk of flooding or could exacerbate the risk of flooding elsewhere.

Conservation

19.57 The development policies for the villages recognise and reflect the importance of maintaining the character and amenity of each village, and the need to conserve the attractive surrounding countryside, particularly where the village lies within one of the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

19.58 Many of the villages in the District are based on historic settlements which contain a rich heritage of listed buildings, and in a number of cases, their special architectural and historic character has been recognised by the designation of a Conservation Area. The Council attaches particular importance to the control of development in Conservation Areas and development affecting listed buildings, and District-wide policies are put forward in Chapter 5.

Traffic

19.59 It is recognised that the residential amenities and general environment of many villages are adversely affected by the movement of traffic, particularly through traffic, and that road safety is an issue relating to this. The Council will urge the County Council to introduce measures to control and manage traffic wherever

possible through preparation and review of the Local Transport Plan.

19.60 One particular area of concern to the Council is a stretch of the A22 road at Lower Dicker, part of the primary route. Despite recent safety measures, including the provision of right-turn lane facilities at major junctions, this stretch has had a higher than national average number of traffic accidents for this type of road. The County Council has consistently sought to resist any development that would increase traffic movements at individual accesses along this stretch of road. It considers that the slowing, stopping and turning movements of the additional vehicles generated by such developments would further impair the safety and convenience of traffic using the A22, and believes that access points along the road should be kept to a minimum. The following policy has therefore been retained from the adopted Wealden Local Plan.

Policy V10

Proposals for development which may be acceptable under other policies in the Plan, but which would increase traffic movements at individual accesses on the Lower Dicker section of the A22, as defined on the Proposals Map, will not be permitted.

Services

19.61 Local village shops, often with sub-Post Office facilities, play an important role in providing principally for food and day to day goods. Village pubs can also be an integral part of the village community. However, there has been a general decline in the level of village services, with shops and pubs closing and being converted to housing, as many residents choose to travel to local towns and larger centres for a wide range of shopping and services. This has often been to the detriment of the local community, and has particularly disadvantaged the less mobile.

19.62 The policies in Chapter 10 seek to maintain and improve the level and choice of village shops and services including resisting the loss of village shops and pubs. Main shopping centres have been defined in Alfriston, Forest Row, Mayfield, Pevensey Bay and Wadhurst in order to focus investment in retail and service facilities as discussed in Chapter 10.

19.63 Village halls, open spaces, recreation grounds and children's play areas in villages are important community facilities. The provision of such facilities is primarily the responsibility of the Parish Councils. However, the Council will consider allocating land if it can be demonstrated by the Parish Council that there is a need for such facilities and that they are committed to carrying out the proposal.

Land to the east of the existing Recreation Ground, Lower Horsebridge

19.64 Hellingly Parish Council has identified a need for additional land for outdoor recreation, including football, at its Lower Horsebridge recreation ground which also helps meet the recreation needs of Hailsham and surrounding villages. An area of land has therefore been allocated for this purpose to the east of the existing recreation ground.

Policy V11

Land to the east of the existing Recreation Ground, Lower Horsebridge, as defined on the Proposals Map, is allocated for public open space and outdoor recreation.

Land to the east of the existing shops, off Adur Drive, Stone Cross

19.65 Land to the east of the existing shops, off Adur Drive in Stone Cross has been allocated for community facilities or services. The site consists of the remaining undeveloped part of an area previously allocated for local shops and car parking. It is considered important to retain this area for uses that can serve the growing population including additional shops and services, health and community facilities. The site is well located to existing services including car parking and provides the opportunity to expand a convenient and sustainable neighbourhood centre.

Policy V12

Land to the east of the existing shops, off Adur Drive, Stone Cross, as shown on the proposals map, is allocated for community use.

Land to the north of the existing recreation ground, Hartfield

19.66 Hartfield Parish Council has identified a need for additional land for a permanent health centre (to replace the temporary facility), other community facilities and associated car parking and for additional outdoor recreational facilities. Areas to the north of the existing recreational ground and the west of Old Crown Farm have been identified as suitable, subject to careful landscaping and screening and an improvement to the access road serving the current temporary surgery.

Policy V13

Land to the north of the existing recreation ground, Hartfield, as defined on the Proposals Map, is allocated for health and other community purposes.

Policy V14

Land to the north of the existing recreation ground, Hartfield, as defined on the Proposals Map, is allocated for public open space.

Land off Church Lane, Frant

19.67 Land to the north of Church Lane, Frant, has been allocated for a new primary school to replace the existing inadequate school premises on the High Street. This will require the creation of a new access on to Church Lane and the provision of a suitable picking up and dropping off area within the allocated site itself. Improvements to pedestrian links between the site and Frant High Street will also be required in order to overcome safety concerns arising from the absence of footpaths along sections of Church Lane.

19.68 Careful consideration will need to be given to the design and layout of the development in order to minimise its impact on both the landscape of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the character and appearance of Frant Conservation Area. Provision should be made for a new tree belt along the northern boundary of the site in order to protect existing views from the surrounding countryside. Existing trees and hedgerows along the other site boundaries should be retained where possible.

Policy V15

Land off Church Lane, Frant, as defined on the Proposals Map, is allocated for a primary school. Proposals for development will be permitted when provision is made for all of the following:

- (1) vehicular access shall be taken from Church Lane;**
- (2) improvements to pedestrian access between the allocated site and Frant High Street to the satisfaction of the local Highway Authority;**
- (3) a comprehensive landscape scheme, incorporating a significant new tree belt along the northern boundary of the site.**

Village Car Park Extensions

19.69 The existing car park for the doctors surgery in Cuckmere Court, Alfriston is inadequate and leads to parking on adjoining residential streets to the detriment of amenity and other road users. An extension of the existing car park is therefore proposed in conjunction with proposals to allocate affordable housing on adjoining land (Policy HG6).

19.70 Alciston and Selmeston Parish Councils manage the Village Hall in Selmeston but existing car parking is inadequate and parking occurs on the highway to the detriment of highway safety and road users. Selmeston Parish Council has identified the need for additional car parking for the Village Hall in its Parish Plan.

Policy V16

The following sites, as defined on the Proposals Map, are allocated for car park extensions:

- (a) land adjacent to the doctor's surgery in Cuckmere Court, Alfriston; and**
- (b) land to the south of the village hall in Selmeston.**

Map

Map

Map

Map

Map

Map