

# Extracts Policies and Questions Chapter 12

## – Town Centres Full Text [Here](#).

### Policy TC1: District, Service and Local Centre Hierarchy and 'Town Centre' First Principles

1 Development proposals for main town centre uses will be expected to take a 'town centre first' approach and be located within district, service and local centres, as defined on the Policies Map. Main town centre uses should be located within these boundaries unless the proposal complies with the sequential test under Policy TC2 (Sequential and Local Impact Test).

The defined centres hierarchy for the district is as follows:

a) District Centres: Uckfield, Hailsham, Crowborough; and Heathfield;

b) Service Centres: Polegate, Forest Row; and Wadhurst;

c) Local Centres: Pevensey Bay, Mayfield, Horam, Herstmonceux, Rotherfield; and Jarvis Brook (Crowborough).

2 Within the district, service and local centres, as defined on the Policies Map, proposals for 'main town centre uses' will be supported where they:

a) Seek to maintain or enhance the role, character, overall mix and diverse offer of uses ensuring a range of main town centre uses to support local communities, without the over concentration of any one use;

b) Develop and enhance the evening and night-time economy without resulting in adverse impacts on residential amenity and daytime footfall and can demonstrate that such uses will add to the vitality and viability of the centre;

c) Are of an appropriate scale to the centre and reflect its function and position within the defined town centre hierarchy;

d) Support the creation of a safe, attractive, accessible and high-quality environment, taking into account the identity of centres, their heritage as well as their connections with other towns, attractions and accommodation. This will include taking opportunities to improve sustainable travel connectivity within the centres and adjoining areas where possible; and

e) Retain an active ground floor frontage.

3 Support will also be given, within district, service and local centre boundaries, as defined on the Policies Map, for:

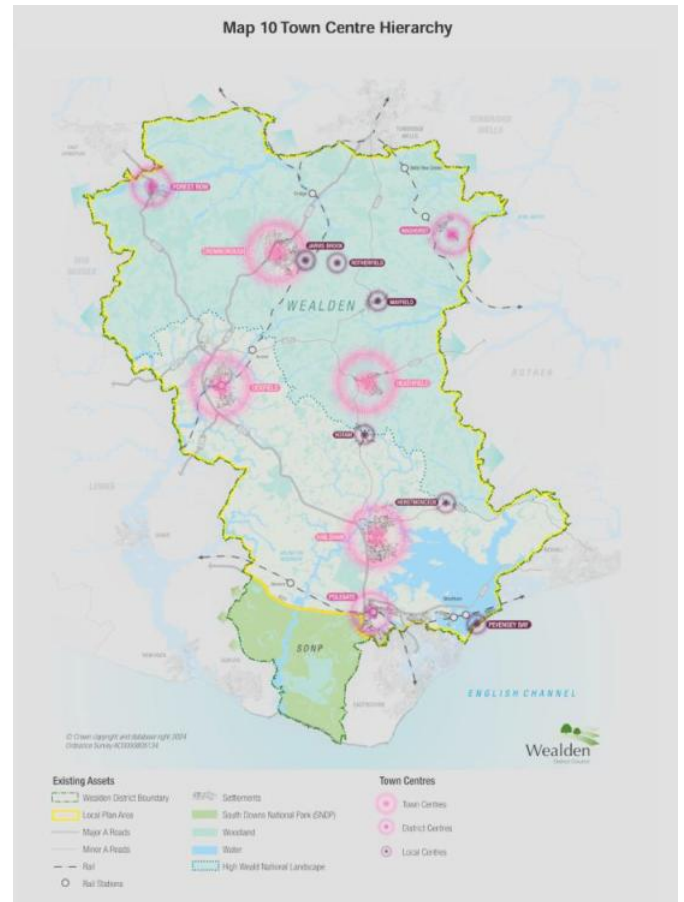
a) The amalgamation or subdivision of existing units that contain 'main town centre uses', providing it only results in a minimal loss of floorspace, but leads to an overall improvement to the format of the unit, an increase in jobs or meets the needs of a modern retail/leisure business;

b) Temporary 'meanwhile' uses to occupy vacant units where they support the vitality and viability of designated centres and do not compromise the future redevelopment of the unit/site;

c) Proposals for upper floor uses that contribute to the centres vitality and viability, including residential uses, subject to conformity with other policies in the Local Plan. The redevelopment of upper floor uses should not result in the loss of ancillary storage space or other beneficial uses to the extent that it would make a ground floor unit unviable; and

d) Delivery lockers, where it can be demonstrated that their installation would enhance the vitality and viability of the designated centre and would not restrict accessibility for pedestrians or harm the public realm.

4 The change of use of existing ground floor premises, that is defined as a 'main town centre use' to residential will not be supported within a defined centre.



### Notes and Comments

#### Question 80

#### Consultation Questions

- Do you agree with draft Policy TC1 District, Service and Local Centre Hierarchy and 'Town Centre' First Principles
- Do you agree with the 'centres' included with the District, Service and Local Centre Hierarchy and their position within the hierarchy? Please explain your answer.
- Should we change anything? If so, what should we change and why?
- Have we missed anything? If so, what have we missed and how should it be included?

### Policy TC2: Sequential and Local Impact Test

- 1 To support the vitality and viability of town, service and local centres as defined on the Policies Map, the sequential approach as set out in the NPPF will be applied where main town centre uses are proposed on the edge of or outside of centres.
- 2 Where the sequential test is met for proposals at the edge of an existing centre or in out-of-centre locations, these are expected to provide specific measures that will, where appropriate, establish new or improve the quality and function of, sustainable connections to the centre, in particular walking/cycling routes and public transport links. The nature and extent of the measures should be directly related to the scale of the proposal.
- 3 Proposals should demonstrate flexibility on issues such as the format and scale of the development, so that opportunities to utilise suitable town centre or edge of centre sites are explored first before out-of-town locations are considered.
- 4 Applications for developments outside of defined centres above the following thresholds will be expected to be accompanied by an impact assessment:
  - a) Over 350 square metres (gross) for retail proposals
  - b) Over 2,500 square metres (gross) for leisure proposals
- 5 In both cases, the impact assessment must sufficiently demonstrate that it will not have a significant adverse impact on the district's defined centres, either on their own or cumulatively in consideration of other commitments in the area.
- 6 Where necessary, planning conditions and/or legal agreements will be applied to any new planning permission outside of defined centres, including defining the nature and extent of the proposed use to ensure no future adverse impacts on existing defined centres.

#### Question 81

#### Consultation Questions

- a Do you agree with draft Policy TC2 Sequential and Local Impact Test?
- b Is the Local Impact Test threshold for retail of 350 sqm correct in the Wealden context? Please explain your answer.
- c Should we change anything? If so, what should we change and why?
- d Have we missed anything? If so, what have we missed and how should it be included?

### Notes and Comment

### Policy TC3: Primary Shopping Areas

- 1 Retail uses will be encouraged in Primary Shopping Areas, as defined on the Policies Map, to ensure that these central areas retain their role as shopping destinations meeting the shopping needs of the community and generating the required footfall during the day for our centres to continue to be vibrant and viable.
- 2 Uses that are likely to detract from the overall shopping function and have closed or inactive frontages will be resisted in the Primary Shopping Area, as this will detract from the overall shopping function.

#### Question 82

#### Consultation Questions

- a Do you agree with draft Policy TC3 Primary Shopping Areas?
- b Should we change anything? If so, what should we change and why?
- c Have we missed anything? If so, what have we missed and how should it be included?

### Notes and Comments

### Policy TC4: Garden Centres

- 1 Proposals for the expansion/extension of existing garden centres outside of development boundaries as defined on the Policies Map, will be permitted when the following criteria is met:
  - a) the sale of plants, horticultural products, garden buildings, garden furniture and ornaments within the garden centre remains the principal use;
  - b) the additional traffic generated does not have an adverse impact on local roads by reason of their inadequate capacity or rural nature;
  - c) it can accommodate the car parking requirements satisfactorily within the immediate surrounds of the building, or where this is not suitable due to highway safety concerns, an alternative solution is agreed; and
  - d) the site has good accessibility to an existing sustainable settlement and is not situated in an isolated location.
- 2 Where a significant extension to an existing garden centre is permitted, the Council will consider whether a planning condition is necessary to ensure the retail floorspace principally relates to the sale of garden/horticultural products.
- 3 It should be noted that all extensions to existing garden centres that are proposed to have retail floorspace above 350 square metres gross will be subject to the Local Impact Test under Policy TC2: Sequential and Local Impact Test of this Local Plan.
- 4 All other ancillary uses that defined as 'main town centre uses' within national planning policy (i.e. cafes/restaurants) may also be considered under the sequential test.

#### Question 83

#### Consultation Questions

- a Do you agree with draft Policy TC4 Garden Centres?
- b Should we change anything? If so, what should we change and why?
- c Have we missed anything? If so, what have we missed and how should it be included?

### Notes and Comments

### Other Comments

