

Policy SS1: Spatial Strategy for Wealden

1 During the plan period up to 2040 the Local Plan will:

- a) Deliver sustainable and high-quality development that meets the needs of our communities for homes and jobs, whilst balancing the impact of growth on our natural environment, protected landscapes and the countryside.
- b) Contribute to the continued sustainability of our towns and villages. This will involve supporting the improvements that are required to local services, community facilities and infrastructure. Subject to other policies in the plan, we will safeguard our existing employment and tourism sites and seek to deliver new employment and tourism sites, ensuring that people can access jobs, services and facilities locally.

c) Support our towns and villages to be 'complete, compact and connected neighbourhoods' to help provide health, social, environmental and economic benefits to our communities.

Development boundaries

2 Subject to other policies in the plan, new development will be permitted within those settlements with an identified development boundary as shown on the Policies Map. This includes the following settlements:

Crowborough, Uckfield, Hailsham, Heathfield, Polegate, Willingdon, Stone Cross, Westham, Pevensey, Pevensey Bay, Forest Row, Horam, Mayfield, Wadhurst, Bells Yew Green, Berwick Station, Blackboys, Buxted, Cross in Hand, East Hoathly, Eridge, Five Ash Down, Framfield, Frant, Groombridge, Hartfield, Herstmonceux, Isfield, Lower Horsebridge, Maresfield, Ninfield and Rotherfield.

3 Within these settlements, development proposals should make the best use of previously developed land, apply an appropriate density to its use, ensure the creation of strong, sustainable, cohesive and inclusive communities including required infrastructure provision. Development proposals should also consider land take and the impact this may have on the natural environment and resources, whilst also relating well to the existing and surrounding character of the area.

Employment

4 The Council will support economic development proposals, which will deliver a growth in high-skilled jobs and an expansion of tourism that contributes towards the delivery of sustainable economic prosperity in the District.

5 New strategic employment floorspace will be allocated for development within this local plan and the district's strategic employment sites will also be protected, alongside non-strategic employment land. Improvements to existing strategic employment sites (redevelopment, conversion, upgrading, intensification or reconfiguration) will also be supported where this meets other policies in the plan in order to meet the district's employment need. These sites will contribute to meeting an increase in employment land and jobs within the plan period.

Town centres

6 The role of our district, service and local centres will be protected and enhanced by encouraging a range of uses consistent with the scale and function of the centre having regard to its position in the hierarchy. Retail growth during the plan period will be focused within these centres in accordance with the town centre hierarchy and policies TC1 (District, Service and Local Centre Hierarchy and 'Town Centre' First Principles) and TC2 (Sequential and Local Impact Test).

7 The Council will support improvements to district, service and local centres where this will support the vitality and viability of centres including improvements to the quality of our town centres and public realm, the provision of a diverse offer, the provision of community services, improvements to active travel infrastructure and the night-time economy. Development that is associated with the 'greening' of our town centres will be particularly supported.

Countryside

8 Land outside development boundaries will be considered as the countryside. The countryside will be protected unless development is supported by a specific policy referenced elsewhere in this plan.

Question 1

Consultation Questions

- a) Do you agree with draft policy SS1 Spatial Strategy?
- b) Is there an alternative strategy that we should be considering through this Local Plan? If so, please set out what the alternative strategy should contain and why.
- c) Policy SS1 sets out the approach for development boundaries. Do you agree or disagree with the settlements that are identified to have development boundaries? Please set out your reasoning.
- d) The policies maps set out the extent of development boundaries for each settlement identified. Do you agree with the boundaries as drawn? Should any changes be made, if so which settlement and why?
- e) Is there anything else within Policy SS1 that we should change? If so, what should we change and why?
- f) Have we missed anything? If so, what have we missed and how should it be included?

Notes and Comment

Policy SS2: Provision of Homes

New homes

- 1 A housing target of 15,729 (net) dwellings will be delivered in the District between 1 October 2023 and 31 March 2040. The provision of homes will be met through committed schemes (with planning permission), site allocations within this local plan and windfall development, as set out in Table 5.
- 2 New housing (allocations and windfall) development is supported in the district's most sustainable settlements and will be located within the defined development boundary areas within the district, as defined on the Policies Map.

Question 2

Consultation Questions

- a Do you agree with draft Policy SS2 Provision of Homes?
- 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 Comment

Policy SS3: Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople - Accommodation Needs

To meet the identified accommodation need for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople within the District up to 2040, the Council will make provision for 51 pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and 3 plots for Travelling Showpeople in accordance with the needs identified in the GTAA for those who meet the PPTS definitions.

Question 4

Consultation Questions

- a Do you agree with draft Policy SS3 Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople - Accommodation Needs?
- 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 Comment

Map 4 Concept Masterplan for Land West of Uckfield - Owlsbury



Question 3

Consultation Questions

- a Do you have any comments at this stage in relation to the site at Land at West of Uckfield - Owlsbury?

Notes and Comment

Policy SS5: Provision of Employment Floorspace

- 1 The Council will support the provision of at least 84,850 sqm of employment floorspace in use Classes E(g), B2 and B8 by 2040. This will be achieved through the following measures:
 - a) The allocation of land as employment sites as listed within Policy SS 6 Strategic Employment Sites;
 - b) The delivery of existing commitments for employment uses, with the largest commitments (above 5,000 sqm) already identified in Policy SS 6 Strategic Employment Sites;
 - c) The retention of existing employment premises across the district and particularly strategic employment sites identified in Policy EC2: Existing Strategic Employment Sites;
 - d) Supporting existing businesses through the provision of new employment premises/floorspace or the redevelopment, conversion, upgrading, intensification or reconfiguration of employment premises or floorspace on existing employment sites;
 - e) The delivery of new economic development in rural areas in line with Policy EC4 Rural Economy; and
 - f) The provision of new office floorspace (Use Class E(g)(i) within Wealden's designated district, service and local centres.

Question 6

Consultation Questions

- a Do you agree with draft Policy SS5 Provision of Employment Space?
- 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 Comment

Policy SS6: Strategic Employment Allocations

- 1 To meet the employment and growth aspirations of the District, the following sites are allocated for business and employment purposes:

Allocations	Employment floorspace (net)
Knights Farm, Lower Dicker, Hailsham	40,000 sqm
Woodside Park, Land East of A22, Hailsham	16,750 sqm

Large Employment Commitments ¹⁸	Employment floorspace (net)
Land at Natewood Farm, Polegate Road, Hailsham	5,999 sqm
Land West of Uckfield, Uckfield	13,495 sqm
Mornings Mill Farm, Eastbourne Road, Lower Willingdon	8,600 sqm

- 2 The sites are allocated to provide employment uses E(g), B2 and B8. Retail uses and other Town Centre uses (excluding offices) will not be permitted at these sites. Once delivered these sites will be considered as strategic employment sites and will form part of the sites listed in Policy EC2 – Existing Strategic Employment Sites. Development must be in accordance with the site-specific requirements set out in the policies of this draft Local Plan.

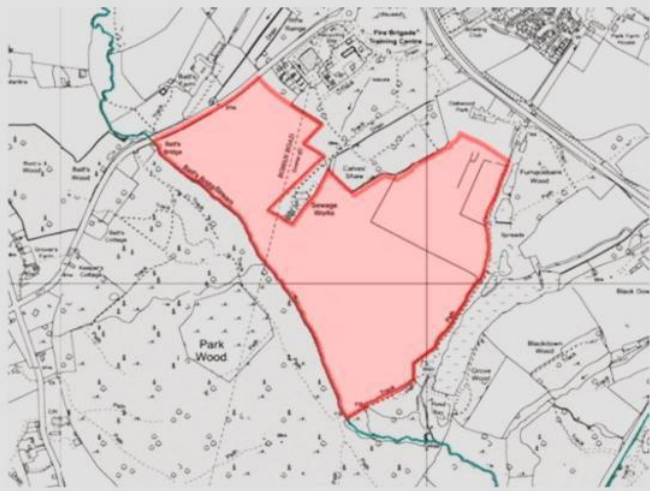
Question 7

Consultation Questions

- a Do you agree with draft Policy SS6 Strategic Employment Allocations?
- 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 Comment

Map 5 Indicative outline of SHELAA site/s submitted to the Council under the 'call for sites' for Ashdown Business Park, Maresfield (SHELAA references: 980/3120, 720/3120 and 918/3120)



Question 8

Consultation Questions

- a Do you have any comments at this stage in relation to the site at Ashdown Business Park, Maresfield?

Notes and Comment

Policy SS7: Ensuring Comprehensive Development and Housing Delivery

- 1 A comprehensive approach to site development will be expected for all new development, even where sites are in multiple ownership and provide a mix of uses, to ensure the good planning of an area. These principles will be achieved through the following policy measures:
 - a) Support for the provision of masterplans and design codes in line with Policy DE2: Masterplans and Design Codes of this Local Plan to help bring forward and co-ordinate the delivery of sites at scale within the District;
 - b) Ensuring that the applicant has applied proper consideration to how the policy requirements in this local plan (such as the provision of appropriate land uses, affordable housing, open space/green space, access, sustainable transport, sustainable drainage and other infrastructure etc.) relating to the whole site, with a phasing plan where appropriate, will be achieved;
 - c) Support for the sub-division of large sites, where this is proven to expedite the delivery of new homes or employment development and where this does not conflict with the comprehensive planning and delivery of the whole site when considered against other policies in this Local Plan; and
 - d) To assist in making sure that proposals for development are implemented in a timely manner (particularly housing sites), the Council will consider imposing planning condition(s) that require development to begin within a timescale shorter than the relevant three-year period, where this would expedite the development and would not threaten its viability or deliverability

Question 9

Consultation Questions

- a Do you agree with draft Policy SS7 Ensuring Comprehensive Development and Housing Delivery?
- 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 Comment

Policy SS8: Responding to Climate Change

Climate change mitigation

- 1 Development proposals will be expected to deliver best practice and, where possible, innovative and creative solutions to mitigate climate change, contributing to meeting

nationally binding targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and Wealden becoming a net zero district, as soon as possible.

- 2 Support will be given to development proposals that help mitigate climate change and consideration will be given to how development proposals:
 - a) Reduce heat and power demands of the development;
 - b) Improve energy consumption through energy efficiency measures;
 - c) Incorporate decentralised, renewable and low carbon energy solutions;
 - d) Re-use buildings, materials and minimise the impact of waste and the use of natural resources;
 - e) Improve the energy performance of any existing buildings;
 - f) Incorporate sustainable design and construction techniques including those relevant to whole life net zero carbon in the construction and operation of buildings and ensuring that development is zero carbon ready;
 - g) Sequester carbon through land management opportunities, woodland creation, tree planting and / or any other innovative ways to capture carbon in the environment;
 - h) Support landscape scale approaches to nature protection and recovery e.g. supporting the Weald to Waves Nature Recovery Corridor¹⁹;
 - i) Support regenerative farming and the protection of soil health;
 - j) Support well-connected communities in relation to their location to services, facilities, education, public transport and jobs, supporting a reduction in vehicle use (number and length of journeys) and avoiding car dependent behaviours;
 - k) Support and deliver the improvement of walking and cycling routes, and access to public transport and transport sharing schemes;
 - l) Support behavioural change to enable people to play their part in addressing climate change;
 - m) Enable home working through digitalisation and broadband;
 - n) Incorporate electric charging facilities and support the take up of electric vehicles;
 - o) Achieve improvements in local air quality;
 - p) Support low carbon farming (agricultural and horticultural) practices to increase productivity and carbon off-setting opportunities; and
 - q) Incorporate well-designed green infrastructure to mitigate climate change and to deliver multiple-benefits.

Climate Change Adaptation

- 3 Development proposals will be expected to protect people and nature through climate change adaptation and measures to improve climate change resilience. Support will be given to development proposals that promote and assist climate change adaptation and reduce the negative impacts of climate change. Consideration will be given to how development proposals:

- a) Incorporate design features and use construction materials to ensure that a building provides resilience and resistance to climate change;
- b) Are designed appropriately in relation to layout and construction materials, prioritising passive cooling and reducing the potential for overheating;
- c) Minimise water and resource consumption;
- d) Take account of flood risk and coastal change through their location and design;
- e) Integrate sustainable drainage systems, to minimise and control surface water run-off, provide flood storage capacity and improve habitats and species migration;
- f) Incorporate green infrastructure to help species adapt to climate change through preventing fragmentation or isolation of habitats and reducing risks such as flooding and the overheating of urban environments;
- g) Improve habitats for nature and wider environmental benefits generally, but especially within local nature recovery networks (once these are confirmed).

Question 10

Consultation Questions

- a Do you agree with draft Policy SS8 Responding to Climate Change?
- b Do you feel the strategic policy covers the key issues we need to address in our approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation?
- 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 SS9: Health, Wellbeing and Quality of Life

- 1 The Council will expect new development to be designed to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places that promote, support and enhance physical and mental health and well-being and therefore contribute to reducing health inequalities within the District.

Development must support and address the health and wellbeing needs in Wealden as identified in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

- 2 To maximise opportunities for health and wellbeing benefits and to enable healthy lifestyles, development (as proportionate to the type and scale of development proposed) must demonstrate how it will:
 - a) Provide high quality, well designed, safe and accessible developments for all age groups and abilities, creating a beautiful and healthy living environment and a distinctive place to live and / or work;
 - b) Create integrated neighbourhoods that improve connectivity with the wider natural and built environment and to key services;
 - c) Deliver good accessibility routes for all users through the provision, improvement or enhancement of well-connected streets and path networks, to enable active and sustainable travel, increasing physical activity and contributing to the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods;
 - d) Provide opportunities to facilitate community cohesion and social inclusion, locating community facilities or spaces for people to meet and socialise in the best location for those walking, cycling, wheeling or using public transport;
 - e) Provide a network of different types of spaces, incorporating multifunctional green infrastructure and access to nature, as well as enabling climate change resilience;
 - f) Provide high quality private space as well as high quality inclusive public spaces;
 - g) Support and facilitate healthy eating and food security through the provision of food growing opportunities such as allotments, orchards or community growing spaces as well as supporting local food production and markets;
 - h) Take opportunities to improve the factors that can contribute to poor health and social inequalities such as noise, vibration, air quality, crime, local amenity, water pollution, deficiencies in open space, recreation and sports facilities and access to the countryside; and
 - i) Contribute towards local labour training, placements / apprenticeships to improve skills to help tackle worklessness, especially for young people.

Health Impact Assessment

- 3 To support this policy requirement, all major development proposals between 30-149 residential units and / or commercial development of 1000 – 9,999sqm will be expected to submit an HIA screening assessment. This should be submitted at the pre-application stage to determine the level of HIA required proportionate to the proposed development.
- 4 The requirement for screening will also apply to smaller-scale developments where there are reasons to indicate that a proposal may give rise to a significant impact on health, especially where the development is located in within the one of the 20% most deprived wards or where there are high levels of childhood and / or adult obesity.
- 5 All major development proposals of or over 150 residential units and/or 10,000sqm floorspace will automatically require an HIA to be undertaken to demonstrate both the individual and cumulative impacts of the proposal on the health and well-being of the community.
- 6 Where a HIA is required the process must commence at the initial stages of the development so that it can inform the proposal, this will allow maximum scope for the health issues to be identified and addressed as the proposed scheme is progressed. The Council will agree timescales and stages with the applicant. An HIA should be undertaken in accordance with the East Sussex HIA Guidance (once published and any subsequent updates to it) which will set out details on required processes.
- 7 The HIA recommendations should be incorporated into the proposal and submission documentation, these must demonstrate how any harmful impacts on health and wellbeing have been mitigated and how positive impacts have been maximised. An HIA report appropriate to the stage of the proposal will be required for full, outline and reserved matters applications as agreed with the Council.

Question 11

Consultation Questions

- a Do you agree with draft Policy SS9 Health, Wellbeing and Quality of Life?
- b Do you agree with the threshold levels set out within the policy for undertaking a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) in the Wealden context?
- c If you disagree with the threshold levels set out in the policy, at what level do you think an alternative threshold should be set and why?
- d Have we missed anything that may impact on the health and wellbeing of our residents? If so, what have we missed?
- e Should we make changes to this policy, and if so, what changes should we make?

Notes and Comments

Policy SS10: Green Infrastructure

- 1 Where relevant, all development should protect, improve and enhance existing green infrastructure and, where opportunities exist, create additional green infrastructure that will play a meaningful role in the creation of a multi-functional and accessible network of GI across the district. New and the improvement of existing GI should be designed to provide benefits for the environment and people, supporting health and well-being and contributing to the response to climate change.
- 2 When determining planning applications, consideration will be given to how development proposals:
 - a) Embed green infrastructure into the design and layout of the proposal taking into account locally distinctive character and creating a sense of place;
 - b) Protect, retain, enhance, create and regenerate green corridors and links that contribute to the network, in particular, supporting ecological connectivity for wildlife between the development, town and village centres and the wider countryside;
 - c) Maximise opportunities to enhance ecosystem services;
 - d) Address any green infrastructure deficiencies in the area;
 - e) Support the delivery of the Council's GI Strategy²⁷;
 - f) Maximise opportunities to provide multi-functional benefits including providing opportunities for people to interact with nature and encourage recreation, sports and healthier lifestyles, ensuring that opportunities will not cause harm to wildlife and habitats;
 - g) Secure improved access to green infrastructure for residents of all ages and abilities. This may include improving rights of way, walking and cycle routes and networks and providing informal access, where this will not cause harm to biodiversity, landscape or heritage assets;
 - h) Incorporate measures for adapting to and mitigating against the effects of climate change through innovative green infrastructure design solutions that will complement the provision of sustainable drainage, the management of flood risk and urban cooling;
 - i) Where appropriate, provide opportunities for growing healthy food, including through allotments and other community schemes;
 - j) Incorporate green infrastructure to support economic growth and sustainable tourism;
 - k) Propose to manage and maintain the provision of green infrastructure; and
 - l) Comply with any national green infrastructure standards.
- 3 Relevant development proposals must secure positive green infrastructure outcomes and will be supported where they contribute to all of the below (as relevant):
 - a) Development is designed to respond to the location of existing green infrastructure and support and improve its functions and benefits;
 - b) A proposal protects and improves the green infrastructure network through enhancement and/or regeneration; and
 - c) Proposals provide new green infrastructure and / or introduce multifunctional uses, green links and corridors.
- 4 Where the scale of development is too small to accommodate on-site provision of green infrastructure or where the development is for the re-use of existing buildings, opportunities should still be sought to maximise opportunities for GI. This could include but is not limited to the following measures, green roofs, walls and nesting and roosting spaces for wildlife.

Question 12

Consultation Questions

- a Do you agree with the Council's draft Policy SS9 for Green Infrastructure?
- b Do you feel the strategic policy covers the key issues we need to address in our approach to the retention, protection, enhancement and creation of green infrastructure?
- 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

Final Thoughts

