

Introduction

- 40.1 Turners Hill is located approximately three miles west of East Grinstead and six miles north of Haywards Heath. It is situated on a prominent ridge at one of the highest points in the Sussex Weald, which affords impressive views from the village to the North and South Downs. The village is centred on a small green, which is at the junction of two historically important routes, now the B2110, running east to west, and the B2028 running north to south. The older part of the village around the green is now a Conservation Area with buildings dating back to the 17th and 18th centuries, a number of which are listed. More recent development has extended the village mainly to the north and south along the B2028.
- 40.2 The village has a very attractive rural setting, surrounded by attractive countryside which separates it from the other nearby villages and which forms a vital part of the strategic gap between East Grinstead and Crawley. The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty abuts the village on its southern boundary.
- 40.3 Due to its location at the junction of the B2028 and B2110, the environment of the village is greatly affected by the amount of traffic which passes through the centre throughout the day.
- 40.4 Turners Hill is served by a range of local facilities. These include a small number of shops in North Street and Lion Lane; a large modern village hall and community centre; three churches and two church halls; a primary school; playing fields, a cricket ground, recreation grounds including equipped children's play areas; four public houses; and allotments.
- 40.5 Approximately half a mile to the east of the village is a large mobile home park, which also has its own shop and social facilities; and approximately 2 miles to the west is Worth Abbey, a large independent school set in extensive grounds.

Policies and Proposals

Built-up Area Boundary

- 40.6 A built-up area boundary is defined for Turners Hill. This seeks to preserve the rural setting of the village and to protect the surrounding countryside, which lies within the strategic gap and includes part of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to the south.

Strategic Gap

- 40.7 The area to the west, north and east of the village lies within the strategic gap between East Grinstead and Crawley.

Conservation Area

- 40.8 Turners Hill Conservation Area was designated in 1984. It extends northwards from the original heart of the village at the main cross-roads and the small village green. It also includes Lion Lane and parts of North Street, Church Road and East Street. There is a mix of house types and styles, some dating from the 17th and 18th centuries, and some of the buildings are listed. Despite the intrusive effects of heavy traffic the older parts of the village have retained their character and attractive appearance.

40.9 The following features in particular contribute to the character of the Conservation Area:

- the varied mix of building styles and ages;
- the attractive grouping of buildings around the village green and along Lion Lane;
- the green plus other smaller grassed areas and verges, including in Lion Lane;
- the elevated position of several houses in Lion Lane, with their raised front gardens;
- attractive street furniture and signs;
- several attractive stone walls and a natural sandstone bank in Church Road;
- important tree groups; and
- the setting of New Cottages in East Street.

40.10 The elevated position of the village also affords excellent views from the Conservation Area across the surrounding countryside

Housing

Clock Field, North Street

40.11 One site has been identified for residential development in Turners Hill. This site has an area of 1.9ha and comprises an open field to the east of the built up area of the village. It is an undulating site which slopes to the north and from the east and west. It is bounded by tree screens to the northeast and east, with open countryside beyond. It fronts North Street on the western boundary. It adjoins the existing built up area on its north, west and south boundaries, and the neighbouring land uses are primarily residential. The site is allocated for housing and it is estimated it can accommodate approximately 30 dwellings. Any development should include an element of affordable housing. Access to the site should be from North Street by means of a new mini- roundabout, which will also serve as a traffic calming measure and help to slow traffic on this busy section of the B2036 which runs through the centre of the village. Development of this site will also provide the opportunity to secure other related benefits for the village including the provision of a footway alongside North Street southwards towards the village centre; and the provision of a footpath link across the site to connect the area of housing at Hill House Close with The Ark community centre to the south. The Council will require these features to be provided as part of the residential development of this site.

TH1 Land at Clock Field (approximately 1.9ha) is allocated for residential development to provide approximately 30 dwellings, 30% to be affordable housing units. Permission for development will be subject to the general requirements of the Local Plan, particularly policies G3 (Infrastructure), B2 (Design), H2 (Dwelling Mix), H4 (Affordable Housing), T4 (New

Development) and R3 and R4 (Outdoor Playing Space).

Additionally permission will be subject to the following requirements:

- (a) vehicular access will be from a new mini-roundabout on North Street;
- (b) the provision of a footway alongside the North Street carriageway from the entrance to the site southwards to the centre of the village and to connect with the existing footpath to the north on the east side of the road;
- (c) the implementation of a comprehensive landscaping scheme on the site, including the provision of replacement planting along the North Street frontage;
- (d) the provision of a footpath link across the site from Hill House Close to The Ark;
- (e) financial contributions towards the provision of additional primary and secondary school, library, off site play space and civic amenity facilities; and
- (f) the completion of a wildlife survey.

Transport

Highways and Traffic

40.12 Although an attractive village, the location of Turners Hill at a busy cross-roads means that the environment is dominated by the very high volumes of traffic passing through the centre. Traffic flows at the junction of the B2028 and the B2110 exceed 17,500 vehicles per day between the hours of 7.00 am and 7.00 pm (1998 figures), with clear peaks at the morning and evening rush hour periods, and with the greatest flows being north and south on the B2028. It is apparent that some of this traffic is passing through Turners Hill and other nearby villages in order to avoid congestion elsewhere, including at East Grinstead. Earlier studies have shown that traffic relief at East Grinstead would help reduce traffic flows on a number of roads in the area including at Turners Hill. However, as explained elsewhere in this Local Plan, any significant traffic relief measures at East Grinstead, if approved, are not expected to take place in the short to medium term at least, and in the meantime there are currently no other measures programmed which would address the wider problem of excessive traffic through the centre of Turners Hill. A new mini-roundabout has been constructed at the junction of Withypitts and Selsfield Road and development of the site at Clock Field for housing will also require a new roundabout access from North Street. However, these are local traffic management and calming measures and are not expected to have a significant impact on the levels of traffic through the village.

40.13 In the meantime these high traffic volumes continue to detract significantly from the environment of the village and are also a threat to road safety. The Council considers that every effort should be made to find ways of reducing the impact of this traffic. It will therefore seek to work with the Highway Authority and the Parish Council to address this issue as a matter of urgency and to consider what measures may be implemented in the

short term to manage traffic in and through the village, pending completion of studies into traffic relief elsewhere.

- 40.14 In addition to these wider considerations, in order to improve highway safety conditions on the approach into Turners Hill from the west, the Council will, in association with the Highway Authority, investigate options for an improvement to the junction of Church Road with Paddockhurst Road.

Community / Recreation Use

- 40.15 In order to improve the provision for formal sports activities in this part of the District, land to the east of the existing sports/recreation area in East Street is identified for playing fields on the Proposals Map. Prior to the implementation of this proposal, an environmental survey will be required in order to assess the ecological value of the site and the possibility of retention / management of any existing on-site features.

TH2 Land in East Street is allocated for sports/playing field use.

- 40.16 At present Turners Hill is under provided with equipped children's play space. The only existing provision is at East Street on the edge of the village which is a considerable distance from some of the main housing areas. The Council has identified a site for an equipped children's play area on land adjacent to Withypitts East on the southeast side of the village.

TH3 A site adjacent to Withypitts East is allocated as an equipped children's play area.

- 40.17 The Council will continue to investigate ways of improving the provision of children's play space elsewhere within the village during the Plan period. Provision of outdoor playing space will be required as part of the residential development at Clock Field.

Other Land Uses

Turners Hill Mobile Home Park

- 40.18 The mobile home park is located approximately half a mile to the east of Turners Hill. With an area of 14.7ha it currently contains around 230 mobile homes, together with a shop and social club and ancillary areas of open space. The homes are informally laid out within a partly wooded setting. The park is located in an attractive area of undulating countryside and lies within the strategic gap between Crawley and East Grinstead.
- 40.19 While the mobile home park helps to meet the demands of a particular section of the housing market and contributes to the overall housing land supply in the District, this has to be balanced against the objectives of protecting the countryside and the strategic gap.

The Council considers that an appropriate balance between the development of the park on the one hand and the protection of the environment on the other has now been achieved. Proposals for the siting of additional homes within the existing site boundaries will be assessed in the light of current site licence conditions and normal planning and highway criteria, and will have to have regard to protected trees within the park. However, the Council considers that any further extension of the mobile home park beyond its currently approved boundaries would be likely to adversely affect the character and quality of the countryside and the strategic gap. It will, therefore, resist such proposals.

TH4 In order to protect the countryside and the strategic gap proposals for the extension of the Turners Hill Mobile Home Park beyond its currently approved boundaries will not be permitted.

