

## 7. CONSULTATION DRAFT OF THE DISTRICT PLAN

REPORT OF: HEAD OF ECONOMIC PROMOTION AND PLANNING  
Contact Claire Tester  
Officer: Email: [claire.testler@midsussex.gov.uk](mailto:claire.testler@midsussex.gov.uk) Tel: 01444 477322  
Wards All  
Affected:  
Key Decision No

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### Purpose Of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to ask Council to approve publishing the consultation draft of the District Plan and accompanying papers for public consultation.

### Summary

2. The report sets out the background to the preparation of the consultation draft of the District Plan, and explains the role of the Policy Member Working Group in this preparation. It sets out the main features of the draft Plan, and refers to the new or amended evidence base documents that inform it. It also stresses the influence of the work on Neighbourhood Plans and other planning documents being undertaken by Town and Parish Councils. In particular it refers to the inclusion of the development proposals in the Burgess Hill Townwide Strategy as a strategic allocation in the consultation draft of the District Plan.

### Recommendations

#### 3.1 That Council:

- (a) agrees to publish the consultation draft of the District Plan for public consultation;
  - (b) supports the Burgess Hill Townwide Strategy and its inclusion in the consultation draft of the District Plan as a strategic allocation for 3,500-4,000 new homes to the north and east of the town, a 40 hectare business park and new sporting facilities at the A2300 corridor and other infrastructure benefits;
  - (c) agrees to publish the Sustainability Appraisal of the consultation draft of the District Plan for public consultation;
  - (d) agrees to publish the Habitats Regulations Assessment for public consultation; and
  - (e) approves the Community Involvement Plan for consulting on the above documents.
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## Background

4. As one of its first acts, the Coalition Government announced its intention to abolish Regional Strategies and the top-down housing targets for local authorities that they contained. In response to this, in June 2010, the Council halted work on the 'Core Strategy' and started work on the District's Local Housing Assessment.
5. The Localism Bill (expected to receive Royal Assent in November 2011), includes a clause to abolish Regional Strategies, and it is understood that the South East Plan (which includes the housing targets for Mid Sussex) will be revoked soon after the Bill is enacted. The District Council would then be able to set its own housing targets and development policies at a local level. In Mid Sussex, these would be set out in the District Plan. In April 2011 the Council agreed a timetable for producing the District Plan, based on robust local evidence, including the Local Housing Assessment. The Council also agreed to revise the Statement of Community Involvement and produce a Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule alongside the District Plan.
6. The proposed legislation in the Localism Bill also includes the introduction of a more 'bottom up' approach through Neighbourhood Plans. Many of the Town and Parish Councils in Mid Sussex have started work on Neighbourhood Plans or other local planning documents, and this work is also helping to inform the draft District Plan and the Community Infrastructure Levy work.
7. The preliminary results of the Local Housing Assessment were reported to the Better Environment Advisory Group in June, and it was resolved that a scenario from the Local Housing Assessment which resulted in a need for 530 new homes per annum be used to inform the preparation of the consultation draft of the District Plan. It was also agreed to set up a Member Working Group to consider the policies for inclusion in the consultation draft District Plan.

## Policy Member Working Group

8. This Working Group, chaired by Councillor Andrew Barrett-Miles, has met on four occasions over the summer, and reviewed the text and policies contained in the consultation draft District Plan appended to this report. The Working Group was informed in this task by the Sustainability Appraisal assessments of strategy and policy options. It was also made aware of relevant evidence documents to aid the discussion. A list of these documents is at the back of the consultation draft District Plan, and references are also included under each individual policy.
9. Members of the Working Group agreed that this approach has improved the quality of the work produced, ensured that it reflects the Council's strategy and objectives, and made sure that the draft Plan is written in plainer and more concise English.

## Consultation Draft of the District Plan

10. The role of the District Plan is to provide an overall direction on what, where, when and how development will take place in Mid Sussex over the next two decades. It will need to include the following:
  - **What** overall quantity of development is needed to support the Mid Sussex community and achieve its aspirations of economic growth, maintain its high quality of life and promote sustainable communities;

- **Where** the majority of the development should be located, **when** it will come forward and **how** it will be delivered;
- **Where** development will be restricted given the desire to protect the attractive countryside and the distinctive character and heritage of the various communities that make up Mid Sussex;
- **How** other development will be delivered;
- **How** the necessary infrastructure to accompany this development will be achieved; and
- **How** the nature and quality of this development will be monitored and controlled to achieve the overall vision and strategic objectives.

11. The consultation draft District Plan contains the following:

1. Background to the consultation draft District Plan;
2. Vision and Objectives;
3. Overall Strategy; and
4. Policies.

It also includes an appendix with the list of relevant evidence documents and a further appendix listing the Mid Sussex Local Plan policies that would be retained after the District Plan has been adopted in 2013.

### **Overall Strategy**

12. The vision for the consultation draft of the District Plan is based on the Mid Sussex Sustainable Communities Strategy (see paragraph 36). Its overall strategy is to increase the 'self-sufficiency' of Mid Sussex and reduce its dependence on other areas for employment and other facilities. The strategy seeks to achieve sustainable communities which support the local economy, and provide the opportunity for residents to work within their communities and access other necessary services and facilities close to home.
13. The location of Mid Sussex within the Gatwick Diamond brings potential to enhance the economic prosperity of the area, and it is important that Mid Sussex benefits fully from those opportunities by supporting economic development across the district, particularly through the regeneration of town centres and other existing employment areas, and the development of new employment areas in the towns and villages. Town and Parish Councils in developing their Neighbourhood Plans will be encouraged to take full account of the economic needs of their area, and seek to reduce commuting by providing for these needs. The consultation draft District Plan also includes policies to support existing businesses, and allow them to grow, and to encourage inward investment especially by knowledge-driven, creative or high technology industries.

### **Housing**

14. As noted in paragraph 7 above, the Better Environment Advisory Group agreed in June that the consultation draft District Plan be prepared on the basis of a housing number of 530 new homes per annum. Over the 20 year period this would equate to 10,600 homes. Of these, approximately 4,300 homes are already 'committed' (i.e. are on allocated sites or have planning permission).
15. A key characteristic of the consultation draft District Plan is the desire of the Council to involve Town and Parish Councils in its preparation and delivery. In Burgess Hill, work has been ongoing for a number of years, and has resulted in the publication earlier this year by Burgess Hill Town Council of its Townwide

Strategy for public consultation. This has now been formally adopted by the Town Council. The consultation draft District Plan supports the development proposals in the Townwide Strategy, and shows them as a 'strategic allocation'. This includes 3,500-4,000 new homes to the north and east of the town, a 40 hectare business park and new sporting facilities at the A2300 corridor and other infrastructure benefits. It should be noted that much of this development is on land outside of Burgess Hill Town Council administrative boundaries, within the adjacent parishes of Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common, and Ansty and Staplefield.

16. The residual amount of 2,300-2,800 new homes (115-140 per annum) would need to be delivered elsewhere within the three towns and 21 parishes of Mid Sussex. The Council's preference is that the location and nature of this development be identified through Neighbourhood Plans. This reflects the Government's localism agenda, and its view that giving power and responsibility to local communities will give them the confidence to accept some appropriate development, and the corresponding benefits that can come with it. Many of the Town and Parish Councils are already working up their proposals and will be consulting their communities on them. It is important that this work is progressed over the next 6 months so that firm proposals can be included within the final District Plan as the Planning Inspector at examination will need to be convinced that these homes will be delivered.

### **The District Plan Process**

17. The original timetable allowed for a 6 week public consultation on the draft District Plan but, following a representation from CPRE Sussex, it is now proposed to extend this to 12 weeks from the 24<sup>th</sup> October to 16<sup>th</sup> January. Consultation material will only be available electronically for the first two weeks due to the need to print and distribute the final agreed consultation documents. A Community Involvement Plan is appended which sets out how the consultation would be carried out.
18. The results of this consultation would then be reported back to the Better Environment Advisory Group in March 2012. Any necessary amendments would be made to the draft District Plan, which would then be reported to Council in May 2012 for a final decision on its content. Following this decision a further 6 week public consultation is required, with all responses being submitted with the draft District Plan to the Planning Inspector appointed to carry out the examination of the Plan.
19. It is anticipated that the examination would occur in the autumn of 2012, with the Inspector's report being received early 2013 and, hopefully, final adoption of the District Plan in the spring of 2013.

### **The Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule**

20. Under the timetable agreed by Council in April, it was envisaged that the Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule would exactly mirror the District Plan timetable above. However, because this is such a new area of work, and this Council is one of the first local authorities to work up a Levy, more information is needed before a preliminary Charging Schedule is ready for public consultation. On 5<sup>th</sup> October the Better Environment Advisory Group agreed to

delay public consultation on the Levy until February/March 2012. The Charging Schedule will then be amended as necessary before being considered by Council in May 2012. At that point the timetable for the Levy would fall back into step with that of the District Plan.

## Evidence Base

21. A number of the evidence base documents produced for the Core Strategy remain wholly or partially relevant to the District Plan, and these are listed at the back of the draft consultation document. However, some evidence base documents have needed to be updated or new ones produced to inform the District Plan. These new pieces of evidence are explained below.
22. **Sustainability Appraisal:** The Sustainability Appraisal is a statutory requirement, and is used to assess plans and policies to make sure that they are the best options for meeting the Council's sustainability objectives. These objectives were themselves consulted upon in 2006 as part of the 'scoping report' for the Sustainability Appraisal process, which has been applied to all the Council's planning documents since. The Sustainability Appraisal of the draft consultation District Plan will be published for public consultation alongside the Plan itself. The Sustainability Appraisal is available to view as a Background Paper to this report.
23. **Habitats Regulations Assessment:** The Habitats Regulations Assessment looks at the impacts of the District Plan on the Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area and Special Area of Conservation (which are European-designated sites of nature conservation importance). The Habitats Regulations Assessment is required by legislation, and must determine whether or not a plan will adversely affect the integrity of the European site concerned (in this case, the Ashdown Forest). This mainly affects development proposals within the settlements of East Grinstead, Ashurst Wood and Crawley Down. Initial work has identified that recreational disturbance and atmospheric pollution could have an impact on the Ashdown Forest and mitigation may be required, however, further work is needed on this to provide more detail and explore potential options. The Habitats Regulations Assessment is available to view as a Background Paper to this report.
24. **Local Housing Assessment:** Since Members of Better Environment saw a copy of the Local Housing Assessment in June, the document has been amended to include more detailed information about how the scenarios were developed. The numbers of homes 'committed' through allocations or the grant of planning permissions has also been updated to the April 2011 position.
25. **Viability Assessment:** The Viability Assessment is being carried out to inform the Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule, as the Planning Inspector will require evidence that the charging rate proposed will not render development unviable, and therefore undeliverable. The percentage of affordable housing sought on sites has a big impact on their viability, and therefore the Viability Assessment also provides evidence on the percentage and thresholds for affordable housing, which has informed the draft District Plan policy on affordable housing. This work is being reviewed by the Infrastructure Working Group, which will make recommendations to the Better Environment Advisory Group in January 2012 on the content of the Charging Schedule.

26. **Town and Parish Council Input:** the Town and Parish Councils have provided a wealth of local knowledge which has helped to inform the consultation draft District Plan. This has included indicating which Parish Plans and other documents represent their most recent thoughts on community aspirations, what their timetable is for reviewing these or undertaking work on Neighbourhood Plans, and providing information on infrastructure requirements to add to the Infrastructure Development Plan. This evidence is referenced in the consultation District Plan, both within the text and above the policies which it has informed.
27. There will be a number of other pieces of evidence base that will need to be gathered or updated before the District Plan is submitted, including transport evidence. As explained in paragraph 16 above, of particular importance will be the evidence provided by the Town and Parish Councils showing how the residual 2,300-2,800 homes will be delivered, their intended provision to support the economic prosperity and self sufficiency of the area, and their infrastructure requirements.

### **Community Involvement Plan**

28. Elsewhere on this agenda, Council is being asked to approve a revised Statement of Community Involvement. This new Statement of Community Involvement includes a requirement for a 'Community Involvement Plan' to be produced for each consultation. The proposed Community Involvement Plan for the draft District Plan is appended to this report. This is a joint plan for the consultation draft District Plan, the Sustainability Appraisal and the Habitats Regulations Assessment. Since all these documents are being consulted upon at the same time it makes sense to coordinate the consultations so that people do not get confused, and feel appropriately informed about all the different facets to this work.
29. In the spirit of the Council's desire to involve Town and Parish Councils in the preparation and delivery of the District Plan, it is considered that they should also be involved in how the wider community is engaged through the public consultation. The Portfolio Holder therefore wrote to the Town and Parish Councils asking for their input to the draft Community Involvement Plan. A number of responses have been received, mainly offering assistance with venues etc. These have been taken into account in finalising the Community Involvement Plan.

### **Better Environment Advisory Group Feedback**

30. The Better Environment Advisory Group discussed the consultation draft District Plan on 7<sup>th</sup> September, and the approved minutes of that meeting are appended to this report. A number of suggested amendments were made to the draft District Plan. The Chairman also asked Members to put any further comments in writing. The consultation draft District Plan appended to this report has been amended as a result of these comments. Some points of clarification were sought at the meeting which could not be answered on the night. These are addressed below:
31. **Ashdown Forest:** A Member asked what a SANG was. One of the measures that could help protect Ashdown Forest from recreational pressure is the identification of a 'Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace' (SANG) which would provide another destination, particularly for dog walkers. If such a facility

was provided close to new development, then residents may choose to walk their dogs there rather than travelling to Ashdown Forest and adding to the air quality problems and disturbance to birdlife. A SANG can either be a new area of open space or it can be an existing area that is made more attractive to dog walkers, such as by providing a car park and circular walks.

32. **Noise, air and light pollution:** Members asked if the standards that these types of pollution were assessed against could be made more specific. The Business Unit Leader for Environmental Health has been consulted on this point, and has advised that including specific standards in this policy would just duplicate Environmental Health legislation. It was also asked if development could be refused if it was close to an existing noisy use such as an airport. The third bullet point under 'Noise Pollution' refers to "ensuring that noise sensitive development is not permitted in close proximity to existing or proposed development generating high levels of noise unless adequate sound insulation measures are incorporated within the development".
33. **Affordable Housing:** Members asked whether the commuted sum in lieu of the requirement to build 30% of houses as affordable included just build costs or also the provision of an alternative site. It was also asked whether the 'Right to Buy' applied to properties in settlements under 3,000 population. The Head of Housing's response is as follows:
- Commuted sums are not based on build costs. They are based on the cost of acquiring equivalent land elsewhere in the District i.e. land cost + 15% acquisition and servicing costs. This is based on our policy requirement for developers to provide free serviced land for affordable housing, the logic being if the developers are not providing it on this site they should pay an equivalent value to enable it to be provided on another site. So commuted sums do not fully fund new affordable housing but should contribute the same as on-site provision in terms of value.
  - The Right to Buy applies to Council housing; the Right to Acquire applies to Registered Provider (housing association) housing and is rarely used as it offers less generous discounts. Neither applies to homes in Designated Protected Areas (DPAs), generally settlements under 3,000, unless specific sites in those DPAs have been exempted from these restrictions. DPAs in fact cover most of Mid Sussex, including the proposed urban extensions to Burgess Hill. DPA designation restricts not only the Right to Acquire but also the ability of shared owners to "staircase" to own their homes, and this makes it very difficult for Providers to raise the funding needed for affordable housing on such schemes, a problem that the Government has recognised. The Council may sometimes therefore seek permission to de-designate certain new sites in DPAs to enable affordable housing to be delivered. There is no Right to Acquire on rural exception sites and shared owners on such sites can only staircase to 80% equity. This is generally manageable for Providers and their lenders owing to the small number and scale of exception sites.
34. **Water Infrastructure and the Water Environment:** Members queried why the threshold for requiring evidence of foul and surface water provision and water supply was set at 10 properties. This was the figure recommended by the Gatwick Sub-region Water Cycle Study, but seems to be simply based on the threshold for 'major developments'. It is likely that this requirement was seen as being too onerous for smaller developments, which are unlikely to have a significant impact on waste water capacity or water supply.

35. **Saved Policies:** Members queried how the list of saved policies had been compiled. Subsequent to the Better Environment Advisory Group meeting, the list of Local Plan policies proposed to be saved after the District Plan is adopted in 2013 was sent out to all District Councillors and Town and Parish Councils asking for input on which policies should continue to be saved. The revised list in Appendix B of the draft District Plan takes account of the responses to this consultation.

### **Policy Context**

36. In line with best practice, the consultation draft of the District Plan has been developed to reflect the area's Sustainable Communities Strategy. The 'Mid Sussex Sustainable Communities Strategy 2008-18' has a vision of:

*"A thriving and attractive District, a desirable place to live, work and visit. Our aim is to maintain, and where possible, improve the social, economic and environmental well being of our District and the quality of life for all, now and in the future."*

The vision is underpinned by four priority themes that promote the development of sustainable communities:

*"Protecting and enhancing the environment  
Promoting economic vitality  
Ensuring cohesive and safe communities  
Supporting healthy lifestyles"*

37. The consultation draft District Plan is based on the above vision and themes, and is intended to be an implementation tool for achieving the planning aspects of this vision.

### **Other Options Considered**

38. The risks of publishing a consultation draft District Plan based on local housing numbers in the current uncertain planning policy climate are set out below. The alternatives are:

- 1) To develop the District Plan based on the South East Plan numbers; or
- 2) To delay further work on the District Plan until the Localism Bill is enacted and the South East Plan is abolished.

It is considered that the first option would result in an undeliverable and unsustainable Plan. The second option would prolong the period where the District is at risk from unplanned development.

### **Financial Implications**

39. There are no financial implications of this report.

### **Risk Management Implications**

40. Strategic Risk 2 for this year is "Failure to approve a District Plan which meets community needs and aspirations and protects Mid Sussex from inappropriate development". It is considered that approving the recommendations in this report would help to lower the likelihood of this risk being realised. However,

there needs to be significant input from Towns and Parish Councils over the next few months in order that a sound District Plan can be developed for approval next spring prior to submission to Government.

41. The risk management implications and the proposed mitigation set out in the Better Environment Advisory Group report in March 2011 remain relevant.
42. An additional risk needs to be considered following publication of the Appeal Court Decision against Cala Homes on May 27<sup>th</sup> 2011. As well as containing the Appeal Court's decision on the planning applications, the judgement also stated the position with regard to plan-making. The judgement reminds Local Authorities that development plan documents must be in general conformity with the regional strategy as set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. It states that it would be unlawful for a local planning authority preparing, or a Planning Inspector examining, development plan documents to have regard to the proposal to abolish regional strategies.
43. Therefore, the status of the District Plan at this consultation stage needs to be carefully considered and weighed against the other risks such as continuing pressure for unwanted development. It is considered that the risk of a legal challenge at the draft consultation stage is outweighed by the risk of delaying the District Plan process and prolonging the period where Mid Sussex is at risk from inappropriate development.

#### **Other Material Implications**

44. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out on the consultation draft of the District Plan. The resulting Action Plan recommends that the draft Plan include policies that promote good accessibility and design; the improvement of community facilities; the provision of necessary infrastructure to support development; and the right housing mix including provision for older people and vulnerable groups and gypsies and travellers. Such policies are included in the consultation draft Plan appended to this report. The Action Plan also makes recommendations about engagement which have been taken into account in the Community Involvement Plan and highlights the need for monitoring of the impacts of the District Plan, once adopted.

#### **Appendices**

- A) Consultation Draft District Plan
- B) Minutes of the Better Environment Advisory Group 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011
- C) Draft Sustainability Appraisal - Non Technical Summary
- D) Executive Summary of the draft Habitats Regulations Assessment
- E) Draft Community Involvement Plan

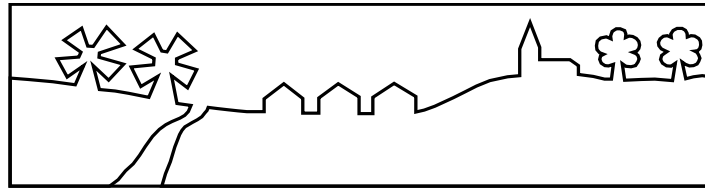
#### **Background Papers**

Burgess Hill Townwide Strategy  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=3168>

Draft Sustainability Appraisal  
Weblink

Draft Habitats Regulations Assessment  
Weblink

Equalities Assessment of the District Plan  
Weblink



**MID SUSSEX**  
**DISTRICT COUNCIL**

# District Plan

## Consultation Draft

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Appendix A – List of evidence base documents

Appendix B – List of Local Plan policies to be saved

## 1.0 Background to the Consultation Draft District Plan

- 1.1 This draft District Plan has been written in the context of the Localism Bill and the changes to the planning system being introduced by the Coalition Government. It reflects the aspirations of Central Government to give local people more ownership and control over the planning of their area, so that development is seen as a positive thing that can help communities maintain a high quality of life, increase economic prosperity and protect the environment to meet current needs and the needs of future generations.
- 1.2 The draft District Plan sets out a vision for how Mid Sussex wants to evolve and a delivery strategy for how that will be achieved. It sets out broad guidance on the distribution and quality of development in the form of 'higher level' strategic policies. It is a way of implementing the area's Sustainable Communities Strategy and provides the framework for all subsequent planning documents, including Neighbourhood Plans. The District Plan will cover the period up to 2031 and will replace the majority of the Mid Sussex Local Plan adopted in 2004. The Local Plan policies that will continue to apply are listed in Appendix B.
- 1.3 A particular feature of this draft Plan is the desire of the Council to involve Town and Parish councils in its preparation and delivery. It is vital that there is local influence over where and what development happens, and the infrastructure that is provided over the next 20 years. To this end, the Town and Parish Councils were asked to submit evidence about their communities' aspirations and needs for infrastructure, and the consultation draft of the District Plan has been based on this information. The draft Plan also encourages all Town and Parish Councils, individually or working together in clusters, to prepare and keep up-to-date local Neighbourhood Plans as envisaged in the Localism Bill. These Neighbourhood Plans will need to be in conformity with the District Plan and national policy guidance.
- 1.4 The documents that comprise the evidence base that sits behind this draft Plan are listed in Appendix A. It is essential that the draft Plan is robust and founded on good information. The results of this public consultation will inform a revised version of this document. Before this can be adopted by the District Council, it will be subject to examination by the Planning Inspectorate to ensure that it is a 'sound' Plan, and is consistent with national policies.
- 1.5 This draft Plan should be read in conjunction with the Sustainability Appraisal, which shows which options have been considered for the strategy and policies of the District Plan, assesses those against sustainability objectives, and explains why the options chosen are preferred over those rejected. A Habitats Regulations Assessment is also being published alongside the consultation draft of the District Plan, to identify its potential impacts on the Ashdown Forest, a European designated site. A draft Proposals Map also accompanies the consultation draft of the District Plan.
- 1.6 The District Council also intends to publish a preliminary draft Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule and Infrastructure Development Plan. The Charging Schedule will be the mechanism for delivering the necessary

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infrastructure to accompany new development. It is anticipated that public consultation on the preliminary draft Charging Schedule will be in February/March 2012, and that the final version will be agreed by the District Council in May/June of 2012 alongside the District Plan. Both sets of documents would then be examined by an independent Inspector early 2013, with adoption planned for mid 2013.

DRAFT

## 2.0 Vision and Objectives

### Mid Sussex – An Attractive Place to Live, Work and Visit

- 2.1 Mid Sussex is a rural district located in the South East of England. It is a popular place to live, benefiting from a high standard of living and a superb and easily accessible natural setting. The district is consistently ranked highly on quality of life measures. The most recent Halifax survey (which ranks how good an area is to live in based on measures such as housing, environment, health and education), put Mid Sussex 21<sup>st</sup> out of 408 local authority areas in the country. Mid Sussex scored higher than any other area in Sussex. It is also one of the least deprived areas in the country according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation; has a higher than average retired population; crime levels are low; health levels are generally good; and there is a strong sense of community.
- 2.2 Mid Sussex has three towns, Burgess Hill, East Grinstead and Haywards Heath, and a good mix of large and smaller villages / hamlets (see map). These are distinct communities with their own characteristics and constraints, and their own aspirations for the future.
- 2.3 Nearly 50% of the district is within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and over 10% is within the South Downs National Park. Between is an area known as the Low Weald, which has its own distinctive characteristics. Mid Sussex is the tenth most wooded district in the South East, and two-thirds of this woodland is classified as 'ancient'. It also has many Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and sites valued for their biodiversity (including Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Sites of Nature Conservation Importance, Local Nature Reserves and Biodiversity Opportunity Areas). It has archaeological sites, (including Scheduled Ancient Monuments) and Registered Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest. Unsurprisingly, the district's attractive natural environment and rich heritage makes it highly valued by its residents and a popular tourist destination.
- 2.4 Economically, the district is generally successful with high levels of local employment. It has weathered the recession well relative to its neighbours and the rest of the south east, and was identified in 2010 as the most resilient local authority area in the region in terms of its ability to withstand economic shocks, such as reductions in public spending. It is the location for a number of innovative and nationally known businesses and also a range of smaller businesses across sectors such as finance, service industries and light manufacturing etc. The nature of the local economy is strongly influenced by being close to Crawley and London Gatwick Airport and within commuting distance of London and the south coast. Mid Sussex has a relatively skilled and educated workforce and has access to higher educational establishments within the district (Central Sussex College) and two universities in Brighton.

## The Challenges Facing the District

2.5 Whilst Mid Sussex offers a high quality of life it will need to manage a series of issues over the lifetime of this plan if the district is to continue to be successful and the negative impacts of development are to be properly mitigated. These challenges include:

- Mid Sussex has relatively high levels of in and out commuting and it is important that appropriate employment opportunities are promoted within the district to ensure people who live locally can work locally;
- There are already infrastructure deficits in sewerage and water supply, and open space and sports/play provision and there are public concerns that further development will exacerbate these problems;
- Transport infrastructure is under particular strain with high levels of car ownership and car usage combining with narrow, winding rural roads and congested towns and major junctions. East Grinstead in particular has acknowledged congestion problems along the A22/A264;
- An important element of achieving sustainable communities is the regeneration and renewal of the three town centres so that they can be attractive and thriving retail, leisure and commercial hubs each with their own distinctive character;
- House prices in Mid Sussex are high relative to average incomes, and this causes affordability issues, particularly for young people;
- According to the Office of National Statistics, 17.4% of the Mid Sussex population are aged 65 and over, and this figure is projected to increase to 23.6% by 2025. There is also a projected increase in people aged over 85 years living in Mid Sussex from 2.5 % to 4 % by 2025;
- There are pockets of deprivation mostly in relation to access to local community services – this can create social exclusion;
- There is a need to achieve sustainable, attractive and inclusive communities to ensure that the district continues to benefit from low crime levels, good health and an attractive natural and built environment; and
- There is a need to promote more sustainable forms of development that are energy and resource efficient and increase the 'self-sufficiency' of communities within Mid Sussex, and its ability to adapt to climate change.

## A Vision for Mid Sussex

- 2.6 The plan is based on the vision for the District set out in the 'Mid Sussex Sustainable Communities Strategy 2008-18':

***“A thriving and attractive District, a desirable place to live, work and visit. Our aim is to maintain, and where possible, improve the social, economic and environmental well being of our District and the quality of life for all, now and in the future.”***

- 2.7 The vision is underpinned by four priority themes that promote the development of sustainable communities:

***“Protecting and enhancing the environment  
Promoting economic vitality  
Ensuring cohesive and safe communities  
Supporting healthy lifestyles”***

- 2.8 The Sustainable Communities Strategy was drawn up by the Mid Sussex Partnership, whose membership includes over 100 local organisations from the statutory, business and voluntary and community sectors. The document drew on a wide evidence base and was subject to an extensive public consultation exercise. The Sustainable Communities Strategy is reviewed on an annual basis by the Mid Sussex Partnership to see if these priorities are still relevant. A copy of the document can be found at [www.midsussex.gov.uk](http://www.midsussex.gov.uk)

## Strategic Objectives for the District Plan

- 2.9 The table opposite shows how the District Plan will take forward the above vision and apply it to planning issues.

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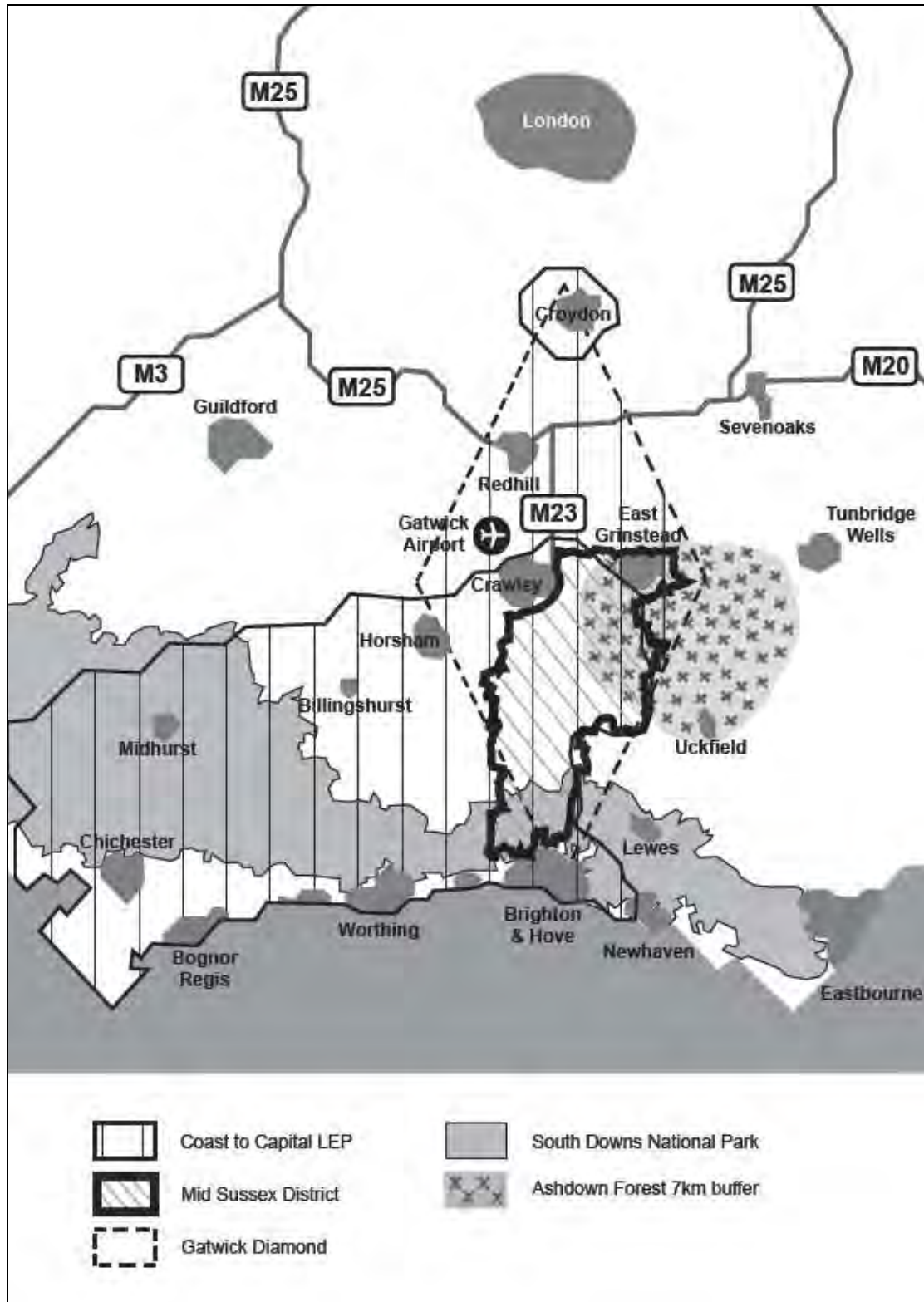
Priority themes	Strategic Objectives for the District Plan
Protecting and enhancing the environment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>To promote sustainable development that makes the best use of resources and increases the 'self-sufficiency' of communities within Mid Sussex, and its ability to adapt to climate change</i></li> <li>2. <i>To promote well located and designed development that reflects our distinctive towns and villages, retains their separate identity and character and prevents coalescence</i></li> <li>3. <i>To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities</i></li> <li>4. <i>To maintain easily accessible green corridors and spaces around and within the towns and villages to act as wildlife corridors and sustainable transport links</i></li> <li>5. <i>To ensure that development is accompanied by the necessary infrastructure in the right place at the right time that meets needs, supports development and creates sustainable communities</i></li> </ol>
Promoting economic vitality	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. <i>To promote a place which is attractive to business, and where local enterprise thrives</i></li> <li>7. <i>To provide opportunities for people to live and work within their communities, reducing the need for commuting</i></li> <li>8. <i>To create and maintain town and village centres that are vibrant, attractive and successful and that meet the needs of the community</i></li> <li>9. <i>To support a healthy rural economy in the villages and the countryside</i></li> <li>10. <i>To support and enhance the attractiveness of Mid Sussex as a visitor destination</i></li> </ol>
Ensuring cohesive and safe communities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. <i>To develop sustainable communities which are safe, healthy and inclusive</i></li> <li>12. <i>To provide the amount and type of housing that meets the needs of all sectors of the community</i></li> <li>13. <i>To create environments that are accessible to all members of the community</i></li> </ol>
Supporting healthy lifestyles	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14. <i>To create places that encourage a healthy and enjoyable lifestyle by the provision of first class cultural and sporting facilities, informal leisure space and the opportunity to walk, cycle or ride to common destinations.</i></li> </ol>

## Wider Context

- 2.10 The District Council has cooperated with neighbouring authorities on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries. Most of Mid Sussex lies within the Gatwick Diamond – an area centred upon the airport, which has a key role to play in the economic strength of the area, both as a direct employer and through its influence on the location of businesses that provide services to it or have international connections.
- 2.11 The Gatwick Diamond forms part of the larger Coast to Capital Local Economic Partnership. The Coast to Capital mission is:
- “ to provide joint public and private sector leadership to drive sustainable private sector led growth and job creation across an area reaching from Brighton & Hove to Croydon and including the Gatwick Diamond and West Sussex. We will do this by boosting enterprise and embedding an even stronger enterprise culture. We will also increase international trade by helping current international traders to trade more and inspiring more businesses to trade internationally. In so doing we will realise every person and place’s potential”. (John Peel, Chairman of Coast to Capital).*
- 2.12 The six District/Borough Councils and two County Councils within the Gatwick Diamond have come together to draw up a local strategic statement, known as the Gatwick Diamond Strategy. This is accompanied by a ‘memorandum of understanding’ setting out how the local authorities will continue to work together to address these wider planning issues and to secure strategic infrastructure provision.
- 2.13 In the south of the district, part of Mid Sussex comes within the South Downs National Park. The National Park Authority is a local planning authority in its own right, although at present it has a delegation agreement with the District Council to determine planning applications in the part of Mid Sussex which lies within the Park. The National Park Authority currently uses the Mid Sussex Local Plan policies, and will be producing its own Local Plan. However, as an interim measure, there may be the opportunity to produce the Mid Sussex District Plan as a joint document so that its policies will cover the National Park area of Mid Sussex until they are replaced by the National Park Authority’s Local Plan in due course. Discussions are taking place with the National Park Authority on this basis. Meanwhile this consultation document includes a draft policy for development within the Park area for inclusion in the District Plan if it is taken forward as a joint Plan.
- 2.14 To the east of the district is the Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area and Special Area of Conservation (European designations). Whilst Ashdown Forest is outside Mid Sussex (within Wealden District Council area), its proximity means that a ‘Habitats Regulations Assessment’ is required by legislation, and must determine whether or not the Mid Sussex District Plan will adversely affect the integrity of Ashdown Forest. This mainly affects development proposals within the settlements of East Grinstead, Ashurst Wood and Crawley Down. Initial work has identified that recreational disturbance and atmospheric pollution could have an impact on the Ashdown Forest and mitigation may be required, however, further work is needed on this to provide more detail and explore potential options.

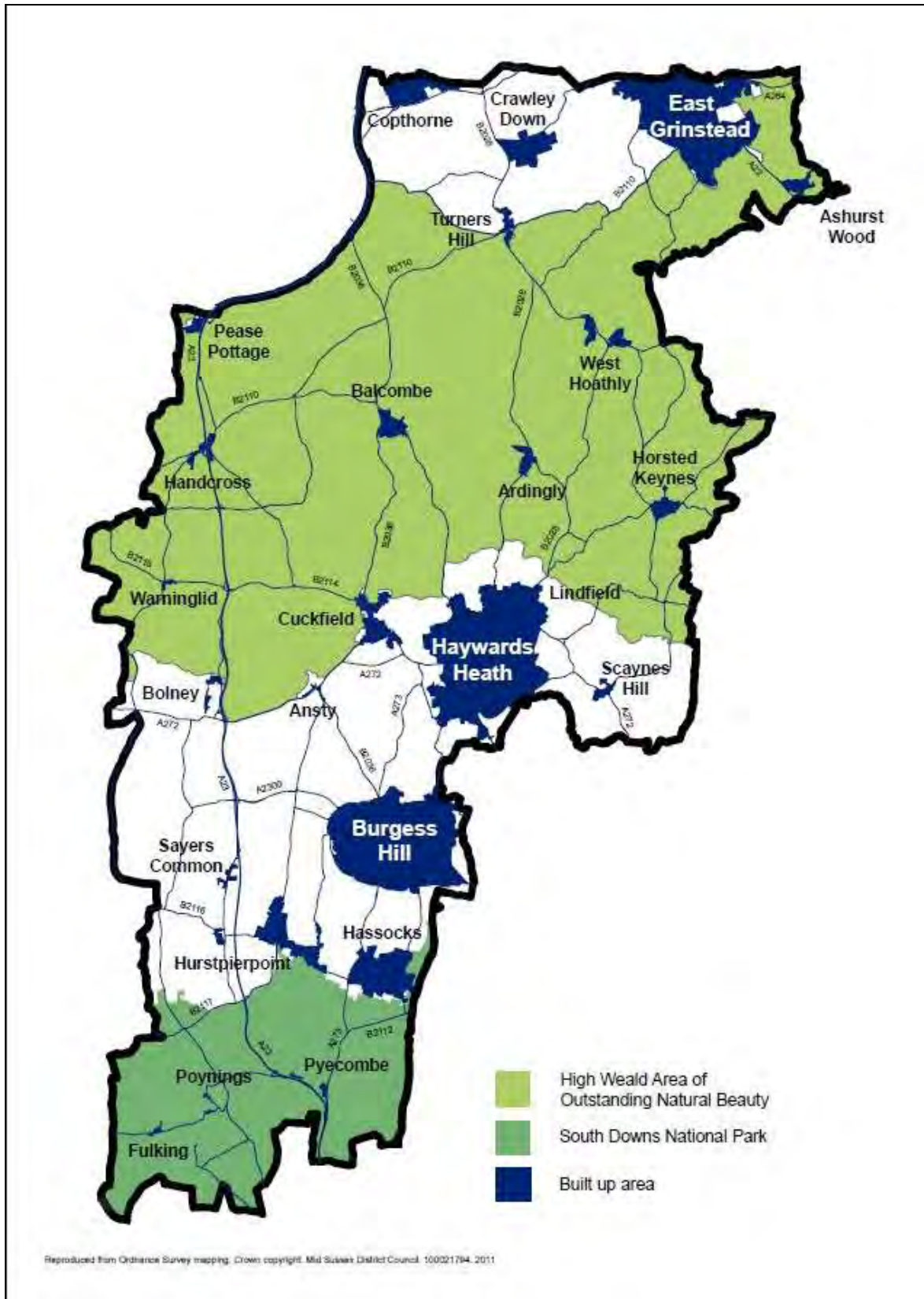
# APPENDIX A

Version for Council 19<sup>th</sup> October 2011



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## 3.0 Overall Strategy

### Introduction

- 3.1 This chapter sets out the strategy for achieving the vision and strategic objectives referred to in the previous chapter. It also shows how this strategy is proposed to be delivered.
- 3.2 The role of the District Plan is to provide an overall direction on what, where, when and how development will take place in Mid Sussex over the next two decades. It will need to include the following:
- **What** overall quantity of development is needed to support the Mid Sussex community and achieve its aspirations of economic growth, maintain its high quality of life and promote sustainable communities;
  - **Where** the majority of the development should be located, **when** it will come forward and **how** it will be delivered;
  - **Where** development will be restricted, given the desire to protect the attractive countryside and the distinctive character and heritage of the various communities that make up Mid Sussex;
  - **How** other development will be delivered;
  - **How** the necessary infrastructure to accompany this development will be achieved; and
  - **How** the nature and quality of this development will be monitored and controlled to achieve the overall vision and strategic objectives.
- 3.3 The District Plan also needs to be flexible enough to enable subsequent Neighbourhood Plans to reflect the individual characteristics and requirements of their localities. It must also enable those making planning decisions to respond to changing circumstances, and take advantage of any unforeseen opportunities to promote the vision and strategic objectives of Mid Sussex.

### Quantity and Type of Development

- 3.4 The overall aim of the District Plan's strategy is to increase the 'self-sufficiency' of communities within Mid Sussex and reduce their dependence on other areas for employment and other facilities. The strategy seeks to provide sustainable communities which support the local economy, and provide the opportunity for residents to work within their communities and access other necessary services and facilities close to home.
- 3.5 The location of Mid Sussex within the Gatwick Diamond brings potential to enhance the economic prosperity of the area, and it is important that Mid Sussex benefits fully from those opportunities. The strategic development at Burgess Hill referred to below will include a 40 hectare business park to enable the town to become more self-sufficient and to boost the economy of the area generally. However, it is also important that economic development opportunities are taken up elsewhere in the district, particularly through the regeneration of town centres and other existing employment areas, and the development of new employment areas in the towns and villages. Town and Parish Councils in developing their Neighbourhood Plans will be encouraged to take full account of the economic needs of their area, and seek to reduce commuting by providing for these needs. The draft District Plan also includes policies to support existing businesses, and allow them to grow, and to

encourage inward investment especially by knowledge-driven, creative or high technology industries.

## Local Housing Assessment

- 3.6 The Local Housing Assessment provides the evidence for the quantity of housing development required in Mid Sussex. It assesses a number of scenarios, based on assumptions about population trends, commuting behaviour, the proportion of the population that is economically active and economic growth projections.
- 3.7 Scenario E2 (v1) is considered to best reflect the needs and aspirations of Mid Sussex. It assumes a healthy level of economic growth, and some increase in the proportion of the population who are not economically active due to the national trend of an ageing population. However, it also assumes that the District Plan will contain positive policies that enable a good proportion of the community to be economically active, and will support the potential for economic growth in the District, enabling more residents to work in Mid Sussex so that less people need to commute to jobs outside the District. This scenario results in an average figure of 530 new homes per year over the 20-year period – or 10,600 overall. It may be that the impacts of the recent recession could result in fewer than 530 homes per annum being delivered in the first few years of the Plan period. However, it is important that the Council can show a supply of housing land that can be taken up as the housing market recovers.

## Location of Housing Development

- 3.8 As at April 2011, there were approximately 4,300 new homes already 'committed' – that is on sites that are allocated either in the Mid Sussex Local Plan or the Small Scale Housing Allocations Document, or have been granted planning permission, but not yet implemented.
- 3.9 In addition, over the last four years work has been progressing in Burgess Hill on a proposal to develop between 3,500-4,000 new homes to the north and the east, a 40 hectare business park and new sporting facilities at the A2300 corridor and other infrastructure benefits. This work has been led by the Town Council, in partnership with adjacent Parish Councils, the District and County Councils and interested developers. This work has recently been the subject of public consultation, and the results incorporated into the 'Burgess Hill Townwide Strategy'.
- 3.10 The District Council supports this work, which it sees as a leading example of the 'bottom-up' approach now being promoted through the Localism Bill. It also reflects the Council's aspirations to support sustainable growth where this is accompanied by infrastructure benefits. It is proposed that the development proposals set out in the Burgess Hill Townwide Strategy are supported, and that they be included as a strategic development location in the draft District Plan for public consultation.
- 3.11 The remaining 2,300-2,800 new homes and other development will need to be delivered elsewhere in the District. The District Council's preference is that the location and nature of this development be identified through Neighbourhood

Plans. This reflects the Government's localism agenda, and its view that giving power and responsibility to local communities will give them the confidence to accept some appropriate development, and the corresponding benefits that can come with it. The figure above should be seen as a floor (minimum) rather than a ceiling (maximum). If communities wish to promote more development to achieve infrastructure benefits then the District Plan will not prevent this, provided it meets with the vision, strategic objectives and policies of this Plan.

- 3.12 A number of Town and Parish Councils are working up their proposed plans in preparation for the expected introduction of the Neighbourhood Planning regulations in 2012. Town and Parish Councils are asked to engage with their communities over the next few months on the improvements that they wish to see in their areas over the next 20 years, and the level of development they consider to be appropriate to help fund these improvements. This information can then be used to inform the final District Plan to be agreed next spring (May 2012). Subsequently Parishes will be able to flesh out these ideas in their own Neighbourhood Plans.
- 3.13 The identification in the District Plan of where new homes will be delivered, and the subsequent detailed allocations and policies in Neighbourhood Plans, is essential to demonstrate that the 530 new homes per annum that Mid Sussex requires to become more self-sufficient and meet the needs of its community can be delivered. This will then protect the district from other development proposals outside of the areas identified in the District Plan and Neighbourhood Plans.

## **Delivery of Housing Development**

- 3.14 Many of the existing commitments are on sites that were originally anticipated to have come forward already. The national economic situation has of course had an impact on delivery, but there are local factors in some cases that have prevented sites from being delivered. These range from landowner disputes, to viability issues, and delays in providing necessary infrastructure. The District Council will work with the landowners, developers and statutory agencies to try and remove these barriers where possible. Progress or otherwise on these matters will be reflected in the Council's regular updates of its 'Five Year Housing Land Supply Position Statement'.
- 3.15 The delivery of the Burgess Hill Townwide Strategy is currently being explored by a Steering Group led by Burgess Hill Town Council, and comprising representatives from the District and County Councils and the interested developers. Mechanisms such as Planning Performance Agreements and a Community Interest Company are being considered. It is hoped that considerable progress will have been made on this by the time the District Plan is finalised, so that issues such as phasing can be included in the allocation of this strategic development location.
- 3.16 Delivery of development through Neighbourhood Plans is currently more uncertain, but again it is hoped that significant progress will be made on this over the next year. If it appears that development will not be delivered through Neighbourhood Plans, then the District Council, as a last resort, will need to consider producing its own allocations document. This is because it must demonstrate to the Planning Inspector at the examination of the District Plan

that the needs of the area will be met. If no mechanism is in place to deliver the required development, then the District Plan will be found unsound, and the district will continue to be vulnerable to unwanted development proposals.

## **Infrastructure**

- 3.17 The timely provision of necessary infrastructure is essential to the success of sustainable development. The District Council intends to introduce a Community Infrastructure Levy to fund this infrastructure, and will be consulting on a preliminary draft Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule in February / March 2012.

## **Nature and Quality of Development**

- 3.18 Mid Sussex has a high quality environment that is greatly valued by those that live, work and visit in the district. Its towns and villages include many historic buildings and conservation areas, and they are surrounded by attractive countryside, much of which is protected by national and local designations. The nature and quality of new development is therefore of the utmost importance to ensure that this environment is protected, and where possible enhanced.
- 3.19 The following chapter sets out the strategic policies that will guide the nature and quality of development in the District. These cover issues which apply to the whole District, or have implications beyond individual parish boundaries. It is anticipated that other town or village specific policies will come forward through Neighbourhood Plans. The strategy in this chapter, and the policies in the following one, have been assessed through the draft Sustainability Appraisal, which is also being consulted on alongside this draft District Plan.

## 4.0 Policies

### Introduction

- 4.1 This chapter sets out the policies of the draft District Plan. These are the strategic policies for Mid Sussex, which all future planning documents, including Neighbourhood Plans, will need to reflect.
- 4.2 The following policy areas have been evaluated through the Sustainability Appraisal which accompanies this consultation document. This sets out the options considered and the reasons why those taken forward in the policies below are considered to be the best choices to achieve the vision and objectives of the Plan.
- 4.3 Under the title of each policy, there is a link to the strategic objectives set out in Chapter 2 – ‘Vision and Objectives’, and a reference to the relevant evidence documents. These documents are listed, together with web-links, at the end of this document in Appendix A.
- 4.4 This chapter is divided into the following sections:
- Quantity and Type of Development
  - Location and Delivery of Housing Development
  - Development in the Countryside
  - Delivery of Infrastructure
  - Nature and Quality of Development
    - Design
    - Housing
    - Historic Environment
    - Natural Resources

### Quantity and Type of Development

#### DP1 Economic Development

*Strategic Objectives: 6) To promote a place which is attractive to business, and where local enterprise thrives; 7) To provide opportunities for people to live and work within their communities, reducing the need for commuting.*

*Evidence Base: Mid Sussex Economic Development Strategy; Atkins – Employment Land Review.*

**To have a policy that supports sustainable economic growth so that:**

- **Mid Sussex benefits fully from the potential for enhanced economic prosperity arising from its location within the Gatwick Diamond; and**
- **A sufficient number and quality of employment opportunities are provided to enable residents of Mid Sussex to work within the communities where they live, in order to build stronger communities and reduce the need to commute.**

**The policy would seek to achieve these aims by:**

- **Supporting high quality development of land and premises to meet the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century businesses;**
- **Supporting existing businesses, and allowing them room to grow;**

- Encouraging inward investment, especially the location, promotion and expansion of clusters or networks of knowledge driven, creative or high technology industries;
- Seeking the provision of appropriate infrastructure to support business growth – in particular high speed broadband connections;
- Providing employment provision within large scale housing development, as part of a mixed use development, informed by the evidence base.

The policy would also ensure sufficient land or premises are available by:

- Allocating as a broad location, up to 40 hectares of employment land at Burgess Hill as a “high quality campus style business park” along the A2300 strategic transport corridor (*see also Burgess Hill policies*);
- Setting out the criteria to enable development of sufficient and suitable employment land to meet the needs of modern business, both to guide planning proposals and future allocations in Neighbourhood Plans or other appropriate planning documents;
- Encouraging Neighbourhood Plans to identify the needs of their local businesses and the needs of their local residents for employment opportunities, and to allocate sufficient land within their towns and villages to meet these needs;
- Encouraging Neighbourhood Plans to identify any areas requiring economic regeneration, infrastructure provision or environmental enhancement;
- Requiring that any loss of existing or allocated employment land or premises should be compensated by the provision of an equivalent alternative facility, unless the loss of employment provision is outweighed by the benefits of the proposed alternative use.

## **DP2 Retail development**

*Strategic Objectives: 8) To create and maintain town and village centres that are vibrant, attractive and successful and that meet the needs of the community*

*Evidence Base: Mid Sussex Retail Study; Town Centre Masterplans and accompanying work.*

To have a policy that supports the regeneration and renewal of the Town and Village Centres by:

- defining a network and hierarchy of centres as follows;
  - The three town centres of Burgess Hill, East Grinstead and Haywards Heath – to meet the needs of their communities and those of the surrounding large and small villages and countryside areas;
  - The village centres of Crawley Down, Cuckfield, Hassocks, Hurstpierpoint and Lindfield - to meet the needs of their own communities and neighbouring small villages and countryside areas;
  - The village centres of small villages, neighbourhood centres in the towns and other retail facilities such as farm shops - to meet the needs of their own communities and countryside areas
- in applying the sequential test for retail development set out in national policy, an impact assessment for development over 2,500 square metres

will be required, which demonstrates how the cumulative effect of unimplemented extant planning permissions, developments under construction and completed developments are taken into account.

Development in the town centres should be informed by the relevant Town Centre Masterplan or updated documents. Development that supports the revitalisation of the three town centres will be supported, provided they are in accordance with any relevant Neighbourhood Plan.

- **Primary and secondary shopping frontages and the other uses suitable to those areas will be identified through Neighbourhood Plans or other appropriate planning documents.**

(Note, primary shopping centres are those areas where the uses should be predominantly retail. Secondary shopping centres tend to be on the edge of primary shopping centres, where a more mixed character of retail, cafes / restaurants and banks / building societies may be appropriate).

## **Location and Delivery of Housing Development**

### **DP3 Housing**

*Strategic Objectives: All*

*Evidence Base: Local Housing Assessment, BHTC's Burgess Hill Townwide Strategy; Atkins – Development Options at Burgess Hill; David Lock Associates – Burgess Hill Visioning the Future; Mid Sussex Landscape Capacity Study.*

**To have a policy that:**

**Sets the overall District housing requirement as 530 per annum, or 10,600 between 2011-2031. This will comprise:**

- **4,300 existing commitments**
- **3,500 to 4,000 new homes at Burgess Hill**
- **2,300 – 2,800 elsewhere in the District, as allocated through Neighbourhood Plans or other appropriate planning documents (It is anticipated that evidence being gathered through early work on Neighbourhood Plans will enable the final District Plan to be more specific about the distribution of this development).**

**This requirement may be exceeded if communities wish to pursue higher levels of development to fund infrastructure improvements or support local facilities or services. Higher levels of development should only be promoted through Neighbourhood Plans, and will be acceptable provided they do not conflict with the vision and objectives of this District Plan.**

## **DP4 General Principles for Strategic Development at Burgess Hill**

*Strategic Objectives: All*

*Evidence Base: BHTC's Burgess Hill Townwide Strategy; Atkins – Development Options at Burgess Hill; David Lock Associates – Burgess Hill Visioning the Future; Mid Sussex Landscape Capacity Study.*

To have a policy that sets out the general principles of development that apply to all strategic development at Burgess Hill, based on the vision and objectives of the Burgess Hill Town Wide Strategy, for Burgess Hill to become a fully sustainable, 21<sup>st</sup> century town focused around a high quality, vibrant and accessible town centre, supported by necessary community facilities, employment opportunities and access to green open space underpinned by a state of the art transport network and modern supporting infrastructure.

The general principles will set out that strategic development will:

- Be designed in a way that integrates it into the existing town providing connectivity with all services and facilities;
- Contribute towards a better, more accessible town centre with a greater range of shops and public realm improvements including a new public square;
- Provide additional, high quality employment opportunities including suitably located business park development;
- Improve public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure and access to Burgess Hill and Wivelsfield railway stations, including the provision of transport interchanges;
- Provide necessary transport improvements that take account of the wider impact of the development on the surrounding area;
- Provide highway improvements in and around Burgess Hill including addressing the limitations of east-west movements across Burgess Hill;
- Provide new and improved community and cultural facilities;
- Provide new and/or improved and well connected sports, recreation and open space in and around Burgess Hill, including the creation of a 'Green Circle' around the town;
- Provide a Centre for Community Sport in the vicinity of the Triangle Leisure Centre;
- Provide a minimum of 30% affordable housing, in accordance with policy DP26;
- Take account of environmental constraints and opportunities by enhancing local biodiversity and contributing to the delivery of green infrastructure in and around the town;
- Deliver a multi-user route between Burgess Hill and Haywards Heath;
- Not be occupied until improvements at Goddards Green Waste Water Treatment Works and connecting pipework and pumping stations to increase the capacity and environmental quality are implemented
- Incorporate on-site 'community energy systems', such as Combined Heat and Power, to meet the energy needs of the development.

## **DP5 Strategic allocation to the east of Burgess Hill at Kings Way**

*Strategic Objectives: All*

*Evidence Base: BHTC's Burgess Hill Townwide Strategy; Atkins – Development Options at Burgess Hill; David Lock Associates – Burgess Hill Visioning the Future; Mid Sussex Landscape Capacity Study.*

**To have a policy in addition to the general principles for strategic development at Burgess Hill to allocate a development to the east of Burgess Hill at Kings Way for:**

- up to 500 new homes;
- high quality and accessible informal public open space;
- A local hub serving the site and the wider community
- a new primary school.

**The policy will consider:**

- the provision of infrastructure, as set out in the Burgess Hill Townwide Strategy, implemented before or alongside development to an agreed programme of delivery;
- measures to address the limitations of east-west movements across Burgess Hill;
- the long-term management of the Ditchling Common Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) to protect this adjoining area from the impacts of strategic development (on site provision together with appropriate mitigation measures);
- the close proximity of the South Downs National Park and the Keymer Tile Works Site of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI), and the opportunities with the latter site for the joint development of community infrastructure for the east side of Burgess Hill;
- the provision of additional informal openspace within the boundaries of Burgess Hill;
- the avoidance of unnecessary damage to the characteristic field pattern and historic hedgerow and tree lines; and
- other developments in the vicinity to ensure complementary provision of infrastructure and facilities.

## **DP6 Strategic allocation to the north and northwest of Burgess Hill**

*Strategic Objectives: All*

*Evidence Base: Burgess Hill Townwide Strategy; Atkins – Development Options at Burgess Hill; David Lock – Burgess Hill Visioning the Future; Mid Sussex Landscape Capacity Study.*

**To have a policy in addition to the general principles for strategic development at Burgess Hill to allocate a mixed-use development to the north and northwest of Burgess Hill for:**

- Approximately 3,000-3,500 new homes and a new neighbourhood centre area, including retail, education, health, employment, leisure and community uses;
- up to 40 hectares of employment land as a “high quality campus style business park” along the A2300 strategic transport corridor; and

- new primary schools and a new secondary school campus.

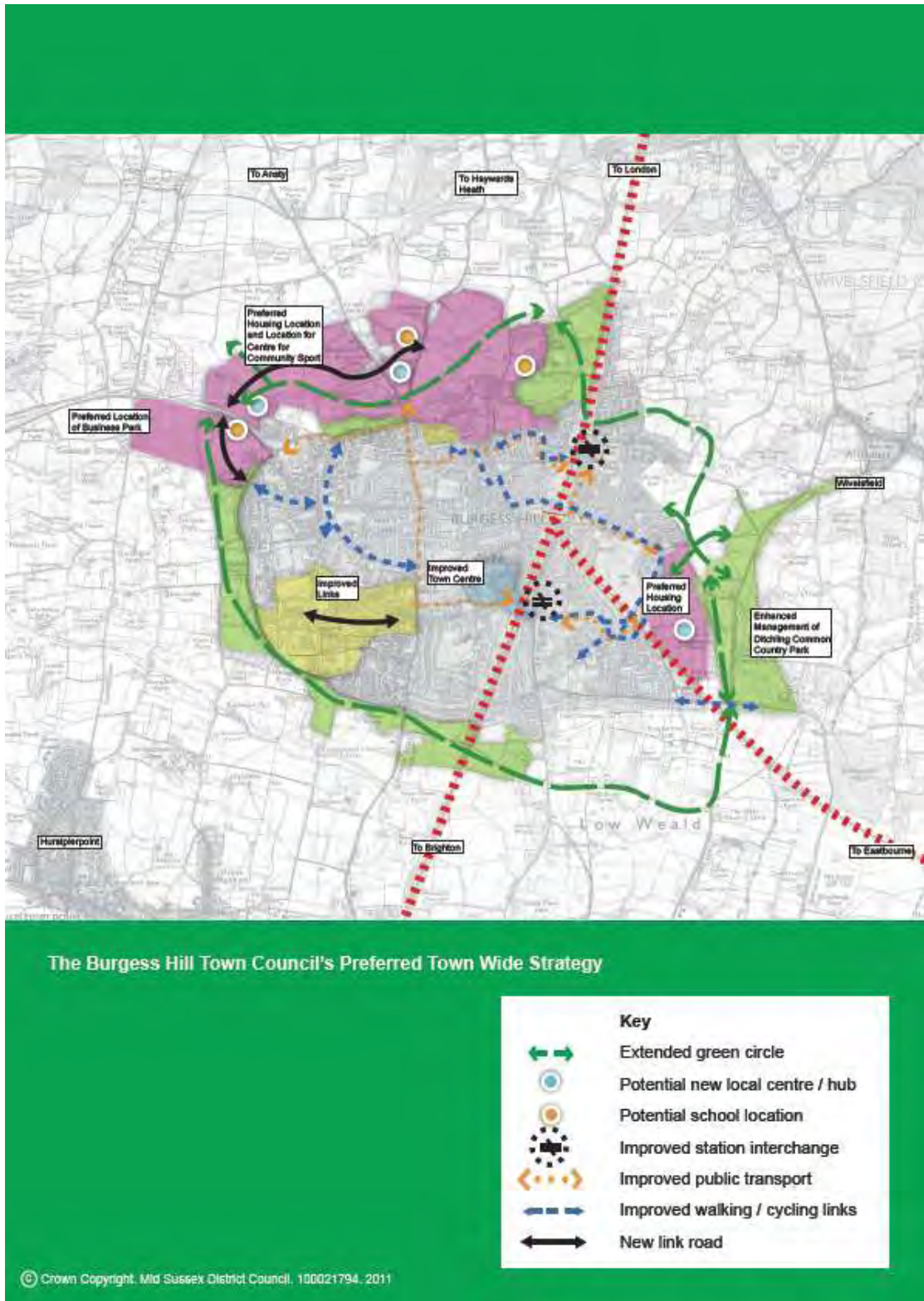
The policy will consider:

- a phasing strategy for the housing and employment provision;
- the provision of infrastructure, as set out in the Burgess Hill Townwide Strategy, implemented before or alongside development to an agreed programme of delivery;
- sustainable transport measures;
- environmental constraints and opportunities;
- flood risk;
- the impact of the adjacent Goddards Green Waste Water Treatment Works on proposals for the strategic development including odour and appropriate land uses; and
- appropriate pitch provision for gypsies and travellers to replace the existing facility and contribute towards the additional need for pitches.

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# APPENDIX A

Version for Council 19<sup>th</sup> October 2011



## Development in the Countryside

### **DP7 Protection and enhancement of countryside**

*Strategic Objectives: 3) To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities*

*Evidence Base: Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment.*

#### **To have a policy that:**

- **Defines the countryside as the area outside of built up area boundaries (defined on the Proposals Map);**
- **sets out that development will only be allowed within the countryside where it:**
  - **is necessary for the purposes of agriculture, or some other use which has to be located in the countryside; and**
  - **contributes positively to the vitality of the rural economy; and maintains or where possible enhances, the quality of the rural and landscape character of the District**
- **Takes account of the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land.**
- **The Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment and other available landscape evidence (including that gathered to support Neighbourhood Plans) will be used to assess the impact of development proposals on the quality of rural and landscape character.**

### **DP8 Preventing Coalescence**

*Strategic Objective: 2) To promote well located and designed development that reflects our distinctive towns and villages, retains their separate identity and character and prevents coalescence*

*Evidence Base: Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment*

#### **To have a policy that :**

- **Sets out that development will only be allowed if it does not result in the coalescence of settlements either visually or by an increase in activity which has an urbanising effect on the area between settlements; and**
- **Allows Local Gaps to be identified in Neighbourhood Plans or other appropriate planning documents where there is robust evidence that development within the Gap would individually or cumulatively result in coalescence and the loss of the separate identity of nearby settlements.**

## **DP9 Sustainable rural development and the rural economy**

*Strategic Objectives: 9) To support a healthy rural economy in the villages and the countryside; and 10) To support and enhance the attractiveness of Mid Sussex as a visitor destination*

*Evidence Base: Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment; Town and Parish Council submissions.*

**To have a policy that, provided it is not in conflict with Policy DP7 : Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside,**

- **Allows new small-scale economic development, including tourism related development, within the countryside provided:**
  - **it meets the proven needs of local communities, supports the rural economy and requires a rural location and**
  - **utilises previously developed sites (where possible)**
  
- **Allows the diversification of activities on existing farm units provided:**
  - **they are of a scale which is consistent to the location of the farm holding;**
  - **would not prejudice the agricultural use of a unit;**
  
- **Allows the re-use and adaptation of rural buildings for business or tourism use in the countryside provided:**
  - **the building is of permanent construction and capable of re-use without substantial reconstruction or extensive alteration;**
  - **the appearance and setting is not materially altered;**
  - **it is not a recently constructed agricultural building which has not been or little used for its original purpose.**
  
- **Allows the re-use and adaptation of rural buildings for residential use in the countryside provided:**
  - **the building is listed or makes a valuable contribution to the rural scene and its retention cannot be guaranteed in any other way;**
  - **it is part of a scheme for business re-use; or**
  - **it can be demonstrated that no viable business use can be secured for the building.**

## **DP10 New homes in the countryside**

*Strategic Objectives: 3) To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities*

*Evidence Base: Mid Sussex Landscape Character Assessment; Town and Parish Council submissions.*

**To have a policy that:**

- **Allows new homes in the countryside only where special justification exists.**
- **Defines special justification as:**
  - **Where accommodation is required to enable agricultural, forestry and certain other full time workers to live at, or in the immediate vicinity of, their place of work; or**

- Where the design of the dwelling is of exceptional quality or is innovative in nature.
- Defines new 'granny annexes' that are physically separate to the dwelling as a new home, and therefore subject to the same special justification as above.

## **DP11 High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**

*Strategic Objectives: 3) To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities*

*Evidence Base: High Weald AONB Management Plan.*

**To have a policy that requires development proposals to have regard to the High Weald AONB management plan, in particular;**

- the conservation or enhancement of the identified landscape features or components of natural beauty and to their setting;
- the traditional interaction of people and nature and appropriate land management;
- local distinctiveness, sense of place and setting of the AONB;
- an emphasis on small scale proposals that are sustainably located and designed; and
- encouraging proposals which support the economies and social well being of the AONB and its communities including 100% affordable housing schemes (provided that they do not conflict with the aim of conserving and enhancing natural beauty).

## **DP12 Ashdown Forest Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Area**

*Strategic Objectives: 3) To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities*

*Evidence Base: Draft Habitats Regulations Assessment.*

**To have a policy which outlines the intention to develop a strategic approach to protect the Ashdown Forest Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Area from recreational pressure and air pollution through the use of:**

- **Buffer zones that:**
  - Prevent development within 400 metres of the Ashdown Forest
  - Allow development within 7 kilometres of the Ashdown Forest provided mitigation methods are employed (for instance Suitable Alternative Natural Green Spaces)
- **An Access Management Strategy that reduces the impact of visitors on special interest features of the designated site.**

## **DP13 South Downs National Park**

*(Note: This policy would be included if the District Plan is taken forward as a joint Plan with the South Downs National Park Authority. All other policies in the District*

*Plan, unless they are location specific, would also apply to development within the Mid Sussex part of the National Park).*

*Strategic Objectives: 3) To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities.*

*Evidence Base: South Downs Management Plan.*

**To have a policy that within the area of the District within the South Downs National Park:**

- 1) proposals protect the special character of the National Park**
- 2) proposals must specifically relate to needs of the communities within the National Park**

**Regard will also be had to the need to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park area.**

**Proposals that promote opportunities for understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the national park by the public will be encouraged.**

**Development proposals must also have regard to the South Downs Management Plan and emerging National Park planning documents and strategies.**

#### **DP14 Setting of the South Downs National Park**

*Strategic Objectives: 3) To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities.*

*Evidence Base: South Downs Management Plan.*

**To have a policy that requires development proposals adjacent to the South Downs National Park (including rural exception sites) to ensure that they enhance and do not detract from the visual quality and essential characteristics of the National Park, and in particular do not adversely impact views out of or into the Park by virtue of their location or design.**

**Assessment of such development proposals will have regard to relevant parts of the South Downs Management Plan and emerging National Park planning documents and strategies.**

## **DP15 Tourism**

*Strategic Objectives: 9) To support a healthy rural economy in the villages and the countryside; and 10) To support and enhance the attractiveness of Mid Sussex as a visitor destination*

*Evidence Base: Mid Sussex Economic Development Strategy.*

**To have a policy that allows new tourism related development in the countryside, including extensions to existing facilities, visitor accommodation and the re-use of rural buildings provided:**

- **It supports the sustainable growth of the rural economy**
- **There will be no harm to the character of the countryside**
- **It meets the criteria of the other policies contained within the Plan, including policy DP9 Sustainable Rural Development and the Rural Economy**

**To have a policy that safeguards the land required to deliver extensions to the Bluebell Railway.**

## **Delivery of Infrastructure**

### **DP16 Securing Infrastructure**

*Strategic Objectives: 5) To ensure that development is accompanied by the necessary infrastructure in the right place at the right time that meets needs, supports development*

*Evidence Base: Mid Sussex Infrastructure Development Plan; Town and Parish Council submissions and emerging Neighbourhood Plans.*

**To have a policy that permits development where:**

- **Any necessary infrastructure needed to support the proposed development and contribute to sustainable communities exists, or can be provided in a timely manner, through developer-funded contributions.**

**The policy will:**

- **set out that a programme of delivery will need to be agreed before development begins (implemented by way of appropriate planning conditions/legal agreements).**
- **refer to a Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule that will set out how new development will pay for the necessary infrastructure to support development.**
- **set out that the Council will, where appropriate, supplement this with negotiated Section 106 agreements to secure affordable housing and additional site specific infrastructure, and Section 278 agreements to secure highway improvements, as necessary to make development acceptable in planning terms**
- **set out the principle that the Community Infrastructure Levy will normally be spent in the locality of the scheme that generated it.**

## **DP17 Transport**

*Strategic Objectives: 5) To ensure that development is accompanied by the necessary infrastructure in the right place at the right time that meets needs, supports development*

*Evidence Base: Mid Sussex Transport Study; West Sussex Local Transport Plan.*

**To have a policy that sets out that:**

- **development must support the objectives of the West Sussex Local Transport Plan<sup>1</sup>, which are:**
  - **a high quality transport network that promotes a competitive and prosperous economy**
  - **a resilient transport network that complements the built and natural environment whilst reducing carbon emissions over time**
  - **access to services, employment and housing**
  - **a transport network that feels, and is, safer and healthier to use**
  
- **to meet these objectives at a local level, development proposals should:**
  - **be sustainably located to minimise the need for travel;**
  - **facilitate and promote the use of alternative modes of transport to the private car, such as walking, cycling and public transport;**
  - **not cause an unacceptable impact in terms of road safety and increased traffic congestion**
  - **be designed to adoptable standards, or other standards as agreed by the Local Planning Authority, as regards road widths and size of car parking spaces / garages**
  - **provide adequate car parking for the proposed development.**

**Car parking provision in new developments will be assessed against Mid Sussex Parking Standards unless there is local evidence within Neighbourhood Plans that indicates that these standards should be varied.**

**Where practical developments should be located and designed to incorporate facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.**

**All developments that generate significant amounts of movement should be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment.**

*(Note: West Sussex County Council is the Highway Authority, and will advise on the definition of 'significant').*

## **DP18 Rights of Way and other recreational routes**

*Strategic Objectives: 14) To create places that encourage a healthy and enjoyable lifestyle by the provision of first class cultural and sporting facilities, informal leisure space and the opportunity to walk, cycle or ride to common destinations*

*Evidence Base: West Sussex Local Transport Plan; Town and Parish Council submissions.*

**To have a policy that protects rights of way and recreational routes and encourages access to the countryside by:**

- Ensuring development does not result in the loss of, or adversely affect a right of way or other recreational routes unless a new resource is provided which is of at least an equivalent value;
- Ensuring that (where appropriate) development provides links to rights of way and other recreational routes;
- Identifying opportunities for planning routes within and between settlements (e.g. *Burgess Hill to Haywards Heath/other routes identified during consultation*);
- Identifying opportunities for putting cycleways along existing transport corridors;
- Where appropriate, encourages making new or existing rights of way multi-functional to allow for benefits for a range of users. (Note: 'multi-functional will generally mean able to be used by walkers, cyclists and horse-riders).

## **DP19 Communication Infrastructure**

*Strategic Objectives: 6) To promote a place which is attractive to business, and where local enterprise thrives; and 7) To provide opportunities for people to live and work within their communities, reducing the need for commuting.*

*Evidence Base: Gatwick Diamond Strategy; Mid Sussex Economic Development Strategy; Town and Parish Council submissions.*

**To have a policy that supports the expansion of electronic communication networks, including the provision of high-speed broadband connection to the towns and rural areas of the District.**

**When considering proposals for new telecommunication equipment:**

- Preference will be for use to be made of existing sites rather than the provision of new sites.
- Where a new site is required careful consideration will be given to the design and appearance of the equipment.

## **DP20 Leisure and Cultural Facilities and Activities**

*Strategic Objectives: 14. To create places that encourage a healthy and enjoyable lifestyle by the provision of first class cultural and sporting facilities, informal leisure space and the opportunity to walk, cycle or ride to common destinations; and 4) To maintain easily accessible green corridors and spaces around and within the towns and villages to act as wildlife corridors and sustainable transport links.*

*Evidence Base: Mid Sussex Leisure and Cultural Strategy; PPG17 Study; Town and Parish Council submissions.*

**To have a policy that:**

- supports development that provides new and/or enhanced existing leisure and cultural activities and facilities, including allotments, in accordance with the strategic aims of the Leisure and Cultural Strategy for Mid Sussex which are:
  - to widen access by maximising opportunities for residents to participate in physical activity and engage in arts and cultural activities;

- to improve and strengthen local partnerships where that will increase participation in arts, culture, sport and physical activity;
- to develop facilities and services by taking opportunities to improve the provision of leisure services and leisure assets in order to increase participation in leisure activities; and
- to raise the profile of culture and physical activity opportunities to achieve a positive change in peoples attitudes towards culture and physical activity
- sets the standards for the provision of leisure facilities;
- is based on the findings of any future assessment of the provision of leisure activities and facilities for Mid Sussex, including evidence gathered to support Neighbourhood Plans.
- seeks on-site provision of new leisure and cultural facilities for all new developments where practicable including making land available for this purpose.

Sites for appropriate leisure and cultural facilities to meet local needs will be identified through Neighbourhood Plans or other appropriate planning documents.

## **DP21 Community facilities and local services**

*Strategic Objectives: 11) To develop sustainable communities which are safe, healthy and inclusive, and provide the amount and type of housing that meets the needs of all sectors of the community.*

*Evidence Base: Mid Sussex Infrastructure Development Plan; Town and Parish Council submissions.*

**To have a policy that**

- Supports the provision or improvement of community facilities and local services that contribute to creating sustainable communities; and
- Where proposals involve the loss of a community facility, evidence will need to be provided that demonstrates that the use is no longer viable, or that a replacement or duplicate facility is provided in the locality;
- Sets out that the provision of community facilities and local services could be delivered through Neighbourhood Plans.

## **Nature and Quality of Development - Design**

### **DP22 Character and Design**

*Strategic Objectives: 2) To promote well located and designed development that reflects our distinctive towns and villages, and retains their separate identity and character; 13) To create environments that are accessible to all members of the community.*

*Evidence Base: CABE Good Practice; Town and Parish Council submissions.*

**To have a policy that ensures that development, including alterations to existing buildings, and its surrounding spaces:**

- Is of high quality design and layout;

- **Contributes positively to the private and public realm (including streets and open spaces) to create a sense of place;**
- **Addresses the character and scale of the surrounding buildings and landscape;**
- **Protects valued townscapes and the separate identity and character of towns and villages;**
- **Safeguards the amenities of nearby residents, including taking account of the impact on privacy and sunlight;**
- **Provides adequate floor area and storage space in accordance with local standards;**
- **Creates safe and accessible environments**
- **Meets Lifetime Homes standards where practicable and consistent with other objectives.**

## **DP23 Accessibility**

*Strategic Objectives: 13) To create environments that are accessible to all members of the community.*

*Evidence Base: CABE Good Practice; submissions from Accessibility Action.*

**To have a policy that requires development proposals to meet high standards of accessibility so that all users can use them safely and easily, wherever possible.**

**This will apply to all new buildings within the urban and rural areas, changes of use, refurbishments and extensions, the layout of development, open spaces and the public realm and transport infrastructure and this will be demonstrated through a Design and Access Statement.**

**With regard to listed buildings, meeting standards of accessibility should ensure that the impact on the integrity of the building is minimised.**

**Accessible environments that will meet local needs will be identified through Neighbourhood Plans or other appropriate planning documents.**

## **DP24 Noise, air and light pollution**

*Strategic Objectives: 2) To promote well located and designed development that reflects our distinctive towns and villages, and retains their separate identity and character; and 3) To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities*

*Evidence Base: Data held by Environmental Health.*

**To have a policy that protects the environment and the quality of people's life from unacceptable levels of noise, light and air pollution by:**

### **Noise pollution:**

- **Ensuring development is designed, located and controlled to minimise the impact of noise on neighbouring properties and the surrounding area;**
- **Ensuring developments likely to generate significant levels of noise incorporates appropriate noise attenuation measures;**

- Ensuring noise sensitive development is not permitted in close proximity to existing or proposed development generating high levels of noise unless adequate sound insulation measures are incorporated within the development;
- Requiring (where appropriate), an assessment of the impact of noise generated by a proposed development
- Requiring (where appropriate), an assessment of the effect of noise by an existing noise source upon a proposed development;

#### Light pollution:

- Minimising impact of lighting proposals (requiring planning permission), including floodlighting, in terms of intensity and number of fittings;
- Requiring good design including fittings to restrict emissions from proposed lighting schemes.

#### Air Pollution:

- Only permitting development which does not cause unacceptable levels of air pollution;
- Only permitting development on land adjacent to an existing use which generates air pollution where this can be mitigated to reduce exposure to poor air quality and/or would not cause any adverse effects on the proposed development;
- Assessing the potential impacts of new development and increased traffic levels on internationally designated conservation sites and adopting necessary avoidance or mitigation measures to address these impacts (see policy DP12 Ashdown Forest Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Area’);
- Ensure that development proposals (where appropriate) are consistent with Air Quality Management Plans.

## Nature and Quality of Development - Housing

### DP25 Housing Mix

*Strategic Objectives: 11) To develop sustainable communities which are safe, healthy and inclusive, and 12) To provide the amount and type of housing that meets the needs of all sectors of the community.*

*Evidence Base: North West Sussex Strategic Housing Market Assessment, Local Housing Assessment and Parish Housing Needs Assessments.*

#### To have a policy that will:

- provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes from new development (including affordable housing) taking into account local housing needs based on the best available evidence (including local evidence provided to support Neighbourhood Plans);
- include provision (in appropriate developments) to meet the needs of older people and vulnerable groups. This could include bungalows and other forms of suitable accommodation;
- support the retention of small dwellings (up to 100m<sup>2</sup>) in the countryside.

## **DP26 Affordable housing**

*Strategic Objectives: 11) To develop sustainable communities which are safe, healthy and inclusive, and 12) To provide the amount and type of housing that meets the needs of all sectors of the community.*

*Evidence Base: Strategic Housing Market Assessment, Local Housing Assessment and Parish Housing Needs Assessments.*

### **To have a policy that provides:**

- a minimum of 30% affordable housing provision on all residential development of 4 dwellings and above;
- on developments of 1- 3 dwellings, and in other circumstances where on-site provision is not practicable, a commuted payment equivalent to 30% towards the provision of affordable housing off-site will be required;
- a mix of tenure (normally 75% social or affordable rented homes, with the remaining 25% for intermediate homes, unless the best available evidence supports a different mix);
- that these requirements will need to be met unless significant clear evidence is provided to show that the site cannot support the required affordable housing from a viability perspective;
- that the policy will be monitored and kept under review having regard to the Council's Housing Strategy and any changes to evidence of housing needs;
- that Neighbourhood Plans can set local policies for affordable housing that exceed the targets set out by this policy (providing that they do not affect viability).

## **DP27 Rural Exception sites**

*Strategic Objectives: 11) To develop sustainable communities which are safe, healthy and inclusive, and 12) To provide the amount and type of housing that meets the needs of all sectors of the community; and 9) To support a healthy rural economy in the villages and the countryside.*

*Evidence Base: Strategic Housing Market Assessment, Local Housing Assessment and Parish Housing Needs Assessments; Town and Parish Council submissions.*

### **To have a policy that:**

- allows the development of rural exceptions sites for affordable housing provided:
  - the development comprises 100% affordable housing;
  - the housing is to meet local needs justified by the best available evidence;
  - The occupancy of the homes is restricted in perpetuity to those with a genuine local need for affordable housing; and
  - development is small scale and respects the setting, form and character of the settlement and surrounding landscapes.

**The delivery of rural exception sites will normally be led by Parish Councils, through planning applications, Community Right to Build schemes or through Neighbourhood Plans.**

## **DP28 Gypsies and Travellers**

*Strategic Objectives: 11) To develop sustainable communities which are safe, healthy and inclusive, and 12) To provide the amount and type of housing that meets the needs of all sectors of the community.*

*Evidence Base: West Sussex Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment.*

**To have a policy that sets criteria for gypsy and traveller sites and extensions of existing sites to ensure that:**

- **The site or extension satisfies a clear local need, as evidenced by the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment or the best available evidence;**
- **the site is reasonably located for schools, shops and other local services and community facilities;**
- **the development is located and designed to recognised best practice standards to ensure good quality living accommodation for residents and minimise impact on adjacent uses and landscape character.**

**Occupation of permanent residential sites will be restricted to gypsies and travellers with a local connection to Mid Sussex.**

## **Nature and Quality of Development – Historic Environment**

### **DP29 Listed Buildings and other buildings of merit**

*Strategic Objectives: 3) To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities; and 2) To promote well located and designed development that reflects our distinctive towns and villages, retains their separate identity and character and prevents coalescence.*

*Evidence Base: Register of Listed Buildings; Historic Environment Records.*

**To have a policy that provides a policy framework for alterations, extensions, conversions and changes of use to, and including development within the grounds of, Listed Buildings and other buildings of merit including the use of appropriate materials and design to conserve and enhance the architectural and historic character and setting of the building.**

### **DP30 Conservation Areas**

*Strategic Objectives: 3) To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities; and 2) To promote well located and designed development that reflects our distinctive towns and villages, retains their separate identity and character and prevents coalescence.*

*Evidence Base: Mid Sussex Conservation Area Appraisals; Urban Extensive Studies; Historic Environment Records.*

**To have a policy that:**

- **protects the special character and appearance of the conservation areas,**
- **considers the impact that new development will have on conservation areas,**
- **considers the impact of demolition,**
- **considers special features of the conservation area**

- considers the impact of development on the setting of the conservation area, including views into and out of the conservation area.

## **DP31 Historic Parks and Gardens**

*Strategic Objectives: 3) To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities*

*Evidence Base: Historic Environment Records.*

To have a policy that allows development within, adjacent to or within the vicinity of a registered park, or park or garden of special local interest provided it:

- Does not adversely affect the character, appearance or setting of a registered park, or park or garden of special local interest;
- Does not adversely impact on views into and out of a registered park, or park or garden of special local interest

## **DP32 Archaeological sites**

*Strategic Objectives: 3) To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities*

*Evidence Base: Historic Environment Records.*

To have a policy that protects and enhances sites of archaeological interest (such as scheduled Ancient Monuments) where possible and sets out how proposals for development that may impact upon sites of archaeological interest should be considered. This will require applicants to carry out an archaeological assessment where a proposed development may impact upon an archaeological site.

## **Nature and Quality of Development - Natural Resources**

### **DP33 Biodiversity/protection of natural habitats**

*Strategic Objectives: 3) To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities; and 4) To maintain easily accessible green corridors and spaces around and within the towns and villages to act as wildlife corridors and sustainable transport links.*

*Evidence Base: Mid Sussex Ancient Woodland Survey; Green Infrastructure mapping; West Sussex SNCI Register; Biodiversity Action Plan; Habitats Records.*

To have a policy that avoids a net loss of biodiversity and pursues opportunities to achieve a net gain by:

- Avoiding damage to nationally designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest, and locally designated Sites of Nature Conservation Interest, Local Nature Reserves, and Ancient Woodland or to other sites or areas identified as being of nature conservation or geological interest, including wildlife corridors
- Promoting the establishment of 'green multi-functional networks' by:
  - seeking on-site natural green space enhancements for all new developments where practicable including making land available for this purpose;

- requiring contributions from developments towards the provision of a green multi functional network which will include the restoration, management and expansion of priority habitat areas in the District;
- enabling improved access to and understanding of natural green space and nature conservation features.

*(Note: A 'green multi-functional network' is a group of open spaces which serve many purposes, such as informal leisure facilities, sustainable transport routes and natural habitats, and which provide wildlife corridors to enable species to travel from one open space to another. An example would be the Green Circle around Burgess Hill).*

## **DP34 Sustainable Resources**

*Strategic Objectives: 1) To promote sustainable development that makes the best use of resources and increases the 'self-sufficiency' of communities within Mid Sussex, and its ability to adapt to climate change.*

*Evidence Base: West Sussex Sustainable Energy Study, Gatwick sub region Water Cycle Study.*

**To have a policy that will require new residential developments to achieve, as a minimum, level 4 against the Code for Sustainable Homes from the start of the plan period, rising to level 5 against the Code for Sustainable Homes from 2016. All non-residential developments to achieve, as a minimum, BREEAM rating 'Very Good' from the start of the plan period, rising to 'Excellent' from 2016.**

**These requirements will be reviewed during the plan period so as to ensure they exceed the minimum requirements set through National policy (such as Building Regulations).**

## **DP35 Renewable Energy in New developments**

*Strategic Objectives: 1) To promote sustainable development that makes the best use of resources and increases the 'self-sufficiency' of communities within Mid Sussex, and its ability to adapt to climate change.*

*Evidence Base: West Sussex Sustainable Energy Study.*

**To have a policy that will require new residential or employment developments to submit an assessment of the proposed development's CO<sub>2</sub> demand and reduce this CO<sub>2</sub> demand by at least 20% by using decentralised (on-site) renewable energy sources, unless it can be demonstrated by the developer that this is not viable or feasible. This is based on the West Sussex Sustainable Energy Study. This target will be reviewed during the plan period in order to ensure it is compatible with national policy (including Building Regulations).**

**Proposals for large scale development (over 100 units / greater than 2ha, or with a density over 50dph) will be required to implement on-site 'community energy systems', such as Combined Heat and Power, to meet the energy needs of the development. The suitability of the type of scheme implemented will be dependant on meeting the requirements outlined in DP36: Renewable Energy Schemes.**

## **DP36 Renewable Energy Schemes**

*Strategic Objectives: 1) To promote sustainable development that makes the best use of resources and increases the 'self-sufficiency' of communities within Mid Sussex, and its ability to adapt to climate change.*

*Evidence Base: West Sussex Sustainable Energy Study.*

**To have a policy that supports large and small-scale renewable energy schemes where it is considered these will not have a significant detrimental impact on the environment and is in accordance with other policies.**

**Consideration of the wider environmental benefits will be balanced against any likely local effects on the environment, particularly in sensitive locations such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and Sites of Nature Conservation Importance.**

**The West Sussex Sustainable Energy Study and accompanying Landscape Sensitivity Analysis Guidance, or any updated study prepared during the plan period, will provide further guidance on the suitability/technical viability of specific types of scheme dependant on location.**

## **DP37 Flood Risk**

*Strategic Objectives: 1) To promote sustainable development that makes the best use of resources and increases the 'self-sufficiency' of communities within Mid Sussex, and its ability to adapt to climate change.*

*Evidence Base: Mid Sussex Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.*

**To have a policy that ensures that development proposals avoid areas of flood risk, and do not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.**

**Proposals for development will need to follow a sequential risk-based approach in accordance with national planning policy, and the precautionary principle will be applied. In identifying flood risk areas, reference will be made to the District Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), with particular attention paid to areas of the District that have experienced flooding in the past. Where possible, proposals for development should seek to rectify these problems and reduce the risk of flooding in these areas.**

**Land that is considered to be required for current and future flood management will be safeguarded from development.**

## **DP38 Water Infrastructure and the Water Environment**

*Strategic Objectives: 1) To promote sustainable development that makes the best use of resources and increases the 'self-sufficiency' of communities within Mid Sussex, and its ability to adapt to climate change.*

*Evidence Base: Mid Sussex Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Gatwick sub region Water Cycle Study.*

**To have a policy that requires appropriate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), as informed by the District Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), to be implemented in new developments where technically feasible, in order to avoid any increase in flood risk or adverse impact on water quality.**

- **For the redevelopment of brownfield sites, any surface water draining to the foul sewer must be disconnected and managed through SuDS.**

- **SuDS should be sensitively designed and located to promote improved biodiversity, an enhanced landscape and good quality spaces that improve public amenities in the area, where possible.**
- **The preferred hierarchy of managing surface water drainage from any development is:**
  - 1. Infiltration Measures**
  - 2. Attenuation and discharge to watercourses; and if these cannot be met,**
  - 3. Discharge to surface water only sewers.**

**New development proposals must be in accordance with the objectives of the Water Framework Directive, and accord with the findings of the Gatwick Sub-Region Water Cycle Study with respect to water quality, water supply and wastewater treatment.**

**For new residential developments of more than 10 dwellings, applicants must demonstrate:**

- **that capacity exists offsite for foul and surface water provision. Where capacity off site is not available, plans must be in place for its provision ahead of the development's occupation.**
- **that there is adequate water supply to serve the development.**

*(Note: the statutory water authorities will be consulted on whether development proposals comply with the above two policies, and their advice taken into account when determining planning applications).*

## Appendix A – List of evidence base documents

The evidence base for the consultation draft District Plan includes the following documents:

- A Landscape Character Assessment for Mid Sussex (November 2005)  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=4201>
- A Revision of the Ancient Woodland Inventory for Mid Sussex District Council (February 2007)  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=5759>
- At Crawley Study (October 2009)  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=4291>
- Biodiversity Action Plan  
[www.biodiversitysussex.org](http://www.biodiversitysussex.org)
- Burgess Hill: A Town Wide Strategy for the Next 20 Years (August 2011)  
[www.burgesshill.gov.uk](http://www.burgesshill.gov.uk)
- Burgess Hill Town Centre Masterplan (November 2006)  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=4311>
- Burgess Hill: Visioning the Future (July 2007)  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=6053>
- CABE Good Practice  
<http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/CABE>
- Draft Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Mid Sussex District Plan (2011)
- Draft Mid Sussex Infrastructure Development Plan  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=9344>
- East Grinstead Town Centre Masterplan (July 2006)  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=4312>
- Feasibility Study for Development Options at Burgess Hill (September 2005 plus Addendum – December 2005)  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=4292>
- Feasibility Study for Development Options at Haywards Heath (December 2005 plus Part 2 – May 2006)  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=4292>
- Gatwick Diamond Futures Plan (October 2008)  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=8022>
- Gatwick Diamond Strategy
- Gatwick Sub Region Outline Water Cycle Study (January 2011)

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- Green Infrastructure mapping
- Habitats Records  
<http://sxbrc.org.uk>
- Haywards Heath Town Centre Masterplan (June 2007)  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=4313>
- Historic Environment Record  
[www.westsussex.gov.uk](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk)
- Leisure & Cultural Strategy for Mid Sussex 2009-2020 (October 2009)  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=1693>
- Local Housing Assessment (2011)  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=9097>
- Mid Sussex Conservation Area Appraisals  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=5729>
- Mid Sussex District Council Retail Study (September 2008)  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=5902>
- Mid Sussex District Council Retail Study Update (July 2009)  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=5902>
- Mid Sussex Economic Development Strategy (2010)  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=2004>
- Mid Sussex Landscape Capacity Study (July 2007)  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=6054>
- Mid Sussex PPG17 Assessment of Open Space, Sport and Recreation (September 2006)  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=5607>
- Mid Sussex Transport Study (August 2008 plus Second Phase – July 2009)  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=8059>
- Northern West Sussex Economic Appraisal / Part I Employment Land Review (September 2009)  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=4571>
- Northern West Sussex Employment Land Review Part II (October 2010)  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=4571>
- Register of Listed Buildings  
[www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (March 2008)  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=5728>

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- The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2004: a 20-year strategy (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, adopted March 2009)  
[www.highweald.org](http://www.highweald.org)
- The South Downs Management Plan 2008-2013  
[www.southdowns.gov.uk](http://www.southdowns.gov.uk)
- The Sussex Extensive Urban Survey (2005 and 2006)  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=7973>
- West Sussex Gypsy & Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment (2007)  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=4291>
- West Sussex Sites of Nature Conservation Importance (SNCI) Register  
[www.westsussex.gov.uk](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk)
- West Sussex Strategic Housing Market Assessment (May 2009)  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=3641>
- West Sussex Sustainable Energy Study (October 2009)  
<http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/page.cfm?pageID=8418>
- West Sussex Transport Plan 2011-2026 (February 2011)  
[www.westsussex.gov.uk](http://www.westsussex.gov.uk)

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## Appendix B

### Local Plan policies that will continue to be saved on adoption of the District Plan

The table below sets out which Local Plan policies will continue to be saved after the District Plan is adopted (Summer 2013). Those Local Plan policies that are saved after the District Plan is adopted can still be superseded by a subsequent Neighbourhood Plan.

The table also indicates whether MSDC officers are recommending saving a policy or if a District Local Member or Town or Parish Council has requested that the policy is saved. In some cases Town and Parish Councils have requested that policies are no longer saved (these are not shown on the list below).

Saved Local Plan Policy	Policy type	Recommended / supported by
<b>General policies</b>		
T1 Safeguards land for the provision of the Haywards Heath Relief Road	Road	MSDC officer
<b>Burgess Hill</b>		
BH1 Open Air Market, Cyprus Road	Housing	MSDC officer, agreed by Burgess Hill Town Council
BH2 The Oaks Centre, Junction Road	Housing	MSDC officer, agreed by Burgess Hill Town Council
BH3 Station Yard and Car Park Burgess Hill	Mixed Housing	MSDC officer
BH5 86 Junction Road, Burgess Hill	Housing	MSDC officer, agreed by Burgess Hill Town Council
BH6 Land north of Faulkners Way, Burgess Hill	Housing	MSDC officer, agreed by Burgess Hill Town Council
BH9 Land south of Maltings Park	Business	MSDC officer, agreed by Burgess Hill Town Council
BH14 Charles Avenue and Victoria Road	Link road	MSDC officer, agreed by Burgess Hill Town Council
BH15 Cycle Track between Hassocks and Burgess Hill	Leisure route	Requested by Burgess Hill Town Council and Hassocks Parish Council
BH16 Wivelsfield Station	Station parking	Burgess Hill Town Council
BH17 Triangle Leisure centre	Leisure	Burgess Hill Town Council
BH19 Playing fields	Leisure	MSDC officer, agreed by Burgess Hill Town Council
BH20 Equipped Play area	Leisure	MSDC officer, agreed by Burgess Hill Town Council
BH21 Informal Open Space	Leisure	MSDC officer, agreed by Burgess Hill Town Council
BH24 Community buildings	Leisure	MSDC officer, agreed (in part) by Burgess Hill Town Council
<b>East Grinstead</b>		
EG1 Built Environment	Built Environment	Requested by Local Member
EG2 The Portlands	Conservation	Requested by Local Member
EG5 East Grinstead Lawn Tennis Club	Housing	MSDC officer
EG7 2-4 Orchard Way	Housing	MSDC officer
EG8 Stonequarry Woods	Housing	MSDC officer
EG15 Children's Play space	Leisure	MSDC officer
EG18 Informal open space	Leisure	MSDC officer
EG19 Worth Way and Forest Way	Leisure route	MSDC officer
Haywards Heath*		

# APPENDIX A

Version for Council 19<sup>th</sup> October 2011

HH2 South western sector	Housing	MSDC officer
HH3 South eastern sector	Housing	MSDC officer
HH4 Haywards Heath Relief Road	Road	MSDC officer
HH6 Implementation		MSDC officer
HH7 Open space	Leisure	MSDC officer
HH8 Haywards Heath Station	Mixed housing	MSDC officer
HH11 Land north of Rookery Farm	Housing	MSDC officer
*Please note that Haywards Heath Town Council requested that all policies relating to Haywards Heath are no longer saved. However the District Council considers that the policies that relate to the housing delivery should be retained, as should those policies that relate to the development of the south west and east of the town which has yet to be fully implemented. In the longer term these policies can be superseded by the Neighbourhood plan for the Town.		
<b>Ardingly</b>		
AR1 Ardingly Rail Depot	Site specific policy	Requested by Ardingly and Lindfield Parish Council
AR3 Ardingly College	Site specific policy	Requested by Ardingly Parish Council
AR4 Ardingly Reservoir	Site specific policy	Requested by Ardingly Parish Council
AR5 South of England Showground	Site specific policy	Requested by Ardingly Parish Council
AR6 Wakehurst Place	Site specific policy	Requested by Ardingly Parish Council
<b>Bolney</b>		
BO2 Bolney Grange	Business	Requested by Bolney Parish Council and Local Member
BO4 Aurora Ranch site	Site specific policy	Requested by Bolney Parish Council and Local Member
<b>Copthorne</b>		
CO2 Townscape Protection Area	Townscape Protection Area	Requested by Worth Parish Council
CO4 Informal open space	Leisure	MSDC officer
<b>Crawley Down</b>		
CD1 Townscape Protection Area	Townscape Protection Area	Requested by Worth Parish Council
<b>Cuckfield</b>		
CU3 Recreation	Leisure	MSDC officer
<b>Horsted Keynes</b>		
HK2 Constance Wood – Scout building	Leisure	MSDC officer
<b>Hurstpierpoint</b>		
HU2 Fairfield Recreation	Leisure	MSDC officer
<b>Keymer and Hassocks</b>		
KH1 Highway Depot	Housing	MSDC officer, supported by Parish Council
KH4 Cycle Track between Hassocks and Burgess Hill	Leisure route	Requested by Burgess Hill Town Council and Hassocks Parish Council
KH5 Formal Sport	Leisure	MSDC officer, supported by Hassocks Parish Council
KH6 Butcher Wood and Lag Wood	Leisure	MSDC officer, supported by Hassocks Parish Council
KH7 Footpath link to Whitelands Reservoir	Leisure route	Requested by Hassocks Parish Council
<b>Pease Pottage</b>		
PP1 Hemsley nursery – residential (implemented) and public open space (not implemented)	Housing/ leisure	MSDC officer
PP5 Finches Field extension	Leisure	MSDC officer
<b>Poynings</b>		
PO1 Public open space	Leisure	MSDC officer

# APPENDIX A

Version for Council 19<sup>th</sup> October 2011

<b>Pyecombe</b>		
PY1 Church Lane and A273	Housing	MSDC officer
<b>Turners Hill</b>		
TH1 Land at Clock Field	Housing	MSDC officer, supported by Turners Hill Parish Council
TH3 Children's play area	Leisure	MSDC officer, supported by Turners Hill Parish Council
TH4 Mobile Home Park	Site specific policy	Requested by Turners Hill Parish Council
<b>Rural Areas</b>		
RA2 Rowfant Business centre	Site specific policy	Requested by Turners Hill Parish Council

DRAFT

## APPENDIX B

### Minutes of the Meeting of Better Environment Advisory Group held on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2011 from 7:00 pm to 9:28pm

**Present:** Councillors: Andrew Barrett-Miles (Chairman)  
Heidi Brunsdon (Vice Chairman)

**Present:**  
Denis Jones\* Peter Martin Ian Simpson  
Andrew MacNaughton Edward Matthews Neville Walker  
Bob Mainstone\* Robert Salisbury

\* Absent

**Also Present (as appointed substitutes):** Councillor Bates

**Also Present:** Councillors Banham, Bourne, Callaghan, Catharine, Coote, Davies, de Mierre, Farmer, Forbes, Landriani, Livesey, Marsh, O'Brien, Reed, Seward, Sweatman, Trumble, Wall and Webster.

#### 10. **SUBSTITUTES AT MEETINGS OF COMMITTEE – COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 4**

The Committee noted that, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4 – Substitutes at Meetings of Committees etc. Councillor Richard Bates had replaced Councillor Denis Jones for the duration of the meeting.

#### 11. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors D. Jones and Mainstone.

#### 12. **DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

Councillor Barrett Miles declared a personal interest in item 5, Consultation Draft of the District Plan as the Leader of Burgess Hill Town Council. Following some debate the Advisory Group agreed unanimously to accept his Chairmanship of the meeting.

It was noted that during the course of work on the draft District Plan all dual-hatted Members might have a personal interest.

#### 13. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Advisory Group held on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2011 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### 14. **CONSULTATION DRAFT OF THE DISTRICT PLAN**

The Chairman requested that where Members had points that they wished to be redrafted for clarity, they email the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Head of Economic Promotion and Planning who would consider the request and make any appropriate changes before the draft District Plan was submitted to Council.

Claire Tester, Head of Economic Promotion and Planning introduced the report. She outlined the background, including the challenging timetable, and the work of the three working groups. She said that the Policy Working Group had been focusing on the draft District Plan and the draft before Members was the result of that work. The draft was not a finished piece of work, it was a consultation document and there was more work to be done to finalise the plan over the next six months. A 'bottom up' approach was being taken. The proposals from Burgess Hill Town Council had been included because they were well developed and had already undergone consultation within that community. The final District Plan should also include proposals from other Towns and Parishes in the District. Members were asked to consider the consultation draft and the Community Involvement Plan which sets out the proposals for how to carry out the consultation.

The Chairman noted that the final document would be dependent on input from the Towns and Parishes.

In response to Members' questions the Head of Economic Promotion and Planning said that MSDC were willing to offer assistance with technical issues for Neighbourhood Plans but the vision must come from the Town or Parish in line with the localism agenda. A Neighbourhood Planning workshop had been run for Members and another was planned for the autumn.

Following some discussion the Chairman summed up by saying that the Advisory Group were in favour of the 'bottom up' approach with MSDC offering guidance to those who needed it. It was up to communities to put forward their vision and define their boundaries.

The Chairman introduced the draft District Plan; he said that this was a Members' document which outlined the vision, objectives and strategy for the District. He drew Members attention to the vision on page 21 of the document and the four key objectives outlined on page 22 of the document. He said that the district was not homogeneous, everywhere was different and the emphasis of the vision was to maintain and enhance the differences whilst promoting economic vitality. He said that the local housing assessment agreed at the meeting of the Advisory Group held on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2011 together with the objectives created a framework against which Neighbourhood Plans should be developed and this was outlined in sections 2 and 3 of the draft District Plan.

A Member welcomed the draft plan. He referred to paragraph 3.2 on page 26 and queried which policies supported bullet point 5. The Head of Economic Promotion and Planning replied that the draft was not a finished document and when it was finalised in six months' time it would be accompanied by a monitoring document.

A Member, in approving the overall strategy, felt that there was too much emphasis on growth and that there should be more emphasis on communities in Mid Sussex rather than the community of Mid Sussex. Members felt that the idea of reducing the amount of commuting in and out of the District needed to be more explicit. A Member added that employment land is also needed for a sustainable approach and villages would also need some areas of employment land.

A Member expressed concern that the housing waiting list was growing and that development was not addressing this problem. Another Member suggested that the Parishes should consider bringing forward exception sites as this would be the quickest way to address local housing need in the villages.

A Member said that the Neighbourhood Plans were vitally important to the 'bottom up' approach of the District Plan.

The Chairman introduced the strategic policies, which would be taken in order.

#### DP1 Economic Development

A Member found it encouraging that economic development was highlighted and noted that Burgess Hill had allocated employment land. He felt that land allocations for other areas should be considered. A Member referred to the fourth bullet point in the second paragraph on page 31 and said that it was important for Neighbourhood Plans to identify any areas suitable for economic activity.

A Member, referring back to the vision and objectives set out on page 19 said that 40 hectares, identified by Burgess Hill Town Council as employment land, was a large amount of land and expressed concern about overheating in the local economy and whether the size of the development would make Burgess Hill no longer an attractive place to work and visit. She asked what mitigation was in place.

The Head of Economic Promotion and Planning replied that overheating occurred when there are so many business opportunities available that inward commuting is encouraged. The District Plan was seeking to discourage commuting. In relation to Burgess Hill, there was further work to be done over the next six months including on the environmental and transport impacts of the proposals.

A Member felt that there was no conflict with the overall strategy as the market would decide how much will actually be developed.

#### DP2 Retail

No comments.

#### DP3 Housing

It was noted that the Better Environment Advisory Group agreed the housing number at their meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2011.

#### DP4 General Principles for Strategic Development at Burgess Hill

#### DP5 Strategic Allocation to the east of Burgess Hill at Kings Way

#### DP6 Strategic Allocation to the north and northwest of Burgess Hill

In reply to a Members' question the Head of Economic Promotion and Planning said that in considering planning applications, the Burgess Hill Town wide Strategy was a material consideration but the weight accorded to it could only be determined by Members at the time a planning application was being considered.

A Member commented that there seemed to be no evidence showing that there is mitigation of the impact of such large scale development and how it would affect the villages along the A23 corridor. She also felt that there was an omission from the general principles about strategic development of on-site waste energy recovery systems. The Head of Economic Promotion and Planning said that there would be a further study on the impact on the A23 and the villages and it would be taken into account when considering the wider strategic transport impacts. She said that MSDC were unable to identify a site for a waste treatment plant as West Sussex

County Council is the waste planning authority. The Member suggested that the matter be discussed with WSCC and that the renewable energy policy might be able to accommodate the suggestion.

#### DP7 Protection and enhancement of the Countryside

A Member expressed concern about 'coalescence' and said that he would like some more robust statements about protecting the gaps between settlements. He felt that the policy needed some further work and should be strengthened. The Advisory Group agreed. Members commented that the policy should refer to strategic gaps, be robust about the defence of them and should go for a strongly worded position. The Head of Economic Promotion and Planning advised against identifying boundaries of local gaps without strong evidence as they would not pass the Planning Inspector.

#### DP8 Sustainable rural development and the rural economy

No comments.

#### DP9 New homes in the countryside

In reply to a Members' question the Head of Economic Promotion and Planning confirmed that the exceptional design criteria was not just for agricultural development and 'or' should be inserted at the end of the first bullet point.

#### DP10 High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

No comments.

#### DP11 Ashdown Forest Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Area

A Member referred to the Habitats Regulations Assessment and said that it was unclear. The Head of Economic Promotion and Planning said that it was an evolving work area and there was more work to be done. The document was for public consultation and when the plan is finalised it will include more specific detail.

It was noted that officers would respond to a Members' question about Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANG) following the meeting.

#### DP12 South Downs National Park

#### DP13 Setting of the South Downs National Park

#### DP 14 Tourism

No comments.

#### DP15 Securing Infrastructure

A Member expressed the view that the policy should be more robust about how infrastructure should be put in place prior to occupation of the development. The Head of Economic Promotion and Planning pointed out that the policy stated that the Council would need watertight agreements. In reply to a Members' question she said that 'locality' was not tightly defined because it would differ for each development.

#### DP16 Transport

The Advisory Group agreed to some additional wording (in bold) to the second paragraph on page 41 which should now read 'Car parking provision in new developments will be assessed against Mid Sussex Parking Standards unless there is local evidence, **given within Neighbourhood Plans**, that indicates that these standards should be varied'.

#### DP17 Rights of Way and other recreational routes

A Member said that the policy should reflect more about non-motorised modes of transport and cycling.

#### DP18 Communication Infrastructure

The Head of Economic Promotion and Planning noted that the consultation on the National Policy Planning Framework encourages local plans to have policies on all kinds of development because where a plan was silent on them it would allow development to go ahead. This had resulted in more policy areas being covered in the draft District Plan than were previously considered under the draft Core Strategy.

#### DP19 Leisure and Cultural Facilities and Activities

A Member asked for allotments to be included. He said that there was a shortage in the District and they were important for leisure and healthy lifestyles. It was noted by Members that allotments were not within the District Council's remit but that this would be something for the Neighbourhood Plans. A Member felt that leisure and sporting provision needed to be included in a much bigger way.

#### DP20 Community facilities and local services

No comments.

#### DP21 Character and Design

A Member felt that the 5<sup>th</sup> bullet point needed to be strengthened, by defining what is meant by 'amenities'; the Head of Economic Promotion and Planning undertook to look into the matter. A Member expressed concern at the use of local standards in the 6<sup>th</sup> bullet point and referred to a recent planning application where there had been an issue with the size of a garage. The Head of Economic Promotion and Planning said that standards for the size of a garage were referred to in the transport policy. Bullet point 6 was a reference to the Mid Sussex Space Standards which they wished to retain and which Council could revise. A Member welcomed bullet point 4 and said that this could inform Neighbourhood Plans.

#### DP22 Accessibility

No comments.

#### DP 23 Noise, air and light pollution

A Member, referring to bullet point 1 on page 45, queried what was unacceptable. The Head of Economic Promotion and Planning said that they would take advice from the Environmental Health Department; it was not a fixed number but would depend on the circumstances. In response to a Member's comments she said that she would look at making the statement more specific but the policy needed to be reasonable. A Member asked if it were possible to refuse permission for a

development because there was already noise and air pollution present, as an example he said that his ward was affected by Gatwick Airport so he would like to know if that were a reason to turn down development. The Head of Economic Promotion and Planning said that she would provide an answer following the meeting.

#### DP24 Housing Mix

A Member welcomed the inclusion of bungalows.

#### DP25 Affordable Housing

A Member welcomed the work that had been done on this policy which he felt was simpler to understand and more achievable. A Member, referring to bullet point 2 questioned whether it was 30% of the cost of building or money to fund building the 30%. The Head of Economic Promotion and Planning said that she would seek advice and come back with clarification of the point.

#### DP26 Rural Exception Sites

A Member noted in relation to bullet point 3 that in settlements of less than 3000 there is no right to buy.

#### DP27 Gypsies and Travellers

A Member said that in consideration of the Core Strategy, Members had previously agreed that sites should be 'well' located for schools and other services. There was evidence to show that the Gypsy and Traveller community have difficulty accessing services. She felt that the point about landscape should also be removed and this implied they would be in a rural location. The Chairman said that the point had been debated by the Working Group and this was the result of that work. A Member added that they did not want to be out of step with neighbouring authorities. Reasonable could be decided by the Council when deciding the location of sites. A vote was taken and the Advisory Group were unanimously in favour of retaining the wording 'reasonably located' in bullet point 2.

#### DP28 Listed Buildings and other buildings of merit

#### DP29 Conservation Areas

#### DP30 Historic Parks and Gardens

#### DP31 Archaeological Sites

#### DP32 Biodiversity/protection of natural habitats

No comments.

#### DP33 Sustainable Resources

A Member commented that the timeframe to achieve code level 5 was too long; especially as some dwellings were already at code level 6. The Head of Economic Promotion and Planning said that although there were certain sites where code level 6 had been achieved, this would not be viable on all sites. A Member said that he supported the imposition of code 6 where there was an opportunity.

#### DP 34 Renewable Energy in New Developments

A Member said that the policy should be strengthened to encourage significant developments to put forward plans to generate power from waste. This would cut the cost of waste collection, generate less CO2 and generate local energy. The Head of Economic Promotion and Planning said that they would discuss the possibility with WSCC.

#### DP35 Renewable Energy Schemes

#### DP36 Flood Risk

No comments.

#### DP37 Water Infrastructure and the Water Environment

The Chairman queried why the threshold was set at 10 properties. The Head of Economic Promotion and Planning said that this was the threshold set by the Water Cycle Study but she would investigate the reason.

In reply to a Member's question about mitigating flash floods from hard standing she said that this was a matter for other council functions; the flood risk assessment does include records of local flood incidents and there was an awareness of these when considering areas of new development.

The Chairman referred Members attention to pages 52 – 54 setting out the evidence and pages 55 - 56 which listed local policies to be saved.

A Member asked how the list of saved policies had been compiled as she noticed that there were none for the Parish in her Ward. The Head of Economic Promotion and Planning said that she welcomed input from Ward Members as to what local policies should be saved and which could be discarded. The Chairman suggested that an email be sent to Ward Members and Parish Councils seeking their views.

The Chairman referred Members to the Sustainability Appraisal which had been used by the Policy Working Group in reviewing the various policy options just debated. A Member noted, in regard to the bottom line on page 60 that not all three towns benefit equally from sustainable transport opportunities and that East Grinstead does not have the same benefits as Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill.

The Chairman referred Members to the Habitats Regulations.

The Chairman referred Members to the draft Community Involvement Plan. The Head of Economic Promotion and Planning said that the District Plan was a 'bottom up' plan in content and delivery and Town and Parish Councils were being asked to comment on and help with the public consultation.

A Member said that they wanted people's comments and should accept comments in any format. Community involvement was very important. The involvement was needed so that the council could understand what people really want. It was confirmed that Parish Councils would receive a hard copy of the draft District Plan for consultation.

A Member questioned what mitigation was in place to address the failure of communities agreeing a Neighbourhood Plan. There were different needs within communities which might make it difficult to put forward an agreed Neighbourhood Plan and she felt this might lead to gaps in the District Plan. The Head of Economic Promotion and Planning said that achieving consensus on the District Plan had been

identified as a strategic risk for the Council, and this included the receipt of appropriate input from the Towns and Parishes. The Council was aware of the possibilities raised but on balance felt that they were pursuing the best option. However it was for Towns and Parishes to work through competing ideas and pressures and put forward their Neighbourhood Plan.

In reply to a Member's question the Head of Economic Promotion and Planning said that the question for the referendum on Neighbourhood Plans would be prescribed by the regulations.

A Member thanked the officers for all their hard work, especially as the timescale was compressed.

### **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL**

That Council: -

- 1) agrees to publish the consultation draft of the District Plan for public consultation;
- 2) supports the Burgess Hill Townwide Strategy and its inclusion in the consultation draft of the District Plan as a strategic allocation for 3,500-4,000 new homes to the north and east of the town, a 40 hectare business park and new sporting facilities at the A2300 corridor and other infrastructure benefits;
- 3) agrees to publish the Sustainability Appraisal of the consultation draft of the District Plan for public consultation;
- 4) agrees to publish the Habitats Regulations Assessment for public consultation; and
- 5) approves, subject to the comments of the Town and Parish Councils, the Community Involvement Plan for consulting on the above documents and the preliminary draft Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule and Infrastructure Development Plan.

### **15. WORK PROGRAMME 2011/12**

The Head of Economic Promotion and Planning said that there was a correction to the Work Programme, for the meetings on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2011 the items should read – Statement of Community Involvement – results of public consultation, Draft Community Infrastructure Levy Documents and Response to the Government National Planning Policy Framework.

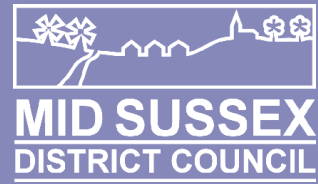
### **RESOLVED**

That the work programme be agreed.

Chairman

# Mid Sussex District Plan Sustainability Appraisal

(incorporating strategic environmental assessment)



Consultation draft  
Non-Technical Summary



## Non-Technical Summary

### What is Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment?

- 1.1. A sustainability appraisal aims to predict and assess the social, environmental and economic effects that are likely to arise from the adoption of Plans or Programmes, in order to ensure that the strategies, policies and plans within these contribute to and promote sustainable development.
- 1.2. The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) aims to predict and assess the environmental effects that are likely to arise from plans, policies and strategies, such as Development Plan Documents. It is a process for assessing and mitigating the negative environmental impacts of specific plans and programmes. The SEA process has been incorporated into the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process. Therefore where the report refers to the SA, it can be assumed this also means the SEA.
- 1.3. This particular appraisal predicts the effects from the consultation draft District Plan and has been used to inform production of the District Plan to ensure that the strategies and policies within the plan promote sustainable development, and present the most sustainable plan given all alternative realistic options.

### The Sustainability Appraisal Report

- 1.4. The consultation draft District Plan sets out a vision for how Mid Sussex wants to evolve and a delivery strategy for how that will be achieved. It will cover a period up to 2031 and will replace the majority of the Mid Sussex Local Plan which was adopted in 2004.
- 1.5. The consultation draft District Plan is a Development Plan and therefore must aim to meet the objectives of Sustainable Development. To ensure this is the case, this Sustainability Appraisal and SEA Report has been undertaken on the consultation draft District Plan in the period leading to the publication of the consultation draft.
- 1.6. The Sustainability Appraisal and SEA follow an iterative process, providing a view of the likely implications on sustainable development of different options for policy areas in the draft District Plan as well as the overall plan strategy. The findings of this work have been taken into consideration in determining the content of the consultation draft District Plan and are documented within this report.
- 1.7. The Sustainability Appraisal process, along with the Strategic Environmental Assessment process, has widened the range of issues and options considered in formulating the proposals for the District Plan, in particular by focussing attention on the need to consider a range of potential social, economic and environmental effects. In turn, this has enabled the most sustainable policy approaches to be identified for inclusion within the draft District Plan.

### How to Comment on This Report

- 1.8. The draft District Plan, along with this accompanying Sustainability Appraisal report, will be made available for public consultation for a minimum period of 6 weeks. All comments received on both of these reports will be taken into consideration in preparing the final District Plan to be submitted to the Secretary of State.
- 1.9. If you wish to comment on these documents, these should be sent to:

**Email:**[LDFConsultation@midsussex.gov.uk](mailto:LDFConsultation@midsussex.gov.uk)**Online:**[www.midsussex.gov.uk/districtplan](http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/districtplan)**Post:**

Planning Policy and Economic Development  
 Mid Sussex District Council  
 Oaklands  
 Oaklands Road  
 Haywards Heath  
 West Sussex  
 RH16 1SS

**Consultation Draft District Plan**

- 1.10. The consultation draft District Plan includes a vision for the District, upon which the plan is based on.

*“A thriving and attractive District, a desirable place to live, work and visit. Our aim is to maintain, and where possible, improve the social, economic and environmental well being of our District and the quality of life for all, now and in the future”*

- 1.11. The District Plan sets out a number of strategic objectives. These are important as they state what the District Plan is aiming to achieve through its overall strategy and accompanying policies. The strategic objectives have been chosen in order to help solve or mitigate as many of the issues and challenges for the District as possible through the planning system.
- 1.12. The following are the 14 strategic objectives for the District Plan:

Priority themes	Strategic Objectives for the District Plan
Protecting and enhancing the environment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>To promote sustainable development that makes the best use of resources and increases the „self-sufficiency“ of communities within Mid Sussex, and its ability to adapt to climate change</i></li> <li>2. <i>To promote well located and designed development that reflects our distinctive towns and villages, retains their separate identity and character and prevents coalescence</i></li> <li>3. <i>To protect valued landscapes for their visual, historical and biodiversity qualities</i></li> <li>4. <i>To maintain easily accessible green corridors and spaces around and within the towns and villages to act as wildlife corridors and sustainable transport links</i></li> <li>5. <i>To ensure that development is accompanied by the necessary infrastructure in the right place at the right time that meet needs, supports development and creates sustainable communities</i></li> </ol>
Promoting economic vitality	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. <i>To promote a place which is attractive to business, and where local enterprise thrives</i></li> <li>7. <i>To provide opportunities for people to live and work within their communities, reducing the need for commuting</i></li> <li>8. <i>To create and maintain town and village centres that are vibrant, attractive and successful and that meet the needs of the community</i></li> </ol>

	<p>9. <i>To support a healthy rural economy in the villages and the countryside</i></p> <p>10. <i>To support and enhance the attractiveness of Mid Sussex as a visitor destination</i></p>
Ensuring cohesive and safe communities	<p>11. <i>To develop sustainable communities which are safe, healthy and inclusive.</i></p> <p>12. <i>To provide the amount and type of housing that meets the needs of all sectors of the community</i></p> <p>13. <i>To create environments that are accessible to all members of the community</i></p>
Supporting healthy lifestyles	<p>14. <i>To create places that encourage a healthy and enjoyable lifestyle by the provision of first class cultural and sporting facilities, informal leisure space and the opportunity to walk, cycle or ride to common destinations.</i></p>

## Methodology

- 1.13. To undertake a Sustainability Appraisal of the District Plan, the council collected data about the District as it is today on social, environmental and economic issues. This is known as the 'baseline' and is documented in section 4 of the main report. This information enable the social, environmental and economic issues facing the district to be established. The baseline consists of quantitative data as well as qualitative data – a review of all plans, programmes and policies that impact upon the District Plan was also established to form a picture of the issues and challenges facing the District.
- 1.14. From this information, it was possible to identify sustainability objectives that the emerging policy options within the District Plan would be assessed against. Indicators were linked to each of the objectives to enable any potential impacts from policies to be quantified and monitored in the future.

## Current Sustainability Issues

- 1.15. From the examination of the baseline data and plans, programmes and policies that could influence the District Plan it was possible to identify the current sustainability issues faced by the District. These issues are summarised as follows:
- Mid Sussex has relatively high levels of in and out commuting and it is important that appropriate employment opportunities are promoted within the District to ensure people who live locally can work locally.
  - The downturn in the rural economy in recent years, especially in the farming industry.
  - There are already infrastructure deficits in sewerage and water supply, transport, open space and sports/ play provision, and there are public concerns that further development will exacerbate these problems.
  - Car ownership and use is high, contributing to congestion and climate change.
  - The District's three town centres would benefit from regeneration and renewal so that they can be attractive retail, leisure and commercial hubs each with their own distinctive character.
  - House prices in Mid Sussex are high relative to average incomes, and this causes affordability issues, particularly for young people.
  - An ageing population is likely to increase the demands on health and social care, in particular the need for residential nursing care.
  - Ease of access to existing facilities and services is an issue for many residents in Mid Sussex, particularly those in rural areas. There are some pockets of deprivation in the

District mostly in relation to access to local community services – this can create social exclusion.

- There is a need to encourage sustainable, attractive and inclusive communities to ensure that the District continues to benefit from low crime levels, good health and an attractive natural and built environment.
- The need to maintain and enhance the high quality natural, built and historic environment and biodiversity of the District.
- Water usage is increasing, putting further pressure on water resources, which is further exacerbated by climate change.
- Water quality, both in watercourses and aquifers, needs to be maintained and enhanced.
- Flood risk is an issue for the District, in particular relating to surface water drainage from new developments.
- The amount of waste produced in Mid Sussex is increasing, while at the same time the land available to dispose of waste (landfill) is reducing. However, this is seen as the most unsustainable option by which to manage waste.
- There is a need to promote more sustainable forms of development that are energy and resource efficient, and increase the 'self-sufficiency' of Mid Sussex and its ability to adapt to climate change.

## Sustainability Framework – Objectives and Indicators

1.16. By taking the above issues it was possible to identify sustainability objectives for the District. These objectives were used to assess how the various policy options being explored for the District Plan would contribute to the objectives of sustainability. The set of indicators could also be used to devise a monitoring framework for assessing how the policy proposals affect the objectives upon adoption of the District Plan.

1.17. A total of 18 Sustainability Objectives (and their associated indicators) were devised:

Social	<b>1</b>	<b>To ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent, sustainably constructed and affordable home.</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>housing completions per annum (net);</i></li> <li>- <i>number of affordable homes completed annually (gross);</i></li> <li>- <i>number of dwellings built to Code for Sustainable Homes standard;</i></li> <li>- <i>number of households accepted as full homeless;</i></li> <li>- <i>private dwellings made fit or demolished;</i></li> <li>- <i>financial contributions towards affordable housing provision;</i></li> <li>- <i>number of key worker households delivered annually.</i></li> </ul>

Environmental	<b>2</b>	<b>To ensure development does not take place in areas of flood risk, or where it may cause flooding elsewhere, thereby minimising the detrimental impact to public well-being, the economy and the environment from flood events. (SEA)</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>number of properties at risk from flooding, as defined by the Environment Agency;</i></li> <li>- <i>number of planning applications approved contrary to advice given by the EA on flood risk/flood defence grounds.</i></li> </ul>

Social	<b>3</b>	<b>To improve the access to health facilities and reduce inequalities in health.</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>number of applications resulting in the loss of health facilities;</i></li> <li>- <i>number of applications resulting in new, extended or improved health facilities;</i></li> <li>- <i>percentage of new dwellings within 300 metres of accessible greenspace;</i></li> <li>- <i>percentage of new residential developments within 30 minutes public transport time of a GP, hospital or major health centre.</i></li> </ul>

Social	<b>4</b>	<b>To maintain and improve the opportunities for everyone to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in work and increase access to educational facilities.</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>percentage of population of working age qualified to NVQ level 3 or equivalent;</i></li> <li>- <i>percentage of adults with poor literacy and numeracy skills;</i></li> <li>- <i>percentage of new residential developments within 30 minutes public transport time of a primary and secondary school.</i></li> </ul>

Social	<b>5</b>	<b>To create crime resistant communities</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>all crime – number of crimes per 1000 residents per annum;</i></li> <li>- <i>number of domestic burglaries per 1,000 households.</i></li> <li>- <i>number of developments achieving „Secured by Design“ status</i></li> </ul>

Social	<b>6</b>	<b>To improve accessibility to retail and all community services and recreation and leisure facilities.</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>average distance the population of the District live from key services (Post Offices, local shops, recreation and leisure facilities);</i></li> <li>- <i>amount of leisure floorspace (Use Class D2) completed per annum (gross)</i></li> <li>- <i>financial contributions towards leisure facilities.</i></li> </ul>

Environmental	<b>7</b>	<b>To improve efficiency in land use through the re-use of previously developed land and existing buildings, including re-use of materials from buildings, and encourage urban renaissance.</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>percentage of new homes developed on brownfield land;</i></li> <li>- <i>percentage of new employment floorspace on previously developed land;</i></li> <li>- <i>density of new housing developments;</i></li> <li>- <i>number of developments using reclaimed/recycled materials in construction;</i></li> <li>- <i>amount of Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land (Grades 1, 2 and 3a) lost to development.</i></li> </ul>

Environmental	<b>8</b>	<b>To address the causes of climate change through reducing emissions of greenhouse gases and ensure that the District is prepared for its impacts. (SEA)</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>number of properties at risk from flooding, as defined by the Environment Agency;</i></li> <li>- <i>number of developments built to BREEAM/Code for Sustainable Homes standards;</i></li> <li>- <i>number of developments incorporating water efficiency measures;</i></li> <li>- <i>proportion of journeys to work by public transport;</i></li> <li>- <i>percentage of electricity consumed that is generated from renewable energy sources.</i></li> </ul>

Environmental	<b>9</b>	<b>To conserve and enhance the District's biodiversity. (SEA)</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>condition of internationally and nationally important wildlife and geological sites (SSSI, SPA, SAC &amp; Ramsar);</i></li> <li>- <i>number and area of SNCIs and LNRs within the District;</i></li> <li>- <i>area of ancient woodland within the District;</i></li> <li>- <i>change in priority habitats and species;</i></li> <li>- <i>number of planning applications approved contrary to advice given by Natural England on biodiversity issues.</i></li> </ul>
Environmental	<b>10</b>	<b>To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the District's countryside. (SEA)</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>open spaces managed to green flag standard;</i></li> <li>- <i>number of major developments in the South Downs National Park / High Weald AONB;</i></li> <li>- <i>proportion of development in areas of high capacity in landscape terms;</i></li> <li>- <i>net gain/loss of Rights of Way;</i></li> <li>- <i>percentage of new dwellings within 300 metres of accessible greenspace.</i></li> </ul>
Environmental	<b>11</b>	<b>To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the District's historic environment. (SEA)</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>buildings of Grade I and II* and scheduled monuments at risk;</i></li> <li>- <i>number of Conservation Areas with appraisals and management proposals;</i></li> <li>- <i>number of Listed Buildings in the District.</i></li> </ul>
Environmental	<b>12</b>	<b>To reduce road congestion and pollution levels by improving travel choice, and reducing the need for travel by car.</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>monetary investment in sustainable transport schemes (value of s.106 agreements);</i></li> <li>- <i>number / percentage of permissions that have a green transport plan;</i></li> <li>- <i>proportion of journeys to work by public transport;</i></li> <li>- <i>percentage of new residential development within 30 minutes public transport time of a GP, primary and secondary school, employment and a major health centre.</i></li> </ul>
Environmental	<b>13</b>	<b>To reduce waste generation and disposal, and achieve the sustainable management of waste, including the amount of waste that is either re-used or recycled.</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>percentage of domestic waste that has been recycled;</i></li> <li>- <i>percentage of domestic waste that has been composted;</i></li> <li>- <i>number of developments incorporating new recycling facilities;</i></li> <li>- <i>number of developments using reclaimed/recycled materials in construction.</i></li> </ul>

Environmental	<b>14</b>	<b>To maintain and improve the water quality of the District's watercourses and aquifers, and to achieve sustainable water resources management. (SEA)</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>percentage of stretches of watercourse that are compliant with River Quality Objectives;</i></li> <li>- <i>number of developments incorporating water efficiency measures;</i></li> <li>- <i>per capita consumption of water;</i></li> <li>- <i>incidents of major and significant water pollution within the District;</i></li> <li>- <i>number of planning applications approved contrary to advice given by the EA on water quality issues;</i></li> <li>- <i>number and area of developments where appropriate remediation of contaminants has taken place.</i></li> </ul>

Environmental	<b>15</b>	<b>To increase energy efficiency, and the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources in the District and to utilise sustainably produced and local products in new developments where possible.</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>number of developments built to BREEAM/ Code for Sustainable Homes standards;</i></li> <li>- <i>domestic energy consumption per household;</i></li> <li>- <i>percentage of electricity consumed that is generated from renewable energy sources.</i></li> </ul>

Economic	<b>16</b>	<b>To ensure high and stable levels of employment so everyone can benefit from the economic growth of the District.</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>unemployment;</i></li> <li>- <i>average weekly income for those who are employed in the District;</i></li> <li>- <i>number of new businesses setting up in the District.</i></li> </ul>

Economic	<b>17</b>	<b>To sustain economic growth and competitiveness across the District.</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>amount of employment land lost to residential development;</i></li> <li>- <i>GVA (Gross Value Added) per capita;</i></li> <li>- <i>net increase/decrease in commercial (Use Classes B1(b,c), B2, B8) and office (B1(a) and A2) floorspace.</i></li> </ul>

Economic	<b>18</b>	<b>To encourage the development of a buoyant, sustainable tourism sector.</b>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>percentage of jobs in the tourism sector;</i></li> <li>- <i>number of visitors staying overnight.</i></li> </ul>

### Compatibility of Objectives

1.18. The 18 sustainability objectives were compared with each other and against the objectives for the District Plan. This process enabled any conflicts between the objectives to be identified. By identifying these conflicts, possible ways of reducing or preventing these conflicts when assessing the District Plan could be found. Overall the majority of objectives were found as being compatible with one another.

## Developing and Appraising Options

1.19. In preparing the draft District Plan, a number of policy areas were considered, and a range of options for each policy area were identified. The policy areas have been based largely on:

- The need for the policy to meet the objectives of the District Plan vision and the Sustainable Community Strategy.
- Issues for the District that have been identified through baseline information collected or consultation (for example, in consultation with Town and Parish Councils).
- Identification of need through the evidence base – for example, the need for policies on sustainable resource use, affordable housing and employment space.
- Identification of the need to enhance or supplement existing national planning policies at a local level, often based on local targets.

1.20. The preferred policy option from all of the options appraised has been based on the overall impact against the sustainability objectives, with the option with the most positive predicted impact determined as the 'preferred option'. In order to record the sustainability of the varying options, a range of colours and symbols has been used:

++	Significant positive impact on the sustainability objective
+	Positive impact on the sustainability objective
+?	Possible positive or slight positive impact on the sustainability objective
0	No impact or neutral impact on the sustainability objective
-?	Possible negative or slight negative impact on the sustainability objective
-	Negative impact on the sustainability objective
--	Significant negative impact on the sustainability objective

1.21. All of the reasonable options have been appraised using these symbols, against the methodology outlined in section 3 of the main report. Once appraised, mitigation for any predicted negative impacts has been identified.

1.22. The majority of the District Plan policy areas were generally found to be impact positively on the social, environmental and economic objectives. In almost all instances, where a negative sustainability impact had been identified it was mitigated by one of the other policies within the District Plan.

1.23. A summary of the sustainability appraisal findings for each of the policy areas within the District Plan is shown in the table below:

District Plan Policy	Sustainability Appraisal Findings
<b>Development Strategy</b>	Whilst this strategic approach will have many positive impacts, particularly on social and economic objectives, it will also have negative impacts on objectives concerned with protection of the environment. However, policies including character and design, protection of the historic environment, sustainable resources and transport will mitigate against any negative impacts that will arise from implementing the strategy.
<b>DP1: Economic Development</b>	This policy will be key in meeting the economic objectives, as it sets the framework for where new employment land will be located over the plan period. It will have significant positive benefits for the economic objectives, as well as indirect positive benefits for some social and environmental objectives in comparison to other options appraised. This is due to the policy directing employment growth to areas where there is a need and supporting existing businesses.

<p><b>DP2: Retail Development</b></p>	<p>Encouraging the development of retail uses to town centre locations, where possible, will deliver economic benefits to these areas, as well as across the District where justified and in accordance with the sequential approach in determining suitable sites. This policy will allow for greater accessibility to retail use, particularly by public transport. This will have positive sustainability impacts.</p>
<p><b>DP3: Housing</b></p>	<p>This option proposes the most aspirational level of economic growth; therefore significant positive impacts should arise from this option in comparison to others. The level of housing proposed through this policy will also go towards meeting the housing need within the District, which has significant positive social impacts, without presenting too many negative impacts on environmental objectives.</p>
<p><b>DP4: General Principles for Strategic Development at Burgess Hill</b></p>	<p>Overall, setting out the general principles that apply to all strategic development at Burgess Hill is likely to have a positive impact on the majority of objectives. This is because a policy is likely to ensure that social, environmental and economic needs are met, such as improved access to services and provision of decent and affordable homes. Whilst strategic development could have a negative impact on environmental objectives, a policy could ensure that provision is made for enhancement and green infrastructure which would mitigate against any possible negative impacts. Strategic development is also likely to have a positive effect on employment levels and economic growth.</p>
<p><b>DP5: Strategic Allocation to the East of Burgess Hill at Kings Way</b></p>	<p>The combination of these policies will have positive impacts on the social, environmental and economic objectives. This is due to the fact the policies ensure that any strategic development at Burgess Hill is delivered in the most appropriate way so as to maximise economic, social and environmental benefits, and mitigate against any possible negative impacts that may arise for these objectives.</p>
<p><b>DP6: Strategic Allocation to the north and northwest of Burgess Hill</b></p>	<p>The combination of these policies will have positive impacts on the social, environmental and economic objectives. This is due to the fact the policies ensure that any strategic development at Burgess Hill is delivered in the most appropriate way so as to maximise economic, social and environmental benefits, and mitigate against any possible negative impacts that may arise for these objectives.</p>
<p><b>DP7: Protection and Enhancement of the Countryside</b></p>	<p>It is considered that for the majority of objectives, this policy will have positive impacts. In particular, the environmental objectives are seen to have a strong positive impact that may increase over time. This policy will allow development in the countryside providing it does not harm, and where possible, enhances the quality of the rural and landscape character. This means that there may be positive impacts on the economic and social objectives, whilst at the same time having a positive impact on the environmental objectives which is the overall aim of this policy.</p>
<p><b>DP8: Preventing Coalescence</b></p>	<p>In the short term, the de-designation of existing local gaps could have negative impacts on the countryside and historic environment, although preparation of Neighbourhood Plans will ensure that major positive benefits for these objectives will be obtained in the long term, as preserving land between certain settlements is shown to have positive effects both directly, and indirectly.</p>

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<p><b>DP9:</b> Sustainable Rural Development and the Rural Economy</p>	<p>The proposed policy should have positive social and economic benefits. It is considered that the policy may contribute to unsustainable transport patterns and therefore the transport and climate change objectives could possibly be adversely impacted upon, however mitigation measures are in place in the form of other policies within the District Plan.</p>
<p><b>DP10:</b> New Homes in the Countryside</p>	<p>Although this policy option has the potential to negatively impact on several of the objectives, it is considered that it is necessary to have a policy that restricts new dwellings in the countryside to those that are required by agricultural and forestry workers. This is likely to have positive impacts on employment and economic growth as well as providing the workers with a decent and affordable home.</p> <p>Overall, whilst this policy option is likely to have negative impacts on some of the sustainability objectives, it is considered that it is necessary to enable dwellings for agricultural and forestry workers to be allowed in certain circumstances, in particular where this contributes to agricultural and land management objectives.</p>
<p><b>DP11:</b> High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</p>	<p>This main objective of this policy is for development proposals within the AONB to have regard to the High Weald AONB Management Plan; hence it has significant positive impacts on the environmental and tourism objectives. Over the longer term, the policy may also have positive impacts on the social and economic objectives. The policy may, however, have a negative impact on providing for decent and affordable homes, but the Rural Exception Sites policy may help to mitigate this impact.</p>
<p><b>DP12:</b> Ashdown Forest Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Area</p>	<p>Overall this policy will have positive impacts, particularly relating to the environmental and social objectives; this policy is likely to have no impact on the majority of the economic objectives. As this policy restricts development, it is likely to have possible negative effects on providing decent and affordable homes within the zone of influence. Over time this policy may lead to increased positive impacts on access to health, access to community facilities, educational and tourism opportunities, and reducing road congestion and addressing one of the causes of climate change. This policy will, therefore, have significant positive environmental effects as it mitigates the recreational and air pollution impacts associated with residential development, as well as positive social effects from providing alternative open space to relieve overall pressure on the European designated Ashdown Forest.</p>
<p><b>DP13:</b> South Downs National Park</p>	<p>Although this policy has the potential to negatively impact on several of the social objectives, it is considered that it is necessary to have a policy that considers development proposals within the South Downs National Park area of the District to ensure that they protect the special character of the National Park and specifically relate to the needs of the communities within the National Park. This is likely to have positive impacts on the environmental objectives such as biodiversity, the countryside and the historic environment, which are the main objectives of this policy. This policy will help</p>

	<p>protect and enhance the countryside through consideration of the South Downs National Park designation.</p> <p>Other policies in the District Plan are likely to help mitigate some of the negative impacts that may arise from this policy, and these are particularly related to the provision of homes, access to services and the economic objectives.</p>
<b>DP14: Setting of the South Downs National Park</b>	<p>Although this policy option has the potential to negatively impact on several of the objectives, it is considered that it is necessary to have a policy that considers development proposals (including rural exception sites) adjacent to the South Downs National Park to ensure that they enhance and do not detract from the visual quality and essential characteristics of the area. This is likely to have positive impacts on the environmental objectives such as biodiversity, the countryside and the historic environment. This policy will help protect and enhance the countryside through consideration of the setting of the South Downs National Park.</p> <p>Other policies in the District Plan are likely to help mitigate some of the negative impacts that may arise from this policy, and these are particularly related to the provision of homes, access to services and the economic objectives.</p>
<b>DP15: Tourism</b>	<p>This policy is likely to have no or little impact on the majority of objectives. It is clear that this policy has strong positive impacts for the economic objectives and as can be expected, on the tourism objective. This is also likely to have positive impacts over time for the objectives on efficient land use, protecting and enhancing the countryside, and protecting and enhancing the historic environment. This policy, however, may have negative effects for the objectives on climate change, road congestion and water quality although these should be mitigated by other policies.</p>
<b>DP16: Securing Infrastructure</b>	<p>Positive social, environmental and economic benefits should accrue from this policy, particularly for those objectives that are linked to new and/or improved health, education, leisure, recreation and other community services and facilities in comparison with other options, particularly in the long term.</p>
<b>DP17: Transport</b>	<p>Positive benefits should accrue from this policy. Improved travel choice and transport infrastructure is shown to have positive social, environmental and economic impacts – particularly over the long term. No negative impacts should arise from the selection of this option in comparison to other options appraised, as they will not reduce road congestion, the key aim of this policy.</p>
<b>DP18: Rights of Way and Other Recreational Routes</b>	<p>It is clear that this policy will have the strongest positive impact on the countryside objective as rights of way and recreational routes will help to protect and enhance the countryside. This policy is also likely to have a positive impact on health as rights of way will provide opportunities for physical activity and well-being. There may also be positive impacts on access to services, addressing the causes of climate change,</p>

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	<p>biodiversity, reducing road congestion and encouraging tourism. Overall, this policy is likely to have positive effects on the environmental and social objectives, and this impact may increase over time.</p>
<b>DP19: Communication Infrastructure</b>	<p>This will impact positively on social and economic objectives by ensuring that up-to-date communications infrastructure can be delivered within the District, which will support economic aims and the indirect positive effects that could occur as residents are able to work from home more efficiently, reducing the need to regularly commute.</p>
<b>DP20: Leisure and Cultural Facilities and Activities</b>	<p>Provision of leisure and cultural activities and facilities will have positive impacts on health and education as well as improving the local environment. This policy should also have an economic benefit in terms of encouraging tourism. Overall, this policy will have positive impacts on the majority of objectives, particularly the social and environmental objectives.</p>
<b>DP21: Community Facilities and Local Services</b>	<p>Provision of community facilities will have positive impacts on a number of objectives, particularly the social objectives concerning access to health, education and services. This is also likely to have a positive impact on the economic objectives as it may create jobs and help economic growth. This policy may also have a positive impact on the environmental objectives such as improving access to the countryside and reducing road congestion through proximity to services. Overall, this policy will have positive impacts on the majority of objectives, and for some the impact will increase over time.</p>
<b>DP22: Character and Design</b>	<p>No negative sustainability impacts are expected to result from this policy. Good design should be seen as key in achieving social, environmental and economic aims.</p>
<b>DP23: Accessibility</b>	<p>Overall, this policy will have little or no impact on the majority of objectives. As this policy requires development to meet high standards of accessibility, it may have a positive impact on the social objectives concerning housing and access to health, education and services. There may also be a positive impact on employment levels as this policy aims to improve the accessibility of the built environment. There is likely, however, to be a negative effect on the historic environment as this policy could impact on the integrity of listed buildings and their setting, although the Historic Environment policies in the District Plan should help to mitigate any negative impacts.</p>
<b>DP24: Noise, Air and Light Pollution</b>	<p>This policy will have positive impacts on the environmental objectives, particularly in relation to minimising the levels of air pollution within the District which will impact positively on climate change objectives. Noise and light pollution restrictions will impact positively on the social objectives.</p>
<b>DP25: Housing Mix</b>	<p>It is considered that this policy will ensure that the appropriate mix of dwellings is delivered taking into account the local housing needs. It is likely to have a positive impact on several of the objectives. This policy is also likely to positively impact on</p>

	<p>those objectives relating to access to health, creating crime resistant communities and the natural and built environment.</p>
<b>DP26: Affordable Housing</b>	<p>The provision of affordable housing is a much needed social requirement for Mid Sussex and therefore a number of positive social impacts should arise from this policy. This should also lead to a number of indirect economic benefits (i.e. increased provision of affordable housing assisting in the retention of key workers). It should ensure that the level of affordable housing required from new developments will not be financially restrictive, and ensure that social objectives relating to provision of facilities will not be affected.</p>
<b>DP27: Rural Exception Sites</b>	<p>The main objective of this policy is to deliver 100% affordable housing schemes where a need exists; and has a very positive impact on the housing objective. This policy is considered to possibly impact negatively on objectives that concern accessibility to community services and facilities, including public transport, schools and retail. This has a knock-on negative effect on climate change objectives.</p> <p>The level of housing that will be delivered through this policy is unlikely to be significant; therefore the negative impacts will be relatively minor.</p>
<b>DP28: Gypsies and Travellers</b>	<p>It is clear that this policy has a positive impact on the social objectives, although it will be necessary to ensure that gypsy and traveller sites are not located in areas of flood risk. This policy has a neutral impact on the economic objectives, however, there may be a negative impact on some of the environmental objectives, but this should be mitigated by other policies.</p>
<b>DP29: Listed Buildings and Other Buildings of Merit</b>	<p>It is clear that this policy will have a strong positive impact on objective 11 as it is intended to conserve and enhance the character and setting of listed buildings and other buildings of merit. This policy may also have a positive impact on the countryside and tourism objectives. By protecting the setting of listed buildings, there may be a negative impact on the objectives relating to homes, access to services, efficient land use and climate change, although these should be mitigated by other District Plan policies to some extent.</p>
<b>DP30: Conservation Areas</b>	<p>It is clear that this policy will have the strongest (positive) impact on objective 11 as it is intended to conserve and enhance the character of conservation areas. This policy may also have a positive impact on the tourism objective. By protecting conservation areas, there may be a negative impact on the objectives relating to provision of homes, access to services, efficient land use and climate change, although these should be mitigated by other District Plan policies.</p>
<b>DP31: Historic Parks and Gardens</b>	<p>Overall positive benefits should arise from this policy. In ensuring that these valued historic sites are retained and protected, a number of very positive environmental sustainability benefits should be seen, as well as encouraging tourism which</p>

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	will benefit economic objectives. A small number of indirect social benefits could also be gained.
<b>DP32: Archaeological Sites</b>	Overall positive benefits should arise from this policy. In ensuring that these valued historic sites are retained and protected, a number of very positive environmental sustainability benefits should be seen, as well as encouraging tourism which will benefit economic objectives. A small number of indirect social benefits could also be gained.
<b>DP33: Biodiversity / Protection of Natural Habitats</b>	This policy should result in positive benefits, particularly for the environmental objectives. It can be seen that over the longer term, positive benefits will increase and there will be a positive impact on some of the social objectives. Overall, this policy should achieve the biodiversity objective and contribute to enhancing the natural and built environment.
<b>DP34: Sustainable Resources</b>	In seeking to address the causes and adapt to climate change the policy is seen as having substantial environmental benefits (particularly for those objectives that relate directly to natural resources). A number of secondary/ indirect positive social and economic impacts are expected from this policy.
<b>DP35: Renewable Energy in New Developments</b>	A number of environmental benefits will be gained from this policy, in particular, those that mitigate against the effects of climate change. A number of secondary / indirect positive social and economic impacts can be expected from this policy.
<b>DP36: Renewable Energy Schemes</b>	Predicted positive effects should arise from this policy overall, particularly on the economic and environmental objectives. In particular, this policy will substantially contribute to the climate change and energy efficiency objectives by supporting renewable energy schemes at all scales. This will enable householders as well as developers to implement renewable energy technologies across the District, whilst ensuring that there is no harm to surrounding rural and urban character.
<b>DP37: Flood Risk</b>	This policy will ensure that development does not take place in areas identified as being at risk from flooding. By utilising the findings of the District Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, a large evidence base containing historic flood events which is constantly maintained, the identification of flood risk areas will be comprehensive and up-to-date. A number of secondary positive impacts can also be expected, particularly in relation to social objectives related to health and leisure.
<b>DP38: Water Infrastructure and the Water Environment</b>	Many positive sustainability outcomes can be expected by implementing this policy, with particular benefits for the environmental objectives. A number of secondary positive impacts can be expected. This will ensure that Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are appropriate to the area within which they are sited, and that the risk of flooding is reduced, as well as impacting positively on water quality objectives. Ensuring new developments demonstrate adequate provision for wastewater and water supply will also impact positively on these objectives.

- 1.24. The Sustainability Appraisal process is an iterative process. It is likely that further policy areas and options will be put forward during the preparation of the District Plan, particularly during consultation on the draft document. If these options are considered to be realistic, reasonable and relevant they will be assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal process during the next stage of its production. The findings of this process will be considered in the next stage of production for the District Plan – prior to its submission to the Secretary of State.

## Executive Summary

### E1 Introduction

- E1.1 This report presents the findings and recommendations of the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) for the Consultation Draft District Plan for Mid Sussex. The report has been prepared at an early stage in the development of the Plan in order that any potential effects of the Plan on the integrity of Ashdown Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Area (SPA) are known at the start of the process. Further work can then be progressed to provide more detail and explore potential options for avoiding any adverse effects. This further work will be finalised before the Submission District Plan is published, which is the next stage in the development plan process.
- E1.2 A considerable amount of work on the HRA of the Mid Sussex draft Core Strategy (the District Plan's predecessor) was carried out. Much of this work is still relevant and forms the background to this report. However the preparation of the new District Plan provides the opportunity to review and update this work. A new screening exercise has been carried out to identify more precisely which elements of the plan are likely to lead to significant effects, and then to determine whether there will be adverse effects on site integrity.

### E2 Purpose and Requirement for Habitats Regulations Assessment

- E2.1 The application of Habitats Regulations Assessment to land use plans is a requirement of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (the Habitats Regulations), the UK's transposition of European Union Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive). HRA must be applied to all Local Development Documents in England and Wales and aims to assess the potential effects of the plan against the conservation objectives of any sites designated for their nature conservation importance as part of the Natura 2000 network of European sites.
- E2.2 Under regulation 102 of the Habitats Regulations, the assessment must determine whether or not a plan will adversely affect the integrity of the European site(s) concerned. Where negative effects are identified, the process should consider alternatives to the proposed actions and explore mitigation opportunities, whilst adhering to the precautionary principle. A glossary of technical terms used in this summary is given towards the end.

### E3 Scope of the Assessment

- E3.1 The Consultation Draft District Plan's forerunner, the draft Core Strategy, underwent an HRA screening and scoping exercise in 2007. This revealed five designated areas potentially at risk of effects from within Mid Sussex:

- ▶ Ashdown Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC);
- ▶ Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area (SPA);
- ▶ Castle Hill SAC;
- ▶ Lewes Downs SAC; and
- ▶ Mole Gap to Reigate Escarpment SAC.

E3.2 Castle Hill, Lewes Downs and Mole Gap to Reigate Escarpment were screened out of the assessment, largely due to their distance from the district and the low likelihood of residents travelling along roads close to the sites. Natural England concurred with these findings in its screening opinion on the plan. The screening exercise found likely significant effects on Ashdown Forest SAC/SPA as a result of disturbance and atmospheric pollution.

E3.3 Having identified likely significant disturbance and pollution effects, further work was undertaken by the Council to establish what evidence would be required to undertake the HRA. As a result, three studies were commissioned to provide information necessary to undertake the assessment and guide the planning of the area:

- ▶ *Ashdown Forest Visitor Survey Data Analysis* (Natural England Commissioned Reports, Number 048: Clarke RT, Sharp J & Liley D 2010);
- ▶ *Visitor Access Patterns on the Ashdown Forest: Recreational use and nature conservation* (UE Associates and University of Brighton, 2009); and
- ▶ *Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Mid Sussex District Council Core Strategy: Mid Sussex Air Quality Baseline Study* (UE Associates, 2008).

## **E4 Assessment of Effects**

### ***Atmospheric pollution***

E4.1 Atmospheric pollution is a widespread issue, with background air quality heavily influenced by large point-source emitters including transboundary sources. Local pollutant sources are expected to affect Ashdown Forest, particularly in relation to habitats of the SAC, and especially from road traffic emissions. The Consultation Draft District Plan cannot feasibly influence causes of background pollution such as large point sources but, through its distribution of development and sustainable transport measures, will affect the way in which locally emitted pollutants reach the site.

E4.2 The habitats qualifying for protection within Ashdown Forest SAC, and which are sensitive to air pollution, are European dry heaths and North Atlantic wet heaths. The main pollutant effects of interest are acid deposition and eutrophication by nitrogen deposition. The critical load or level (the level below which harm to habitats and species is not thought to occur) for each of these pollutant classes is already exceeded in parts of Ashdown Forest.

- E4.3 Additional sources of these pollutants generated as a result of proposals in the District Plan should be avoided or mitigated to prevent additional adverse effects on ecological integrity, while it would be beneficial to explore opportunities to improve baseline conditions.
- E4.4 The Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB; Highways Agency, 2007) provides guidance on assessment of the impact that road projects may have on local air quality. Specific provision is made in relation to sites designated under the Habitats Directive. In this instance the assessment is in relation to existing, as opposed to new roads, however the guidance clarifies that *'where appropriate, the advice may be applied to existing roads'*. In accordance with this guidance, and with agreement from Natural England, the HRA examines whether there is a likely significant effect using the DMRB guidance. The criteria for defining such an effect include where:
- ▶ Daily traffic flows will change by 1,000 or more movements a day; or
  - ▶ Heavy Duty Vehicle flows will change by 200 or more movements a day.
- E4.5 The number of homes to be included in the assessment is derived from the plan's housing strategy, but does not include dwellings that have already been built because these will already be included in baseline traffic flow data. Mid Sussex District Council is working with West Sussex County Council to estimate the increase in traffic flow along key roads within 200m of Ashdown Forest as a result of proposals within the Consultation Draft District Plan.
- E4.6 The Consultation Draft District Plan contains measures to promote sustainable transport over the plan period, including measures relating to existing development, and additional actions to assess and manage air pollution. These are intended to improve the overall sustainability of the district and will also reduce the traffic emissions from proposed development, including along roads passing through or close to Ashdown Forest. The measures include:

### Summary of District Plan measures relating to atmospheric pollution

**DP17 Transport:** To have a policy that sets out that:

- development must support the objectives of the West Sussex Local Transport Plan, which are:
  - a high quality transport network that promotes a competitive and prosperous economy
  - a resilient transport network that complements the built and natural environment whilst reducing carbon emissions over time
  - access to services, employment and housing
  - a transport network that feels, and is, safer and healthier to use
- To meet these objectives at a local level, development proposals should:
  - be sustainably located to minimise the need for travel;
  - facilitate and promote the use of alternative modes of transport to the private car, such as walking, cycling and public transport;
  - not cause an unacceptable impact in terms of road safety and increased traffic congestion
  - be designed to adoptable standards, or other standards as agreed by the Local Planning Authority, as regards road widths and size of car parking spaces / garages
  - provide adequate car parking for the proposed development.

Car parking provision in new developments will be assessed against Mid Sussex Parking Standards

unless there is local evidence that indicates that these standards should be varied.

Where practical developments should be located and designed to incorporate facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.

All developments that generate significant amounts of movement should be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment.

**DP24 Noise, air and light pollution:**

To have a policy that protects the environment and the quality of people's life from unacceptable levels of [noise, light and] air pollution by:

- Only permitting development which does not cause unacceptable levels of air pollution;
- Only permitting development on land adjacent to an existing use which generates air pollution where this can be mitigated to reduce exposure to poor air quality and/or would not cause any adverse effects on the proposed development;
- Assessing the potential impacts of new development and increased traffic levels on internationally designated conservation sites and adopting necessary avoidance or mitigation measures to address these impacts (see policy DP12 Ashdown Forest Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Area');
- Ensure that development proposals (where appropriate) are consistent with Air Quality Management Plans.

**DP12 Ashdown Forest SAC/SPA:**

To have a policy which outlines the intention to develop a strategic approach to protect the Ashdown Forest Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Area from recreational pressure and air pollution through the use of:

- Buffer zones that:
  - Prevent development within 400 metres of the Ashdown Forest
  - Allow development within 7 kilometres of the Ashdown Forest provided mitigation methods are employed (for instance Suitable Alternative Natural Green Spaces)
- An Access Management Strategy that reduces the impact of visitors on special interest features of the designated site.

E4.7 Until more is known about the likely growth in traffic on roads within or close to Ashdown Forest it is not possible to assess the effectiveness of these policy proposals in avoiding adverse effects on the SAC/SPA. Recommendations for further measures to influence travel behaviour, modal split and traffic management are included within the main draft report.

**Disturbance**

E4.8 The bird species afforded protection by Ashdown Forest SPA are Dartford warbler and nightjar. The Forest supports approximately 2.1% and 1.1% of the UK's breeding population of these species, respectively; disturbance is expected to affect the SPA more than the SAC. Woodlark is also present in qualifying numbers but is not listed as a qualifying feature of the SPA. Many visitors to the Forest originate from the surrounding area, and increases in the number of homes around the Forest may compound the effects of disturbance from recreation of these birds of European importance.

- E4.9 The findings of a visitor survey in 2008 found that Ashdown Forest attracts upwards of 1.3 million visitors each year. It also found that 60% of people interviewed during the survey visited for the primary purpose of walking the dog, while a further 30% visited to go for a walk. The potential effects of disturbance to ground and near-ground nesting breeding birds are described in the main draft report by reference to numerous studies in a range of locations. Summarising this literature review, potential impacts can be described as follows:
- ▶ Increased nest predation by natural predators when adults are flushed from the nest or deterred from returning to it by the presence of people or dogs;
  - ▶ Chicks or eggs dying of exposure because adult birds are kept away from the nest;
  - ▶ Accidental trampling of eggs by people, given that (nightjar and woodlark) nests are on the ground and may be close to paths;
  - ▶ Predation of chicks or eggs by domestic dogs; and
  - ▶ Increasing stress levels in adult birds in response to perceived predation risk.
- E4.10 A statistical model of visiting rates of pedestrian and car visitors was developed, taking into account observed visitor rates from the 2008 field survey, the residential density of nearby areas, and car park size. The model can be used to predict the number of additional visitors to each access point, and therefore the whole Forest, arising from the proposed development of a specific number of dwellings in defined areas. The model provides a means to directly compare the consequences of development (in terms of increased SPA visitor numbers) at a potential development location. Accordingly, 100 new dwellings at Crowborough, in close proximity to parts of the SPA, is predicted to lead to 12.2 extra visitors per 16 hours, in contrast to 5.1 extra visitors for an equivalent number of dwellings at East Grinstead, further away from the Forest.
- E4.11 Following consultations with Natural England, a 7km zone of influence around Ashdown Forest was established. This is the area within which the majority (83%) of regular visitors to the Forest originate, and therefore where measures targeted at reducing pressure on the Forest would be most effective. Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANG) are an example of such a measure. SANGs are sites that cater for the recreational needs of communities in order to reduce the likelihood of increasing visitor pressure and disturbance on important nature conservation areas, and should be supported by access management measures within Ashdown Forest itself. Natural England has stated that 8ha of SANG should be provided for every 1,000 increase in population (or part thereof) within this zone, in line with the Thames Basin Heaths approach to avoiding adverse effects on the site.
- E4.12 SANGs are characterised by a number of factors, as defined by Natural England:
- ▶ For SANGs larger than 4ha there must be adequate parking for visitors, unless the site is intended for local use, i.e. within easy walking distance (400m) of the developments linked to it. The amount of car parking space should be determined by the anticipated use of the site and reflect the visitor catchment of both the SANG and the SPA.
  - ▶ It should be possible to complete a circular walk of 2.3-2.5km around the SANG.

- ▶ Car parks must be easily and safely accessible by car and should be clearly sign posted.
- ▶ The accessibility of the site must include access points appropriate for the particular visitor use the SANG is intended to cater for.
- ▶ The SANG must have a safe route of access on foot from the nearest car park and/or footpath/s.
- ▶ All SANGs with car parks must have a circular walk which starts and finishes at the car park.
- ▶ SANGs must be designed so that they are perceived to be safe by users; they must not have tree and scrub cover along parts of the walking routes.
- ▶ Paths must be easily used and well maintained but most should remain unsurfaced to avoid the site becoming too urban in feel.
- ▶ SANGs must be perceived as semi-natural spaces with little intrusion of artificial structures, except in the immediate vicinity of car parks. Visually-sensitive way-markers and some benches are acceptable.
- ▶ All SANGs larger than 12ha must aim to provide a variety of habitats for users to experience. Access within the SANG must be largely unrestricted with plenty of space provided where it is possible for dogs to exercise freely and safely off lead.
- ▶ SANGs must be free from unpleasant intrusions (e.g. sewage treatment works smells).
- ▶ SANGs should be clearly sign-posted or advertised in some way.
- ▶ SANGs should have leaflets and/or websites advertising their location to potential users. It would be desirable for leaflets to be distributed to new homes in the area and be made available at entrance points and car parks.
- ▶ It would be desirable for an owner to be able to take dogs from the car park to the SANG safely off the lead.
- ▶ Where possible it is desirable to choose sites with a gently undulating topography for SANG.
- ▶ It is desirable for access points to have signage outlining the layout of the SANG and the routes available to visitors.
- ▶ It is desirable that SANGs provide a naturalistic space with areas of open (non-wooded) countryside and areas of dense and scattered trees and shrubs. The provision of open water on part, but not the majority of sites is desirable.
- ▶ Where possible it is desirable to have a focal point such as a view point or monument within the SANG.

E4.13 At the present stage it is not yet known precisely how many dwellings will come forward within the zone of influence, and therefore the amount of SANG that would be required to offset their adverse effects. However, it is possible to begin planning for the delivery of SANG as an important aspect of the district's infrastructure requirements.

- E4.14 Within Mid Sussex, the options for creating SANG could include existing open space of SANG quality currently without public access, open space which is already accessible but which could be improved to perform better as SANG, or land in other uses which could be converted to SANG. In order to facilitate the delivery of SANG, a tariff will need to be agreed through which developer contributions can be collected within the 7km zone of influence. The tariff for SANG within Mid Sussex will firstly be determined by the preferred option for delivering SANG. The evidence base for establishing and justifying the tariff needs to be robust and informed by (i) estimations of the likely increase in population within the zone of influence, (ii) a detailed and costed programme of works to establish the SANG, and (iii) costs for long term management and maintenance of the site as SANG.
- E4.15 The District Plan contains measures to establish an avoidance and mitigation strategy, while the Council is also carrying out work on a preliminary draft Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule and Infrastructure Delivery Plan. The measures include:

#### Summary of District Plan measures relating to disturbance

##### DP12 Ashdown Forest SAC/SPA:

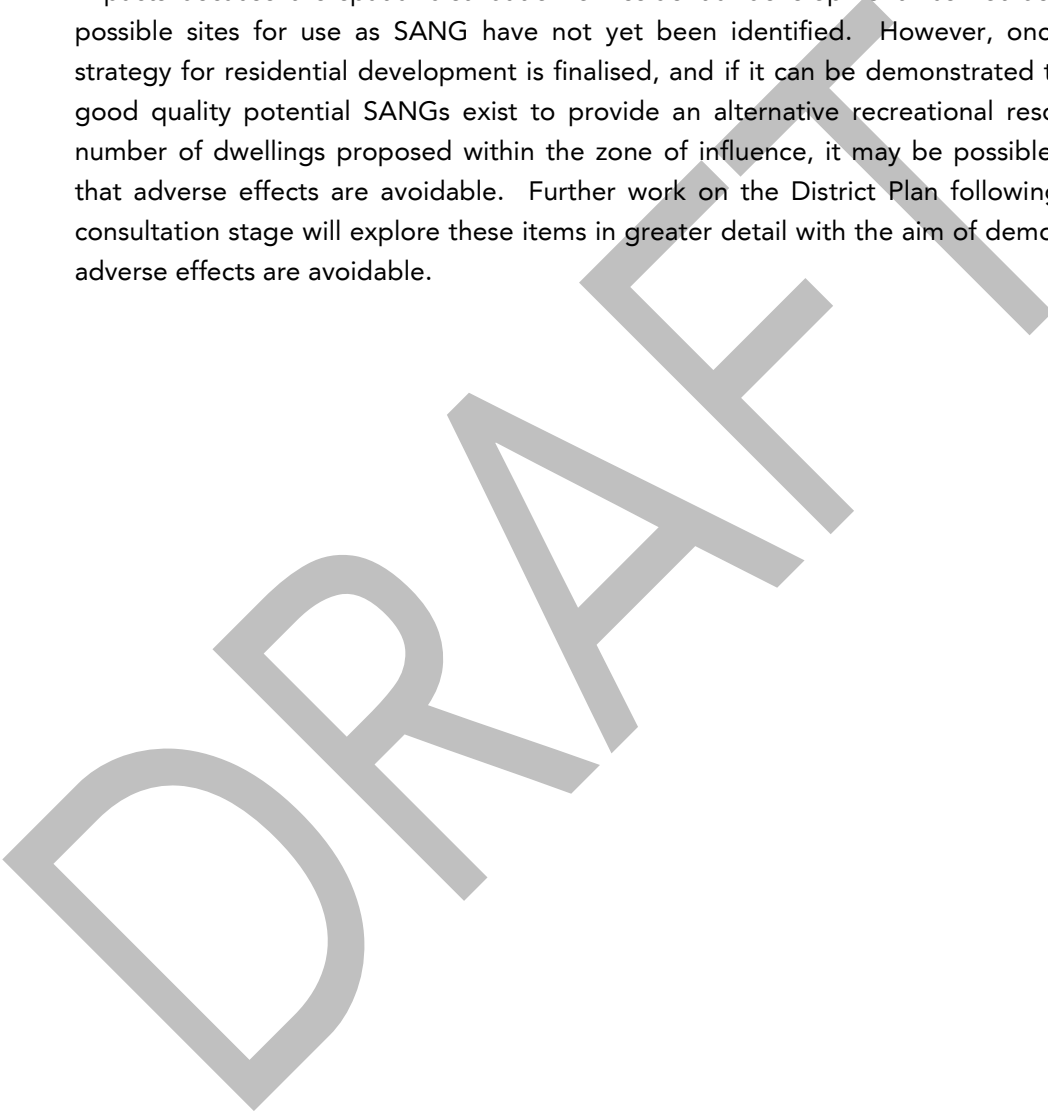
To have a policy which outlines the intention to develop a strategic approach to protect the Ashdown Forest Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Area from recreational pressure and air pollution through the use of:

- Buffer zones that:
  - Prevent development within 400 metres of the Ashdown Forest
  - Allow development within 7 kilometres of the Ashdown Forest provided mitigation methods are employed (for instance Suitable Alternative Natural Green Spaces)
- An Access Management Strategy that reduces the impact of visitors on special interest features of the designated site.

- E4.16 Recommendations for further work to identify SANG and access management and monitoring measures, and a mechanism to collect funds for delivery, are included within the draft report.

## E5 Conclusions

- E5.1 The HRA Report establishes the nature and severity of effects on the ecological integrity of Ashdown Forest and assesses the avoidance and mitigation measures put forward within the Consultation Draft District Plan. It is an interim assessment that informs the development of the District Plan, drawing on the information that is currently available. It provides recommendations for additional avoidance and mitigation measures to help ensure that adverse effects on the European sites can be avoided. However, it cannot currently be concluded that Consultation Draft District Plan will not adversely affect either the SAC or SPA.

- E5.2 In relation to the SAC, it is not currently possible to determine the likelihood or scale of atmospheric pollution because there is insufficient data regarding the traffic growth effects of the plan. The Council is carrying out additional studies to provide a better understanding of the likely traffic implications of its development proposals, the outputs of which will be assessed in a future iteration of the report.
- E5.3 In relation to the SPA, good principles for avoiding and mitigating disturbance impacts within the SPA are included within the plan. But it is not currently possible to determine the scale of impacts because the spatial distribution of residential development has not been set, while possible sites for use as SANG have not yet been identified. However, once the spatial strategy for residential development is finalised, and if it can be demonstrated that sufficient good quality potential SANGs exist to provide an alternative recreational resource for the number of dwellings proposed within the zone of influence, it may be possible to conclude that adverse effects are avoidable. Further work on the District Plan following the current consultation stage will explore these items in greater detail with the aim of demonstrating the adverse effects are avoidable.
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## Glossary of terms

**Acid deposition:** caused by oxides of nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>) (or sulphur dioxide) reacting with rain/cloudwater to form nitric (or sulphuric) acid, and is caused primarily by energy generation, as well as road traffic and industrial combustion.

**Avoidance and mitigation measures:** Avoidance measures which aim to avoid the occurrence of adverse effects on protected sites. Mitigation measures aim to reduce the severity of adverse effects and/or manage adverse effects in a way that lessens their impact.

**Background air quality:** A baseline measure of air quality conditions, within which existing local pollutant sources and transboundary sources are already represented.

**Integrity:** Ecological integrity can be defined as (ODPM, 2005): *“The integrity of a site is the coherence of its ecological structure and function, across its whole area, that enables it to sustain the habitat, complex of habitats and/or the levels of populations of the species for which it was classified.”*

**Local pollutant sources:** Locally sources of pollution emissions, for example linear sources such as roads or point sources such as chimneys, but which directly affect local air quality.

**Modal split:** The percentage share of total journeys made that each mode of transport experiences. Modes include car, taxi, bus, train, cycling and walking. Sustainable transport policies aim to encourage modal shift whereby more sustainable forms of transport become more popular, and less sustainable modes become less popular.

**Nitrogen deposition:** consists of the input of nitrogen from NO<sub>x</sub> (and sometimes ammonia) emissions by deposition, and is caused primarily by road traffic, as well as energy generation, industrial combustion and agricultural practices. Nitrogen deposition leads to nutrient enrichment (eutrophication) and toxic damage to vegetation.

**Point source emitters:** Can be either large or small sources of pollution from a fixed point such as a chimney, as opposed to linear source such as a road. Emissions from large point sources, such as a power station, can travel long distances and affect background air quality over wide areas, and can include transboundary effects (i.e. crossing intra- or international administrative boundaries).

**Precautionary Principle:** The European Commission (2000a) describes the principle as: *“If a preliminary scientific evaluation shows that there are reasonable grounds for concern that a particular activity might lead to damaging effects on the environment... decision-makers then have to determine ... the potential consequences of taking no action, the uncertainties inherent in the scientific evaluation, and ... possible ways of managing the risk.”* (See also section 1.2 of the main report.)

**Process contribution:** The contribution of a proposed process to air pollution. A process may be an industrial or combustive process, or a proposal which effects a change in traffic flow for example.

**SAC:** Special Areas of Conservation are strictly protected sites designated under European Union Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive). SACs make a significant contribution to conserving the 189 habitat types and 788 species identified in Annexes I and II of the Directive (as amended). The listed habitat types and species are those considered to be most in need of conservation at a European level (excluding birds).

**SPA:** Special Protection Areas are strictly protected sites classified in accordance with Article 4 of European Union Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds (the Birds Directive). They are classified for rare and vulnerable birds (as listed on Annex I of the Directive), and for regularly occurring migratory species.

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