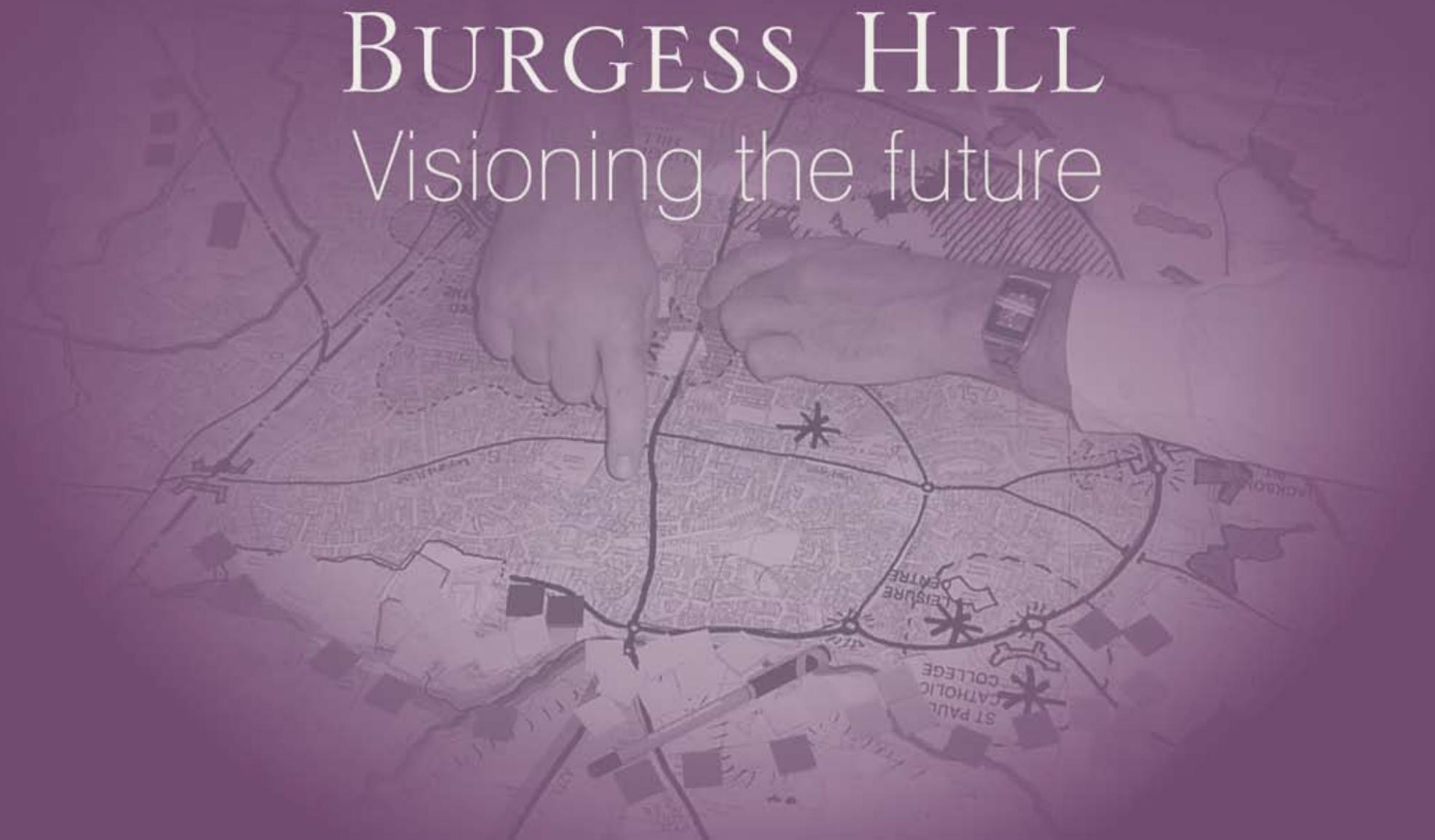


BURGESS HILL

Visioning the future



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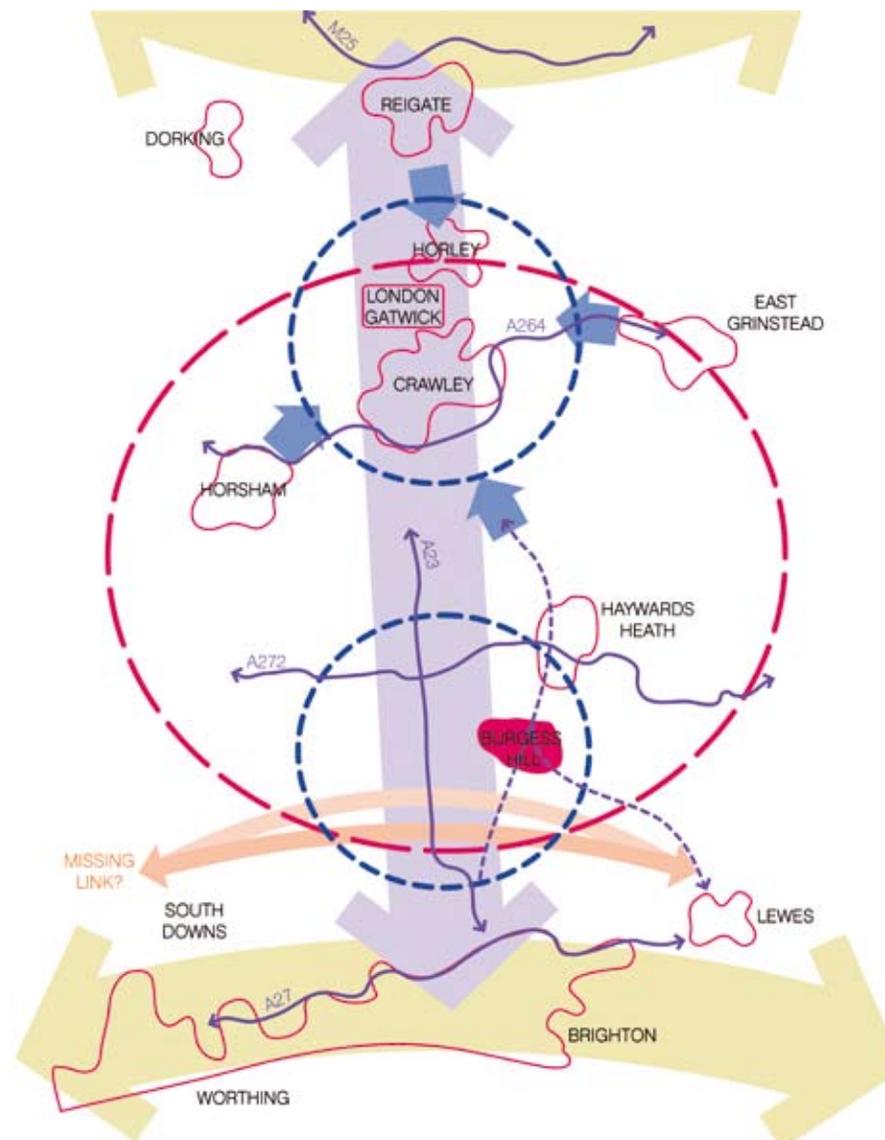
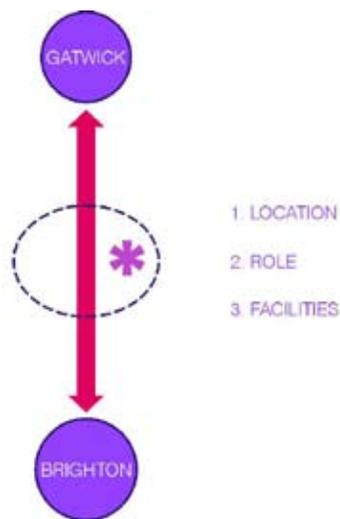
1.0 FOREWORD

- 1.1 This document describes a possible future for Burgess Hill that could be made to happen over the next thirty years or so. It has been prepared by consultant town planners and urban designers David Lock Associates, and involved broad desktop research, fieldwork and site visits, telephone discussions with local experts, briefings from Mid Sussex District Council (the local planning authority), and workshop sessions with some key stakeholders in the town and with District Councillors.
- 1.2 The vision summarised in these pages is not an “official” one, because it has not been prepared through formal statutory procedures. This document is not designed to be formally “approved” or “adopted” by Mid Sussex District Council as part of the statutory development plan for the area. It is the modest fruits of concentrated thought and discussions among interested parties, deliberately undertaken outside any formal legal processes in order to provide the opportunity for free thought about the bigger picture and the longer term.
- 1.3 The visioning programme and our consultancy work have been paid for in the first instance by Mid Sussex District Council. Subscriptions to recover the cost are being made by Burgess Hill Town Council and other local stakeholders including major landowners and property developers.
- 1.4 We hope that a degree of local consensus might form around the broad ideas that are presented here. Armed with a sense of the longer term shape and qualities that are desired for the town, small short-term decisions should become relatively easier to take. Conversely, without some sense of long term direction, people would continue to have to make decisions in and around Burgess Hill without context.
- 1.5 Meanwhile, the statutory town planning processes roll on. Preparations for a new *South East Plan* for the period to 2026 are underway. It will set the number of houses and related developments for Mid Sussex. There is a public examination of draft proposals in progress at the time of writing, and the final version of the *South East Plan* is expected in early 2008, soon after which the District Council must formally decide the distribution of development within Mid Sussex. The next stage in the story of Burgess Hill will then be determined. It is hoped that this report will provide some of the evidence and some of the ideas that are needed to help the District Council make its decisions.

*Professor David Lock CBE MRTPI
Chairman and Managing Director, David Lock Associates -
July 2007*

2.0 INTRODUCTION TO BURGESS HILL

- 2.1 Burgess Hill is a market town with a population of approximately 29,000 (2001), lying to the east of the main road from London to Brighton (the A23 Trunk Road), south of Gatwick, and in the foothills of the South Downs north of Brighton.
- 2.2 Burgess Hill railway station gives access north to Gatwick and London Bridge, and south to Brighton. Wivelsfield railway station, immediately to the north of the town, gives access to the branch line to Lewes (some 14 miles away). At present there is no direct off-peak service from either station to London Victoria, although these are available at the nearby Haywards Heath station.
- 2.3 Burgess Hill is one of three market towns that dominate Mid Sussex, the others being Haywards Heath (the District's administrative centre) and East Grinstead. There is movement between the three towns for work, schooling, healthcare, shopping and some entertainment.



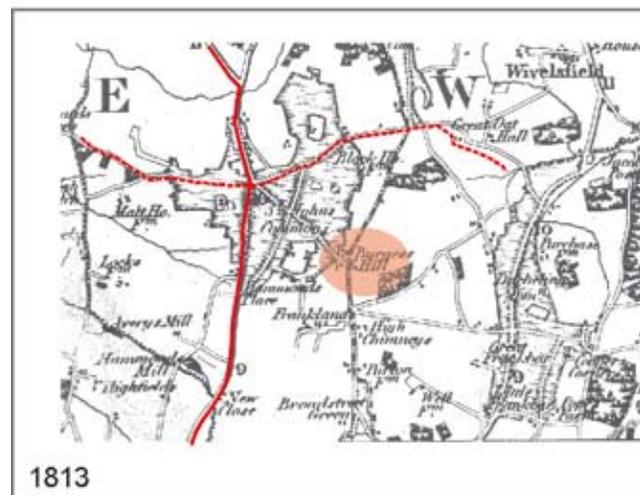
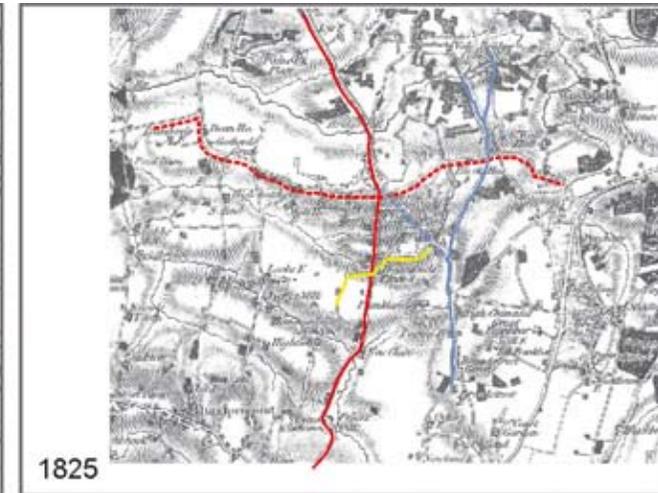
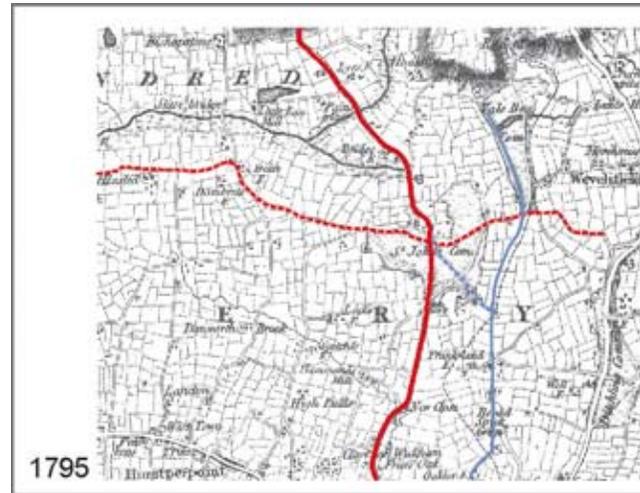


- 2.4 Burgess Hill supports its own local cluster of settlements, notable amongst which are Hurstpierpoint and Hassocks.
- 2.5 The town has experienced several phases of planned peripheral urban expansion in recent decades. The population is now ageing and school populations are currently declining. This age profile is tending to be maintained by house prices which make it difficult for young people, especially first-time buyers, to make their home in the town, even though housing in Burgess Hill is regarded as less expensive than in other towns nearby.
- 2.6 Burgess Hill is surrounded by attractive countryside. Much of it is specifically protected by planning designations including a Special Site of Scientific Interest, Strategic Gap policies to stop the town merging with its neighbours north and south, and flood risk areas. Also to the south, and with borders that are very near to the built up edge of Burgess Hill, is the proposed boundary of the South Downs National Park.
- 2.7 The visioning for Burgess Hill builds upon earlier work which has been undertaken in the town. The most recent and most important visioning project was for the town centre, undertaken in 2004. This was to provide a context for the *Burgess Hill Town Centre Masterplan* which was Adopted in November 2006 as a formal Supplementary Planning Document.
- 2.8 Another has been the Atkins study (*Feasibility Study for Development Options at Burgess Hill Final Report*, Atkins, September 2005) which proposed locations for new development which would be adjacent to the existing Burgess Hill built up area, and which in theory could provide sustainable new neighbourhoods of up to 5,000 dwellings up to 2026.
- 2.9 Our visioning process for Burgess Hill is part of an initiative by Mid Sussex District Council to try to manage future growth pressures in a responsible way. Visioning provides an opportunity to look ahead and to be better prepared for future decisions. Visioning can provide a framework to inform decisions regarding future proposals for growth or change. The South East Region is under great pressure generally to accommodate significant levels of growth. While the major identified growth areas such as the Thames Gateway and Milton Keynes and South Midlands are absorbing a major proportion, districts in Counties such as Sussex will still need to accommodate some growth to meet some of the locally generated need.
- 2.10 The time span considered in this report is roughly 30 years from now. As noted earlier, the emerging South East Plan will run to 2026, so this visioning work is, in that sense, looking further ahead than is possible in current statutory plans.
- 2.11 In summary, Burgess Hill is one of three market towns in Mid Sussex, surrounded by attractive countryside, and situated in a highly accessible location within the prosperous South East Region. Pressures for further growth are beginning to bear upon the town, which has already experienced several phases of expansion in recent years. The population profile is now starting to age. This visioning process is part of an initiative to provide an informal long term framework to help guide relatively short term decisions regarding possible growth or change.

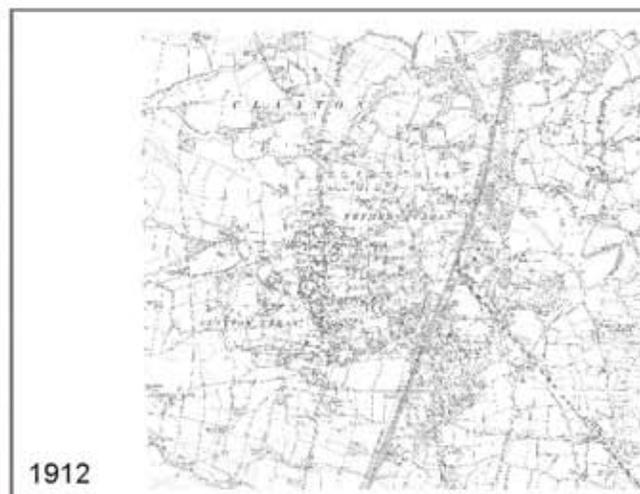
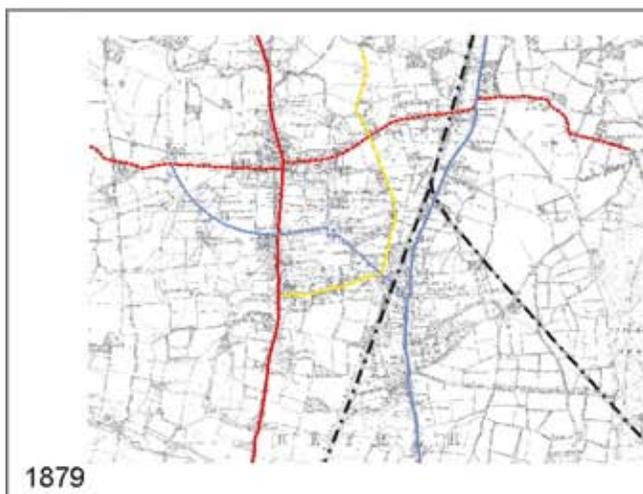
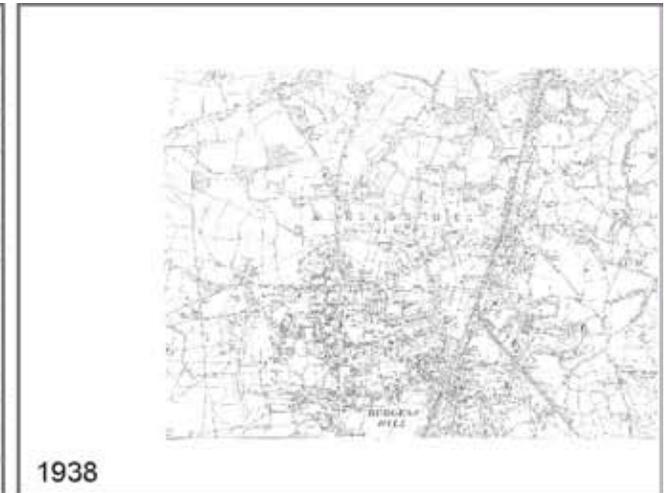
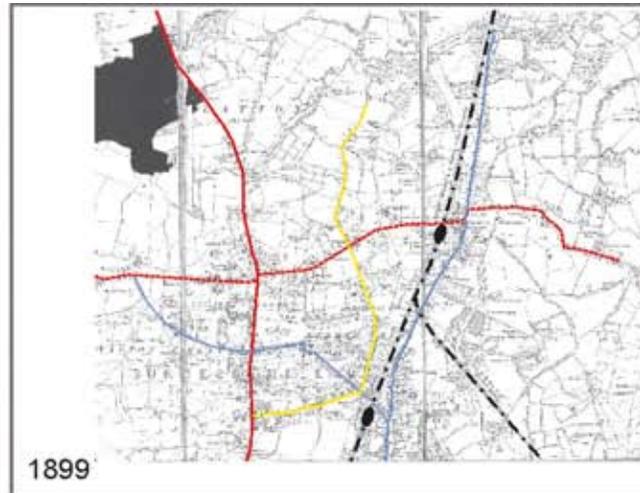
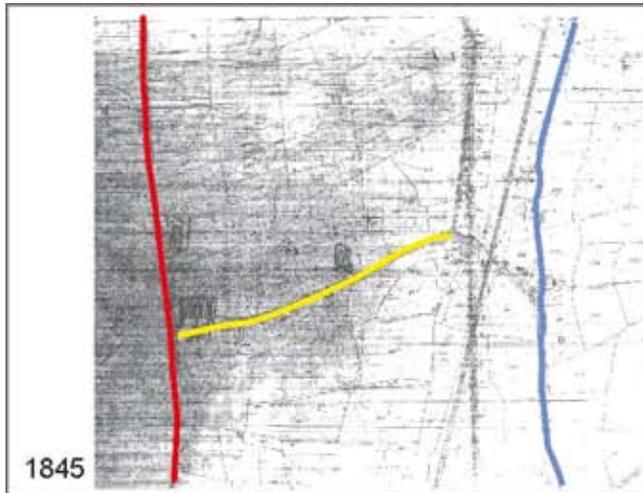
3.0 HISTORICAL GROWTH OF THE TOWN

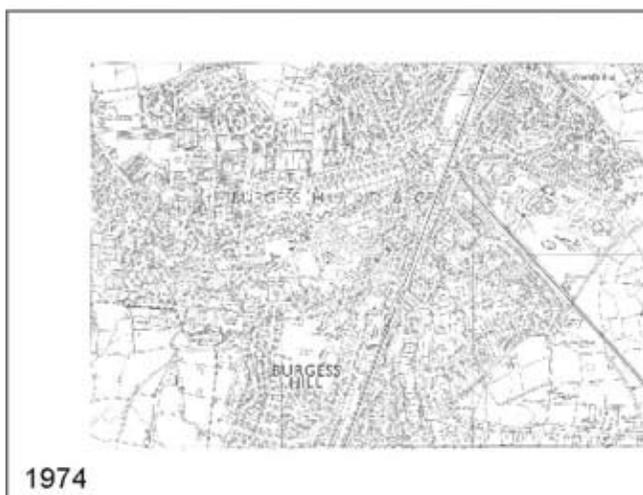
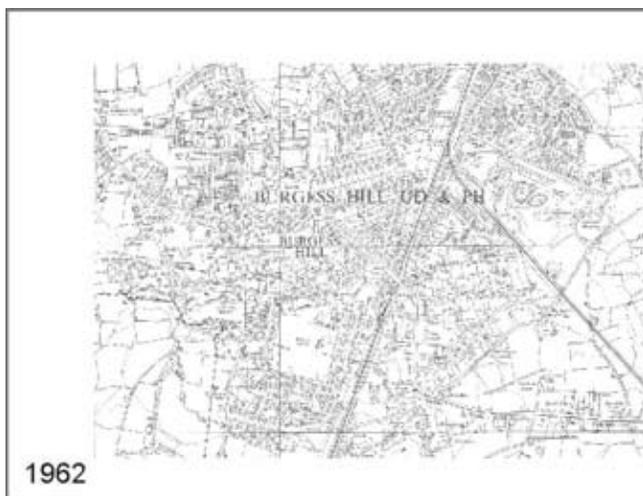
- 3.1 These historic maps illustrate the physical growth of Burgess Hill. The growth is described here in three phases: pre railway; the arrival of the railway; and the post war period.

Pre Railway



Railway Arrives



Post war

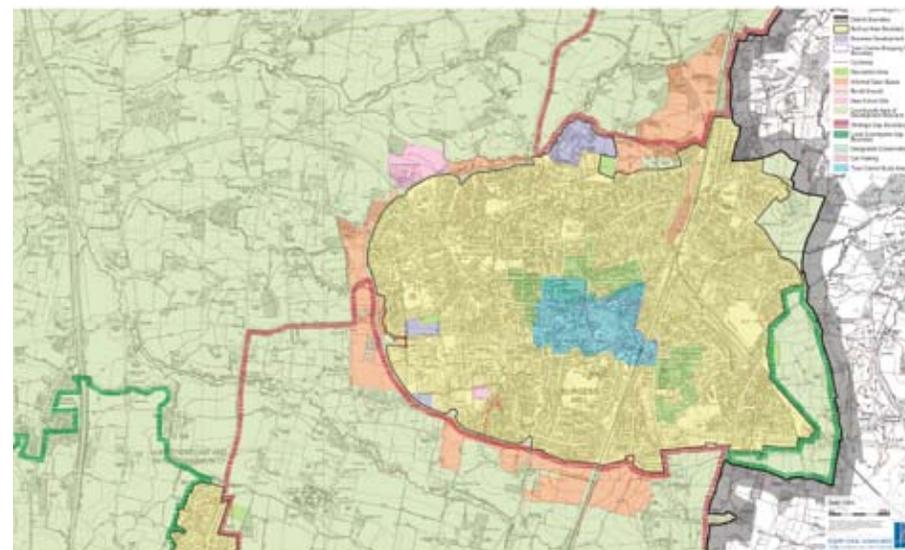
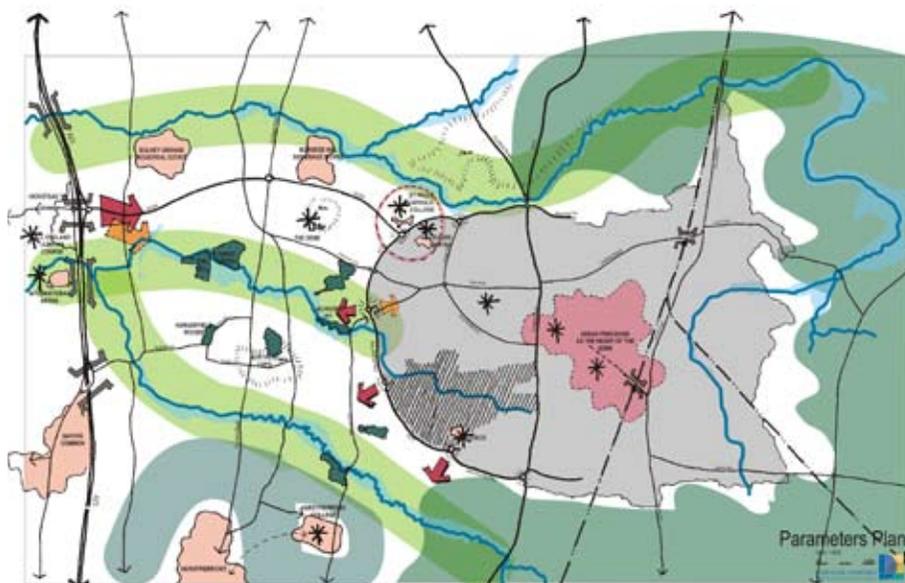
- 3.2 Meticulous detail about the town's beginnings can be enjoyed in the local history book *Burgess Hill*, by Hugh Mathews (Phillimore, 1989), The *Burgess Hill Town Centre Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document* (2006) provides an overview. Neither need be repeated in full here.
- 3.3 Our observations from this information are that the town has experienced three main phases of growth. These phases comprise of the early settlement and growth during the pre railway years. This was followed by the arrival of the railway and expansion of the town. Finally, the post war period has seen a continued pattern of expansion.
- 3.4 Brick and tile making industries were established in and around St John's Common by the early 17th century. The Common was also the location of a great annual fair and livestock market. Enclosure of parts of the common, both official and unofficial, took place through to the late 18th century. Commercial activity had by this time started to establish itself around London Road. Rapid growth of the town, and the extension of the town centre to the station area, took place following the opening of the railway in 1841. The name Burgess Hill has been in use since the fifteenth century when it was used to identify the hill to the east of the railway station
- 3.5 The town continued to grow until the Second World War and the Town Centre Masterplan tells us that then "Considerable expansion took place post war with the population almost doubling to 14,000 between 1951 and 1961. Further considerable growth took place during the 1990s".

- 3.6 The sequence of growth at Burgess Hill shows a particular pattern in recent decades, with most development being at the periphery in housing estates laid out like additional layers of skin on an onion. Particularly conspicuous features of the most recent changes at the periphery of the town have been the creation of Jane Murray Way which provides a bypass to the west of the town and a rapid access to the town centre for cars and lorries; and the gifting of land to the District Council to form the Green Crescent, located to the west of Jane Murray Way and primarily to the south west of the town. The Green Crescent is to be maintained as green space (a cemetery has since been created in this area). Other notable natural assets include Bedelands Farm to the north of the town which was gifted to the District Council, and Batchelors Farm to the south which was gifted to the Town Council.
- 3.7 In summary, an early settlement at the site of the town was established by the early 17th century. A second stage, of very rapid growth, took place following the opening of the railway in 1841. After the war and with the establishment of the planning system in 1947, a third stage of waves of planned growth took place that continues to the present day. Particular features of the more recent phases of development include the Jane Murray Way bypass and the gifting of land to form the Green Crescent and other peripheral areas of nature conservation: successive planned developments have made the town grow in layers on its outskirts, in the manner of layers of skin on an onion.

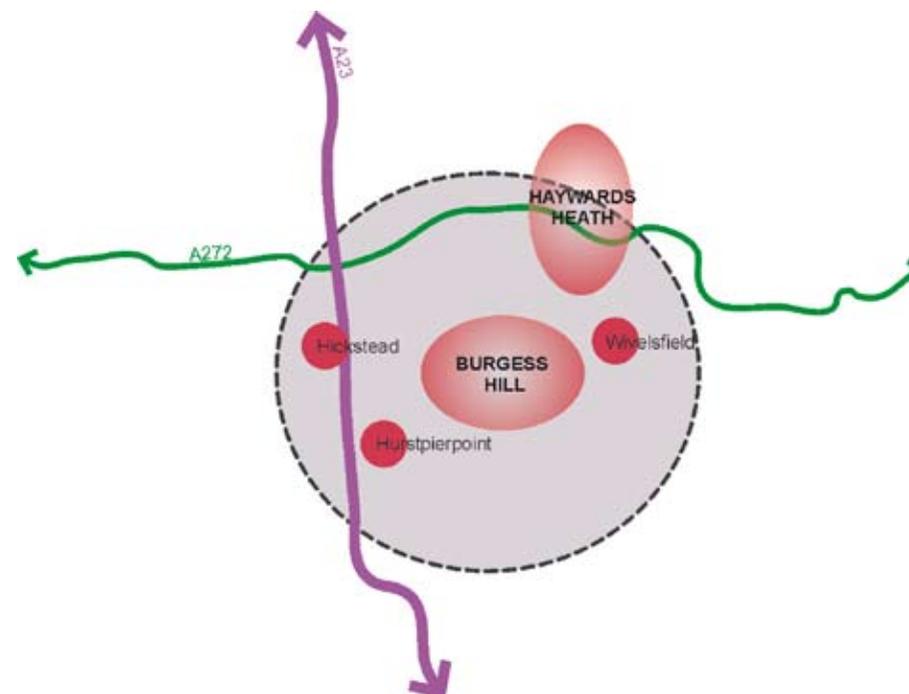
4.0 THE TOWN AND ITS SETTING TODAY: STRUCTURING FEATURES

4.1 The administrative boundary of Mid Sussex District lies tightly along the eastern edge of the built up area of Burgess Hill. Part of the north east of the town actually lies across the boundary in Lewes District, East Sussex, from which come further population and development pressures. Burgess Hill and its surrounding countryside are otherwise within Mid Sussex. Parish Councils with a strong sense of local identity are also important local administrative units, including in particular Cuckfield Rural, Hurstpierpoint, Hassocks, as well as Ditchling and Wivelsfield in East Sussex District.

4.2 The population of Burgess Hill has trebled since 1951 and until recently it was one of the fastest growing towns in Sussex. This growth has continued until recent years, with a growth of 12% between 1991 and 2001. Compared to the County average, the town has a slightly higher percentage of people in the younger age groups and a slightly higher percentage in the older age groups. Compared to the national average, the town has a lower percentage of people in the 16-29 age group and a higher percentage in the 30-44 age group.



- 4.3 Burgess Hill is the largest of the three main towns in Mid Sussex with a population of nearly 29,000 (*Burgess Hill Facts and Figures*, Mid Sussex District Council, 2005). The built up area of the town is currently approximately 2 miles east to west and 1.5 miles north to south. Burgess Hill is approximately 10 miles from Brighton, 14 miles from Crawley, 20 miles from Gatwick and 45 miles from London.
- 4.4 The local economy across Mid Sussex has remained relatively resilient over the last 30 years. Unemployment has remained well below the regional and national averages and is currently amongst the lowest in England. The service sector is predominant within the wider District, although the economies of the three main towns vary. In Burgess Hill a third of employment is in manufacturing and there is an increasing emphasis on high tech industries. The town currently has a high level of economically active people that is above the district, county, regional and national level (*Burgess Hill Facts and Figures*, *ibid*).



- 4.5 With regard to physical features, it is the eastern edge of the town that has the most varied topography and character, including the Gill-Peplar Heritage site, the flood plain of the tributaries of the River Adur, and beyond that the SSSI at Ditchling Common. The Gill-Peplar Heritage site is located to the east of the town and comprises a sensitive enclave of buildings and property associated with the estate of the late very distinguished sculptor, typographer, engraver and writer, Eric Gill.
- 4.6 Elsewhere around Burgess Hill the countryside presents its beautiful intimate grain of relatively small paddocks, meadows, woodlands and hedgerows in gently undulating land running north to Haywards Heath, west across the A23 and small villages conspicuous among which is the internationally famous Hickstead show-jumping ground, and south past several villages to the feet of the Downs. It is to the south that the famous school in the village of Hurstpierpoint is to be found.
- 4.7 In planning policy terms, there are designated Strategic Gaps to the north and south to prevent unplanned sprawl and merging of the towns and villages. The proposed South Downs National Park boundary also reaches up to the south west corner of Burgess Hill. The town is surrounded in all directions by countryside over which planning policy provides protection from most day-to-day development pressures.
- 4.8 Burgess Hill Railway Station and the historical location of St John's Common are linked by Church Road which is now a key commercial area. The Victoria Industrial Estate, a significantly sized light industrial and employment area, is located in the south west sector of the town. Recent development has taken place on the urban periphery at the junction of the A2300 'link

road' and the Burgess Hill distributor road (A273 Jane Murray Way), comprising the St Paul's College secondary school and the Triangle leisure centre.

East-West Traffic and Highways

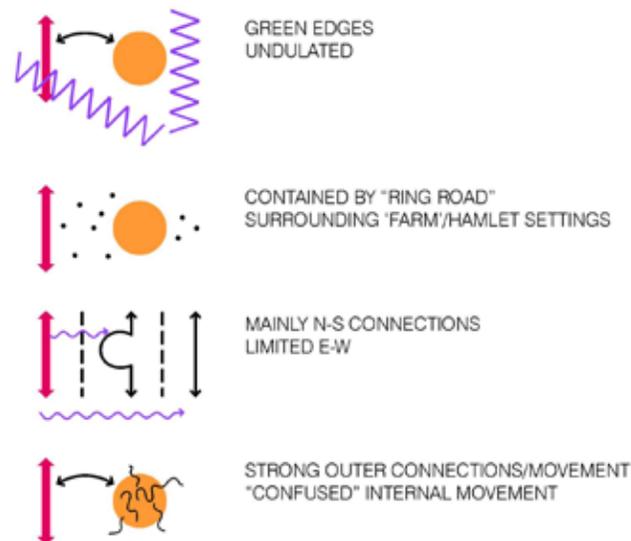
- 4.9 The existing capacity for east-west road routes through the centre of Burgess Hill is restricted due to the limited number of road crossings over the railway line. A detailed survey of the existing traffic flows and potential traffic management solutions has not formed part of our deliberations, but initial observations can be drawn from the Atkins report, the responses from stakeholders and our evaluation of the urban structure of the town and the wider area.
- 4.10 The Atkins study (*Feasibility Study for Development Options at Burgess Hill Final Report*, Atkins, 2005) identifies the major magnets attracting public transport services and highway trips as follows:
- north of Burgess Hill (including destinations such as Haywards Heath, Gatwick, East Croydon and London);
 - the town centre area;
 - Wivelsfield Station area;
 - The Tesco store in the south west area of Burgess Hill.
- 4.11 This pattern reflects the location of trip generators within the Burgess Hill area and further afield. The Atkins study notes that many jobs are located to the north of the town as well as within the town centre. Key highway links in Burgess Hill are close to theoretical capacity, and congestion is concentrated around key junctions within the town centre and stations during peak periods.

- 4.12 Traffic from Lewes to Burgess Hill is likely to travel through Hassocks along the B2116 and then north to Burgess Hill on the A273. Traffic from the rural area to the east of Burgess Hill is likely to travel southwards towards Brighton along the B2112 and A23. However, traffic from the rural areas to the east of Burgess Hill that is travelling northwards may be travelling through Burgess Hill to use the A23 northwards and, in doing so, is contributing to the traffic flows through Burgess Hill.
- 4.13 It is understood that high flows of traffic also currently approach the town from the south using the road from Keymer, which funnels traffic directly into the southernmost of the two rail crossings within Burgess Hill. It is a characteristic of the wider area that relatively high flows of traffic are experienced on many north-south routes. Detailed traffic studies will be needed to understand the origin and destination of traffic flows and to inform any specific highways and traffic proposals. However, it is the impression of the Highway Authority that consideration should be given either to improvements to London Road or to the Burgess Hill distributor road Jane Murray Way and to highways management solutions that reduce the volume of north-south traffic using the rail crossings in Burgess Hill.
- 4.14 The Haywards Heath outer relief road will include a new bridge over the railway and will link the B2112 to the A272. This will provide a route that enables traffic from the area to the east of Burgess Hill to travel northward to Haywards Heath and onward to the A23 north-south trunk road or eastward towards Uckfield.
- 4.15 The likely redirection of existing through-traffic from the centre of Burgess Hill will relieve pressure on the town's existing railway crossing points. With general traffic growth and possible major expansion of the town, an additional railway crossing to help residents move around Burgess Hill may be necessary. Detailed traffic studies would be needed to identify the precise requirement and its design, but a projection eastwards of the Jane Murray Way route appears to offer the best value.
- 4.16 Currently around 13,000 people travel to work in Burgess Hill, and around 9,025 people travel out. Of those who travel to work in the town, 62% are residents of Mid Sussex, 14% are residents of Brighton and Hove and 5% are residents of Haywards Heath. Of those who travel out, around 59% work in Mid Sussex, 11% work in Crawley and Gatwick, 8% in London, 7% in Brighton and Hove and 11% in Haywards Heath.
- 4.17 The predominant mode of travel for all workers is the car. Approximately 68% of all workers commuting into Burgess Hill travel by car, and 66% of residents of the town travel to work by car. Of those travelling into Burgess Hill, 7% use public transport, of which 4% use the train, 10% work at home and 11% walk to work. The modal split is similar for those who travel to work from Burgess Hill, with 13% using public transport of which 11% use the train, and 9% walk to work (*Burgess Hill Facts and Figures*, *ibid*).
- 4.18 The substantial development to the east of the existing town as envisaged by Atkins would require the completion of a major distributor road that will involve up to three rail crossings. Even if such a major project is technically and politically feasible, the total cost per dwelling of the transport costs is estimated to be

approximately £14,000 per dwelling, based on 5000 dwellings in total (*Feasibility Study for Development Options at Burgess Hill Final Report, Atkins, 2005*). As a comparison, the upper levels of tariff contribution per unit that are currently being achieved for all purposes (i.e. not just roads) in growth areas and on green field sites are in the region of £20,000. The potential growth sites located to the east of Burgess Hill are not typical green field sites and are likely to involve increased development costs. The cost of the highways infrastructure required for this growth option would therefore be a significant proportion of the total contribution that is likely to be realised from development on these sites. In addition, potential development sites to the east of Burgess Hill may not deliver the total estimated number of dwellings, which would further increase the unit cost.

Other Infrastructure and Community Facilities

4.19 Growth can enable further investment to be made in services and facilities across the town, as well as improving the vitality and viability of existing and future services. However, clear priorities will need to be established as to which elements of infrastructure are to be funded by developer contributions from new development. The following summary considers some of the key services that will need to be provided and the likely scale of provision. It is not intended to provide a detailed list for negotiations between the local planning authority and developers – these will need to be considered in much greater detail and clear priorities will need to be agreed between bidding departments locally and at the County and elsewhere.

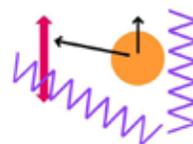


- 4.20 Various studies have shown that the London – Brighton rail line is a third over capacity (*Funding the Future of Mid Sussex*, Mid Sussex District Council, 2004). At least one recent study has suggested that investment will be required to address rail bottlenecks on the line or the tendency for increased commuting to London from longer and longer distances should aim to be reversed (*Augmenting the Evidence Base for the Examination in Public of the South East Plan*, Roger Tym & Partners in association with Land Use Consultants, May 2006). Further detailed investigations will be necessary to inform the viability of local improvements or additional rail crossing points, and it is understood that Network Rail is currently undertaking further work to evaluate the economic and operational costings of further crossings.
- 4.21 Four new Primary Care Centres are currently being planned within Burgess Hill, two in the town centre, one in the west and one in the east of the town. One of these facilities has already been secured in principle through planning consent, whilst the other three are currently in negotiation as part of development proposals. Primary Care Centres are generally developed with a minimum of 30% spare capacity in order to future proof the facilities, by allowing for potential future expansion. Within Burgess Hill, each of the four Primary Care Centres currently being planned are expected to incorporate such future proofing capacity and this is expected to provide enough future capacity to absorb future growth in the order of 8,000 dwellings. Each Primary Care Centre accommodates approximately 6-9 GPs (as well as a broad range of other healthcare services) and each GP has a list of 1500 – 2000 patients. Development of an additional 8,000 dwellings would generate approximately 20,000 patients which equates to a demand for between ten and fourteen GPs.
- This could be absorbed within the potential capacity of the four Primary Care Centres that are currently being planned. Each Primary Care Centre generally needs a site of approximately 0.5 ha and will be between two and three storeys in height. Sites should preferably be able to accommodate an element of flexibility in the site to enable facilities to evolve over time.
- 4.22 Healthcare provision across West Sussex is currently being reviewed by West Sussex Primary Care Trust and public consultation is due to commence at the time of writing in 2007. This may include proposals to review the existing hospital provision at Haywards Heath, particularly in terms of Accident and Emergency services which may be more effectively supplemented by Primary Care Centres. The basis of the review of NHS services is threefold: to meet clinical safety standards, to address changes in national policy; and to restructure in order to minimise financial deficits. There will be an opportunity for any significant development proposals in Burgess Hill to be considered as part of this review.
- 4.23 There is no existing deficit in terms of school provision within the town. Future development will generate a need for new schools. As a general guideline the District Council advises that one primary school is needed for approximately 2,000 dwellings and one secondary school is needed for every 4 primary schools. Based on these guidelines, an increase of approximately 8,000 dwellings would need to be supported by a capacity of 4 new primary schools and one new secondary school. The Atkins report estimated school place capacity at existing primary schools to be capable of accommodating approximately 500 additional students. However, there was estimated to be no further capacity at existing secondary schools.

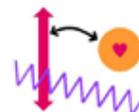
4.24 In terms of Sixth Form and Further Education provision, the Learning and Skills Council advise that there is no existing or short term deficit in the wider catchment area. It is acknowledged that there is limited provision within Burgess Hill itself but that the wider catchments served by Sixth Form and Further Education colleges in Haywards Heath and Brighton serve wide areas including and beyond Burgess Hill. Both colleges have also recently received approval for significant levels of investment which will increase their capacity. It is also useful to note that the Sixth Form College in Haywards Heath was formed from the merger of the Sixth Form College, which had become unviable on its own, with the Further Education College to create the Central Sussex College. We have been advised that a minimum student roll of 1100 is required to support a viable Sixth Form College.

4.25 In terms of Higher Education, there is currently no identified deficit within the wider catchment area. The universities of Brighton and Sussex serve this area and degree courses are also available at Worthing. Both the University of Sussex and the University of Brighton have a medium to longer term aspiration to create a further campus in the Crawley area in addition to their existing campuses, which would also be within easy commuting distance of Burgess Hill.

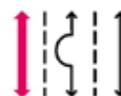
4.26 In terms of other community facilities, the existing library in Burgess Hill is below floor space standards for the size of the town, and the County Council has successfully sought developer contributions from planning permissions to pay towards further expansion and improvements.



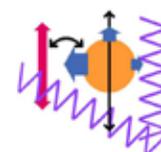
LIMITED GROWTH OPTIONS/OR NOT?



KEY STRUCTURING ELEMENTS:
A23(T): OFF THE MAIN DRAG
GREEN SETTING
BY-PASS/RING ROAD EFFECT



CONNECTIONS:
VERY MUCH NORTH-SOUTH ORIENTATED
VERY LITTLE EAST-WEST
STRONG RING: "CONFUSED" INTERNAL?



GROWTH PATTERNS:
RESTRICTIONS TO SOUTH AND LARGELY TO EAST
CONNECTIONS TO NORTH REQUIRES MORE/CAREFUL DESIGN
CONNECTIONS TO WEST - POSSIBLE BUT NOT JUST ANOTHER "OINK"...
RESTRICTIONS INTO LAND OWNERSHIP AND HAMLET DEVELOPMENT...?

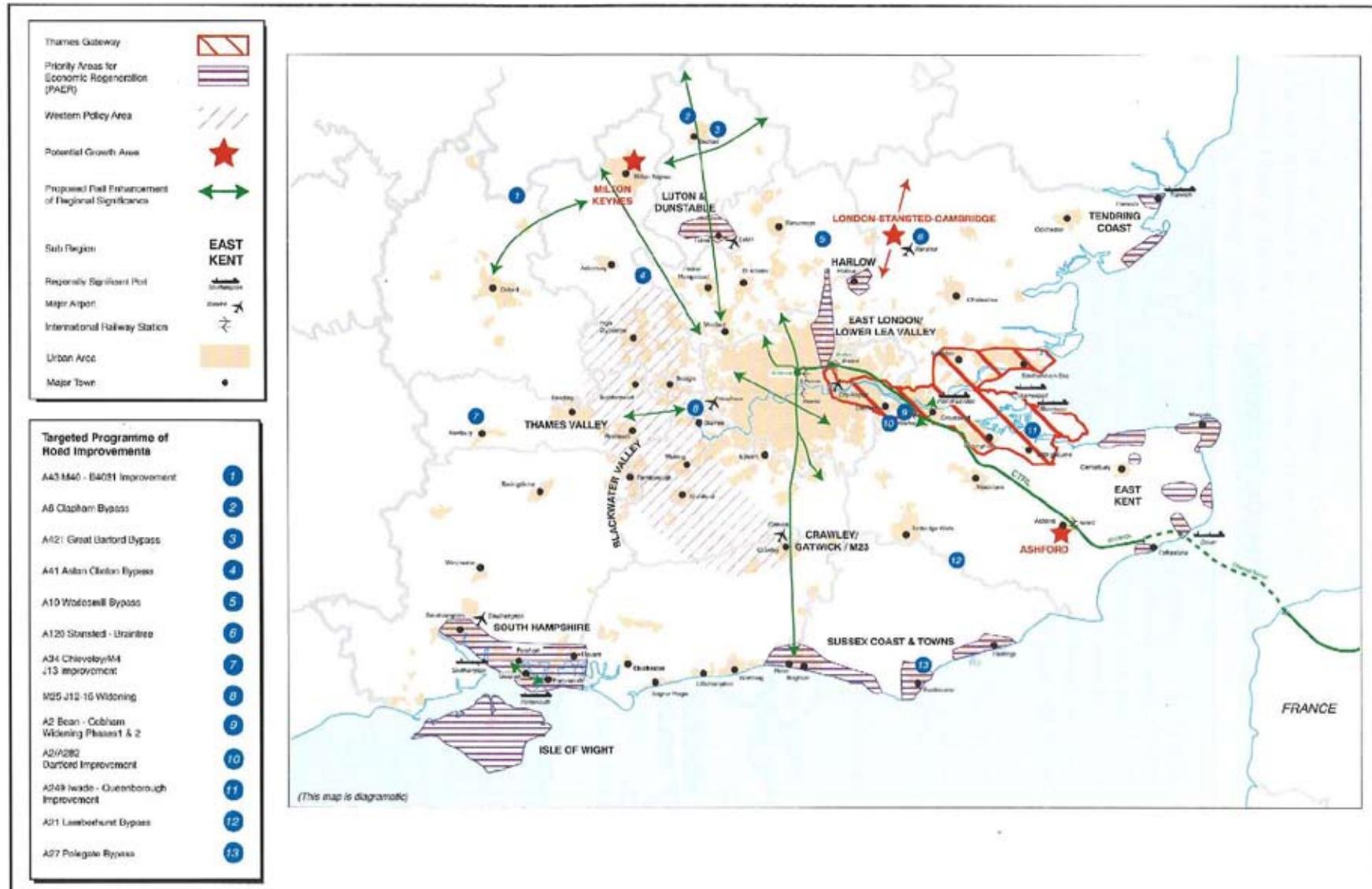
- 4.27 Water supply is a concern across the South East Region, however it is understood that Burgess Hill is not particularly constrained in this respect. The water companies will be able to make strategic plans for supply once the scale of development overall is set in the South East Plan, and local arrangements can be made once the pattern of development is set locally by the Mid Sussex District Council Core Spatial Strategy. In accordance with current best practice, new development should be designed to minimise consumption of treated water, and Sustainable Urban Drainage systems (SUDs) required to retain and recycle water where possible.
- 4.28 Burgess Hill lies in close proximity to Haywards Heath to the north and Hassocks and Hurstpierpoint to the south. Together these form a network of small towns and supporting community infrastructure. Each of these towns has its own history, character, features and a desire for some distinct independence from its neighbours. However, the individual settlements are too small and too close to each other to be able each to support a viable range of facilities. In order to support an increased range of facilities and services it is essential that the towns work together to support between them a wider range of services.
- 4.29 Further growth at Burgess Hill would support the improvement of some of the facilities and stimulate additions in the town and at Haywards Heath, but some higher order services such as major shopping and entertainment will still have to be sought in larger towns such as Brighton.

5.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT AND THE SCALE OF GROWTH PRESSURES

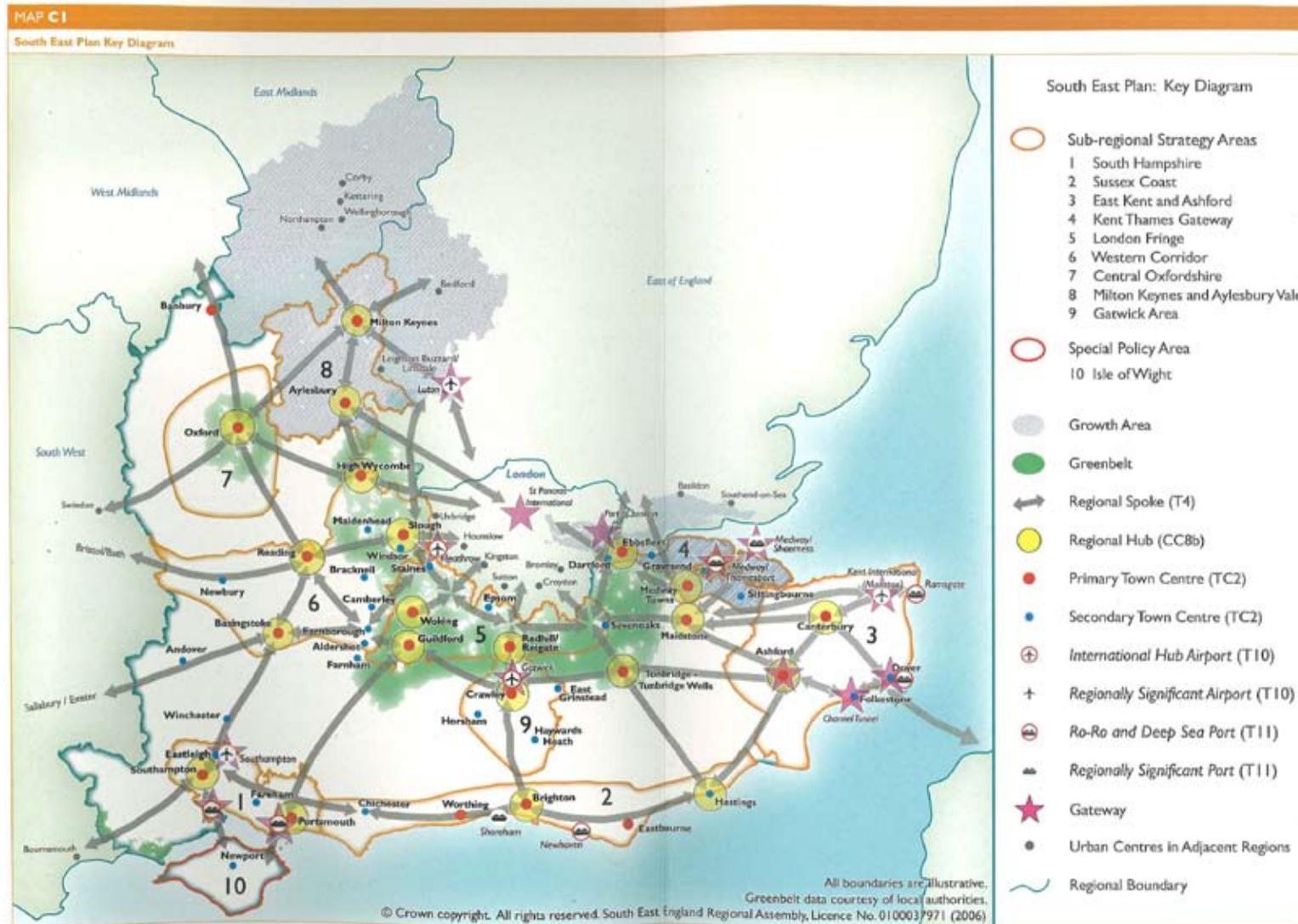
Planning Context

- 5.1 As mentioned, there are statutory town planning processes at the regional level by which the Secretary of State decides upon the scale and rate of future growth and change in Mid Sussex. The Government's current requirements at County level are set out in *Regional Planning Guidance Note 9 (RPG9)* of 2001. Total housing and employment requirements for the District are then set out in the *West Sussex Structure Plan*.
- 5.2 The RPG9 policy framework is now dated, and the process of revision is underway. Under the new planning system introduced in 1990, the new edition of RPG9 is being called *The South East Plan* and a *Draft South East Plan* was published for public consultation in March 2006. That Plan is being examined by an independent Panel at the time of writing. The Secretary of State will issue Proposed Modifications, and then the final version early in 2008. Because County Structure Plans are being replaced by Regional and Sub-Regional Spatial Strategies, *The South East Plan* will set out requirements for each district including Mid Sussex District – there is no intermediate County planning level in the statutory plan-making process other than for waste and minerals and some aspects of transport.
- 5.3 While *The South East Plan* is being finalised, Mid Sussex in common with the rest of the South East Region is required to plan for development at the rate of the old RPG9. This requires an annual rate of provision for West Sussex of 2,890 dwellings. *The Draft South East Plan* proposes a higher number (see para 5.13) and there are expectations that this will be further increased by the Secretary of State in her draft in due course. It is not realistic to imagine that development pressures in Mid Sussex District will decline in the foreseeable future.

RPG9 Core Strategy



Draft South East Plan Key Diagram



Mid Sussex Local Development Framework

- 5.4 Whatever the outcome of the regional planning processes, Mid Sussex Council is required by law to undertake statutory town planning processes at the local level, to create a Local Development Framework (LDF). There is further statutory public consultation at the local level in preparing this suite of documents, and a public examination by an independent Inspector to ensure that what is proposed is “sound”. Statutory public consultation on the key LDF document – the Core Strategy - is expected to take place during autumn 2007.
- 5.5 The Core Strategy will set the scale of growth to be planned for at Burgess Hill, and it is likely that a more detailed Area Action Plan may then have to be prepared for Burgess Hill to settle the pattern and content of development in detail.
- 5.6 There would have to be discussion throughout these processes with neighbouring East Sussex County and Lewes District Councils, and no doubt they would be participants at the public examination in due course.
- 5.7 To one side of these statutory planning processes, and running ahead of any local Area Action Plan, our visioning exercise for Burgess Hill and its environs provides an opportunity for key stakeholders to informally consider longer term growth patterns for Burgess Hill and the possible impacts and opportunities: what are the implications of anticipated growth and how should the town grow, and on what terms?
- 5.8 This report does not propose detailed levels or rates of growth, but we are mindful of present pressures to sustain growth at RPG9 levels and of the *Draft South East Plan* proposals to put 14,000 homes in Mid Sussex District and the likelihood that they will be increased.
- 5.9 Against this background, we have had in mind development pressures at Burgess Hill roughly of the scale of up to 8,000 homes or thereabouts, with associated job infrastructure, service, recreation and shopping requirements. The actual levels and rates of development that might be agreed for the town are matters for the statutory plan making processes, but development of this magnitude over the next thirty years or so seems to us to be a serious possibility. If we have anticipated more growth than turns out to be required, this visioning will last the town longer!
- 5.10 We consider the broad shape of the town that might be made and which might be managed to improve the local quality of life while providing the balance of homes, jobs and facilities that are needed by any sustainable community. The possibility of planned growth raises questions about the terms on which it might be brought about – the financial and other contributions that might be sought to reduce the harmful effects of change and maximise the benefits. It also raises the question of the limits to growth – are there directions or types of growth that should be avoided?

5.11 As explained, above, we have been looking 30 years ahead approximately. That is a few years further ahead than the Secretary of State's version of *The South East Plan* will take us, and allows us all to think more broadly than is usually possible. The formal statutory planning context is set out in a little more detail below.

West Sussex Structure Plan 2001- 2016, adopted 2005, West Sussex County Council

5.12 We have explained how RPG9 was approved in 2001, and how it was followed by a County Structure Plan which set the figures for Mid Sussex. The *West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-2016*, adopted in October 2004 by West Sussex County Council, identifies a housing growth requirement of 10,175 dwellings 2001-2016 including existing commitments at 2,810 dwellings. It will be seen that it is already being overtaken by the emerging new statutory document, the South East Plan.

Lewes District Local Development Framework Core Strategy Preferred Options, Lewes District Council. September 2006

5.13 To the east of Burgess Hill, Lewes District Council has also begun work on its new Core Strategy, even though *The South East Plan* is still in preparation (it is appreciated that all these layers of plans, and the way they leapfrog each other, can be confusing).

5.14 In their document, *Lewes District Local Development Framework Core Strategy Preferred Options*, September 2006, Lewes District Council propose to locate growth in what they consider to be the "most sustainable" settlements in terms of the quantitative level of services and infrastructure. Several such settlements are identified including the edge of Burgess Hill (within Lewes District). More detailed assessment would then consider the quality of services and infrastructure and the suitability of individual sites. Urban growth within Lewes District but in such close proximity to Burgess Hill would clearly have an effect on the town and its services and facilities. This underlines the merit in having a forward view of Burgess Hill.

Draft South East Plan, SERA , March 2006

5.15 *The Draft South East Plan* (March 2006) proposes the following level of growth in the Gatwick Area sub region, which includes Burgess Hill:

2006 – 2026	(homes)
Mid Sussex (part)	13,800
Horsham (part)	9,200
Reigate and Banstead (part)	3,000
Crawley	7,000
Total	33,000 (1,650 pa)

5.16 Following publication of the Draft South East Plan, consultants were appointed by the Government Office for the South East (GOSE) to appraise options for increased rates of growth for the South East region. Their report, *Augmenting the Evidence Base for the Examination in Public of the South East Plan*, (Roger Tym & Partners in association with Land Use Consultants, May 2006), concludes that levels of growth that are significantly higher than that proposed in the Draft South East Plan should be accommodated across the South East Region overall. The report also acknowledges that there is more limited potential for growth in some sub regions, including the Gatwick and Sussex sub regions.

5.17 The report also highlights the over-loading on most rail routes into London and suggests that the tendency for increased commuting into London from longer and longer distances should aim to be reversed. The report states that outside of London most lines are operating well below their existing capacity except for the Brighton line.

National planning policy

5.18 In contemplating the future growth of Burgess Hill, there are many aspects of national planning policy to take into account. For example, PPS3: Housing gives some local flexibility but the overall pressure to use land intensively and to restrict provision of car parking is strong. PPS6: Planning for Town Centres directs all attractors of movement, such as employment, leisure and civic functions to town, district or local centres in sequence and PPG13:Transport seeks to reduce the need to travel especially by car. PPS25: Development and Flood Risk makes clear the need to avoid that danger, and there is recent very high priority being given to the need to plan for climate change.

Key messages

5.19 The Draft South East Plan is currently being examined by an independent Panel and the final version by the Secretary of State is expected in early 2008. The South East Plan will set out requirements for each district including Mid Sussex District. The Draft South East Plan proposes a higher number of dwellings than is currently required and there are expectations that this will be further increased in the final edition. Mid Sussex District Council will in turn set the scale of growth to be planned for at Burgess Hill and elsewhere within the District, in line with The South East Plan figures for the District as a whole.

6.0 THE STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP

- 6.1 Key stakeholders have recently given much thought to the future of Burgess Hill as input to the Burgess Hill Town Centre Masterplan, formally adopted by Mid Sussex District Council in November 2006.
- 6.2 Our task has been to look wider, at the town and its environs, and to look further ahead. A workshop of key stakeholders was held to provide us with local views and opinions.
- 6.3 The workshops were intended to provide an opportunity for the town to spend some time to look further ahead, in an informal way and free from the rigours of the formal statutory planning system. If some sense of the longer term shape and destiny of the town could emerge from key stakeholders, everyone would be better prepared for the constant cycle of statutory planning debates. Without a shared long term view, short term decisions might be made which are later regretted, and there is less protection against surprise challenges arising from day to day development pressures. This project is therefore not concerned with whether Burgess Hill should grow and change at any particular speed, which will be a matter for the statutory planning processes. Instead, this project is an informal opportunity to look at the bigger picture and to take a longer view: assuming Burgess Hill will have to grow, where and on what terms? Appendix 1 shows the list of stakeholders invited to the workshop by Mid Sussex District Council, which was held at the Martlets Hall in Burgess Hill on Monday 13 November 2006. The informal evening feedback session was held at the same venue one week later.
- 6.4 The workshop included short presentations on the broad geography and setting of Burgess Hill and the ways in which the town has grown over the past century. Stakeholders were then asked to work in groups to identify parts of the town where things needed to be improved or protected and where there is capacity for growth. This led to discussions of the ways in which the town might grow and change. The findings of the workshop were digested and summarised, along with initial responses, at an informal evening session.
- 6.5 The workshop programme focused in the morning on the history of growth in the town, followed by impressions of the town's urban structure and discussions on the strengths and weaknesses of the present layout. During the afternoon, group discussions focused on the broad visions for the future of the town. These discussions centred around illustrated maps of the town showing key features and enabled groups to map areas where they thought there might be capacity for future growth. A feedback plenary session brought together the ideas from all of the groups at the end of the day.
- 6.6 In summary, the stakeholder workshop was not concerned with whether Burgess Hill should grow at any particular speed or by any particular level of growth, as these matters will be debated and decided within the statutory planning processes. Instead, this project offered an informal opportunity to look at the bigger picture and to take a longer view, assuming growth was coming sooner or later.



7.0 ANALYSIS OF OPPORTUNITIES AND CHANGE – WORKSHOP RESPONSES

7.1 During the workshop, discussions of the strengths and weaknesses of the present layout and structure of Burgess Hill identified the following issues as part of a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis. The teams were asked to give us their feedback about their town and to turn any issue that they identified into an opportunity. These formed the overriding opportunities that were perceived for the future of the town. The issues have been grouped into five topics: the overall vision; links and movement; uses, activities and public services; the town centre; and landscape and open space.

The vision...

- Strengthen local identity and civic pride, promoting Burgess Hill as a desirable destination
- Promote a broad range of initiatives and proposals, thereby benefiting many, and also ensuring a fair allocation of funding and resources
- Encourage a better use of land, including the identification of both redevelopment and 'land swap' opportunities within existing areas
- Demand high standards of design and construction

7.2 This overall vision was broken down into the following more focused themes. These offer a very imaginative array of objectives that the vision needs to address in order to be a success.



Links and movement...

- Provide direct and convenient links to key destinations within the wider region, specifically links to Gatwick Airport
- Improve transport and movement networks within Burgess Hill and the immediate locale
- Facilitate redevelopment and expansion through the provision of new east/west infrastructure links within the town, bridging barriers created by linear infrastructure such as the railway line and the ring road
- Develop a strategic network of pedestrian and cycle routes throughout Burgess Hill and into the town centre
- Promote accessibility, including provision for the very young, the elderly and the disabled
- Improve public transport, providing better and more frequent services between key destinations, encouraging people to use their cars less



Uses, activities and public services...

- Provide a wider range of dwelling types, tenure and price, fostering a balanced, inclusive and dynamic community
- Broaden the range of education facilities and options, particularly further education and adult education, to enable Burgess Hill to provide complimentary education facilities to those within the wider region
- Develop a new business park, encouraging businesses to relocate to Burgess Hill and to invest in the area
- Improve and extend the range of healthcare services, including updating and supporting existing services
- Provide a range of high quality modern leisure and entertainment facilities, including 'something special'; an innovative or unique facility that will have a wider appeal and help put Burgess Hill on the map
- Relocate Burgess Hill Football Club to a more suitable location, providing an opportunity to modernise this facility and raise the profile of the club

The town centre...

- Build upon those initiatives already proposed or underway as part of the new town centre plan
- Identify diverse development opportunities and initiatives which will provide a vibrant and attractive town centre where people will want to live, shop and work, preventing Burgess Hill from becoming a 'doughnut town'
- Provide a high quality public realm within the town centre as a part of an overall regeneration strategy
- Improve town centre public transport services, including a facelift for the railway station, ensuring a positive first impression for those arriving at Burgess Hill
- Promote residential development within the town centre, providing a broad range of accommodation
- Provide new hotels, encouraging visitors to Burgess Hill
- Promote arts and culture, for example through the development of a new theatre in the town centre

Landscape and open space...

- Provide more good quality green open space (of which there is currently a deficit) within easy walking distance of residents, and also protect and improve existing green open spaces
- Facilitate the development of green landscape and wildlife corridors connecting into and through the urban form
- Ensure that new development respects and enhances the wider countryside setting, and identified areas of high quality landscape and ancient woodland.

The following issues were also highlighted and relate to the implementation of the vision and the objectives...

- Ensure the adoption of an overall vision, to function as a framework for future development and investment
- Ensure some person or group is properly funded to undertake the delivery of the vision, what we called a “town champion”
- Foster a spirit of ‘cross border’ co-operation, preventing initiatives from being compromised by administrative boundaries

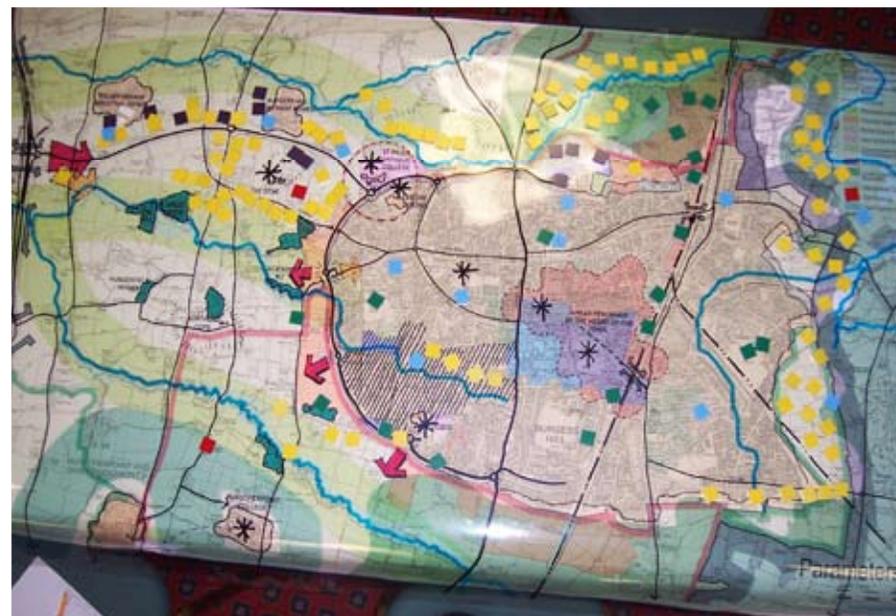
7.3 In summary, the vision highlighted the importance of strengthening local identity and making better use of land. The need for better links within the wider region as well as within Burgess Hill and the surrounding locale was also highlighted. An east-west crossing in the town was regarded as important in order to facilitate development. A wide range of dwelling types was sought, along with a wider range of education and health facilities. The need for more local green open space was also identified as an important aspect for the future of the town.

8.0 FUTURE NATURE AND DIRECTIONS OF GROWTH – WORKSHOP RESPONSES

8.1 This chapter reflects the issues and ideas raised during the stakeholders' workshop. It is important to note that these ideas were generated from informal but informed discussion and they usefully prompted debate during the workshop. However they should not in themselves be taken too literally. The ideas reflected here are not based on detailed research or democratic processes, and they are included here to give an insight into the discussions, concerns and opportunities that were considered during the workshop.

The Blue Group

8.2 This group identified the opportunity to consolidate the town centre but also highlighted the importance of retaining green spaces. The need for jobs and houses was important, and the opportunity to rejuvenate deprived areas. The need for good transport, including an additional east-west link, was recognised as well as the importance of ensuring good access standards for disabled members of the community.



The Red Group

8.3 This group highlighted the importance of a well balanced town, with quality of life and sustainable development as important broad themes.



The Green Group

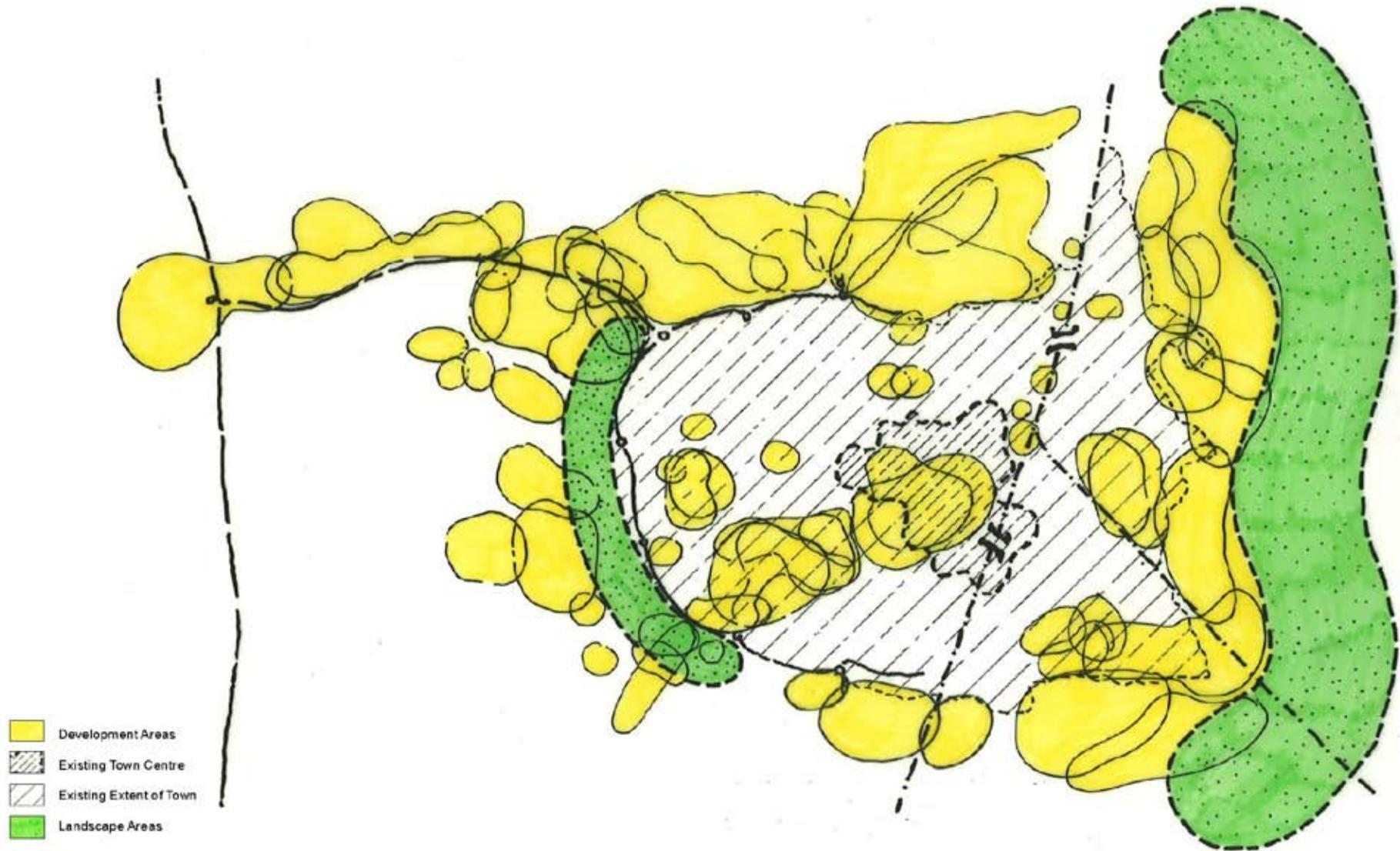
8.4 Integration and the development of communities were highlighted as important themes by this group. Community identity, sustainability, transport and formal leisure space to the east of the town were all highlighted as important issues.



The Yellow Group

8.5 The importance of a compact and sustainable town was highlighted by this group. It was suggested that growth could be an opportunity for bringing more people into the town and at the same time redistributing some uses. The idea of land swaps was raised, to enable land in the town to be kept green by allowing green fields to be developed instead. Other priorities that the group identified included enhancement of the Green Crescent to the west of the town, extension of the Jane Murray Way distributor road and extending the town centre westwards by redeveloping the older part of the Victoria Industrial Estate.





First priority: the town centre...

- Expansion of town centre uses and activities towards the north west
- Expansion of town centre retail
- Residential densification
- Improvements to the town centre arrival experience to create a 'good first impression' of Burgess Hill
- Creation of a public transport interchange, centred on the railway station
- High quality public realm
- Development of hotels and visitor accommodation

Second Priority: consolidation to the east...

- Identification of site specific opportunities, and interventions to remove barriers to growth and redevelopment
- Town wide infrastructure improvements; "getting around the town"
- Development of east / west infrastructure links, including links across the railway tracks
- Consolidation of residential development to the eastern edge of Burgess Hill
- Provision of green public open spaces within residential areas
- Enhance and protect the wider landscape setting to the east
- Creation of green wildlife corridors connecting into and through the urban form
- Long term investment in education and healthcare services
- Long term investment in leisure and sports, including the potential relocation of the football club

Third Priority: growth to the north west...

- Development of east/west infrastructure links, including links across the distributor road
- Improved links throughout the region and to Gatwick airport
- Development of local centres and other activity hubs complimentary to the town centre as Burgess Hill expands
- Ensure balanced growth and a mix of uses
- Expansion of residential development to the north western edge of Burgess Hill
- Provision of green public open spaces within residential areas
- Identification of redevelopment and 'land swap' opportunities within the existing urban form
- Expansion of commerce and industry along the A2300, and the development of new business parks

Fourth Priority: growth to the west ...or far west?

- 8.6 There was considerable convergence of views on the limited room for expanding Burgess Hill to the north or south. There was unresolved debate about how much development should go east: to some, this area was closest to the railway station and town centre and to the development pressures coming over from Lewes; to others, the eastern side of the town has limited access (because of the need to cross the railway lines) and was constrained by flood risk, strategic environmental protections and historic buildings and landscapes.
- 8.7 There was wide divergence of views in the workshop groups about the idea of further development to the west of Burgess Hill. A majority could see common sense in consolidating development around the St Paul's College and the Triangle leisure centre – perhaps to form a new “gateway” or “district centre” for local residents for whom the town centre is some distance away.
- 8.8 Beyond that for some, if necessary, commercial development might spread to front the A2300 towards the A23 London to Brighton junction, past the sewage treatment works. Some would then see development arc southwards on the far side of the Green Crescent which would then become, in effect, a park within the town boundary. Others saw the Green Crescent built over but re-created a little further out, to make a new outer boundary for Burgess Hill – a new “layer of onion skin” for Burgess Hill, in effect.

Priority search areas arising from Stakeholder Workshops



- 8.9 Others would leave the western edge of Burgess Hill as it stands, and plan for development to “jump” across the area of countryside to Hickstead and the villages around the junction with the A23.
- 8.10 In summary, these discussions highlighted the importance of consolidating and expanding the town centre, followed by further consolidation to the eastern edge of the town. This development would be supported by an additional east-west road link, local green open spaces and education and healthcare services. A further priority was to accommodate development to the north western edge of the town, supported by improved links throughout the region and the development of local centres. Expansion of commerce and industry along the A2300 was also suggested. Finally, the extent of further development to the west of the town raised a variety of views, ranging from expansion of the town on the western side of the Green Crescent to development much further to the west of the town and immediately west of the A23.

District Councillor Involvement

- 8.11 The Stakeholder Workshop was supplemented by a further event using a shortened workshop format designed to provide District Councillors with their own opportunity to participate in this visioning process. The Councillors’ Workshop provided experience of the format of the workshop in which other Stakeholder views had been solicited and gave them an opportunity to view the information that had been presented. This also provided the Councillors with a brief opportunity to participate directly in the workshop process. As the District Councillors have other opportunities to direct the future of Burgess Hill they had not been included en masse in the main Stakeholders’ Workshop. This had also helped participants who were naturally reticent or shy.
- 8.12 The shortened workshop format for District Councillors revealed a preference for only very limited development to the west of the existing town, with additional development then ‘jumping’ across to the west of the A23. Establishing some green separation to the east of the existing town also emerged as a theme. During discussions it emerged that the Green Crescent was originally envisaged as becoming a green lung which could potentially sit within a larger urban area at a later date. Other issues that were identified included the need to establish a process for capturing more developer contributions to infrastructure funding when planning permission was sought; the need to provide a wide housing mix especially to ensure families were not excluded by densities that were too high; reviewing the use of the existing

Victoria Industrial Estate to encourage mixed use and high technology businesses; and the need for the boundary to the east of the town to be reviewed if it was obstructing proper planning of the area.

9.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES IN VISIONING BURGESS HILL

9.1 Drawing upon the results of the stakeholders' workshop, we have been able to set out some guiding principles for the visioning work. These are set out in the following table, alongside our response.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES	RESPONSE
The vision should provide an overall framework to guide future development and investment.	This visioning exercise will feed into the statutory Local Development Framework including, if appropriate, an Area Action Plan for Burgess Hill. The work will inform several future rounds of statutory plan-making because it looks around 30 years ahead – longer than formal statutory plans are able to do.
Strengthen local identity and civic pride.	Provide more jobs and community facilities in the town, and fill the gaps that exist in choices for shopping, recreation, entertainment and leisure. Maintain physical separation, and cultivate the local differences of character in the physical and appearance of the town. Events and activities that would be unique to the town would also generate local self confidence and sense of identity.
Attract a range of commercial leisure facilities and hotels.	A clear investment “prospectus” needs to be produced to attract developers and operators. Burgess Hill can't have everything, but good connections to neighbouring towns will widen choice and create a bigger market for operators.
Encourage better use of land, including 'land swaps'	There are parts of Burgess Hill that need more public open space, and improvements in the quality of the space which already exist. These stand against ideas of “town cramming” all available space to save green fields. Similarly, high urban densities would not be in character, though medium densities in the town centre could be beneficial as already agreed. In peripheral expansion, the first choice should be damaged or less useful agricultural land, and medium densities used to reduced the amount of land taken. Public transport, walking and cycling would reduce the need to provide space for traffic and cars in particular. The idea of “land swaps” – by which a parcel of town land might be swapped with a green field, for example, to enable a new park to be made – is an idea worth exploring in the Council's Local Development Framework.
High quality design standards including for the public realm.	This will be achieved by robust planning policies in the Local Development Framework (and is supported by national planning policy such as PPS1 and PPS3).
Provide direct and convenient links to key destinations in the wider region, especially Gatwick Airport.	The Haywards Heath Distributor Road will improve highways links northwards from Burgess Hill. Strategic public transport links by bus and coach need further development if the use of cars is to be reduced.

Facilitate development through the provision of new east-west infrastructure links.	Detailed traffic and movement studies will be needed: the cost of crossing the railway lines is very high and will consume much of the money that might otherwise be made available for local investment and facilities. The number of new crossings should be kept as low as possible.
Provide a wider range of dwelling types and tenure	This will be achieved by robust planning policies in the Local Development Framework (and is supported nationally by PPS3)
Long term investment in health and education services	The planning authority needs to lobby hard to bend the spending plans of other bodies to the advantage of Burgess Hill, and to be prepared to demand payments from development in the town to help pay for these improvements.
Develop a new Business Park	It is not good planning to have a 1980s-style out-of-town business park to which everyone must drive. New employment opportunities need to be embedded in the life of the town, in the town centre and other local district or local centres, or nearby on walking, cycling and public transport routes.

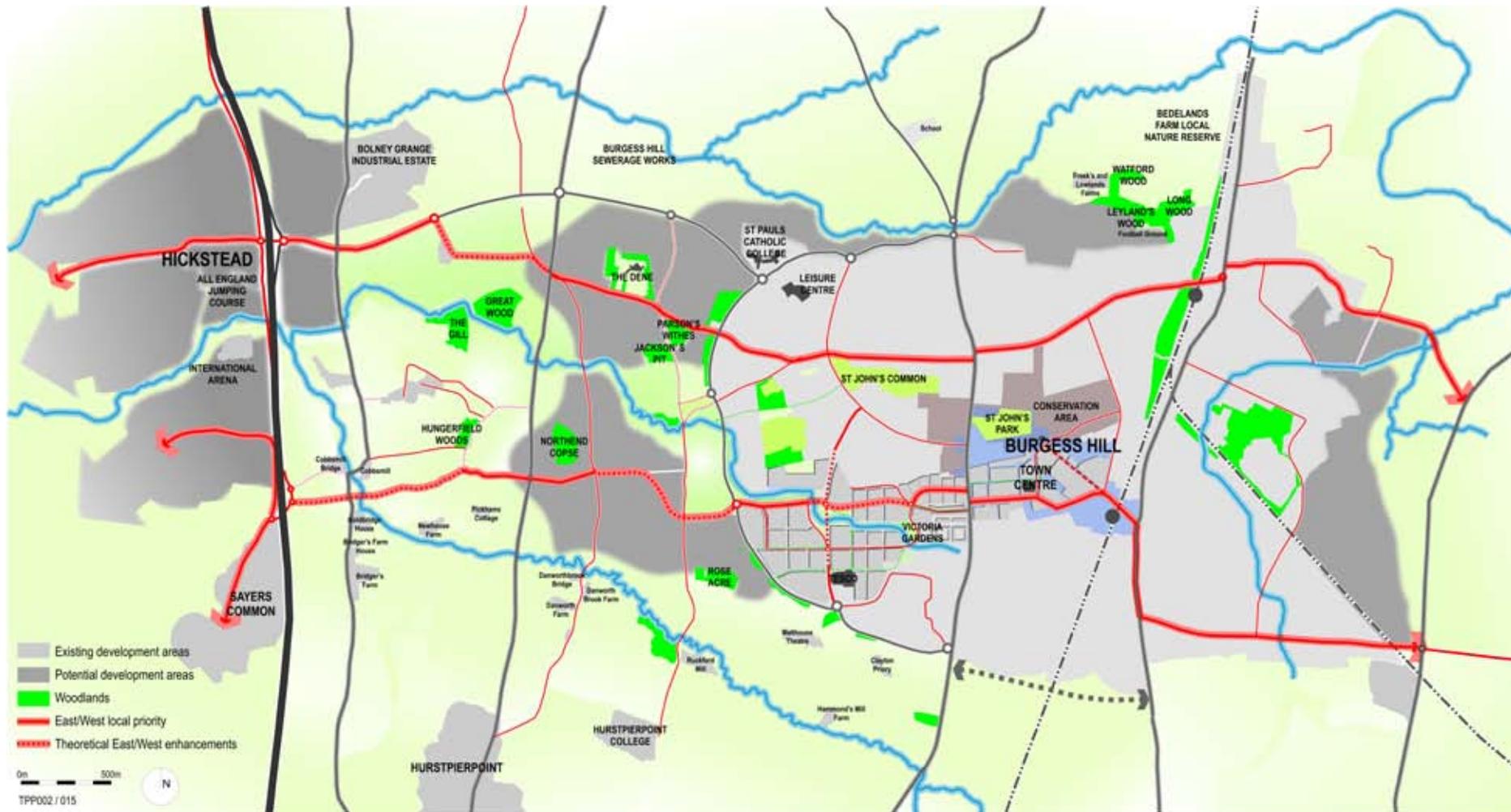
9.2 Other points arising from the stakeholder workshop which we have noted, many of which overlap with points in the table above, include the demand for more local green open space and green corridors; ensuring that new development respects the wider countryside setting; and achieving the development of local centres to complement the town centre as the town expands. A specific request was also noted to help relocate Burgess Hill Town Football Club.

9.3 In summary, the importance of an overall framework to guide and coordinate future development and investment in infrastructure and services is recognised as a key aspect to support the town. Strengthening local identity and ensuring a high quality public realm will also support further growth and investment in the town. Making better use of land within the town, improving links within the wider area, and facilitating life in the town for residents by providing an additional east-west railway crossing are also important aspects. Finally, the need for the town to secure a wider range of dwelling types and longer term investment in health and education services are also key principles for the future of the town.

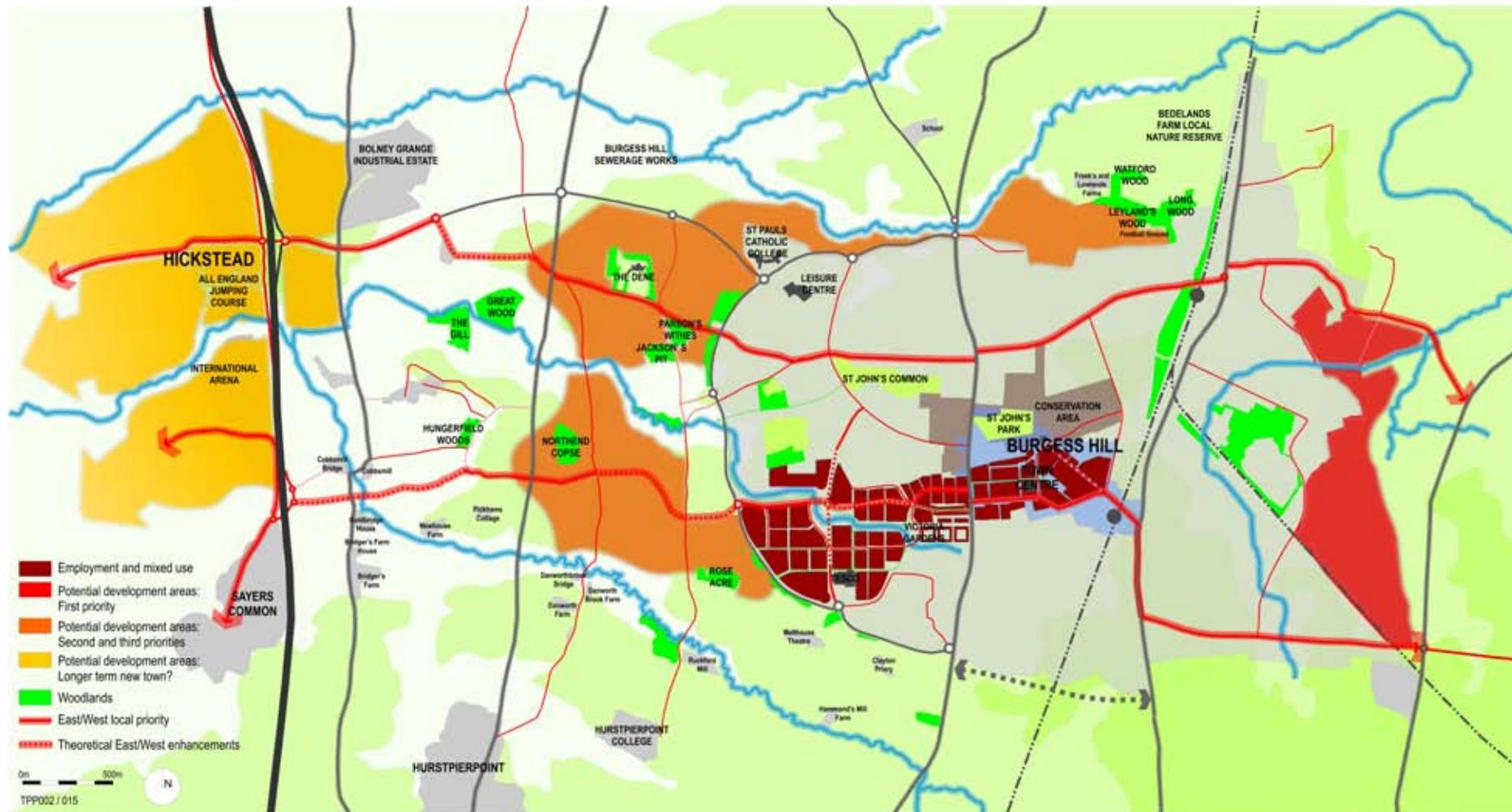
10.0 THE FUTURE BURGESS HILL: THE CONSULTANT'S VIEW

- 10.1 Burgess Hill performs several roles simultaneously, and each of us will experience them to a different depth. For the villages in the surrounding rural area it is a centre for employment, local services and relatively low-key shopping, for some schooling, and for others it may be civic functions. The town's railway station is also a gateway to Gatwick, London and Brighton. There is some frustration at having to travel further for evening entertainment and major cultural facilities and higher quality shopping, but on balance the town is comfortable and could be made even more convenient if there was easier access, easier parking and better public transport links to the country areas. Many residents of the newer estates towards the edge of the built up area of Burgess Hill appear to feel the same way: better public transport links into town would be highly valued.
- 10.2 For many residents of the town itself, it is a place with a distinctive though modest local character, quietly successful, and home to a friendly and stable community with deep roots. For those that commute to work in Gatwick, London or Brighton, Burgess Hill provides a well connected home base. For employers it is a town that can offer a stable reliable and well educated workforce. Retailers and leisure operators have to work relatively hard as we have been advised that much of the life in the town is home-based, and among younger households mortgage borrowing is high and therefore disposable income is not abundant, and the increasing number of older households are less inclined to spend profligately or linger long into the evening economy.
- 10.3 Most of these attributes are very desirable as they are indicators of a welcoming and stable community that is "sustainable" in the common-sense meaning of the word. This is confirmed by the fact that Burgess Hill continues to attract (and make room) for new households to join the town. It has retained and diversified its employment base, and is experiencing even more growth pressures. These are features to celebrate. In a competitive world, a good place such as Burgess Hill will be strong and will survive, compared with those which are less able to retain existing residents and employers, or attract new ones.
- 10.4 There are changes underway, however, and these began to emerge in the stakeholder workshop sessions. Burgess Hill and its villages, together with Haywards Heath and to a lesser extent East Grinstead, are actually beginning to operate as an integrated cluster of communities. This interrelationship between local towns is recognised in the Atkins employment report (*Crawley, Horsham and Mid Sussex Employment Land Review*, Atkins, Mid Sussex District Council, 2005):
- "Compared to Horsham, Mid Sussex historically has displayed a marginally stronger employment role which reflects the collective role played by the District's three main settlements (Burgess Hill, East Grinstead and Haywards Heath)."*
- Employment, social and recreational networks are not any longer tightly confined to the historic town boundary, and people move freely for different purposes between each part of the cluster.

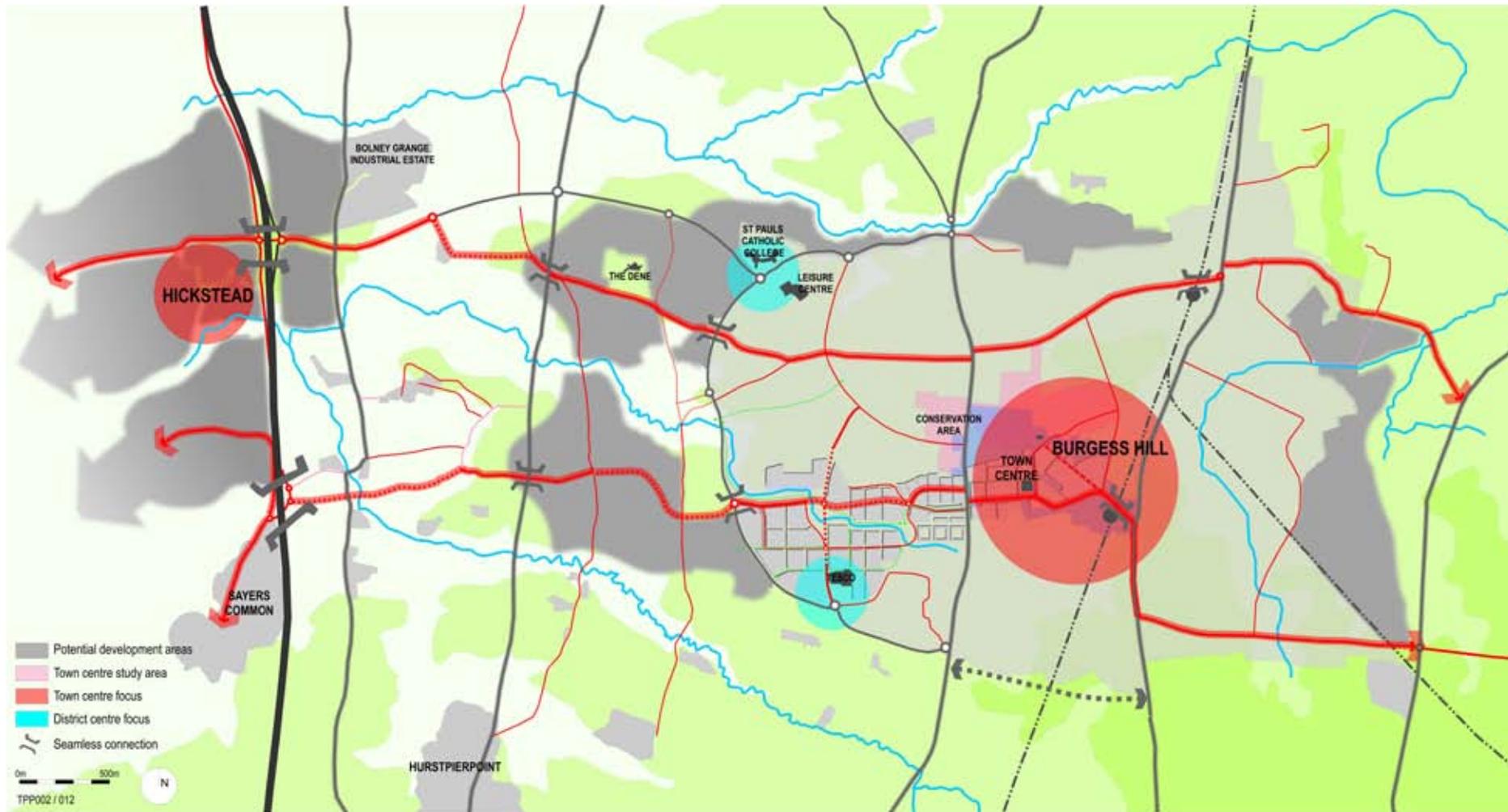
Suggested long term expansion framework for Burgess Hill



The vision and its fit with Stakeholder priorities



The possible hierarchy of centres in thirty years and beyond



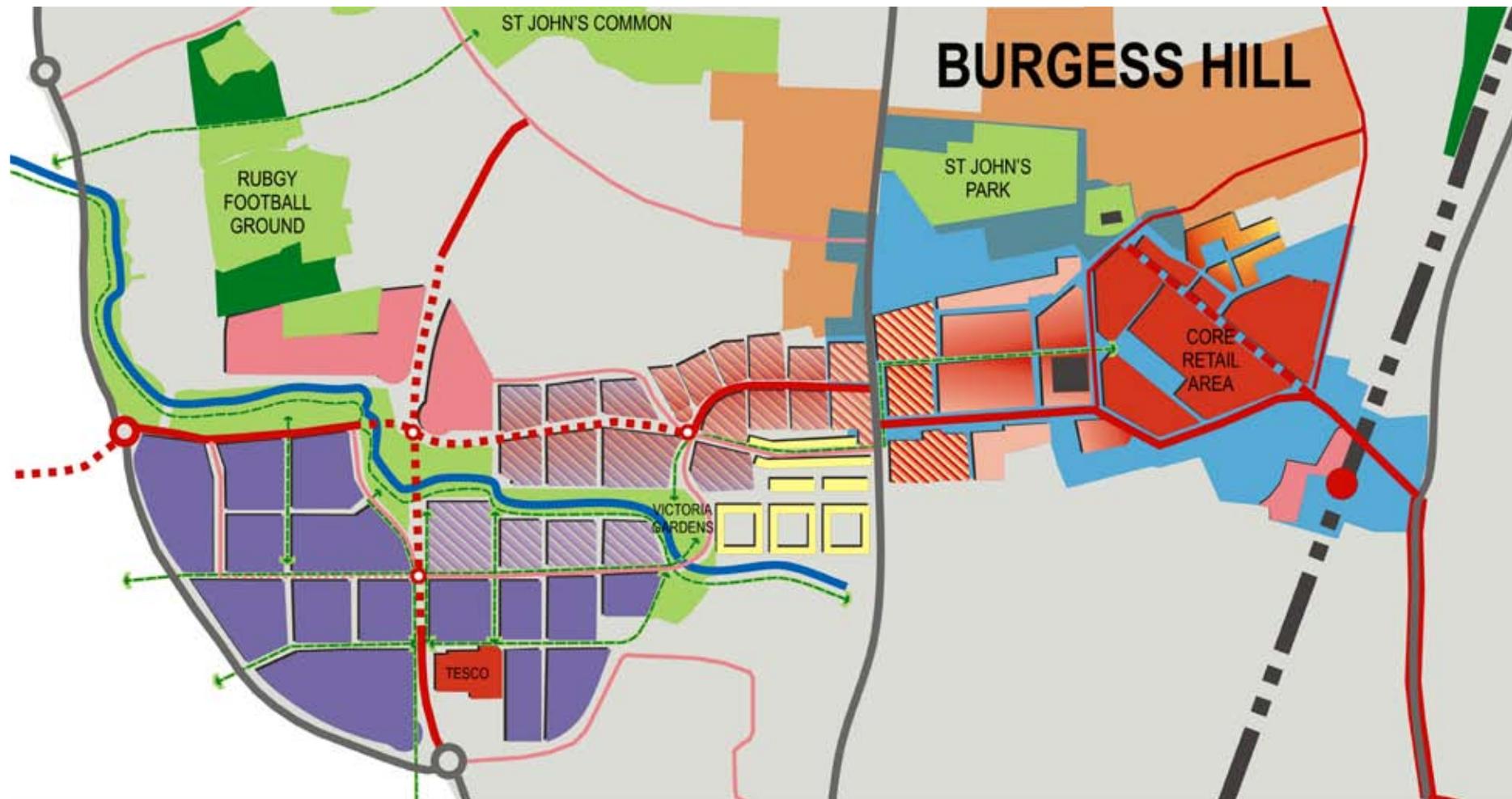
- 10.5 This is an important observation. It means that it is not necessary (aside from not being possible, anyway) for Burgess Hill to have “one of everything”. It is good enough that somewhere in the cluster there is to be found all the needs of a sustainable community – the health care facilities, the jobs, the cultural and leisure attractions, shops, sports and community facilities and places for religious witness and spiritual refreshment.
- 10.6 Furthermore, viewed in this way, it is possible and desirable for each part of the cluster to develop, enhance and celebrate its differences, each of which will be complementary and assist in ensuring that the whole is more than the sum of its parts.
- 10.7 Where does this take us? It means that our first concerns in visioning the future of Burgess Hill are to secure its baseline service and facility role, to cultivate its distinctive character as a place. The town centre visioning work took this approach for the core of town. Now the same logic must be worked through the rest of the town.
- 10.8 Second, we must ensure Burgess Hill is as well connected as possible (by all means, physical and virtual) to the cluster of places of which it forms part. To be in a beautiful and convenient location in Sussex, to feel like a market town, but to be part of a cluster that can offer the amenities of a much larger urban network, is a powerful formula for a really sustainable community.

- 10.9 Third, in contemplating the possibility of further major development at Burgess Hill, it would be appropriate to think not just of the town as if it was an island, but instead to see the town as part of a connected cluster of places and use the new development to help make that cluster better in every sense.

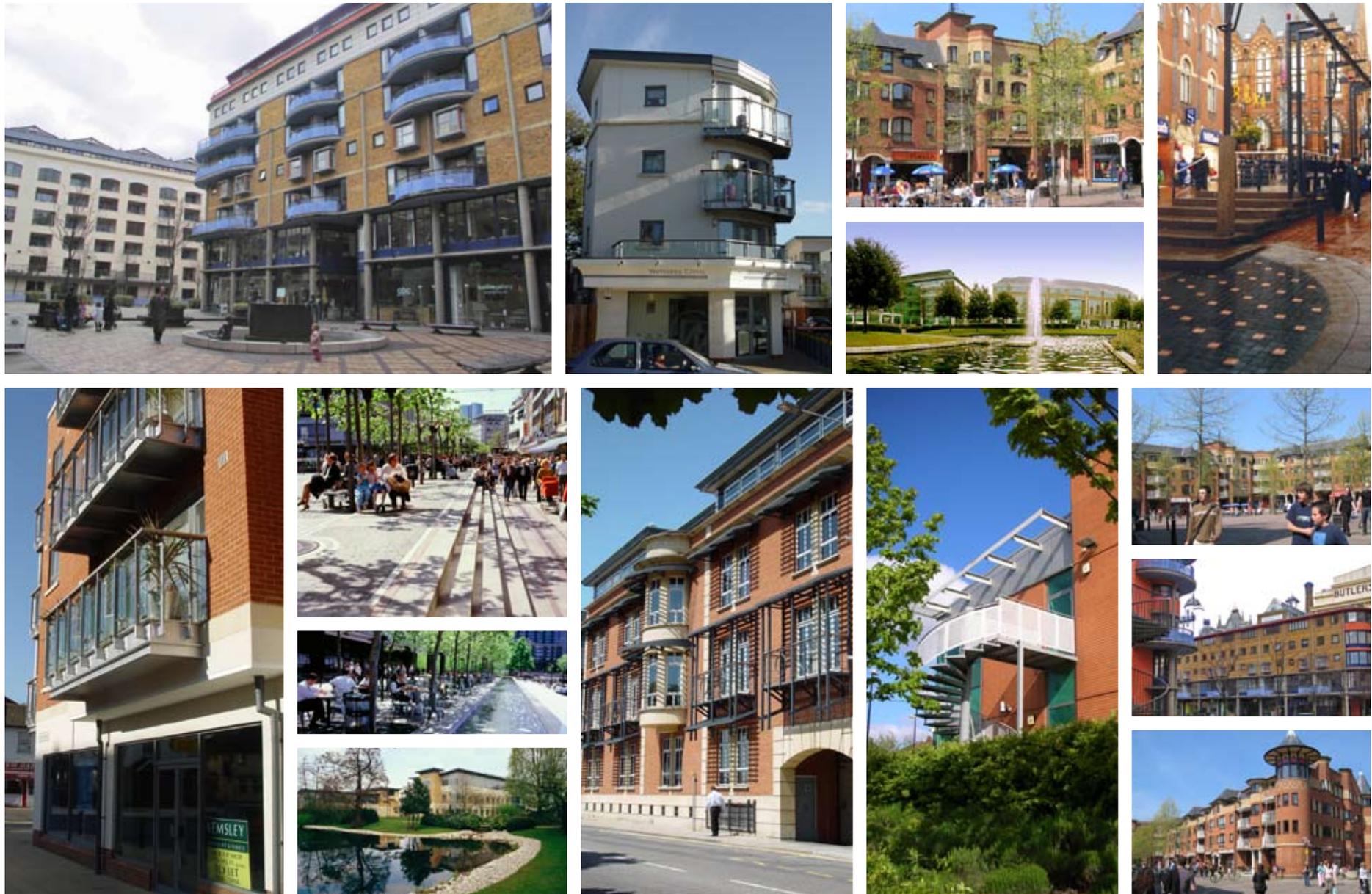
The disposition of new development

- 10.10 The logic that unfolds is, of course, to give priority to the further development, enhancement, embellishment and enrichment of the town centre of Burgess Hill. This will be cast as wide as the earlier visioning exercise agreed, to reach out to embrace the railway station area for example. Now, however, and as endorsed by the stakeholder workshop teams, the town centre vision could be extended to stimulate planned change in the nearest parts of the Victoria Industrial Estate business area. This is the natural direction for extension of the town centre into mixed use, residential and high technology employment quarters, over time.
- 10.11 The future Burgess Hill would therefore have a town centre that covers a larger area, has more mixed uses within it, especially more residents and places of modern knowledge-based employment.
- 10.12 There is a limit to the reach of this core area vision. To be consistent, the design and layout of Burgess Hill’s larger and more vigorous town centre will capture and exaggerate the particular character of the town. It mustn’t be made to look and feel just like anywhere else. This is a strong theme to add to the earlier town centre visioning exercise – identify the essential Burgess Hill, distil it, and apply it liberally but not too thinly over too wide an area!

Conceptual diagram of the new east/west mixed use employment core



- Shopping and other town centre functions
- Homes of mixed density and tenure
- Employment, especially high technology



- 10.13 Next, the vision for Burgess Hill would lead to the systematic survey of the fabric of the main suburban neighbourhoods in the town, to mend and remake connected routes for walking cycling and public transport, to ensure streets are safely overlooked by windows and front doors and are made safe by busy movement along them. Also to study local and neighbourhood centres to encourage their retention and further development to meet daily needs and reduce the need to travel by car, and to focus maintenance and management in the public thoroughfares to ensure that the experience of living and visiting Burgess Hill remains pleasurable and attractive. It is important to emphasise here the need to re-awaken the natural east/west orientation of the town. “Ring-minded” planning in relatively recent years has changed the pattern of the town and the mindset of observers, and has created obstructions at the local level between town and country and between neighbourhoods. Historic routes flow north/south, and the town originally grew east/west. That is the strongest conceptual idea for the framework of the town because it fits the real geography of the locality.
- 10.14 The third ingredient in the vision is to develop the town’s nascent District Centres. At the moment a superstore on the edge of the town is just that. A shed in a sea of car parking. The same can be said of the location of the Triangle leisure centre, and the new St Paul’s school: neither are easily accessed by foot or by bike and both are rather bleakly disconnected from other facilities.
- 10.15 Given that development pressures exist for more housing, but also more variety in shopping and leisure and recreation, provided the town centre project is not harmed or delayed, the vision suggests the existing peripheral places of attraction are developed to create mixed use District Centres that would be of real advantage to their local catchments and spread the economy and social activity of the town. These would be the receptors of retail and other services and attractions not suitable for the town centre, and for relatively high density homes and public transport services.
- 10.16 Then we must turn to the possibility of even further expansion. There is interest in expanding the town to the east because, on a two dimensional map, the proximity to the railway station and to the town centre shows this area to be better placed than other points of the compass.
- 10.17 However, excessive easterly expansion of the town would increase pressure on the few railway crossings which exist, and that would not be a forward step. Topography also means that real walking times and accessibility are not quite as they might appear on a plan. Thirdly, the environment is often of high quality, and there are severe constraints caused by flooding, nature conservation designations and historic buildings, the settings of which should not carelessly be harmed. Clearly there are parcels of land to the east of Burgess Hill which should be carefully studied for development, and some areas where existing residential development might – over a number of years - be intensified. From our necessarily superficial studies we have indicated the area that appears to us to be worthy of in-depth examination, but we are not persuaded by those who would go much further.

- 10.18 There are many assumptions to be made in roughly estimating the quantity of new development that might come from this eastern side of the town, given that the site-by-site analysis needs to be done and the accessibility implications need to be carefully calculated, but we reckon the capacity of undeveloped land between the eastern edge of the built up area of Burgess Hill and the administrative boundary is unlikely to exceed approximately 1,300 dwellings (using the lowest PPS3 recommended average density of 30 dwellings per hectare gross). This assumes that all of these potential sites are able to be developed to their full capacity at relatively high densities. It also assumes a cautious grossing up factor for housing land, to include associated development (infrastructure, employment, community facilities), as recommended by the government's good practice guidance.
- 10.19 Enthusiasm was also shown by most stakeholders for expansion along the northern boundary of Burgess Hill, and in principle this is an attractive idea: the edge of the built up area is mostly a road, which might be neat on a plan but this removes people from contact with the countryside setting and leads to quantities of developable land being stranded across the road – harmed as agricultural land, but currently of limited urban utility. This land offers some capacity for well designed development that would bring Burgess Hill to a properly resolved relationship with its green setting. However, development along this northern edge will need careful and more detailed consideration and design to address a number of factors that are highlighted below.
- 10.20 The main difficulty arises from the combination of development constraints imposed in this northern area. To the north of the A273 (Sussex Way), the constraints include the designation in the Local Plan of an area of Informal Open Space and a flood risk corridor, and also the restricted number of highway crossing points and the topography. The Informal Open Space corridor follows the watercourse and extends south from the watercourse to the A273. The Informal Open Space corridor also overlaps with the flood risk corridor that follows the same watercourse. The A273 as it turns northwards currently provides the only crossing point over the watercourse and the B2036 then provides the only access into this area. The ground level rises to the north of the watercourse, providing views of green and open slopes from within the town. Whilst we could envisage a limited quantity of development occurring in this area, subject to more detailed assessments and high quality design, we have not identified this area as being a preferred area for major growth of strategic scale on the basis of this preliminary evaluation, our suggested strategic directions for growth and the availability of alternative and less restricted locations.
- 10.21 Between the A273 (Isaacs Lane) and the railway line, the constraints include the Strategic Gap boundary, the Bedelands Nature Reserve and the Informal Open Space designation. Thus we find that an area including the former sewage treatment works and the possible relocation of the football club provides the only encouraging broad location for major growth on the northern boundary of the town. Additional development between these sites would form a more robust urban edge which would effectively follow the existing Strategic Gap boundary. There are many areas, particularly around the edge of the

existing town, that are currently designated as Informal Open Space. Generally speaking, we have not suggested that these designated areas should become preferred areas for major growth. However, our suggested areas for development do infringe upon these local allocations in two locations, here on the northern edge of the town and also to the west of the town. In both of these locations it seems to us that the underlying pattern for strategic development that we are suggesting either justifies or could easily accommodate a more detailed consideration of these local designations and their potential for strategic future development, but we have not been equipped to conduct that detailed evaluation at this stage. Although quantities are difficult to estimate given the time and resources available, we estimate that the northern edge ought to yield some 700 dwellings.

10.22 To the south of Burgess Hill, we have an even more severe demarcation between the town and the countryside thanks to Jane Murray Way. South of the road, at the southern edge of the Green Crescent, there are few parcels of land that are not particularly sensitive to the countryside setting of the town in relation to the proposed National Park, and we have indicated some areas where particular possibilities could be studied, where development might finance an improvement in connectivity across the Way to the countryside and bring a softer edge to town.

10.23 Mention has been made of the nascent District Centres at St Paul's College and the Tesco store to the north west and south edges of Burgess Hill respectively. In our vision these become new nodes of local activity and mixed use and the existing developed footprint should – over time - be able to

accommodate a significant amount of development in place of wasted air over car parks and single story blocks. Our rough calculations suggest a yield of approximately 1,000 dwellings, though detailed study is needed.

10.24 The most difficult part of the vision to resolve is the western edge of Burgess Hill. The ranges of possibilities – and the differences of opinion – were exhibited in the ideas produced by each of the groups in the stakeholder workshop.

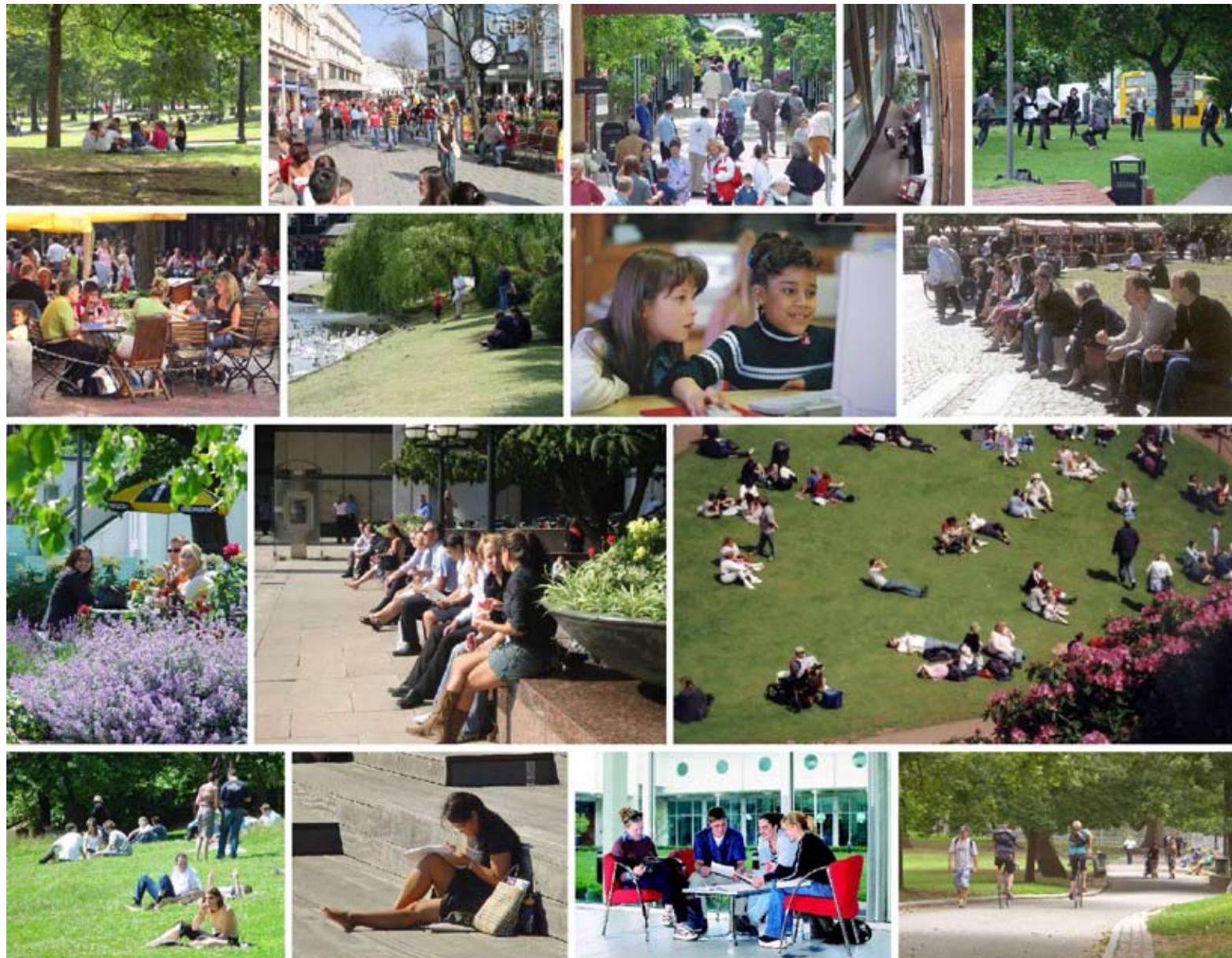
10.25 Some would string development along the A2300 to the A23. Some would jump the Green Crescent and convert it into an urban park, and let development spread a little further west to some new urban edge that would be created. Others would move the Green Crescent further out, and stick with the idea of a “mini-green belt” to set the edge of the town. Yet others would jump even further west and develop the villages around the A23 junction and Hickstead and perhaps even develop a small new town – a “daughter town” for Burgess Hill - at that distance.

10.26 We see elements of wisdom in all of these ideas, but we have given great weight to the principle that Burgess Hill must have a western stop, sooner or later. We are already close to the stage where western expansion of the town is getting so far from the town centre and its facilities (and station) that it is barely part of Burgess Hill at all.

10.27 Unpacking the issues on the western edge of the town, we feel first that the new District Centre near St Paul's College and the Triangle Leisure Centre, if it was to be developed (especially as the “gateway” feature for the town for which it

clearly has potential) should support development that would be within easy range of its facilities and amenities. This “walkable neighbourhood” would, of course, be shaped by the actual constraints of the land, including the electricity sub-station, but the design and layout of development should reinforce the “gateway” concept at this edge of the town.

- 10.28 Turning to the existing Green Crescent, we share the observation that at present this edge of the town is not in reality formed by the Green Crescent at all – that is a diagram only visible on a map – but in practice is defined by Jane Murray Way. As elsewhere, this “peripherique” of Burgess Hill makes a neat edge, but actually cuts off the town from the country and the country from the town, to mutual disadvantage.
- 10.29 Given the shortage of good quality public open space in Burgess Hill, we feel the vision of the Green Crescent as a high quality urban park, in its brook side setting and possible wildlife corridor leading back into the town with excellent links across the Jane Murray Way, would be of great benefit to many residents both existing and newcomers.
- 10.30 A new designed urban edge, some distance further to the west, celebrating the two east/west ridges and historic lane alignments where possible, would provide a much better and more durable edge to Burgess Hill than the present arrangement. We have indicated diagrammatically the possible extent of urban development along the ridges beyond the Green Crescent that seems worthy of further study.
- 10.31 Taking the new development around the existing nascent District Centre, and the new western urban edge together, and subject to detailed design and assessment, we would expect some 4,000 dwellings.
- 10.32 That is where we feel the line should be drawn for the foreseeable future for the town of Burgess Hill. Our rough calculations have pointed to a housing capacity in and around the town of around 8,250 dwellings.
- 10.33 Should further development be required, we feel the temptation to create a ribbon of development along the A2300 should be resisted as it would probably be car dependant and would have the appearance of sprawl.
- 10.34 Instead we are attracted to the vision which suggests that an addition to the Burgess Hill cluster should be properly planned – either by major planned expansion of one or more villages in the Hickstead area or as a small new town of approximately 5,000 dwellings or more. The latter appeals particularly as it would enable proper provision to be made for public transport links east/west with Burgess Hill and north/south in the A23 corridor and for a realistic scale of development given the stimulus of the A23 link with Brighton to the south and Gatwick to the north – a location of great interest in terms of employment and commercial development, being the epicentre of the strategic “Diamond” for economic growth in the Draft South East Plan. Our vision would provide for design and appraisal of several different forms of urban development in the Hickstead area as a strategic reserve to be called upon in the longer term if local development pressures remain relentless. It must be



emphasised, however, that planning for major development at Hickstead would have to begin within our 30 year time horizon. Such a project cannot be instantly started, and switched on like a light bulb.

10.35 It is axiomatic in sustainable development that new urban development should be organised to provide not only homes but also schools, community facilities, accessible open space, and supporting employment. The jobs needed by a particular population can be calculated by the local planning authority by making assumptions about the mix of households that will be attracted to the area. Economic activity rates for the area can then be applied – this will show the scale of employment “need”. On the supply side, jobs will be provided in servicing the community through its schools, local shops and other facilities and service needs. A view would have to be taken on the proportion of jobs that it would be acceptable to continue to see provided elsewhere (in London, Gatwick and Brighton, for example) and thus, by deduction, the number of jobs that would be needed in Burgess Hill. Further calculation would allow an estimate to be made of the amount of land that would be needed to accommodate a mix of possible types of employment that might realistically be secured. Some rounding of all figures in these types of calculation is necessary – there can be no precision about future employment type or structure!

10.36 One ambition that emerged strongly from stakeholders is that Burgess Hill should capture more of the high technology employment for which the wider area is becoming famous. Such “knowledge based industries” are high added value and have good growth prospects and support a highly skilled and educated workforce. Such employment is seen as a major

driver for sustainable community life, and is felt to be a serious prospect as the proportion of high tech employment in the town has already begun to grow significantly.

10.37 In fact Burgess Hill is well located in the “Gatwick Diamond” which stretches to the edge of Brighton to the south (Brighton is itself another “Diamond” and so is Crawley to the north). There are eight “Diamonds” in *The Regional Economic Strategy 2006-2016 A Framework for Sustainable Prosperity*, produced by the Regional Development Agency SEEDA which, with 21 Regional Hubs, are the primary focuses for Investment and Growth which can act as a catalyst to stimulate prosperity across wider areas. SEEDA say that

“Within these areas it is the concentrations of people, employment, built assets, knowledge, transport, networking, creativity, leisure, culture and diversity which give the potential to be economic catalysts for the region as a whole. This needs to be reinforced by selective infrastructure investment as a stimulus to sustainable growth.” (Page 42).

10.38 Actions in the overall Framework include an Innovation Action Plan for research and development; promoting the region’s knowledge base nationally and internationally; developing a high growth Enterprise Hub network; creating an early stage business fund; and investing in leadership and management skills for entrepreneurs.

10.39 SEEDA have committed themselves to a wide range of programmes and initiatives to stimulate and cultivate enterprise, improve the skills base, and to promote the connectivity of the region including in particular the Brighton-Gatwick-Croydon

Corridor and national and international hubs including Gatwick. Gatwick, as may be expected, is the focus of an “aerospace hub” promoted within SEEDA’s Enterprise Hub Network, and Burgess Hill is already represented in that economic sector and could expect further growth.

10.40 SEEDA’s RES Implementation Plan Framework provides a progress report on “Transformational actions” including a Future Broadband Infrastructure Strategy, and says of the Diamonds that “partnership structures and strategies are currently most advanced in Urban South Hampshire and the Gatwick Diamond. SEEDA is piloting an approach in both areas that seeks to map the totality of current and planned SEEDA investment, and identify opportunities for enhanced integration of investments.”

10.41 In visioning Burgess Hill to optimise its prospects for attracting and retaining investment in high technology employment, advice is that “If the resident population is to take advantage of the anticipated growth, specific programmes of (re)skilling and (re)training will be needed to deal with industrial restructuring and the emphasis on the growth of the knowledge economy” (*Use of Business Space and Changing Working Practices in the South East*, DTZ Pineda Consulting, 2004) and, in planning terms, the message is that “Demand for new industrial development cannot be satisfied with the surplus industrial land – the Business Survey has shown that organisations in R&D, design and logistics will need more space, and this is very likely to be different to space that is suitable to the manufacturing sector.”

10.42 Burgess Hill is blessed with employment land inside the town boundary and close to the town centre that has the real prospect of redevelopment that will be attractive to high technology companies. Their staff are their greatest asset, and employee preference is for workplaces that are connected to public transport, and to shopping, dining and social facilities for meeting colleagues and networking. Edge of town business parks are increasingly unpopular. Urban environments also encourage innovation through chance meetings and the productive business connections and collaborations that can follow.

10.43 In employment terms, the emerging vision is therefore reinforced: the creation of an attractive town that is well networked with adjoining towns, in an economic “Diamond” in the region into which SEEDA is focusing resources, and in which well located urban space can be released for high technology companies – often in an enjoyable mixed use environment – will optimise the chance of Burgess Hill enjoying an increasing emphasis in high technology employment.

10.44 Investment in (re)skilling and (re)training is the responsibility of the relevant agencies, but there are other “software” features of the drive to maximise high technology employment. According to *Innovation and Knowledge Exchange: The National Role of Universities and Research Establishments based in the Greater South East of England Summary Report*, ECOTEC Research and Consulting Ltd, SEEDA (2005), “Innovation has been identified as one of the major drivers of growth and one of the priorities for action in this area is the need to strengthen inter-regional knowledge transfer.” The Universities of Brighton and Sussex propose expansion to a new university campus in the

Crawley area, within easy distance of Burgess Hill. This could offer an opportunity to develop stronger links with the research and knowledge economy.

10.45 ECOTEC state that “Universities located in the Greater South East are more likely than other English universities to engage in Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs) and have significantly more Cooperative Awards in Sciences and Environment (CASE) studentships. In both cases these schemes support the engagement of graduates on industry-relevant projects and the consequent exchange of knowledge.” Promoting and facilitating better links to these initiatives could be a key action for Mid Sussex District Council.

10.46 The aerospace Enterprise Hub is significant because “the location of particular industrial sectors, or concentrations of research-orientated organisations, is a more significant influence on the geography of knowledge exchange and innovation-related activities” according to ECOTEC.

10.47 One aspect of high technology employment of importance to Burgess Hill that might easily be overlooked is the cluster of multimedia businesses in the Brighton area. It is noted by the TCPA in their report on the “changing geography of employment”, (*The People: Where will they work?* Ed by Michael Breheny, 1999) that there is “a distinct clustering of the multimedia industry centred on London and extending west along the M4, northwest to Oxford, north east to Cambridge, and south to Brighton. The report comments “we should not expect the geography of the electronic economy to be appreciably different, in terms of where jobs are located, from patterns currently observable.”

10.48 The same TCPA report states that the places best placed to benefit from investment in new job growth in new technologies “are generally characterised by pleasant, suburban, small town and rural living environments. A major characteristic of such areas is also that they carry little “industrial baggage”; that is, they have little or no declining production industry to overcome. Nor do they have the social structure and physical fabric associated with traditional industrial towns”. It is the relatively quiet market town charm of Burgess Hill that appears to be a competitive advantage. The location of employment in the future Burgess Hill will therefore be within the urban area, focused in the town and district centres and in the increasingly redeveloped mixed use area currently occupied by the Victoria Industrial Estate.

10.49 Another feature of employment in the visioning of Burgess Hill may be found in activities related to sports and stimulated, initially at least, by the national and regional commitment to the 2012 Olympic Games. There are early indications that sports-related initiatives are being taken in Burgess Hill that may be of great significance locally, though these are not in the public domain at the time of writing.

10.50 Another important source of employment that is often overlooked is retailing. Some expenditure from the town already “leaks” elsewhere, and it would be desirable to at least maintain the present level of retained expenditure and to increase it in order to widen choice, vitality and viability in the centres. Our visioning exercise has not included a specialist retail study, although one such study has recently been commissioned by Mid Sussex District Council, but in the vision we have described

here there is scope for the physical accommodation of retail growth. Aside from any projected growth in disposable income locally (and adjustments for the impacts of e-tailing that are unfolding as we write), the vision we have described would increase the population of the Burgess Hill area from the present 29,000 to some 47,000 approximately. If a small new town at Hickstead is later added, a further 16,000 people or thereabouts join the linked cluster.

10.51 The locations for retail expansion would be the enlarged town centre, and for second level retail growth in and around the two possible district centres (provided no harm is caused to the town centre), and for small scale local centres within walking distance of all parts of the town and in each village. The possible district centres are also the appropriate location for shops selling bulky goods and the like. If growth pressures require further expansion, such as to trigger the “daughter town” in the vicinity of Hickstead, a further district centre or equivalent would be justified there.

10.52 In summary, Burgess Hill forms a strong and integral part of a wider and complementary cluster of towns. This leads to the view that the town needs to cultivate its distinctive character as a place and to be as well connected as possible within that wider cluster. An expanded town centre with more mixed uses will address these and other issues, supported by a review of local centres and local connectivity within the town. The existing peripheral places of attraction and activity can be developed to form mixed use District Centres, serving the existing and growing population. A detailed review of limited development opportunities to the eastern edge of the town and expansion



along the northern edge will support a new urban edge to the west of and incorporating the Green Crescent. Beyond this, further development should be properly planned as an addition in its own right to the existing cluster of towns. The existing features of the town and its quality of life, and its location in the “Gatwick Diamond”, provide an excellent springboard for capturing an increasing share of high technology employment.

11.00 IMPLEMENTATION

Spatial planning arrangements

- 11.1 Whether the vision outlined in this document is accepted as an informal objective by most stakeholders or not, it has been explained earlier that the statutory town planning processes operated by Mid Sussex District Council are the means by which the “real” plan for the town will unfold, and in which all residents will have real input. However, the statutory plans will only go as far ahead as 2026 whereas this document suggests a direction of travel for the town well into the 2030s and therefore can act as an informal guide if so desired.
- 11.2 The Secretary of State will decide the housing numbers and other strategic planning policies that will bear upon Mid Sussex District by 2008 or thereabouts. This will enable the District Council to complete a Core Strategy for the whole District. Consultation on the early stages of that strategy (*the Core Strategy*) are expected in Autumn 2007. The Core Strategy will propose the number of homes and amount of related development for Burgess Hill for the period to 2026. There will be formal statutory consultation with the public, and an examination of the document by an independent Inspector to make sure the proposals are “sound”. Some people and organisations will be invited to take part in the examination to help test the proposals in public.
- 11.3 If Burgess Hill is proposed for major growth and change as expected, it would be appropriate for the Core Strategy to evaluate, in testing various options, the appropriateness of starting a “daughter town” in the Hickstead area before 2026, or whether such an idea can be shelved for review at a later date.
- 11.4 Either way, the Core Strategy must define the scale and mix of growth at Burgess Hill and, if it is significant, it should state that the town is to be the subject of an Area Action Plan (AAP). This type of local development document can be detailed in its content and, once again, is subject to statutory planning processes including public consultation and examination by an independent Inspector. The Core Strategy for the whole District, by itself, could not give enough detail or attention to Burgess Hill to enable the issues reported here to be addressed.
- 11.5 We have been advised that the District Council is indeed thinking along these lines, and are currently considering the potential for an AAP to be prepared following the preparation of the Core Strategy.
- 11.6 It is a logical consequence of this visioning work that the AAP for Burgess Hill should not be limited too tightly to the town boundary or its immediate environs. The area should reach out to include the areas discussed in our report.

Development control

- 11.7 Under normal town planning procedures, the implementation of the Burgess Hill AAP would primarily rest with the private sector. Landowners, developers, investors, employers and others would be encouraged to bring forward schemes which supported the plan. Developer contributions to help overcome the impacts of individual developments (e.g. for extra schooling, or health facilities, or public transport services) would be negotiated by the District Council as each planning application came forward. This is “business as usual” development control by the local planning authority.

- 11.8 Public bodies, including the County and District Councils, would propose various infrastructure items for government funding, and would seek the involvement of government agencies such as English Partnerships and the South East Development Agency SEEDA to help make things happen.
- 11.9 Affordable housing – planners' jargon for new homes that are cross-subsidised so that they can be made available to people on lower incomes or in serious housing need - would be achieved partly through developer contributions, and by organising streams of funding from the Housing Corporation.
- 11.11 It is our understanding from preliminary discussions that land is potentially available to accommodate these infrastructure needs - they are not land hungry items. However, the challenge is to meet the financial costs of provision. This requires a mechanism to be established that enables additional financial contributions to be captured from any proposed development areas and then directed towards agreed infrastructure priorities elsewhere in the town. This requires a big step to be taken: the strategic requirements need to be identified and budgeted for, and expressed as a type of "strategic tariff" that would be instituted as an additional charge on development.

The case for developer contributions for wider purposes

- 11.10 With the encouragement of the government at the time of writing, local planning authorities can seek to be more ambitious in their negotiations for developer contributions. The high level reasoning is that the grant of planning permission will change the value of land from a few thousand pounds to a few million pounds per hectare, without a brick being laid and that the community, which creates the demand that creates the value, should be able to share in this "unearned" increase in value. Whether this high level argument is accepted or not – and it is controversial - the fact is that the opportunity exists for meeting the demands often made in the stakeholder discussions for the 'infrastructure deficit' in Burgess Hill to be overcome, and for new development to be fully served to a high standard.
- 11.12 This leads to the need for further steps to be taken. An arrangement would need to be made for the "strategic tariff" element to be safely banked (and not raided for other public expenditure), and held while it is pooled so that the sums can be accumulated for the major infrastructure items needed in the town.
- 11.13 An arrangement would also be needed to ensure the money is spent on the right things in the right place at the right time, and returned if not.
- 11.14 These ideas suggest that a "local delivery vehicle" for the growth of the Burgess Hill area might be needed. Such a body could be both the promoter and guardian of the vision – the "town champion" we have mentioned – and perhaps also the body that will receive and dispense the developer contributions for the benefit of the town. The body might be constituted in a number of different ways and more work would be needed on the idea.

Relationship between a Strategic Tariff and the Local Development Framework (LDF)

- 11.15 It is important that any tariff mechanism is included within the adopted LDF. The process of consultation and adoption of an LDF is thorough and, once adopted, the policy will have much greater weight. This will reduce the likelihood of challenges to the application of the policy in future planning decisions.
- 11.16 The policy may be included in detail within the Core Strategy. Alternatively a general policy can be included in the Core Strategy and supplemented with further detail set out in a Supplementary Planning Document as suggested in Circular 05/1005 which advises in Paragraph B26 that “More detailed policies applying the principles set out in the Development Plan Document...ought then to be included in Supplementary Planning Documents”.
- 11.17 In either case, it is important to ensure that both the Sustainability Appraisal and the tests of soundness are applied to the proposed policy. If amendments are made to the proposed policy after the initial Sustainability Appraisal and test of soundness have been considered, the proposed amendments to the policy will need to be re-evaluated. The advantages of setting out the detail in a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) rather than in the Core Strategy are that the SPD offers greater flexibility for review.
- 11.18 These agreements can incorporate pooled contributions as supported by Paragraph B21 of Circular 05/2005 and can include pooling between developments and between authorities.
- 11.19 Information we have gathered that will be of some relevance to the computation of a strategic tariff, and which has informed our visioning work anyway, is set out in Appendix 2.
- 11.20 The computation of a strategic tariff involves the assembly of the “wish list” from all possible claimants in the local authorities and elsewhere, and then some fierce editing (to ensure a realistic prospect of cost recovery from developments) and some prioritisation (not all desires can be fulfilled, and some matters will be more important than others). Even if there is no strategic tariff, editing “wish lists” and prioritising demands from spending departments and agencies must be done to assist the development control process. It is not good planning merely to hand the “wish list” to the developer, knowing the scheme cannot bear the cost. Is affordable housing more important than a library extension? Should the private company providing electricity be given financial assistance that might otherwise subsidise a bus service?

Why implementation arrangements matter

11.21 Our purpose in raising these points is that it is clear from the stakeholder workshops and from our own professional experience elsewhere that there is a very strong feeling that growth is only acceptable if carried out to a very high standard and of demonstrable benefit to the host community as a whole. This leads us to recommend that almost as much attention is given to the implementation arrangements as to the principle of development itself.

11.22 The issues are technically and legally difficult to resolve, and they must be thoroughly researched and be properly consulted upon and well administered. However, where extensive development is proposed, as may be the case at Burgess Hill, the potential benefits of this approach would be likely to justify the cost and time taken in having them properly established. In this way the prospect of major growth, miserable to some, can be seen as an opportunity to lift the spirit of the town, restore its own sense of purpose, and make it fit to face the future. We have no doubt it has both the potential and capability, and express our thanks to all contributors to our work and wish Burgess Hill every success.

Appendix 1: Acceptance list for Burgess Hill Visioning Workshop

ORGANISATION	INVITED	ATTENDED
Mid Sussex District Council	Anne Halligey Claire Timms Dick Lankester	No Yes Yes
Burgess Hill Town Council	David Carden	Yes
West Sussex County Council	Chris Cousins Steve Brown Alan Bell	No No Yes
Hurstpierpoint and Sayers Common Parish Council	Tim Ricketts	No
Cuckfield Rural Parish Council	Liz Bennett	No
Hassocks Parish Council	Linda Baker Noel Thomas	No Yes
Wivelsfield Parish Council	Allan Janes	No
Ditchling Parish Council	Mary Holman	No
Lewes District Council	Clare Flowers	Yes
East Sussex County Council	Graham Arr-Jones	No
South Downs Joint Committee	Martin Small	No
Mid Sussex Primary Care Trust	Mike Pritchard	Yes
West Sussex Primary Care Trust	Amanda Marshall	Yes
Network Rail	Chris Price	No
South East Water	James Grinnell	No
Southern Water	Chris Kneale	No
Environment Agency	Emma Winchester	No
Friends, Families and Travellers		No
Thornfield Properties plc	Mike Capocci Simon Hope	No Yes

Wates	David Brocklebank Judith Ashton (Planning Consultant)	No Yes
Sunley Homes	James Sunley	No
Rydon Homes Ltd	Mike Jones (Land Director) Chris Hough (Sigma Planning)	No Yes
Mrs C Godman Law		No
Hargreaves	Richard Andrew	No
Croudace Homes	Julian Black (Associate Planner) Keith Dolling	Yes Yes
Cluttons	Tim Hutchings	Yes
Glenbeigh Developments / Dacorar (Southern) Ltd	Colin Whelan	Yes
Sussex Enterprise	Beth Carpenter	No
West Sussex Economic Partnership	Simon Warburton	No
Scouts	Mike Wakeling	No
South Downs District Scouts	Janet Slaughter	Yes
Girl Guides	John Hudson David Virgo	No Yes
Chamber of Commerce	Jim Groves Paul Robinson	No No
Cyprus Road Community Hall Association	Sarah Voce	No
Oakmeads Community College	Colin Taylor (Head)	No
St Pauls Catholic College		No
Burgess Hill Business Park Association	Barry Swainston	No
Southern Access Group	Francis Gaudencio Tony Aston	Yes Yes
Burgess Hill web chat room	Richard Light	Yes

Sussex Wildlife Trust	Janyis Watson	Yes
Friends of the Green Crescent	Roy Ticehurst	Yes
Friends of Bedelands Farm Nature Reserve	Mary Smith	No
Burgess Hill into the Future	Denis Jones Chairman	Yes
Burgess Hill into the Future	Mike Wallace, Member	No
Churches Together	Ian Chisnall	No
James B Bennett & Co.	Kevin Newall	Yes
WSFRS	David Boarer	Yes

Appendix 2: Infrastructure situation report and some pointers for the consequences for future growth

Housing is the greatest single urban land use, and that is why visioning tends to seize upon the number and disposition of new homes. But each new home brings with it a requirement for a proportion of local employment, schools, shopping, community facilities, transport and green space, and of basic infrastructure to serve it such as roads, and water and electricity supply.

As explained in the body of the report, the employment needs actually to be met within Burgess Hill require an economic development analysis which is beyond the scope of the visioning exercise, but it is clear there is space inside the town and its expansion areas for what is likely to be needed.

The need for retailing will be established through the study under way at the time of writing, and the location will be the town district and local centres.

As the town expands, there will be the need for more schools and other community facilities and green space. The standards to be applied will need to be set out in the Council's new statutory planning documents, as will the Council's policy to recover cost from development.

In this Appendix we do not set out the recommended standards, or the detail of the cost recovery of site specific and local infrastructure. Rather, taking the 30 year strategic view, we have investigated the main features of more than site specific or very local interest and, in particular, to try to identify any "showstopper" items that would prevent major growth at Burgess Hill. There are none.

This news might seem shocking, as local residents will be acutely aware of local constraints and current problems. The propensity for the road to flood under the railway line by Wivelsfield Station, for example, is used by the drainage authorities at present to try to stop any form of development upstream of that spot. In strategic terms, however, this particular problem is not very significant – there are bodies with statutory responsibilities and powers to deal with it, and the resources can be obtained for the purpose – it just requires the will and the passage of a little time to get the solution in place.

This Appendix deals instead with matters that might be of more significance to the whole town over the longer term.

Infrastructure & Community Facilities

Growth can enable further investment to be made in services and facilities across the town, as well as improving the vitality and viability of existing and future services. However, clear priorities will need to be established as to which elements of infrastructure are to be funded by developer contributions from new development. The following summary considers some of the key services that will need to be provided and the likely scale of provision. It is not intended to provide a detailed list for developer contributions – these will need to be considered in much greater detail and clear priorities will need to be agreed in negotiating any agreements.

Highways Infrastructure

As explained in the body of the report, the Atkins study suggested that the creation of three new rail crossings would be prohibitively expensive (*Feasibility Study for Development Options at Burgess Hill Final Report*, Atkins, 2005). The externally-generated need – commuters from East Sussex seeking the A23 and Gatwick - is expected to evaporate with the completion of the Haywards Heath outer relief road. Viewing the town structure for residents rather than passers-by, one additional rail crossing may be sufficient, subject to highway studies. We have suggested the southern route. Extrapolating from the costs attributed to the links by Atkins, a sum of approximately £23m may be required. There is no other strategic highway infrastructure required in the vision that is offered, though local improvements and realignments to east/west roads might be achieved through agreements arising from nearby development if there is no strategic tariff in place, or from the tariff pool if one exists.

Rail Infrastructure

Various studies have shown that the London – Brighton line is a third over capacity (*Funding the Future of Mid Sussex*, Mid Sussex District Council, 2004). At least one recent study has suggested that investment will be required to address rail bottlenecks on the line or the tendency for increased commuting to London from longer and longer distances should aim to be reversed (*Augmenting the Evidence Base for the Examination*

in Public of the South East Plan, Roger Tym & Partners in association with Land Use Consultants, 2006). Further detailed investigations will be necessary to inform the viability of local improvements or additional rail crossing points, and it is understood that Network Rail is currently undertaking further work to evaluate the economic and operational costings of further crossings.

Water and Sewerage Infrastructure

Water supply is a concern across the South East Region, however it is understood that Burgess Hill is not unusually constrained in this respect. Southern Water has a statutory responsibility to appraise the capacity of the wastewater network and to provide for planned growth. The Atkins report states that:

“The existing Goddards Green STW is relatively new and capable of extension to accommodate additional flows. The proposed development of Burgess Hill would represent approximately a 7% increase in wastewater flows.”

The report also notes that:

“Sites to the east of the town are relatively isolated and it is unlikely that existing sewers through the town will be capable of accepting large increases in flow. As such these areas would most likely need to become separate catchments, pumped into existing strategic pumping stations.”

The Interim Report by Cllr Christopher Maidment (*Interim Progress Report for MSDC Performance & Scrutiny Committee, Sewage Infrastructure Working Group, 2006*) states that:

“Work is ongoing with both Southern Water and the Environment Agency to clearly define an Action Plan for further improvements.”

The report also notes that:

“The plant can and does treat more sewage than it was designed to do. There are no plans to increase the treatment capacity of Goddards Green at all.”

Healthcare facilities

Two new Primary Care Centres are currently needed within Burgess Hill, one in the town centre and one in the east of the town. Each Primary Care Centre accommodates approx 6-9 GPs (as well as a broad range of other healthcare services) and each GP has a list of 1500 – 2000 patients. Development of an additional 8,000 dwellings would generate approximately 20,000 patients which equates to between ten and fourteen GPs. Each Primary Care Centre needs a site of approximately 0.5 ha and would be between two and three storeys in height. Each site should preferably be able to accommodate an element of flexibility in the site to enable facilities to evolve over time.

Healthcare provision across West Sussex is currently being reviewed by West Sussex Primary Care Trust and public consultation is due to commence early in 2007. This may include proposals to review the existing hospital provision at Haywards Heath, particularly in terms of Accident and Emergency services which may be more effectively supplemented by Primary Care Centres. The basis of the review of NHS services is threefold: to meet clinical safety standards; to address changes in national policy; and to restructure in order to minimise financial deficits. There will be an opportunity for any significant development proposals in Burgess Hill to be considered as part of this review.

Education facilities

It is understood that there is no existing deficit in terms of school provision. Future development will generate a need for new schools. As a general guideline the District Council advises that one primary school is needed for approximately 2,000 dwellings and one secondary school is needed for every 4 primary schools. Based on these guidelines, an increase of approximately 8,000 dwellings would need to be supported by a capacity equivalent to 4 new primary schools and one new secondary school. The Atkins Report estimated school place capacity at existing primary schools to be capable of accommodating approximately 500 additional students. However, there was estimated to be no further capacity at existing secondary schools (*Feasibility Study for Development Options at Burgess Hill Final Report, September 2005, Atkins*).

In terms of Sixth Form and Further Education provision, the Learning and Skills Council advise that there is no existing or short term deficit in terms of provision within the wider Burgess Hill catchment. It is acknowledged that there is limited provision within Burgess Hill itself but that the wider catchments served by Sixth Form and Further Education colleges in Haywards Heath and Brighton serve wide areas including and beyond Burgess Hill. Both colleges have also recently received approval for significant levels of investment which will increase their capacity. It is also useful to note that the Sixth Form College in Haywards Heath was formed from the merger of the Sixth Form College, which had become unviable on its own, with the Further Education College to create the Central Sussex College. It is recommended that a minimum student list of 1100 students is required to support a viable Sixth Form College.

For Higher Education, it is understood that the University of Brighton and the University of Sussex both have plans to offer higher education in the Crawley area in addition to their existing campuses. Degree courses are also available in Worthing. It is understood that there is no identified and specific deficit in terms of Higher Education provision in the wider Burgess Hill catchment.

The universities of Brighton and Sussex serve this wider area. Both the University of Sussex and the University of Brighton have a medium to longer term aspiration to create a campus in the Crawley area, which would also be within easy commuting distance of the Burgess Hill area.

Other Community Facilities

It is understood that the existing library in Burgess Hill is below floor space standards for the size of the town and that the County Council has successfully sought developer contributions towards further expansion and improvements. It is envisaged that additional growth of up to 5,000 dwellings could be additionally catered for at a central town centre facility (*Town Wide Plan for Burgess Hill – West Sussex County Council's Infrastructure Needs, Officer's Working Note, 2006*). Growth beyond this level has not been considered at this stage by the County and so there is no indication at this stage as to whether additional growth might also potentially be accommodated at a single central library facility.

An assessment of open space has been carried out on behalf of Mid Sussex District Council and identifies in detail existing shortages in the provision of local open space and sport and recreational facilities (*Mid Sussex District Council PPG17 Assessment*, Kit Campbell Associates, 2006). Some surpluses of provision in comparison to recommended standards are also highlighted in the report, particularly in relation to indoor sports facilities. The report finds that the south eastern sector of the town is generally the least well served by current provision. Reflecting the deficit in relation to the provision of outdoor pitches, the report recommends that ideally a new multi pitch centre should be provided in the Burgess Hill area, and which could serve most of South Mid Sussex. St Paul's Catholic College is suggested as a possible location for such a facility. The report also notes that enhancing existing provision should have a higher priority than creating additional provision. It is anticipated that the land take that would be needed to accommodate the type of facilities considered by the consultant's assessment could easily be accommodated within the scale of strategic growth that this visioning report is concerned with.

An assessment of outdoor playing space has also been carried out by Mid Sussex District Council (*Mid Sussex Local Plan Burgess Hill Outdoor Playing Space Survey*, Mid Sussex District Council, 2002). This survey estimates that the existing provision of outdoor playing space achieves 45% of the standard recommended level of provision from the National Playing Field Association.

STRATEGIC GROWTH KEY REQUIREMENTS IN KEY SECTORS	SUMMARY	ARE THESE ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS ALREADY PROGRAMMED?
Rail	The London-Brighton line is currently 30% over capacity.	
Highways	A detailed highways assessment is needed to identify highways requirements.	
Water supply	Water supply is a concern across the South East Region, however Burgess Hill is not particularly constrained.	South East Water has a statutory responsibility to appraise the capacity of the network and to provide for planned growth.
Sewerage		Southern Water has a statutory responsibility to appraise the capacity of the network and to provide for planned growth.
Health	4 new Primary Care Centres are being planned within Burgess Hill, with enough capacity to serve an additional 8,000 dwellings.	Yes
Education	There is no existing identified deficit in terms of school provision. An additional 8,000 dwellings would need to be supported by capacity equivalent to 4 new primary schools and one new secondary school.	Levels of educational provision will be reviewed on the basis of estimated demand for school places.
	There is no existing identified deficit in terms of Sixth Form and Further Education provision.	n/a
	There is no existing identified deficit in terms of Higher Education provision.	n/a

In considering the westward limits of Burgess Hill, we have considered the guidelines in The Urban Task Force Report (*Towards an urban renaissance: final report of the Urban Task Force*, 1999, Urban Task Force). The Urban Task Force Report identifies an approximate catchment distance for a district or a town as being 2-6km.

We have considered the area around Hickstead as a potential area for further development. A small –medium sized new town at Hickstead would have the capacity, along with Burgess Hill, to accommodate the level of growth that we are considering in this report. There may be scope at Hickstead for further growth in the longer term. Considering the same catchment distances described above from The Urban Task Force Report, we have considered the potential for development at Hickstead to extend westwards for a distance of approximately 2km. With the incorporation of a green gap that would prevent coalescence between Burgess Hill and Hickstead, this also reinforces the westward limit of Burgess Hill.

Any new or largely new town needs to have a minimum size in order to establish viability for key services and facilities. The minimum size for a small new community embedded in a cluster of places is generally regarded as between 3,000-4,000 dwellings. This is largely based on the minimum population level that is needed to establish the viability of a secondary school, which in West Sussex is approximately 3,000 dwellings.