

**2011-2031**



# **Cuckfield Parish Council**

## **CUCKFIELD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SUBMISSION PLAN**

**(INCORPORATING EXAMINER'S MODIFICATIONS AND ALL  
MODIFICATIONS INCLUDED IN THE MID SUSSEX DISTRICT COUNCIL  
DECISION STATEMENT)**

A Neighbourhood Plan that ensures Cuckfield will continue to thrive, meeting the changing needs of the community whilst preserving the distinctive character, landscape, and setting of the village that has evolved over nine centuries of history.

**May 2014**



## Acknowledgements

This document has been developed and produced by the Parish Council and a community group of volunteers with wide ranging skills and backgrounds on behalf of the whole Cuckfield community.

Cuckfield was appointed by the Department of Community and Local Government (DCLG) 'Front Runner' status in 2011 and was part of an early group of Town and Parish Councils to adopt the principle of developing a neighbourhood plan.

The team would like to thank the following in preparation of the documents:

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- Catherine Martin for the Sustainability Appraisal.
- The community groups in Cuckfield for providing support through their membership, in particular The Cuckfield Society, Holy Trinity Church and Holy Trinity CE (A) Primary School.

The Parish Council and the Neighbourhood Plan team would like to thank the whole community for participating in the process and for coming together and supporting the Neighbourhood Plan over the past 18 months.

The following individuals have given up their time to develop the plan and supporting evidence.

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## Index of Evidence

The following documents have provided the evidence base used to formulate this plan. They are all available at [www.cuckfield.gov.uk](http://www.cuckfield.gov.uk).

1. Community Engagement Action Plan.
2. Options Consultation Feedback.
  - 2.2 *Pre Submission - Statement of Consultation.*
3. Sustainability Appraisal Report.
  - 3.1 *Non-Technical Sustainability Appraisal Report.*
4. Cuckfield Village Design Statement.
5. Cuckfield Open Space Assessment.
6. Cuckfield Landscape Character Assessment.
7. Cuckfield Landscape: Views Assessment.
8. Cuckfield Biodiversity Review.
9. Housing Needs Survey.
10. Parish Housing Land Availability Assessment (PHLAA).
  - 10.1 *Parish Housing Land Availability Assessment Methodology*
11. Cuckfield Village Centre Background Document.
12. Whitemans Green Neighbourhood Centre Background Document.
13. Cuckfield Infrastructure Assessment.
14. MSDC Cuckfield Conservation Area Appraisal.
15. Whitemans Green Conservation Area Parish Council Review.
16. MSDC Whitemans Green Conversation Appraisal.
17. Cuckfield and Haywards Heath Distinctiveness.
18. Built Up Area Boundary Assessment.

## **Introduction.**

The Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan is a new type of planning document produced in the Parish. It is part of the Government's new approach to planning which aims to give local people more say about what goes on in their area. This is set out in the Localism Act that came into force in April 2012.

If passed at a local referendum, the Neighbourhood Plan will be adopted by Mid Sussex District Council (MSDC) as the plan which must be used in law to determine planning applications in the Parish; it will become part of the Development Plan alongside the District Council's Local Plan.

The Plan therefore provides the local community with a powerful tool to guide the long term future of Cuckfield and its surrounding countryside for the period 2011 to 2031. The Plan contains a vision for the future of Cuckfield Parish and sets out clear planning policies to realise this vision.

In order to develop the Neighbourhood Plan, Cuckfield Parish Council set up a Neighbourhood Plan team which comprises five Parish Councillors and a number of local volunteers.

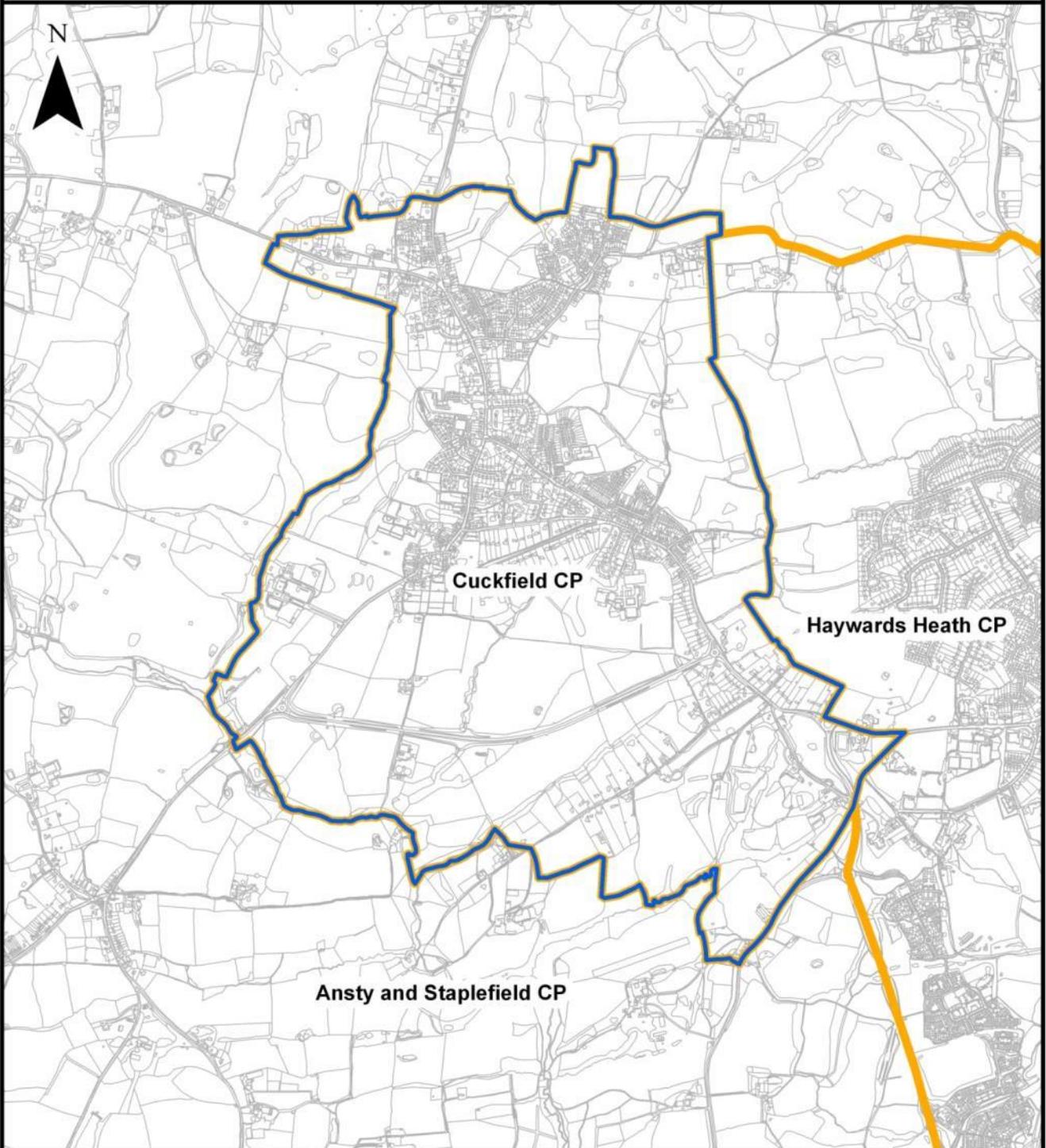
Some of the Neighbourhood Plan policies are general and apply throughout the Plan area, whilst others are site or area specific and apply only to the appropriate areas illustrated on the relevant Map. Nevertheless, in considering proposals for development, the Parish and District Council will apply all relevant policies of the Plan. It is therefore assumed that the Plan will be read as a whole and cross-referencing between Plan policies has been avoided.

The Plan should also be read in conjunction with the National Planning Policy Framework, Mid Sussex District Council's Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan Evidence Documents (as outlined in the Index of Evidence).

## **Which Area Does The Neighbourhood Plan Cover?**

The Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan covers all of Cuckfield Parish (Urban). In preparing the Plan, there has been dialogue with the adjoining Ansty & Staplefield Parish Council and Haywards Heath Town Council as well as with Mid Sussex District Council. An application for neighbourhood plan designation was approved by Mid Sussex District Council on 9 July 2012. This is shown in Map 1 – Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan Area.

# Map 1 - Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan Area



## Key

-  Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan Area
-  Parish Boundaries

0 780 Meters



Map produced by:

**Cuckfield Parish  
Council**

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Ordnance Survey 0040086631

## **Your Involvement in the Neighbourhood Plan Process**

The Neighbourhood Plan team has followed the necessary legal steps to create the Plan. Importantly, the team developed and followed a Community Engagement Action Plan to ensure extensive engagement with the people of Cuckfield and others with an interest in the area.

The process is set out in Figure 1 – Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan Process with the opportunities for local involvement highlighted in green. The timetable was partly dependant on the responses received to the Plan, and the number of issues to be considered by the independent examiner, and their reporting time.

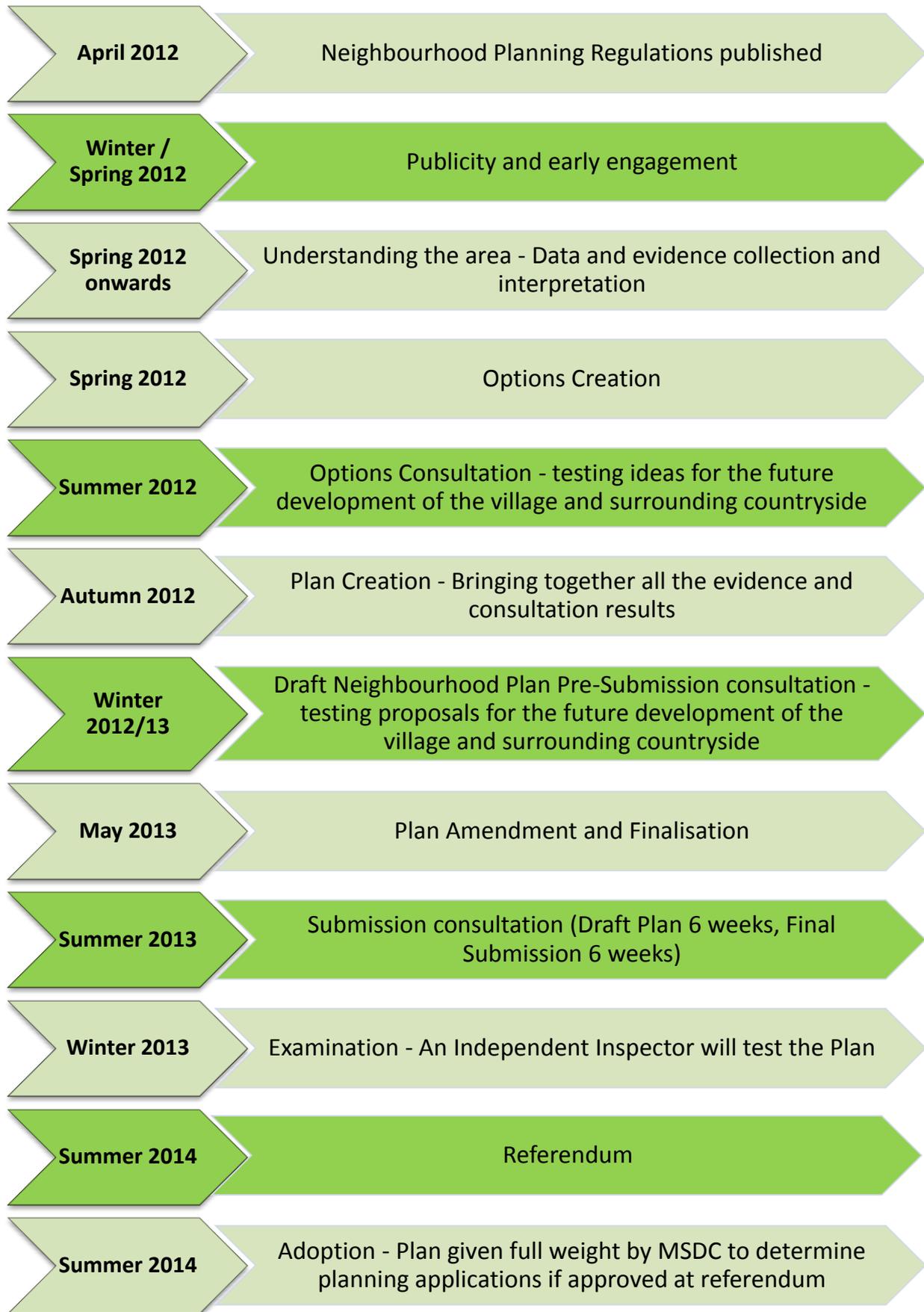
Consultation events have included an online questionnaire, a paper questionnaire, and two open day events in June 2012 where residents were able to comment on a number of options for the Plan. Further Pre Submission consultation was held in February/March 2013. These comments have influenced the Submission Plan.

Details of the consultation have been recorded in a series of reports that are available to download from our website at [www.cuckfield.gov.uk](http://www.cuckfield.gov.uk) or to view the Parish Office, Queen's Hall.

The Neighbourhood Plan has been carefully examined by an Independent Examiner who is delighted to recommend to Mid Sussex District Council that the Cuckfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan as modified by her recommendations should proceed to a referendum.

This plan is a submission document incorporating the recommendations of the Examiner, as approved by Mid Sussex District Council, and is now the subject of a public referendum for those living in Cuckfield Parish where it is necessary to gain more than 50% 'yes' vote of those voting in order to bring the plan into force.

**Figure 1 – Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan Process**



## **How the Neighbourhood Plan Fits Into the Planning System**

Although the Government's intention is for local people to decide what goes on in their parish, all Neighbourhood Plans must be in line with higher level planning policy. That is, Neighbourhood Plans must

- comply with European regulations on strategic environmental assessment and habitat,
- take account of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and
- generally conform to the strategic policies of the adopted Mid Sussex Local Plan (2004).

In order to future-proof the Plan, the local team has also ensured through close dialogue with the District Council that the Plan is appropriately in line with up to date evidence of any strategic needs identified for the area and the emerging District Plan.

Nevertheless, if passed at a local referendum, the Neighbourhood Plan will be adopted by Mid Sussex District Council as the plan which must be used in law to determine planning applications in the Parish.

## **What Is In The Neighbourhood Plan?**

Although deciding where new housing and new employment should go is an important part of the Plan, it is about much more than this. The Plan is for the Parish as a whole and looks at a wide range of issues, including:

- Achieving high quality development which fits well with the location.
- Protecting open space within the village as well as the surrounding countryside including the landscape, views and habitats.
- Meeting local housing needs.
- Promoting local businesses in the village centre and Whitemans Green neighbourhood centre.
- Local transport proposals including the maintenance and enhancement of public rights of way.
- Facilitating the expansion of local schools, open space and improved community facilities.

## **What Period Does The Neighbourhood Plan Cover?**

The Mid Sussex District Plan period is from 2011 – 2031 and in order to generally align with the strategic policies of the plan, the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan covers the same period.

## **Sustainability Appraisal**

To ensure that the policies and proposals set out in the Neighbourhood Plan contribute to sustainable development, it has been tested to see how well it performs against economic, social and environmental objectives. In order to assess the sustainability impacts of different plan and policy options, an appraisal framework (known as a Scoping Report) was prepared, with inputs from statutory consultees.

This has helped in developing the Plan's vision and objectives, the overall planning strategy and individual policies that work towards achieving sustainable development, offering economic, social and environmental benefits. At each stage in the Neighbourhood Plan preparation, an assessment has been undertaken and recommendations made as to how the sustainability of the Plan might be improved. The Sustainability Appraisal Report presents the appraisal of this submission Neighbourhood Plan and demonstrates how the Neighbourhood Plan meets the sustainability objectives of the Parish. The majority of the policies proposed in the Neighbourhood Plan have a positive impact on the parish's environmental, social and economic wellbeing. Taken as a whole, the policies of the Plan have no net negative impact, and therefore no additional mitigation is required. The overall effect of the implementation of the Plan will be to contribute to the objectives of sustainable development within the Parish.

The sustainability objectives concerning the global issue of climate change are partially addressed in the Neighbourhood Plan through the location of development, reducing the length of journeys, protection of open space and vegetation and the need for sustainable transport, but specific measures in relation to sustainable design are covered through the NPPF and part L of the Building Regulations (Code Level 4 expected to be mandatory for all housing development from October 2013) and are not repeated in this Plan. The emerging Mid Sussex District Council District Plan also contains specific measures.

## How This Plan Is Organised

This Plan is divided into five sections:

- Section 1: About Cuckfield Today:** a brief description of the Parish today and the key issues that have influenced the Plan
- Section 2: The Vision for Cuckfield:** over the next 20 years
- Section 3: Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan Strategy:** the broad planning approach for Cuckfield and how this conforms to higher level planning policy.
- Section 4: Neighbourhood Plan Policies:** which set out policies to support the overall vision, including site specific allocations for new development. Policies are arranged in the following themes:
- Environment
  - Housing
  - Local Economy
  - Getting Around
  - Wellbeing and Leisure
- Section 5: Monitoring and Review:** how the Plan will be monitored

## Section 1: About Cuckfield Today

A wide range of issues have been considered in producing the Neighbourhood Plan. These are grouped under five themes:

- Environment
- Local Economy
- Wellbeing and Leisure
- Housing
- Getting Around

The key issues for these five themes are set out below. The main issues have been identified from research along with issues raised by local people at the various consultation events. The background reports used to help prepare the Neighbourhood Plan are referred to in more detail in Section 4. A full report of issues raised during consultation is set out in the 'Consultation Plan'.

### 1.1 Environment

The origins of Cuckfield, or Kukefeld (a clearing in the wood) as it was originally known, date back to before Saxon times and the earliest recorded date for a church here is 1092, though the present church building dates from the 13th century. Whitemans Green was once a separate hamlet but has merged with Cuckfield. The historic centres of Cuckfield and Whitemans Green are designated Conservation Areas for their special architectural and historic character and combine with an additional five distinct character areas of more recent development to form the distinctive village environment. Within the Conservation Areas there is a high incidence of heritage assets - English Heritage's register has 97 separate listings, mainly for Grade II and Grade II\* buildings, with Holy Trinity church being Grade I. Roland B Harris' Cuckfield Historic Character Assessment Report, completed as part of the 2005 Sussex Extensive Urban Study, contains considerable village heritage background ([www.midsussex.gov.uk/8308.htm](http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/8308.htm)).

Cuckfield is situated on a ridge within the attractive undulating landscape setting of the High Weald Fringes at the edge of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) which skirts the northern and western edges of the village. Each of the areas of countryside around the village has a distinctive character with most having a substantial sensitivity to change. One of the distinctive features which results from the topography and layout of development is the strong visual connectivity between the village and the landscape – offering uncluttered long and shorter distance views from the built up area.

The countryside around the village contains attractive landscape, designated ancient woodland, species-rich hedgerows and protected species and offers potential for enhancement.

Without careful planning, the distinctive character and sensitive landscape and ecology are under threat from significant and inappropriately located or designed development. To the west and north is the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, to the east and south there are areas of landscape of major or substantial landscape value or sensitivity. The south is the distinctive and rural medieval setting of the village and to the east there are strong biodiversity interests. There are concerns about the coalescence with Haywards Heath.

## **1.2 Housing**

The 2011 census tells us that in 2011 Cuckfield had 1439 dwellings with a predominance of family housing (71% of homes having 3 bedrooms or more) 74% of homes are owned, with 13% available for social rent, 12% private rent and 1% shared ownership.

Between 2001 and 2011 just over 100 dwellings have been added to the housing stock of the Parish.

The number of dwellings already completed since the start of the plan period (2011) is 27 and a further 90 dwellings are committed through planning permissions. The Housing Needs Survey 2012 has revealed a local need for market and affordable housing but there is pressure from developers for Cuckfield to accommodate significantly more housing than is necessary to meet local housing need. Residents would prefer the village not to allocate land for a large number of additional dwellings.

## **1.3 Local Economy**

The most recently available census tells us that in 2011 many of the 1620 economically active residents (3500 residents in total) were working outside the Parish.

Most local employment is to be found in the village centre and Whitemans Green neighbourhood centre shops and services, community services such as schools and the doctors' surgery, tourist accommodation, small scale industry as well as those working from home.

Of real importance to the community are the shops and services provided at the village centre and the Whitemans Green neighbourhood centre. The location, village centre boutique shops, heritage and landscape, make this an attractive area for tourists and visitors. A high quality hotel and spa and other tourist accommodation play an important role in the local economy. It is important that these facilities and attractions are retained in order to maintain a thriving local economy.

## **1.4 Getting Around**

Peak hour congestion occurs on London Road and at the Ardingly Road, London Lane and Broad Street junctions. Congestion also occurs close to the schools during term time and when events are held at these locations.

The interlinking network of paths and twittens within the village and into the countryside is an important asset for non-car users and for informal leisure.

## **1.5 Wellbeing and Leisure**

Cuckfield is blessed by a strong community spirit reflected in the number of groups and activities taking place. These groups need places in which to meet and there are a number of excellent facilities within the village including the newly re-ordered Holy Trinity Church, Old School adjacent to the church; Holy Trinity CE Primary and Warden Park schools, the Queen's Hall and the Youth Club building. The Youth Club building is in need of improvement.

The Cuckfield Medical Practice surgery is located adjacent to Holy Trinity Primary School and is in modern, purpose built and accessible premises. The practice is partnered with the Vale practice in Haywards Heath.

There is generally good provision of open space serving the village whether in terms of local amenity areas, formal play areas and sports pitches, or informal recreation through the extensive footpath and bridleway network and access to woodlands and countryside. There is an identified need for further allotments to meet future demand.

## **Section 2: The Vision for Cuckfield**

The following vision looks forward over the next 20 years and has been derived from extensive public engagement:

Our vision is for Cuckfield to continue to thrive, meeting the changing needs of the community whilst preserving the distinctive character, landscape, and setting of the village that has evolved over nine centuries of history.

### Section 3: Neighbourhood Plan Strategy

Cuckfield has continued to thrive by adapting and evolving over nine centuries. Necessary development to provide new homes, businesses and community facilities for Cuckfield will continue to come forward. The Neighbourhood Plan is looking to ensure that development needed to sustain the Parish is well located and designed to respond to the distinctive local character.

Following a careful assessment of the evidence and responses from public consultation, the planning strategy is to focus well designed development to meet identified needs within the built up area of Cuckfield whilst protecting and enhancing the character of the village and the attractive countryside beyond.

A built-up area boundary is defined for Cuckfield which seeks to enable development opportunities within the village whilst protecting its rural setting and the surrounding countryside from inappropriate development. The boundary has been updated since the 2004 Mid Sussex Local Plan to include development that has been built since that date; sites where planning permission has already been granted (to reflect the planning status of these sites) and other well located and screened areas which have some capacity to accommodate development. The new Cuckfield Built Up Area Boundary is shown on Map 2. (See also Built Up Area Boundary Assessment – [www.cuckfield.gov.uk](http://www.cuckfield.gov.uk))

The Neighbourhood Plan recognises the important community networks in Cuckfield and seeks to protect the social and economic hubs of the village centre and Whitemans Green neighbourhood centre together with other community and leisure facilities which are important to the social fabric of the Parish.

The Plan seeks to allow limited development within the countryside by allocating previously developed sites (the former Court Meadow School and Horsgate House, Hanlye Lane ) for housing development, allowing suitable conversions or new buildings for business or tourist uses and enabling the expansion of existing business premises and tourist accommodation and, if necessary, school facilities. Nevertheless, any development beyond the built up area boundary should protect and enhance the setting of the village, the views from it, the landscape character and biodiversity of the countryside.

The Neighbourhood Plan strategy is well aligned with the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This means that:

- Local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area;
- Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs, with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change, unless:
- Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole; or
- Specific policies in the NPPF indicate development should be restricted.

All plans should be based on, and reflect, the presumption in favour of sustainable development, and take account of the NPPF with clear policies that will guide how the presumption should be applied locally. The national planning policy background to each of the Neighbourhood Plan topics is set out in the relevant sections of the Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the current Local Plan. The emerging District Plan also provides a relevant planning context. This means that neighbourhoods should develop plans that support the strategic development needs set out in local plans, including policies for housing and economic development; and plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development in their area. To facilitate this, local planning authorities should set out clearly their strategic policies for the area and ensure that an up-to-date local plan is in place as quickly as possible. The Neighbourhood Plan should reflect these policies and should plan positively to support them. The Neighbourhood Plan should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies.

The Mid Sussex Local Plan was adopted in 2004 for the period up to 2006. It was produced under legislation which preceded the new planning system heralded by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and the Localism Act 2011. It also preceded the NPPF. The Local Plan was based on Regional Planning Guidance for the South East (RPG9) - March 2001 which preceded the adopted South East Plan (2010). The Local Plan attaches great weight to the protection and improvement of the urban and rural environment of Mid Sussex, the quality of life which residents and visitors enjoy, their amenity and the conservation of its natural and created resources.

This means precluding development which destroys, unacceptably damages or pollutes the environment. The Local Plan distinguishes clearly between the countryside and the built-up areas and aims to focus most development within the built up areas of the District. The Plan aims to protect and strongly resist development within the countryside particularly those areas of special qualities such as the best and most versatile agricultural land, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Strategic and Local Gaps. The loss of wildlife habitats and corridors is also resisted, together with harm to heritage assets and their setting. Enhancement of the countryside through good management is encouraged. The Local Plan aims to encourage high standards of design and sufficient infrastructure wherever new development is permitted.

In order to meet the above objectives, the Local Plan considers the most desirable location for new residential development to be within, or adjacent to, existing built-up areas and in particular the three main towns of the District (Burgess Hill, Haywards Heath and East Grinstead). However, the Local Plan considers that some limited development opportunities also exist within the villages where there is sufficient infrastructure to accommodate development or where the benefits of the development are important to the village.

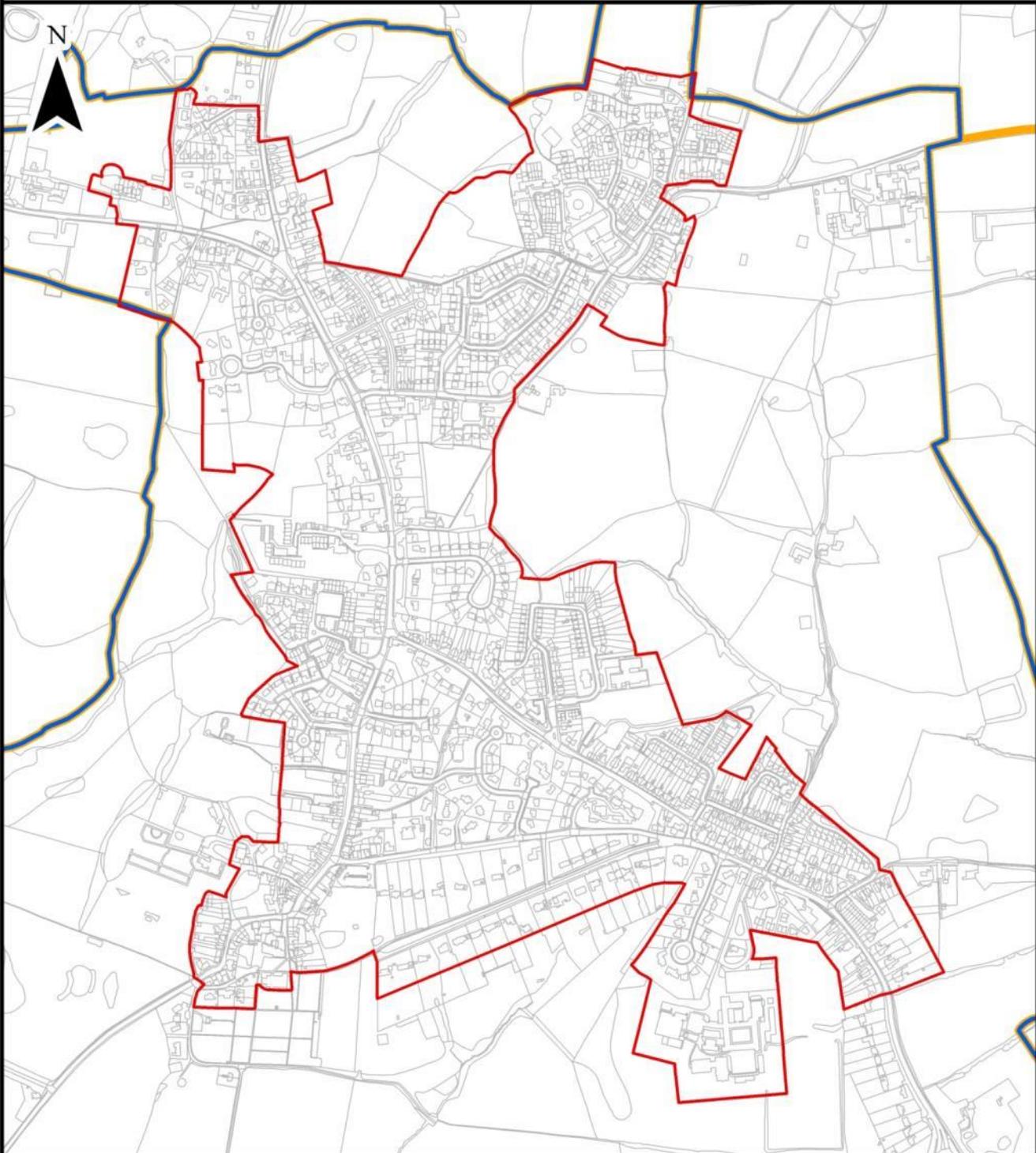
The Local Plan allocates one housing site at Cuckfield west of High Street for approximately 50 dwellings including 30% affordable housing. This development has been completed. No strategic employment or retail allocations are made in the Parish. The Plan contains a large number of detailed policies but these are not considered to be strategic policies. The Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan.

The Local Plan policies were designed to be relevant up to 2006 (when the South East Plan was adopted) whereas the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan extends to 2031. Mid Sussex District Council is preparing a new District Plan which must be consistent with the NPPF. Following the revocation of the South East Plan, local authorities are bringing forward proposals (for example on housing targets) which have a local interpretation to them in their plans, based on their own sound evidence base. The overall aim of the Proposed Submission Mid Sussex District Plan's strategy is to increase the 'self-sufficiency' of communities within Mid Sussex and reduce their dependence on other areas for employment and other facilities. The strategy seeks to provide sustainable communities which support the local economy, and provide the opportunity for residents to work within their communities and access other necessary services and facilities close to home.

The District Council has based the revised District Plan on new evidence, including new housing targets for the District to provide sufficient deliverable and developable housing sites to meet the District housing requirement. No strategic housing target is set for Cuckfield Parish but through early consultation Cuckfield Parish Council indicated that the Parish could accommodate approximately 130 additional homes over the plan period up to 2031, which includes existing planning consents of approximately 100 dwellings. Other Parishes submitted their own targets to help deliver the overall housing need (Housing Supply Document published by Mid Sussex District Council in March 2013). Consequently, in order to meet this target, the District Council expects that 130 dwellings will be completed in Cuckfield Parish in the period up to 2031. Consultation on the submission District Plan was closed on 17<sup>th</sup> June 2013. No strategic employment, retail or infrastructure requirements are identified for the Parish. A policy identifies Cuckfield village centre within the hierarchy of centres within the District where development, including for mixed uses, will be permitted providing it helps maintain and develop the range of shops and services to enable the village centre to meet local needs and is appropriate in scale and function to its location.

Where neighbourhood planning is undertaken before an up-to-date local plan is in place, collaboration between the community and the District Council is critical. In developing the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan, Mid Sussex District Council has taken an active role in advising and supporting the local Neighbourhood Plan team, sharing evidence and information and ensuring the Neighbourhood Plan fits with any relevant up-to-date evidence of strategic needs. The Parish Council has received advice from MSDC that the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and the emerging District Plan.

## Map 2 - Cuckfield Built Up Area Boundary



### Key

-  Built up area boundary
-  Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan Area
-  Parish Boundaries

0 360 Meters



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**Cuckfield Parish  
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## Section 4: Neighbourhood Plan Policies

### 4.1 Environment

#### *Objectives*

- To preserve and enhance the distinctive heritage of the area.
- To protect important open spaces within the village.
- To ensure development is well designed and reflects the heritage and distinctive character of Cuckfield.
- To protect and enhance the high quality and sensitive landscape within the Parish and the setting of the village.
- To maintain the distinctive views and visual connectivity with the surrounding countryside from public places within the built up area.
- To protect the identity of Cuckfield and prevent any further coalescence of Cuckfield with Haywards Heath.
- To protect and enhance biodiversity.

#### *Policies*

##### **High Quality Design**

The National Planning Policy Framework states that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. Sustainable development involves achieving positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in people's quality of life, including replacing poor design with better design. One of the Government's core planning principles is to always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

Through evaluation, there is a good understanding of the distinctive character of the village, and the surrounding landscape. Evidence of this can be seen in the Village Design Statement, produced by the community and covering important development design features, MSDC Cuckfield Conservation Area Appraisal, and the Landscape Character Area Assessment (available at [www.cuckfield.gov.uk](http://www.cuckfield.gov.uk) & [www.midsussex.gov.uk/8324.htm](http://www.midsussex.gov.uk/8324.htm)). The Neighbourhood Plan also has a clear vision and objectives for the future of the area.

The character of the Conservation Areas owes much to the variety of architectural forms, styles and materials represented by buildings constructed and developed over hundreds of years. There are many examples of pre 15th Century timber framed buildings together with some sandstone buildings, rendered or tile hung facades and many different styles of brick built properties constructed from the 18th century to the present day (reflecting Cuckfield's heritage as a brick producing settlement).

The last hundred years of new build took on some of the characteristics of the old style hung clay tiles and the Georgian style windows. A wide variety of traditional details are employed not only in the Conservation Areas but throughout Cuckfield including:

- Hipped and half hipped roofs,
- Sash windows,
- Chimney stacks,
- Panelled and plank doors.
- Some of the buildings are also finished in render or painted brickwork predominantly white or cream in colour.

Wealden clay tiles are used for roofs and to great effect for tile hanging using a variety of patterns including plain, bull nose, club and fishtail, Mathematical tiles are used occasionally. Horsham Stone is also used for roofing particularly on pre 1800 buildings.

This diversity in building styles contributes greatly to the character of Cuckfield and it is important that this diversity is retained when new development is planned.

Future building should respect the distinctive height, scale, spacing, layout, orientation, design and materials of the area in which it is located. Innovative design should continue to reflect design cues from the context of the building.

### **Cuckfield and Whitemans Green Conservation Areas**

The village contains two Conservation Areas. The District Council has adopted a Conservation Area appraisal and management plan for the Cuckfield Conservation Area in order to identify the historic and architectural qualities which make this area special and how these qualities can be preserved and enhanced. The appraisal identifies five distinctive character areas:

- The High Street, including the junction with Broad Street and the western end of Broad Street.
- Ockenden, including Ockenden Manor Hotel, the Courtyard and Ockenden Garden House.
- Courtmead Road including the Broad Street car park.
- The Church of the Holy Trinity and its environs.
- South Street, up to and including its junction with the High Street, including Ockenden Lane, Church Street and north side of Church Platt.

The village layout is based on the original medieval street pattern and comprises a central street of South Street which dog legs and rises northwards to form the High Street. In the lower end of the High Street, in South Street and Church Street there are medieval buildings dating from the 15th and 16th century built up to the back edge of the pavement. The buildings, which abut these streets, are closely grouped together in blocks and terraces and are domestic in scale. Interest and variety is achieved by irregular building lines and colourful, natural materials.

The rising ground from South Street northwards gives the High Street its distinctive character and there are attractive views up and down its length. The upper parts of the High Street and Broad

Street frequently have gardens or forecourts creating the impression of a wider street. Here there are Victorian and Regency facades and slate can be seen on several roofs. Several medieval buildings were refaced in brick and clay tiles in the 19th century.

The pavements are brick. Extending eastwards is Courtmead Road a 1930's development of detached dwellings initiated by the local architect Harold Turner. The layout embraces prevailing ideas on Garden Cities and has detached dwellings set well back in large gardens from the long, straight, tree-lined carriageway. To the south west of the village is Cuckfield Park, post-medieval parkland surrounding an Elizabethan brick mansion with a small elaborate gatehouse. An avenue of old limes runs from the gatehouse to the house. The Park provides an attractive open introduction to the Conservation Area.

A distinctive characteristic of the Conservation Area is its relationship with the countryside with the western and southern boundaries of the historic core of the village abruptly meeting parkland and countryside. This surrounding countryside forms the setting of the Conservation Area.

The document also sets out a series of recommendations to preserve and enhance the area which have been taken into account in the Getting Around section of this Plan.

Whitemans Green is also designated as a Conservation Area. Located at the end of the ridge, where the Ouse/Adur watershed turns south and the B2036 highway joins the B2114, the Conservation Area contains the historically separate village, which has coalesced gradually with Cuckfield down the hill. The area is characterised by small cottages set around a tree lined green with local and far reaching views to the north and south from the western part of the Conservation Area.

The green with the surrounding group of residential properties of different ages and architectural styles closely packed together, post office, village store and garage gives the area the identity of a village nucleus. The many trees and hedges make a valuable contribution to the appearance of the area including the lane off Whitemans Green up to Vidlers Cottage. A Conservation Area appraisal and management plan is in preparation in association with the District Council with a view to adoption.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 empowers the local authority to pay particular attention to proposed development within, and affecting the setting of, a Conservation Area and gives greater control over such matters as demolition, landscaping and trees, and the display of advertisements.

The NPPF also seeks the protection of the character and setting of listed buildings and Conservation Areas. Heritage assets are located both within and outside the Built Up Area Boundary They form an essential component of the street scene in the village centre as well as in their countryside locations. They consequently support tourism and the local economy.

In addition, the appraisals provide guidance for assessing proposals for development and will be used alongside the Neighbourhood Plan to determine planning applications.

## Cuckfield Character Areas

Surveys conducted for the Village Design Statement show that in addition to the two designated Conservation Areas, Cuckfield has five further distinct character areas:

- Broad Street East, including Warden Park and Hatchgate Lane.
- High Street (north of the Conservation Area) and London Lane, including large house infill closes either side (The Copse, Glebe Road, Ledgers Meadow, Leyton Lea, Mytten Close and Hatchlands).
- London Road, Barrowfield and Brainsmead.
- Ardingly Road with Bylanes, Chapelfields and The Highlands.
- Whitemans Green (outside Conservation Area to the edge of the built up area boundary)

These areas are defined on Map 3 - Cuckfield Conservation Areas and Character Areas.

### *Broad Street East*

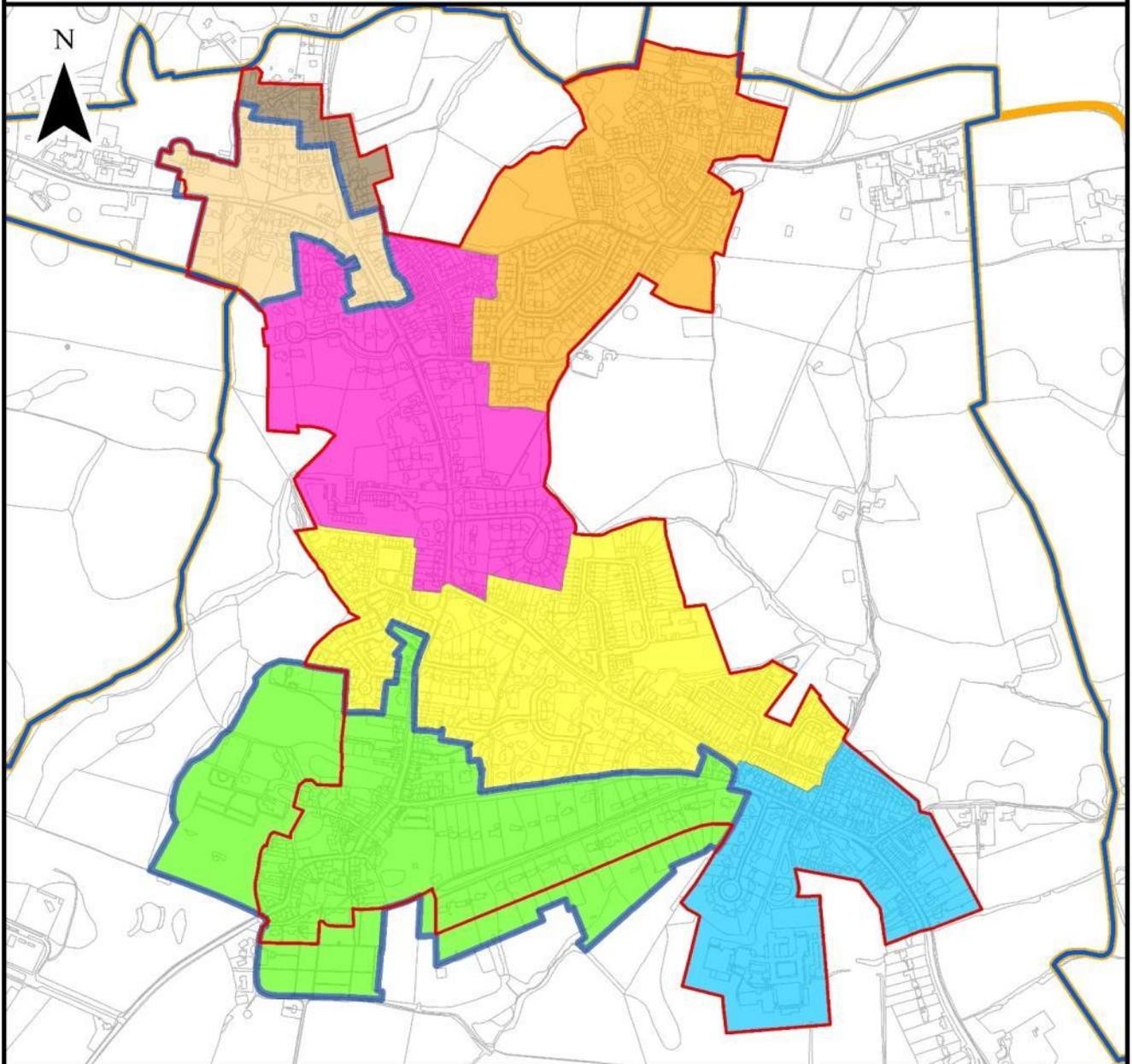
From the junction of London Lane with Broad Street (the edge of the Conservation Area) travelling east, the road broadens considerably. Warden Court to the south of the road is a close of tile hung, large post war houses. Towards the Wheatsheaf public house, with Horsgate and Hatchgate Lanes into the countryside opposite, is a mix of Victorian and infill detached and semi-detached dwellings. Warden Park Academy's main entrance means that this area is very busy at school times. Wheatsheaf Lane off Hatchgate Lane is a 1980s mixed development overlooking Blunts Wood and Paige's Meadow Local Nature Reserve (LNR). Beyond the pub, predominantly Victorian semi-detached and detached dwellings line the road, which increase in size, set back and landscaped gardens beyond the built up area boundary.

### *The High Street and London Lane*

Going north from the edge of the Conservation Area, the High Street meets London Lane at the 200 year old Rose and Crown Pub, with its distinctive Wealden hung tiled frontage. This area has seen substantial housing infill of the village's historic larger houses, such as Mytten Close, Hatchlands, Leyton Lea and Ledgers Meadow. The 2008 development at Ashburnham Drive is diagonally opposite the pub and in-filled a gap in the urban area, blocking views from the High Street towards the New England Wood and Adur valley beyond. Glebe Road is a development along London Lane promoted by the council over 50 years ago, where Holy Trinity Primary School and the village doctors' surgery were relocated in the 1990s. The predominantly Victorian Chatfield Road at the southern end was extended in 1992 by 15 houses in The Brambles and has recently (2012) been further extended by an additional 44 houses.

The housing in this area is of mixed character, with some Victorian development along London Lane and much more recent in other areas. The older closes in this area, and throughout the village, allowed views into each development from the main road, retaining the sense of landscape connectivity with the highway. However recent developments (particularly Ashburnham Drive and Chatfield Road) have blocked these views as the access roads turn sharply near the entrances.

### Map 3 - Cuckfield Conservation Areas and Character Areas



**Key**

-  Built up area boundary
-  Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan Area
-  Parish Boundaries
-  Cuckfield Conservation Area
-  Whitemans Green Conservation Area
-  Whitemans Green north of the Conservation Area
-  Broad Street East
-  London Road, Barrowfields, Brainsmead and Whitemans Green south of the Conservation Area
-  Ardingly Road, Bylanes, Chapelfields and The Highlands
-  The High Street and London Lane

0 400 Meters




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### *London Road, Barrowfield, Brainsmead and Whitemans Green South of Conservation Area*

North from the Rose and Crown pub, London Road links the High Street to Whitemans Green. There is a wide grassed area fronting Barrowfield; this development retains the view from the main highway into the Ouse Valley landscape beyond. On the east side of the road Polestub Lane leads to the Baptist Church then there follow, as far as the Whitemans Green Conservation Area, several large, mainly detached properties of varying styles and ages.

To the west, over the past fifty years there have been several other smaller developments of mainly larger scale housing. These have open frontages and front gardens, which give a sense of space; Manor Drive has been developed along a curved road to the west of London Road with Manor House representing a building of local character. The Knowle, a 1990s development, 'turns its back' on the road, with high walls and back gardens facing London Road.

The red brick pavements are seen on the west side all the way to Whitemans Green. The road is clear of signs and there are no road crossing areas. At night the area is dimly lit in accordance with the low carbon and light pollution policy. Brainsmead, with older, mainly smaller properties, also has green verges and a sense of space.

### *Ardingly Road with Bylanes, Chapelfields and the Highlands*

Up to 70 years ago there were only a scattering of houses heading towards the Victorian workhouse (subsequently the hospital) and the area was dominated by farmland on both sides of the road. Longacre Farm is still present today and together with Winchester Lodge on the other side of the road they are landmark buildings on large plots, providing significant character and distinctiveness to the area. However, in the past 40 years there has been significant building in this area with the creation of Bylanes, Ruthven Close and some in-filled houses along Ardingly Road – though farmland continues to line parts of the road and provide distinctive immediate and long distance views, with a rural outlook.

The most recent large development is at Chapelfields. Built in the mid-1990s in the grounds of the hospital subsequent to its decommissioning, the houses are a mixture of detached, semi-detached, and terraced properties, a collection of different styles with open frontage. The Victorian Workhouse building is a very distinctive landmark (Grade 2 listed) which has been retained and converted into flats. The Highlands area is a mix of Victorian cottages, 1950s and more recent build. A South East Water covered water supply storage reservoir is located behind this area.

A network of ancient 'twitchen' footpaths stretch in all directions, particularly to the east and the northern village boundary.

### *Whitemans Green (North of Conservation Area to the Edge of the Built Up Area Boundary)*

The Whitemans Green area to the north of the designated Conservation Area comprises a mix of properties, from Victorian & Edwardian development lining the main roads, to newer properties behind such as the 1960s bungalows in Whitemans Close and a small 1980s development at Crouchlands Farm.

## Development Outside the Built Up Area

Each area outside of the BUAB around the village has its own distinct rural character. The Cuckfield Landscape Character Assessment includes further information on each.

**North: Ouse Valley AONB** is characterised by the long, sweeping east-west running Ouse Valley, with the Balcombe area on its northern slopes.

**East: Scrase Stream** open space between Haywards Heath and Cuckfield contains Blunts Wood and Paiges Meadow LNR and the Borde Hill Millennium Wood public open spaces within the incised stream valley, together with a network of agricultural fields.

**South: Adur streams south** is characterised by deeply incised streams and a patchwork of open agricultural and forested fields as the tributary streams head towards the larger river in the Low Weald.

**West: Adur streams west AONB** continues the deeply incised streams towards the higher source of the Adur, with the network of forest and fields. It contains the New England Wood nature reserve.

The Neighbourhood Plan allows only limited development within the countryside by allocating previously developed sites (the former Court Meadow School and Horsgate House) for housing development, allowing suitable re-used, extended or new rural buildings for business or tourist uses and, if necessary, school facilities. The Cuckfield Landscape Character Assessment notes the value and sensitivity of the landscape. The siting, scale, form, mass, design, materials, landscaping and activity associated with any proposal in the countryside should respect the character and pattern of development in the locality.

Well considered designs and landscaping should be used rather than the reliance on vegetation to simply screen development and planting should be of appropriate native species to retain the landscape character. However, landscaping should not be of such a scale or design that it in itself becomes an alien intrusion in the landscape.

Mid Sussex District Council's Local Plan and emerging District Plan attach great importance to the quality of design in new development.

The Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan similarly attaches great importance to preserving and enhancing the character and appearance of the two Conservation Areas and their setting; the distinctive character of the other built up areas within the village and the surrounding landscape.

The height, scale, spacing, layout, orientation, materials and design of buildings should reflect the context of the surrounding area. Development should result in an attractive and safe public realm. Roads and car parking areas should not dominate the area and boundary treatment to properties such as hedges or walls should reflect that used in the surrounding area.

Development should respect the natural contours of a site and sensitively incorporate natural features such as trees, hedges and ponds within the site. Landscape proposals should form an integral part of a planning application and be in scale with the proposed development. In an area seeking to protect the landscape setting of the village, it is important to optimise the potential of sites within the built up area to accommodate development.

The design and layout of specific sites and residential extensions is also considered in the Housing Chapter of the Neighbourhood Plan but Policy CNP1 applies to all types of development within the Neighbourhood Plan area and sets out the quality of development that will be expected for the area.

### **Policy CNP 1 - Design of New Development and Conservation**

New development in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan will be permitted where it:

- a) Is designed to a high quality which responds to the heritage and distinctive character and reflects the identity of the local context of Cuckfield as defined on Map 3 - Conservation Areas and Character Areas, by way of;
  - i. height, scale, spacing, layout, orientation, design and materials of buildings,
  - ii. the scale, design and materials of the public realm (highways, footways, open space and landscape), and
- b) Is sympathetic to the setting of any heritage asset and
- c) Follows guidance in the Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans, the High Weald AONB Management Plan, and
- d) Respects the natural contours of a site and protects and sensitively incorporates natural features such as trees, hedges and ponds within the site, and
- e) Creates safe, accessible and well-connected environments that meet the needs of users, and
- f) Will not result in unacceptable levels of light, noise, air or water pollution, and
- g) Makes best use of the site to accommodate development.

<b>Monitoring Indicators</b>	<b>Targets</b>
Performance of new housing against Building for Life criteria	All new housing development to be rated good or better against Building for Life criteria
The area of the Parish covered by Conservation Areas	No reduction in the extent of Conservation Areas due to insensitive development
The number of listed buildings within the Parish	No loss of listed buildings in the Parish
Number of trees, hedges, ponds affected by development	No loss of mature native trees, hedges or ponds within development sites

### **Open Space in the Village**

One of the aims of this Plan is to focus development on the village where there are suitable opportunities to develop. However, the open spaces within the built up area which are visible from public places are of great importance in creating the character and identity of a place. The loss of these spaces can be important to both the character and amenity value of the immediate

locality and also, because of their location or the effect of topography, may affect the appearance and character of the village as a whole. If uncontrolled, changes to open spaces can irrevocably change the special character of a place.

### *Areas of Important Open Space*

The location and importance of Cuckfield’s open spaces has been summarised in the Open Space Assessment ([www.cuckfield.gov.uk](http://www.cuckfield.gov.uk)). There are only a limited number of sites and they are important visually for a number of sometimes overlapping reasons which are outlined below:

#### *Open Spaces of Historic Importance*

The relationship of buildings and open spaces within Conservation Areas is essential in creating their special character. As noted in the appraisals of Conservation Areas, the open space around Holy Trinity Church; lining the streets of Courtmead Road and Broad Street and the Green at Whitemans Green all contribute to the character of the Conservation Areas.

#### *Open Space of Local Visual Amenity Value*

A number of open spaces within the built up area provide important visual amenity for the locality and include greens, allotments and smaller pockets of locally important amenity spaces.

#### *Open Spaces of Strategic Importance*

Certain open spaces within the village because of their location and openness, allow views of the countryside. Similarly, because of a combination of location on a well-used route and topography, the Whitemans Green and Barrowfield open spaces have a strategic importance in creating a perception of the village.

### **Policy CNP 2 – Protection of Open Space within the Built Up Area**

Proposals for development which would result in the loss of an Area of Important Open Space, as defined on Map 4 - Areas of Important Open Space within The BUAB, will not be permitted, other than in exceptional circumstances for essential utility infrastructure and where no feasible alternative site is available.

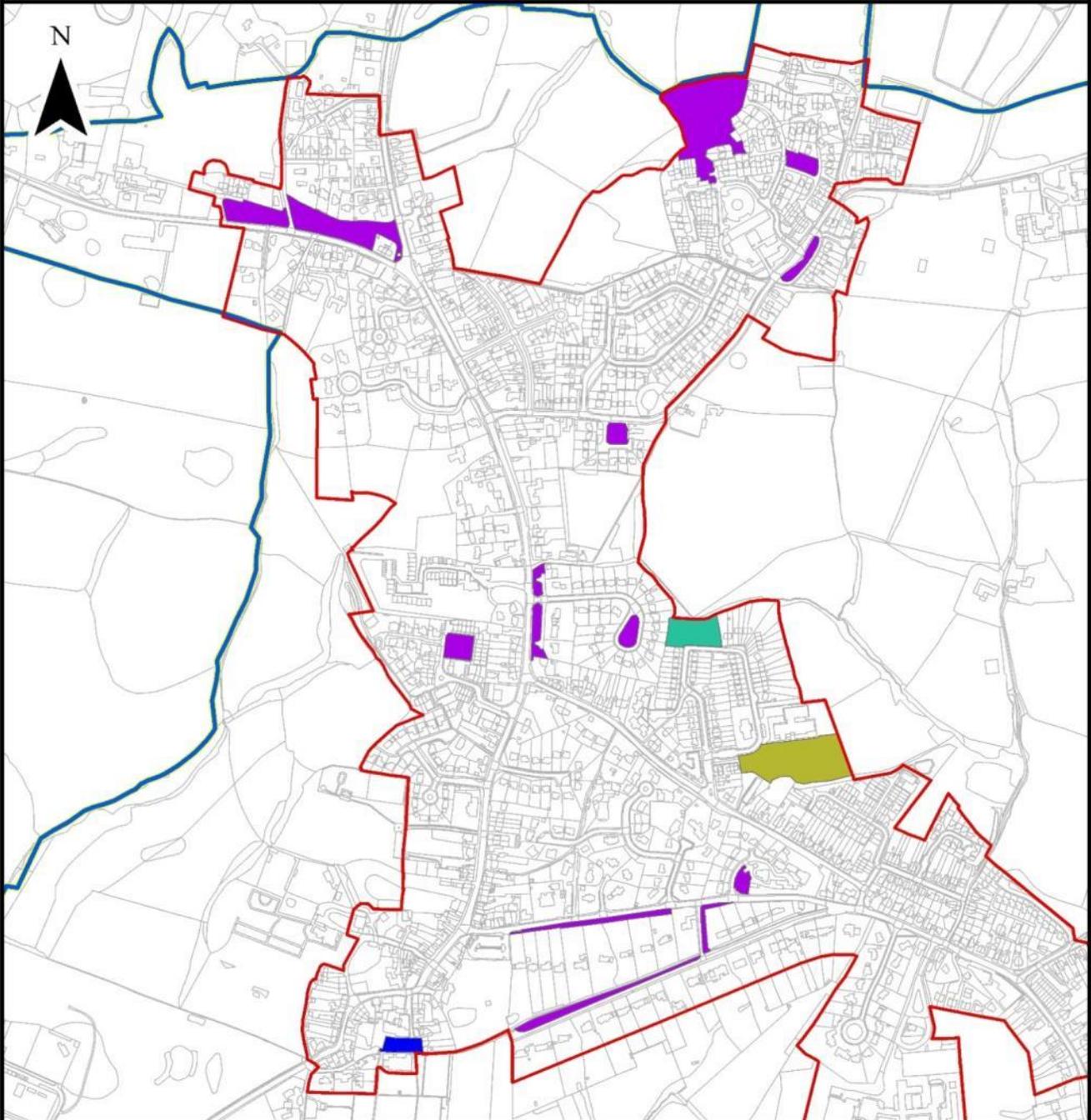
<b>Monitoring Indicators</b>	<b>Targets</b>
Number of hectares of Important Open Space lost due to development.	No Important Open Space lost.

### **Countryside outside the Built Up Area Boundary**

#### *Landscape Protection*

The landscape forms an intrinsic part of the character and setting of the village and provides informal and formal recreational opportunities for the community and visitors alike. The landscape also forms part of the tourism offer in the area which is vital for sustaining current business and economic ventures.

# Map 4 - Areas of Important Open Space within The BUAB.



**Key**

-  Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan Area
-  Parish Boundaries
-  E (i) - Amenity Green Space of Historic Importance
-  E (ii) - Amenity Green Space of Local Visual Amenity Value
-  F (ii) - Provision for Children and Teenagers of Local Visual Amenity Value
-  G (ii) - Allotments
-  Built up area boundary

0 320 Meters




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*Open Space Classifications - PPG17*  
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The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty extends to the north and west of Cuckfield within and beyond the Parish boundary. Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing the landscape, scenic beauty and cultural heritage in this area which has the highest status of protection in the country. The National Planning Policy Framework states that planning permission should be refused for major developments in the AONB other than in exceptional circumstances and locally there is no need to allocate land for development within this area. The High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan (2009) sets out ways that the countryside will be protected and enhanced by, for example, protecting the distinctive character of villages and maintaining the hinterlands and managing and enhancing the natural features which contribute to this character.

The National Planning Policy Framework states that the planning system should contribute to, and enhance, the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes. Public engagement in the preparation of this Plan has indicated that the landscape around the village is highly valued and is identified as one of the village’s unique characteristics.

The Cuckfield Landscape Character Assessment ([www.cuckfield.gov.uk](http://www.cuckfield.gov.uk)) classifies the countryside around the village, including the area designated as part of the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, into distinctive landscape character areas. Landscape character often crosses administrative boundaries, and to provide context to Cuckfield village a number of landscape character areas straddle the Plan boundary. The characteristics of each area are analysed against the wide range of criteria identified in Topic Paper 6 of the Countryside Agency’s *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance* ([http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/lcatopicpaper6\\_tcm6-8179.pdf](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/Images/lcatopicpaper6_tcm6-8179.pdf)), along with other relevant policies and consideration of historic landscape characterisation. An assessment is made for each area with regards to its landscape value, sensitivity and its capacity to accommodate change without significant effects on landscape character (landscape capacity), in accordance with the Assessment Guidance. This is summarised in Table 1, with areas identified on Map 12 - Landscape Character Assessment Areas.

Table 1 – Landscape Character Assessment Summary

Classification	Area
Substantial value, Substantial sensitivity	8, 9, 26, 27, 29, 32
Moderate value, Substantial sensitivity	3, 5, 6, 7, 11, 13, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 28
Slight value, Substantial sensitivity	17, 24
Moderate value, Major sensitivity	33
Moderate value, Moderate sensitivity	2, 10, 12, 30, 31

*(assessed areas wholly outside of the Plan area are excluded)*

Significant parts of the countryside around the village comprise intact, high quality landscapes. The Historic Landscape Characterisation identifies medieval time depth and low boundary loss across a number of character areas. The Landscape Character Assessment identifies that the majority of the countryside surrounding Cuckfield has major or substantial landscape value or

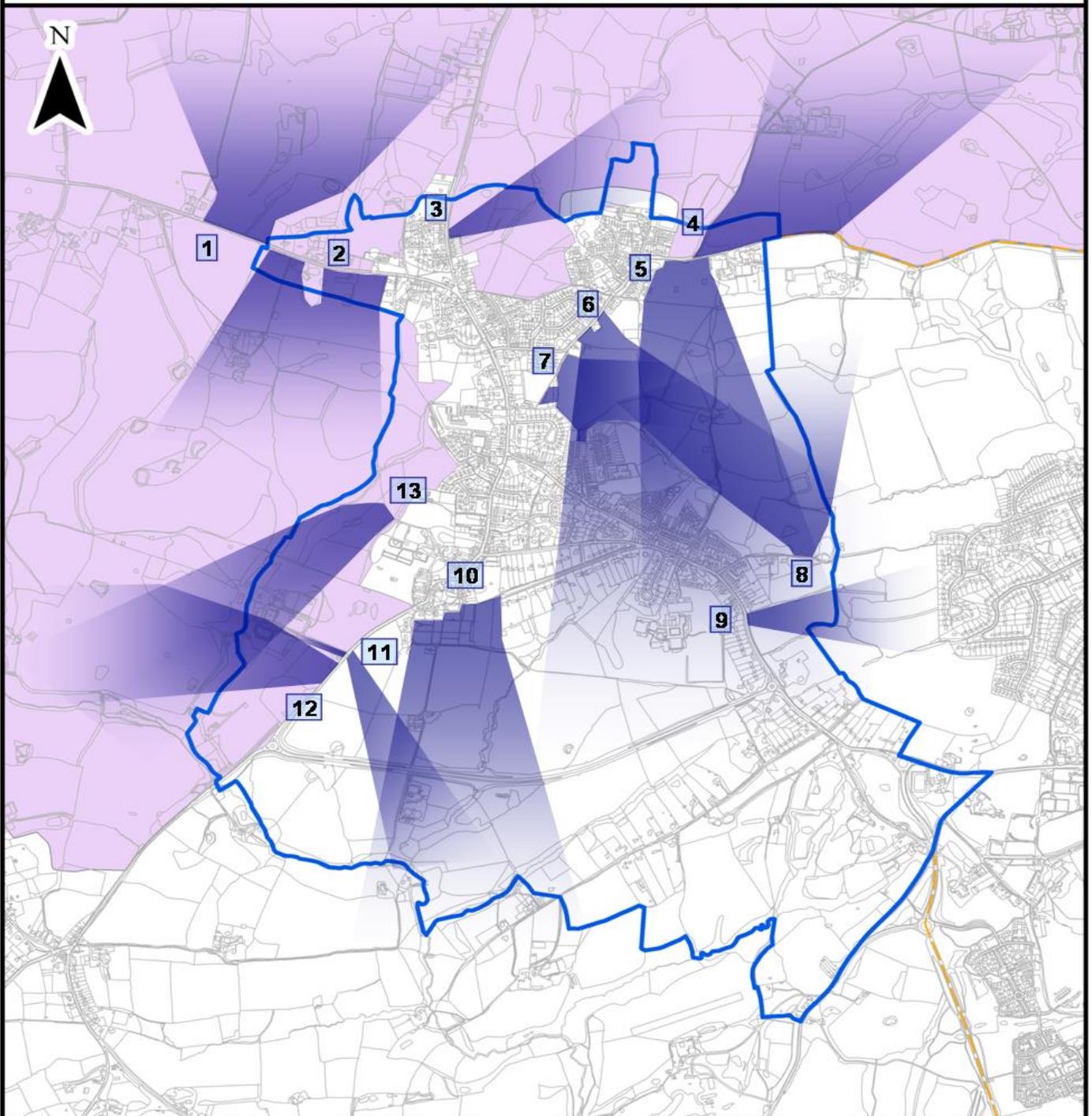
sensitivity, as summarised in Table 1. Development should not have a detrimental impact on such areas and the Landscape Character Assessment will be used as the basis for understanding the landscape value and sensitivity of an area.

Cuckfield occupies an elevated position on the southern slopes of the Weald. The landscape setting of Cuckfield which is visible from public vantage points in the village and from the surrounding extensive footpath network is an important feature of the Plan area.

One of the distinctive features of Cuckfield village is the visual connectivity with the surrounding countryside from public places. Map 5 shows the locations at the edge of the village where there is direct visual connectivity with the countryside (Cuckfield Views assessment is at [www.cuckfield.gov.uk](http://www.cuckfield.gov.uk)). These distinctive views combine shorter uncluttered views of the more immediate setting of the village with views across the Low Weald to the South Downs National Park to the south and across the Sussex Ouse valley towards the Balcombe Forest High Weald.

The value and sensitivity of the landscape, the setting of the village and the distinctive views of the landscape from public vantage points are distinctive qualities of Cuckfield and they have been taken into account in assessing the suitability of development opportunities. Intrusive development (including buildings, highways and lighting) in areas of major or substantial landscape value or sensitivity or which would clutter distinctive views, would adversely affect the character of the village and this valued landscape. Re-modelling of the local topography, through cut and fill, could in itself adversely impact on the landscape character and, where acceptable, development should be adapted to the site contours rather than the site adapted to the development. Proposals affecting the landscape will be considered by applying Policy CNP5.

## Map 5 – External Views (also shows AONB boundary)



### Key

-  Cuckfield Plan Area
-  Adjoining Parish Boundaries
-  AONB
- 1 – Cuckfield Golf Club
- 2 – Whitemans Green Recreation Ground
- 3 – Balcombe Road
- 4 – Hanlye Lane (Ouse)
- 5 – Hanlye Lane and twittens (Adur)

- 6 – Ardingly Road
- 7 – Ardingly Road to Glebe Road twittens
- 8 – Hatchgate Lane
- 9 – Broad Street
- 10 – Church
- 11 – South Street East
- 12 – South Street – West across Cuckfield Park
- 13 – Cuckfield Park

0 740 Meters



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## Preventing Coalescence

Protecting the separate identity of Cuckfield is a key objective of the Neighbourhood Plan. The gap between the built up areas of Cuckfield and Haywards Heath is already very narrow in the vicinity of Broad Street, Tylers Green and the eastern part of the A272. The Neighbourhood Plan has defined a distinct edge to the Built Up Area Boundary. Whilst the area beyond the Built Up Area Boundary is partially built up along the A272 towards Haywards Heath with generally linear development, the development is at a low density, set well back from the road and is dominated by landscape. Increasing the density of development within existing curtilages may have a detrimental impact on coalescence.

There is also a single field gap in Broad Street which breaks the built up frontage.

Whilst apparently wider than the southern areas noted above, there is already a visual connection between the two areas and hence retention of the gap to the north of the Broad Street area of the village is crucial in retaining the distinctiveness of this part of the village. This includes the substantial views and rural landscape, biodiversity and wildlife corridors, amenity value and a strong community objective in keeping these areas free from further encroachment.

Any intensification of development beyond the defined Built Up Area Boundary which would have the effect of reducing the separate identity of the two distinct settlements and increasing the coalescence between them would be inappropriate. Even limited new development could contribute to a cumulative undermining of the effectiveness of the Built Up Area Boundary which has been designated with the protection of open countryside and the prevention of coalescence in mind.

The Cuckfield and Haywards Heath Distinctiveness Assessment provides further evidence on the above.

### Policy CNP 3 - Preventing Coalescence between Cuckfield and Haywards Heath

Development will not be permitted outside the Built Up Area Boundary, as defined on Map 2 – Cuckfield Built Up Area Boundary, if individually or cumulatively it would result in increasing the coalescence between Cuckfield and Haywards Heath or reducing their separate identity by:

- a) Reducing the gap between Cuckfield and Haywards Heath or,
- b) Increasing the density of development within existing curtilages

#### Monitoring Indicators

Number of buildings developed outside the BUAB between Cuckfield and Haywards Heath.

#### Targets

No new buildings outside the BUAB as defined in the Neighbourhood Plan between Cuckfield and Haywards Heath.

## Biodiversity

The National Planning Policy Framework states that in order to minimise impacts on biodiversity, planning policies should:

- Identify and map components of the local ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity, wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them and areas identified by local partnerships for habitat restoration or creation.
- Promote the preservation, restoration and re-creation of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species populations, linked to national and local targets, and identify suitable indicators for monitoring biodiversity in the plan.

Cuckfield lies outside a 7km zone within which recreational disturbance could have an impact on the Ashdown Forest Special Protection Area and Special Area of Conservation (which are European-designated sites of nature conservation importance) and the Neighbourhood Plan will not adversely affect the integrity of this site of European importance.

Map 6 shows the hierarchy of national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity in the plan area.

In addition, an ecological study of the Parish and its immediate surrounds revealed that of the 52 hedgerows around Cuckfield, 37 are species-rich (hosting five or more tree and shrub species each).

**Birds:** From the observations of local recorders between 1990 – 2012, 15 red listed (statutorily protected) and 9 amber listed species have been recorded in and around Cuckfield.

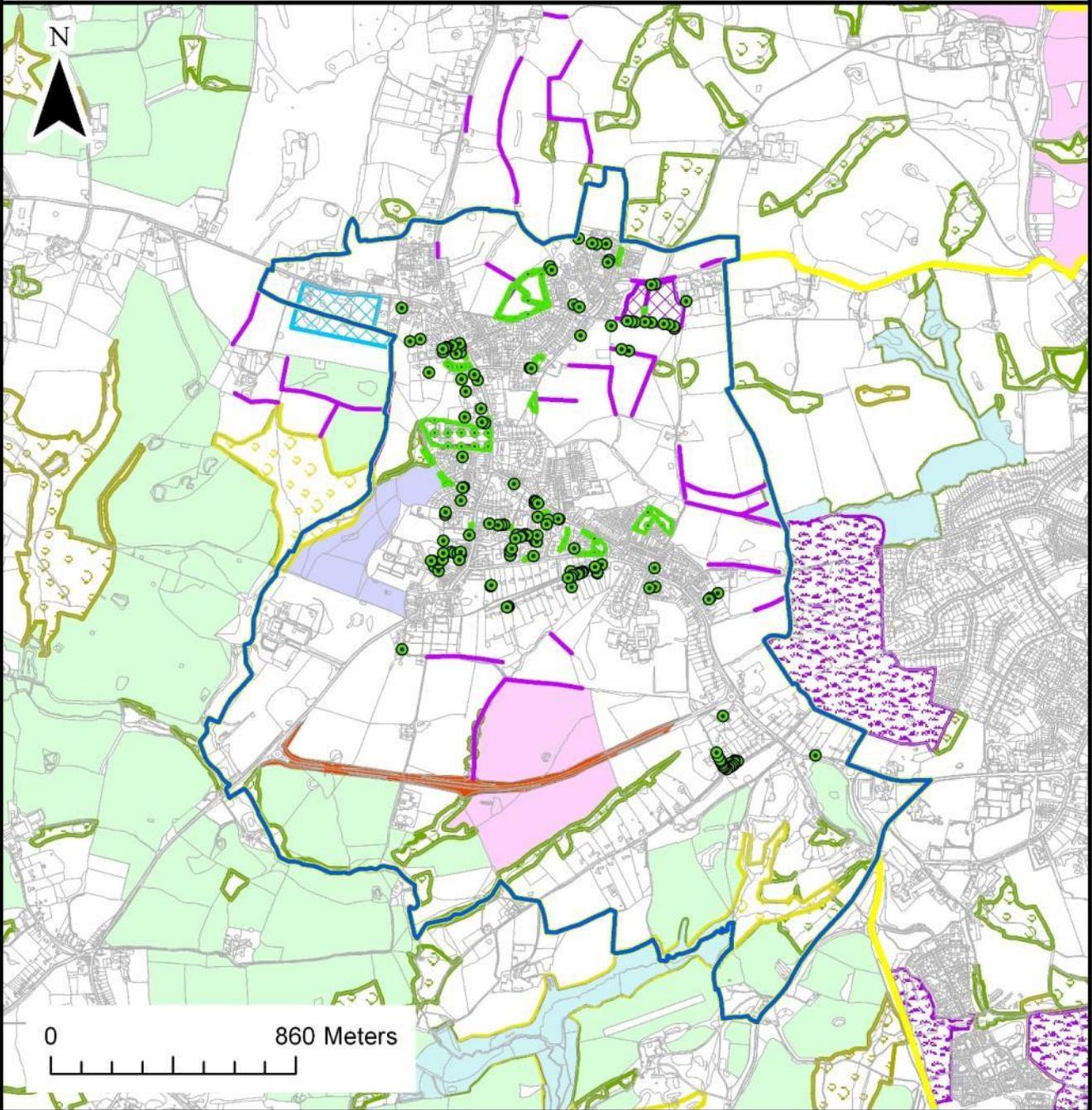
**Butterflies:** 3 species of butterfly that are a priority in the UK's Biodiversity Action Plan are recorded around Cuckfield in 2011/12.

**Pollinating insects:** Cuckfield is within DEFRA's designated High Priority area of vulnerable grasslands and pollinating invertebrates - butterflies, bees, etc. Pollinating insects depend on species-rich meadows which are in significant decline.

One metre square transects in the two fields immediately south of Hanlye Lane and west of the former Court Meadow School contains 16 and 15 species respectively. This meets Natural England's definition of the basis for restoration to species-rich grassland.

The management and enhancement of habitats will be supported by a combination of landowner actions, developer funding, fund-raising and voluntary activity. The key to delivery of Cuckfield's biodiversity aspirations will rest on influencing the way land is managed and used and through control of land and buildings. Landowners in the Parish are already participating in Environmental Stewardship schemes and this may be extended over the plan period. The village has a strong track record in respect of fund-raising and voluntary activity. For example, a group has already been attempting to re-create a species-rich meadow adjacent to the Observer Field, south of the Church.

# Map 6 – Biodiversity



## Key

- |                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan Area | Ghyll Woodland                                    |
| Parish Boundaries                 | Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland                   |
| Tree Preservation Order           | Ancient Replanted Woodland                        |
| Area Tree Preservation Order      | Species Rich Potential Fields                     |
| Species Rich Hedgerows            | Entry Level Stewardship                           |
| Local Nature Reserves             | Entry Level plus Higher Level Stewardship         |
| Notable Road Verges               | Organic Entry Level plus Higher Level Stewardship |
| Local Geological Site             |   |
| Local Wildlife Site               |   |

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Whilst just outside of the Plan area there are a number of nature reserves and natural areas which are important for their biodiversity, some acquired by village groups for amenity and environmental conservation purposes. The green spaces within the Plan area act as important buffers between urban and rural environments.

By carefully managing the land that the Parish Council will own at Bylanes Close and Ardingly Road, there are opportunities to enhance the biodiversity of such land with contributions from developers.

A number of organisations have been contacted already, and have expressed an interest in the proposals for habitat management and enhancement including The High Weald Trust; the Weald Meadows Initiative (now under The Grassland Trust); Sussex Wildlife Trust; the Sussex Biodiversity Partnership; the UK Native Seed Hub run by the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew at The Millennium Seed Bank at Wakehurst Place. While the support from such groups would largely be in the form of information and advice, or other 'in-kind', some direct funding is also possible.

Map 6 highlights that the Parish has a high number of trees of arboriculture and amenity value, which form part of the distinctive characteristic nature of the village. Many are protected by tree preservation orders. (TPOs)

Climate change is likely to have a major impact on the biodiversity around Cuckfield over the plan period and beyond. The impacts of development on climate change should be minimised through the use of renewable energy and Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDS), whilst increasing resilience to such change through having high regard to its ecological networks. The plan will therefore monitor and appraise such schemes as they come forward.

#### **Policy CNP 4 – Protect and Enhance Biodiversity**

Proposals should protect and enhance biodiversity by:

- a) Protecting designated sites, protected species and ancient or species-rich hedgerows, grasslands and woodlands, and
- b) Preserving ecological networks, and the migration and transit of flora and fauna, particularly between urban areas, and
- c) Protecting ancient trees or trees of arboricultural value, and
- d) Promoting the mitigation, preservation, restoration and re-creation of wildlife habitats, and the protection and recovery of priority species and
- e) Providing a net gain in flora and fauna, in particular those defined on Map 6 - Biodiversity, and
- f) Adopting best practice in Sustainable Urban Drainage.

<b>Monitoring Indicators</b>	<b>Targets</b>
Condition of nature reserve buffer zones within Plan area.	No deterioration in the condition of these buffer zones.
Data from Sussex Biodiversity Records.	No loss of species rich hedgerow. No deterioration in the quality of the biodiversity in the Parish. Number of hectares of re-created priority habitats.
Sustainable Drainage.	No increase in downstream flood risk.
Amount of species rich grassland and number of trees, hedges, ponds affected by development.	Increase in species rich grassland, mature native trees, hedges or ponds within development sites

### **Protect and Enhance the Countryside**

The planning strategy for Cuckfield generally is to focus development within the defined Built up Area Boundary and to restrict development in the countryside in order to protect landscape of major or substantial value or sensitivity, views from public areas, formal and informal recreational amenities as well as biodiversity.

#### **Policy CNP 5 - Protect and Enhance the Countryside**

Outside of the Built up Area Boundary, priority will be given to protecting and enhancing the countryside from inappropriate development. A proposal for development will only be permitted where:

- a) It is allocated for development in Policy CNP 6 (a) and (b) or would be in accordance with Policies CNP 10, CNP 14 and CNP 17 in the Neighbourhood Plan or other relevant planning policies applying to the area, and
- b) It would not have a detrimental impact on, and would enhance, areas identified in the Cuckfield Landscape Character Assessment (summarised in Table 1) as having major or substantial landscape value or sensitivity, and
- c) It would not have an adverse impact on the landscape setting of Cuckfield and
- d) It would maintain the distinctive views of the surrounding countryside from public vantage points within, and adjacent to, the built up area, in particular those defined on Map 5, and
- e) Within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty it would conserve and enhance landscape and scenic beauty and would have regard to the High Weald AONB Management Plan.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Landscape value and sensitivity in land parcels identified in the Landscape Character Assessment.	No deterioration in areas of major or substantial landscape value or sensitivity as defined in the Landscape Character Assessment.
External views	No partial or complete loss of identified views

## 4.2 Housing

### Objectives

- To enable local people to stay in the village throughout their lifetime and as their needs change.
- To ensure an adequate supply of affordable housing to meet the needs of the Parish.
- To maintain a strong community by ensuring a mix of home types and integration between different types and tenures of housing within the village.

### Policies

#### Cuckfield Housing Stock

Table 2 - Cuckfield housing stock shows a total of 1439 dwelling in Cuckfield Parish in 2011 with the majority of homes being owner occupied. There is a predominance of family housing with 71% homes having 3 bedrooms or more.

A further 108 dwellings have been completed in the last 10 years, of which 94 have been built in the last 5 years (2007/8 – 2011/12).

#### Housing Requirement

Neighbourhood Plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Mid Sussex Local Plan (2004).

In terms of housing land supply the Local Plan is relevant up to 2006 whereas the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan extends to 2031. Where neighbourhood planning is undertaken before an up-to-date local plan is in place, collaboration

between the community and the District Council is critical. In developing the Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan, Mid Sussex District Council has shared evidence and information to ensure the Neighbourhood Plan fits with any relevant up-to-date evidence of strategic needs.

Following the revocation of the South East Plan, Mid Sussex District Council is preparing a new District Plan which must be consistent with the NPPF and based on their own up to date evidence base.

The NPPF states that local planning authorities should use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area, as far as is consistent with the policies set out in the Framework.

Mid Sussex District Council has prepared housing evidence. A draft Local Housing Assessment (updated October 2012) has informed the housing requirements of Mid Sussex District in relation to future demographic, economic and labour market change.

Table 2 - Cuckfield housing stock

Housing Tenure	Dwellings
<b>Owner occupied</b>	1068
<b>Affordable rent</b>	181
<b>Private rent</b>	159
<b>Shared Ownership</b>	13
<b>Other</b>	18
<b>Total</b>	1439

(Source: 2011 Census)

As a result of this evidence, the Mid Sussex District Plan Proposed Submission - May 2013 Policy DP5 sets a District housing requirement of 10,600 homes between 2011–2031, at an average of 530 homes per year. In addition to completions, commitments and the Burgess Hill Strategic Development, the policy seeks a contribution of 2000 dwellings from settlements in the District through Neighbourhood Plans or other appropriate planning documents. No strategic housing target is set for Cuckfield Parish but through early consultation Cuckfield Parish Council indicated that the Parish could accommodate approximately 30 new homes over the plan period up to 2031 in addition to existing planning consents of approximately 100 dwellings. Other Parishes submitted their own targets to help deliver the overall housing need (Housing Supply Document published by Mid Sussex District Council in March 2013). Consequently, in line with the assessment of need, commitments and capacity, the District Council expects Cuckfield to accommodate 130 dwellings as the contribution towards meeting the district-wide strategic housing need up to 2031.

## Housing Need

The Cuckfield Housing Needs Survey, 2012 quantifies the need for market housing over the plan period as 20 dwellings and affordable dwellings as 40 dwellings as set out in Table 3 below.

Table 3 – Housing need in Cuckfield

Housing Needs Survey Summary June 2012	Within 2 years	2 - 5 years	5 years or more	Not Known	Total
<b>Affordable</b>	21	13	3	3	40
<b>Open market</b>	7	2	5	6	20
<b>Total</b>	28	15	8	9	60

(Source: Housing Needs Survey, 2012)

## Housing Supply

### *Housing Completions*

The Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan period is from 2011 – 2031. There were 27 housing completions for the year 2011/12 and therefore these form part of the Plan’s housing land supply.

### *Sites with Planning Permission*

Cuckfield has sites with planning permission for 76 dwellings at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012. These are outlined in Table 4 - Outstanding planning permissions and completions in Cuckfield. In addition, the Ardingly Road site allocated in the Pre-Submission version of this plan now has outline planning consent for 14 dwellings.

Table 4 - Outstanding planning permissions and completions in Cuckfield

Location	Number with Planning permission as of 1st April 2012, but not completed.	Completions in plan period 1st April 2011 to 1st April 2012	Number granted planning permission 1st April 2012- 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2013	Total	Affordable units within total
North west of Chatfield Road	20	24	-	44	13
Horsgate Farm	-	1	-	1	-
Ardingly Road			14	14	
Rose and Crown	-	2	-	2	-
Land at Bylanes Close	42	-	-	42	17
Tentercroft Broad Street	1	-	-	1	-
R/O 1 Manor Drive Whitemans Green	1	-	-	1	-
Longacre Farm, Ardingly Road	1	-	-	1	-
The Talbot Inn High Street	1	-	-	1	-
Delmon House London Road	6	-	-	6	-
Adj Polestub London Road	1	-	-	1	-
27 Chapelfields	1	-	-	1	-
Loriner House Broad Street	1	-	-	1	-
Cuckfield House High Street	1	-	-	1	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>30</b>

(Source : MSDC)

## *Allocations*

The overall need for market housing identified in the Housing Needs Survey of 20 dwellings is small and easily met from within the existing supply of planning permissions. However, as the Housing Needs Survey indicates, whilst the initial period of housing need over the next 10 years is likely to be accurate, need beyond this period is likely to be indicative and for this reason there is a need to provide some flexibility in the housing supply in the second part of the Plan period.

The Cuckfield Parish Housing Land Availability Assessment, 2012 (PHLAA) appraises a range of sites for their suitability, availability and achievability. The assessment identifies sites suitable for housing development during the Plan period. The approach and method for this is included in the PHLAA Methodology July 2012 ([www.cuckfield.gov.uk](http://www.cuckfield.gov.uk)). Some of these are small and within the built up area boundary and will come forward as windfall sites during the Plan period. Over 70% of residents are in favour of small scale development within the Built up Area Boundary of Cuckfield.

Other sites have greater capacity. The NPPF encourages the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land) and the former Court Meadow School and Horsgate House are allocated for small housing developments. The former school site is part of a cluster of buildings within a countryside location and the form, scale and layout of the site should ensure that development is not prominent on the skyline or within views from the surrounding countryside. It is important that the redevelopment of the former school is well integrated with its countryside setting. Horsgate House is an imposing building with architectural and historical significance and the building or its character should be retained within any development.

Greenfield sites have been identified close to the edge of the village which would not cause substantial harm to the local area if developed in accordance with Policy CNP1 Design of New Development and Conservation and are allocated for housing development. Nevertheless, two of these sites abut the countryside designated as the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It is important that the existing strong site boundaries are retained and reinforced and that mature trees and hedgerows are retained as part of the development. Proposals should respect the natural contours of the sloping sites in accordance with Policy CNP1.

All sites are located close to the main highway. There is scope for introducing sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) that reduce surface water run-off from development and thereby offer the potential to reduce the severity of future flooding. Feedback from Southern Water indicates that, though limited sewer flooding has been recorded, there are parts of the village where capacity may be insufficient and new development would need to connect to the sewerage system at the nearest point of adequate capacity. Other infrastructure provision will need to comply with Policy CNP 22.

Table 5 - Identified potential from PHLAA sites

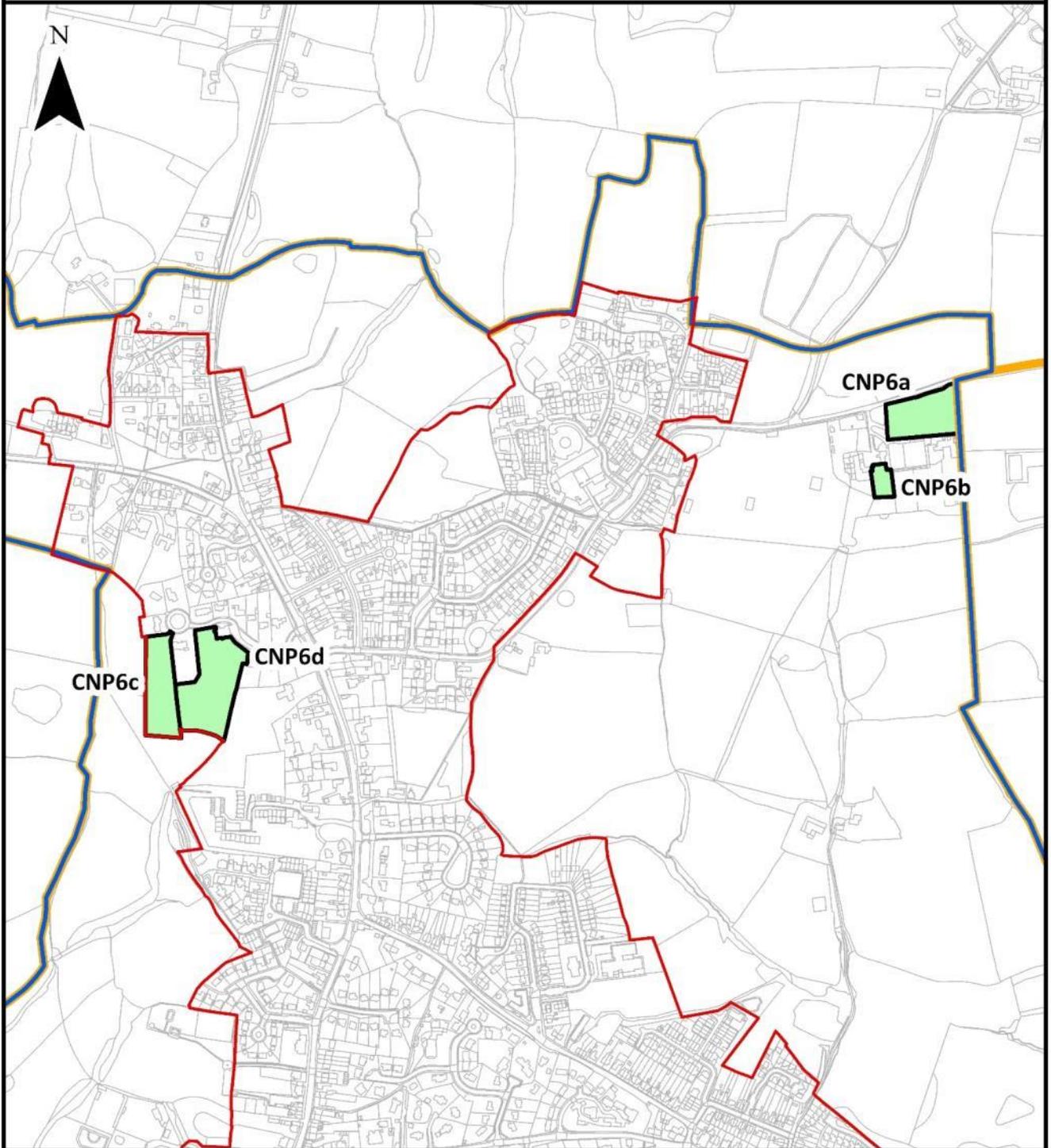
Site	Approximate Capacity	Potential Development Period
Site of Manor House, Manor Drive	15	6 – 10 years
Site of 11 Manor Drive	3	6 – 10 years
Former Court Meadow School	10	6 – 10 years
Horsgate House	To be determined	6-20 years
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>0 – 20 years</b>

The Ardingly Road site obtained outline planning permission in early 2013 and is awaiting reserved matters to be determined. These proposals should respect the natural contours of the sloping site and the form, scale, layout and landscaping of the development should ensure that it responds sensitively to the surrounding residential development as well as the setting of the village and the distinctive views from Ardingly Road.

The existing strong hedge and treed boundaries should be retained and reinforced by new planting and the mature native hedgerow and individual specimen native trees should be retained as part of development. A substantial new boundary of native hedgerow and tree planting should enclose the development to the south to help screen the development and establish a clear definition between private and public spaces. The reserved matters application should include some 1 or 2 bedroom dwellings in accordance with Policy CNP9.

Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) should be used to minimise run off from this development. The access road width should be minimised and the layout should be informal to respect the rural setting and low vehicular and pedestrian usage. A shared surface should be considered to serve the site to meet these objectives and encourage low vehicle speeds.

# Map 7 – Housing Allocations



### Key

-  Built up area boundary
-  Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan Area
-  Parish Boundaries
-  Housing Allocations

0 280 Meters



Map produced by:

**Cuckfield Parish Council**

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Ordnance Survey 0040086631

## Policy CNP 6 - Housing Allocations

The following sites as defined on Map 7 – Housing Allocations, are allocated for residential development, with the density, form, layout, dwelling mix, landscaping and access for these sites as set out below.

The allocated sites may come forward for development in phases, but proposals for development of part of a site which would prejudice eventual development of the whole allocation will not be permitted. Any proposals for development of part of the allocation will be required to demonstrate that they would not prevent the quantum of development set out below from being satisfactorily accommodated on the site.

---

### a) Former Court Meadow School, Hanlye Lane

**Site Area:** 0.5 ha

**Capacity:** The site should provide approximately 10 dwellings.

**Form, Layout and Landscaping:** The former school site should be redeveloped. The form, scale and layout of the site should ensure that development is not prominent on the skyline or within views from the surrounding countryside. Structural landscaping should ensure that development is well integrated into its surrounding countryside setting and the design reflects the character of existing adjacent buildings. Proposals should incorporate an element of 1 or 2 bedroom dwellings.

**Infrastructure:** The sewer capacity may need to be improved in Ardingly Road. Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) should be used to minimise run off from this development. Vehicular and pedestrian access should be provided to Hanlye Lane.

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### b) Horsgate House, Hanlye Lane

**Site Area:** 0.3 ha

**Capacity:** It is not possible to specify a capacity for this site as it would suit a single dwelling or a number of units.

**Form, Layout and Landscaping:** Horsgate House should be retained or its character and its impact as a landmark building on the wider landscape should be maintained within any development.

**Infrastructure:** The sewer capacity may need to be improved in Ardingly Road. Sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) should be used to minimise run off from this development. The existing vehicular and pedestrian access to Hanlye Lane should be used.

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### c) 11 Manor Drive

**Site Area:** 0.6 ha

**Capacity:** The site should provide approximately 3 dwellings.

**Form, Layout and Landscaping:** 11 Manor Drive is a modern building which is available to be redeveloped as part of a comprehensive scheme for this site. The site may be developed with, or

independently of, the adjoining Manor House site. The character of Manor Drive with larger detached properties laid out along a curved road should be respected. Some of the proposed buildings could be subdivided to allow the creation smaller dwellings. The existing strong hedge and treed boundaries should be retained and reinforced by new planting and the mature specimen native trees should be retained as part of the development.

Proposals should respect the natural contours of the sloping site and the form, scale, layout and landscaping of the development should ensure that it responds sensitively to the setting of the AONB.

**Infrastructure:** The adjacent pond may be adapted to provide a sustainable drainage system (SUDs) to minimise run off from this development. Access should be provided to Manor Drive and a shared surface should be considered within the site to encourage low vehicle speeds.

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#### **d) Manor House, Manor Drive**

**Site Area:** 0.95 ha

**Capacity:** The site should provide approximately 15 dwellings.

**Form, Layout and Landscaping:** Manor House is a landmark building within the Manor Drive street scene and should be retained or its character maintained within any development. The site may be developed with, or independently of, the adjoining 11 Manor Drive site. The character of Manor Drive with larger detached properties laid out along a curved road should be respected. Some of the buildings should be subdivided to allow the creation of 1 or 2 bedroom dwellings. The existing strong hedge and treed boundaries should be retained and reinforced by new planting and the mature individual specimen native trees should be retained as part of the development. Proposals should respect the natural contours of the sloping site and the form, scale, layout and landscaping of the development should ensure that it responds sensitively to the setting of the AONB.

**Infrastructure:** Sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) should be used to minimise run off from this development. Access should be provided to Manor Drive and a shared surface should be considered within the site to encourage low vehicle speeds.

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### **Windfall Sites**

Over the past 10 years, small sites of between 1 and 4 dwellings have made a regular contribution towards the housing land supply in the Parish. A total of 20 dwellings have been completed over this period at an average of 2 dwellings per annum. There remain opportunities for small scale changes of use, redevelopment and infill development and Policy CNP7 of the Neighbourhood Plan facilitates such 'windfall' developments over the remainder of the Plan period if developed in accordance with Policy CNP1 - Design of New Development and Conservation.

It is anticipated that some 20 dwellings will come forward within the Plan area over the period to 2031. However, some of these already have planning consent and should not be double counted. For this reason a cautious estimate of a further 10 dwellings is made on unidentified sites for the plan period.

## Timing

It is recognised that the housing provision over the plan period is ‘front loaded’, with the majority delivered within the first 5 years. It is the purpose of this plan to meet objectively assessed needs within the constraints identified in the evidence base. The development proposed in this plan will result in a more sustainable pace of development from that seen in recent years, which is considered appropriate during this plan period. The plan will meet assessed need whilst still allowing some flexibility in how this is met. The plan will also safeguard some of the valued and distinctive assets of the Parish.

### Policy CNP 7 - Housing Development within the Built Up Area Boundary

Housing development within the Cuckfield built-up area boundary, as defined, will be permitted including infill development and change of use or redevelopment to housing outside the designated Cuckfield village centre and Whitemans Green neighbourhood centre where it meets the following criteria:

- a) The scale, height and form fit unobtrusively with the existing building, or curtilage for new dwellings, and the character of the street scene.
- b) Spacing between buildings would respect the character of the street scene.
- c) Gaps which provide views out of the village to surrounding countryside are maintained.
- d) Materials are compatible with the materials of the existing building.
- e) The traditional boundary treatment of an area is retained and, where feasible, reinforced and
- f) The privacy, daylight, sunlight and outlook of adjoining residents are safeguarded.

## Housing Supply

Table 6 - Total Housing Supply below sets out the total number of dwellings projected for the Neighbourhood Plan period.

There are a significant number of commitments (completions and planning permissions) to provide for housing needs. This together with the allocations and windfall opportunities will exceed the contribution of 130 dwellings from the Parish to meet the District housing need across the Plan period.

The identified housing supply is significantly greater than the identified local housing need for market housing over the Plan period (20 dwellings) and affordable dwellings (40 dwellings). The total supply of housing development allows significant flexibility should some of the sources of

Table 6 - Total Housing Supply

Source	Number of Dwellings
<b>Completions</b>	27
<b>Planning permissions</b>	90
<b>Allocations</b>	28
<b>Windfall sites</b>	10
<b>Total</b>	155

development not be delivered on time or should the Needs Survey not have captured all of the long term demand for housing. The Plan’s target of 130 dwellings during the period 2011 – 2031 is made up of existing commitments (completions and planning permissions totalling over 100 dwellings) and further potential dwellings from allocated and windfall sites.

### Housing trajectory

The total housing land supply for the period 2011 - 2031 from completions, planning permissions and sites identified within the PHLAA is 155 dwellings. This includes a contribution from additional small scale windfall sites in the final 10 years of the Plan. Table 7 below sets out the projected supply of housing development over the plan period based on the phased implementation of planning consents and site availability.

Table 7 - Cuckfield Housing Trajectory

Housing Supply	2011/ 2012	2012/ 2013	2013/ 2014	2014/ 2015	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2021	2022/ 2031	Total
<b>Private market</b>	20	16	23	24	4	13	17	117
<b>Affordable</b>	7	6	10	7	0	5	3	38
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>155</b>

The housing land supply should be monitored regularly to ensure:

- Sites with planning permission are now under-construction or complete.
- Planning applications have been submitted or approved on sites allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- The windfall allowance is coming forward as expected, or may need to be adjusted.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Number of new dwellings delivered within the Parish area during the Plan period (net)	At least 130 new dwellings (net) over the plan period
Number of new dwellings delivered on allocated housing sites within the Plan period (net)	At least 9 new dwellings on allocated housing sites

## Affordable Housing

The supply of affordable housing in Cuckfield was 225 dwellings at 2012 (see Table 8 - Affordable housing supply).

Table 7 - Cuckfield Housing Trajectory shows that the Housing Needs Survey identifies 40 households in need of affordable housing. 21 households are in need within the next 2 years, with a further 13 in 2 – 5 years. A further 23 affordable homes are to be completed on sites with planning permission over the next 2 – 3 years. The Plan’s target of at least 38 new affordable dwellings is made up of the existing commitments of completions and planning permissions together with provision of affordable housing on new housing site allocations.

In addition, the supply of affordable housing will be increased by turnover of the existing housing. This can be assumed to average approximately 11 dwellings per annum based on the historic turnover rate supplied by Mid Sussex District Council.

From the projections above it would appear that the needs of families that are on low incomes and in need of affordable rented accommodation can be met by the existing supply of affordable housing i.e. empty homes arising in existing affordable housing stock combined with the new development already in the pipeline.

However, as the Housing Needs Survey indicates, whilst the initial period of housing need over the next 10 years is likely to be accurate, need beyond this period is likely to be indicative and for this reason there is a need to provide some flexibility in the affordable housing supply in the second part of the plan period. In addition, a significant proportion of those identifying themselves as in need of affordable housing (75%) are single or couples and the Housing Needs Survey indicates that a reasonable proportion of this group could afford shared ownership though there is limited development of this type of housing currently in the village.

The Mid Sussex Local Plan seeks 30% affordable housing provision on sites of 15 or more dwellings. The Cuckfield PHLAA identifies opportunities for housing developments of 3 – 15 dwellings. The emerging District Plan seeks a minimum 30% affordable housing on *all* residential development or equivalent contributions. These policies will apply through the Neighbourhood Plan area.

The NPPF and the objectives of this Plan indicate that this need should be met on site. Public consultation shows a clear preference for developers to provide a percentage of new units to be affordable, rather than to allow the development of exception sites around the edge of the existing village. This is consistent with the objectives to protect the countryside around the village and to achieve integration between different types and tenures of housing within the

Table 8 - Affordable housing supply

Affordable Landlords	Homes
Affinity Sutton	167
Sussex Housing and Care	21
Southern Housing Group	19
Southdown Housing Association	5
Moat Housing Group	10
Bellway Housing Trust	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>225</b>

(Source MSDC, 2012)

village. The projected supply of affordable housing resultant from this approach is shown in Table 7 Cuckfield Housing Trajectory above.

Affordable housing policies should be sufficiently flexible to take account of changing market conditions over time.

### Policy CNP 8 - Affordable housing

- a) On sites able to accommodate four or more dwellings, it will be expected that the equivalent of a 30% affordable housing provision will be made on-site subject to viability considerations.
- b) The type of affordable housing provision should reflect local needs, and shared ownership provision for smaller households is particularly encouraged.
- c) The location, layout and design of the affordable housing within the scheme should create an inclusive development.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Number of new shared ownership dwellings delivered within the Parish area during the Plan period (net).	All new developments to have more than 50% shared ownership on all affordable schemes

### Type of Housing

A significant number of households in Cuckfield identifying their need for market housing are on low income levels and many give downsizing/sheltered housing as reason for need to move. This would indicate a need for some smaller market homes in the future.

A large proportion of those identifying themselves as in need of affordable housing (75%) are single or couples, most of this group are unlikely to be eligible for social housing. Need would seem to be for market homes rather than shared ownership in this category though it is likely that some of this group could afford shared ownership. There is limited development of this type of housing currently in the village.

Market pressures and changing demographic profiles indicate that allowing for an increasing proportion of smaller 1 or 2 bedroom units will provide for wider choice of housing in Cuckfield (78% of housing currently provides 3 bedrooms or more), help meet identified special needs (for example elderly residents wishing to down-size their property), extend accessibility to the housing market and confer planning benefits in optimising the use of land and buildings.

In order to meet an identified local need and to meet the objectives of enabling local people to stay in the village throughout their lifetime as their needs change whilst ensuring a mix and integration of house types within the village, sites of 5 or more dwellings should incorporate an

element of 1 or 2 bedroom dwellings. The precise number of 1 or 2 bedroom dwellings will be negotiated on each scheme. Where developers consider that accommodating a number of 1 or 2 bedroom units would have serious implications for the viability of developments, the Council will encourage an ‘open book’ approach and where necessary will operate the policy flexibly.

### Policy CNP 9 – Small Scale Dwellings

Proposals for residential development of 5 dwellings or more (gross) will be permitted if they incorporate an element of 1 or 2 bedroom dwellings, subject to other policies in the Plan.

#### Monitoring Indicators

#### Targets

Number of new development proposals of 5 dwellings or more (gross) delivered with some 1 or 2 bedroom dwellings.

All new developments above the threshold to include 1 or 2 bed dwellings.

### Building Extensions

Over the next 20 year, existing homes and businesses within and outside the built up area will be extended to adapt to changing needs. There is strong support from public engagement for the siting, scale, form and materials of extensions to existing buildings to be in keeping with the original property and the street scene. Consistent with Policy CNP 1, extensions should be designed to a high quality and should respond to the heritage and distinctive character of the area of Cuckfield in which they are situated and reflect the identity of the local context by way of height, scale, spacing, design and materials of buildings. In addition, extensions should respect the amenities of adjoining residents.

#### *Scale, Height and Form*

The overall scale, height and form of an extension are important factors in achieving a successful design and should fit unobtrusively with the building and its setting and be compatible with the surrounding properties. An extension should be subservient to the original dwelling and not dominate the original building or the locality. A range of devices are available to subordinate an extension such as setbacks, lower roofs, changes in materials or detailing. Where visible from public view, roof shape is critical to creating a successful built form. The pitch of extension roofs should normally be as, or similar to, the main house roof pitch.

#### *Spacing*

In terms of spacing between buildings, an extension to the side of a property should normally be acceptable if it does not have a significant adverse impact on the nature of space between buildings which would be out of character in the street scene when the gaps, often with associated landscaping or allowing longer views, are important elements. Extensions to existing

buildings should maintain gaps which provide views out of the village into surrounding countryside.

### *Materials*

Good quality design relies on the choice and combination of materials. The choice of materials should respond to, and reinforce, the character of the area and generally, the materials of an extension should match those used on the original building. However, often secondary buildings or extensions were traditionally erected in different materials which can help reinforce the subservience of the extension and maintain the visual primacy of the original. Hence, if it is compatible with the materials of the existing building, it could be appropriate to use other local materials on an extension.

### *Boundary Treatment*

The boundaries to properties such as hedges or walls have a significant impact on the character of an area and its visual amenity. They help enclose the road space, define the boundary between public and private space and act as a strong link to the history of the area and the locally derived materials. When adding an extension to a property, the proposal should retain and, where feasible, reinforce the traditional boundary treatment of an area.

### *Innovative Design*

Subject to the context, it may be possible to arrive at an innovative design which responds to the positive features of the existing building and the area and ensures sufficient references to reinforce the distinctive character of the building and its surrounding context.

### *Privacy, Daylight, Sunlight and Outlook*

Extensions should respect the amenities of adjoining residents regarding privacy, daylight, sunlight and outlook.

Extensions can materially affect the privacy of adjoining occupiers. In order to safeguard the privacy of neighbours, windows in extensions should avoid overlooking windows of habitable rooms in any adjoining property at a close distance and the private amenity area immediately adjacent to the rear of an adjoining dwelling.

Overshadowing occurs when an extension is in such a location, and/or is of a size that it would cause significant overshadowing of a neighbour's property or amenity space. An extension should be designed to avoid any significant loss of daylight or the cutting out of sunlight for a significant part of the day to principal rooms (including lounge, dining room, kitchen and bedrooms) in neighbouring properties or private amenity space. Daylight is the volume of natural light that enters a building to provide satisfactory illumination of internal accommodation between dawn and dusk. Sunlight refers to direct sunshine and is very much brighter than ambient daylight.

Extensions should not significantly adversely affect the immediate outlook from neighbours' windows. For example, extensions should be designed to avoid an outlook from a main window to be of a large wall of a residential extension.

## Policy CNP 10 – Building Extensions Within and Outside the Built Up Area Boundary

Building extension will be permitted where it meets the following criteria:

- a) The scale, height and form fit unobtrusively with the existing building and the character of the street scene.
- b) Spacing between buildings would respect the character of the street scene.
- c) Gaps which provide views out of the village to surrounding countryside are maintained.
- d) Materials are compatible with the materials of the existing building.
- e) The traditional boundary treatment of an area is retained and, where feasible, reinforced and
- f) The privacy, daylight, sunlight and outlook of adjoining residents are safeguarded.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Number of objections to residential extensions from the parish council.	No objections from the Parish Council to proposed developments.

## 4.3 Local Economy

### Objectives

- To support the development and sustainable growth of business in Cuckfield.
- To promote the economic and social hubs of Cuckfield village and Whitemans Green neighbourhood centres.

### Employment Policies

#### Retaining and Generating New Employment in Cuckfield

The most recently available census shows that in 2011, 1620 of Cuckfield's economically active residents were working in the sectors shown in Table 9, many outside the Parish.

Most local employment is to be found in the village centre and Whitemans Green Neighbourhood centre shops and services; community services such as schools and the doctors' surgery; tourist accommodation; small scale industry as well as those working from home.

Table 9 - Cuckfield residents' Industry in 2011

All Usual Residents Aged 16 to 74 in Employment	1620
A Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	13
B Mining & Quarrying	1
C Manufacturing	61
D Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air Conditioning Supply	9
E Water Supply; Sewerage, Waste Management and Remediation Activities	11
F Construction	105
G Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motor Cycles	190
H Transport and Storage	90
I Accommodation and Food Service Activities	82
J Information and Communication	102
K Financial and Insurance Activities	141
L Real Estate Activities	24
M Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	163
N Administrative and Support Service Activities	93
O Public Administration and Defence; Compulsory Social Security	64
P Education	193
Q Human Health and Social Work Activities	184
R, S, Arts Entertainment & Recreation	88
T, U Other	6

(Source: Office for National Statistics)

To promote a prosperous rural economy, the NPPF states that Neighbourhood Plans should:

- Support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through reuse of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
- Promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;

- Support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside. This should include supporting the provision and expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities in rural service centres. Many people are employed in tourism and local traders have confirmed the importance of tourism and leisure to the local economy and the need to protect the overall look of the village and the surrounding attractive landscape, to continue to attract visitors; and
- Promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship. Local traders have confirmed that they would strongly support protecting the village centre shops and services. In relation to the Neighbourhood Plan a number of traders from the village centre would support an approach which avoids the loss of business premises to residential uses.

The Mid Sussex District Plan is based on an economy-led scenario which seeks to create new jobs within the District.

### **Cuckfield Village Centre**

The centre of Cuckfield is the economic and social hub of the village. It is the historic commercial centre of the village comprising a large number of listed buildings clustered around an enclosed High Street and is located within Cuckfield Conservation Area. Some of the premises have retained traditional shop fronts. Traditional brick paving adds to the character of this attractive centre.

The centre serves both the village and a rural catchment beyond with a range of shops, pubs, restaurants and cafes, as well as professional and community services. The centre includes the Queen's Hall and the Old School which cater for a range of community activities. The community buildings continue to make an important contribution to community life and their location in the village centre serves the local population well. The mix of uses is shown in the Cuckfield Village Centre background document ([www.cuckfield.gov.uk](http://www.cuckfield.gov.uk)). This mix provides activity within the centre throughout the day and evening. Cuckfield village centre is defined on Map 8.

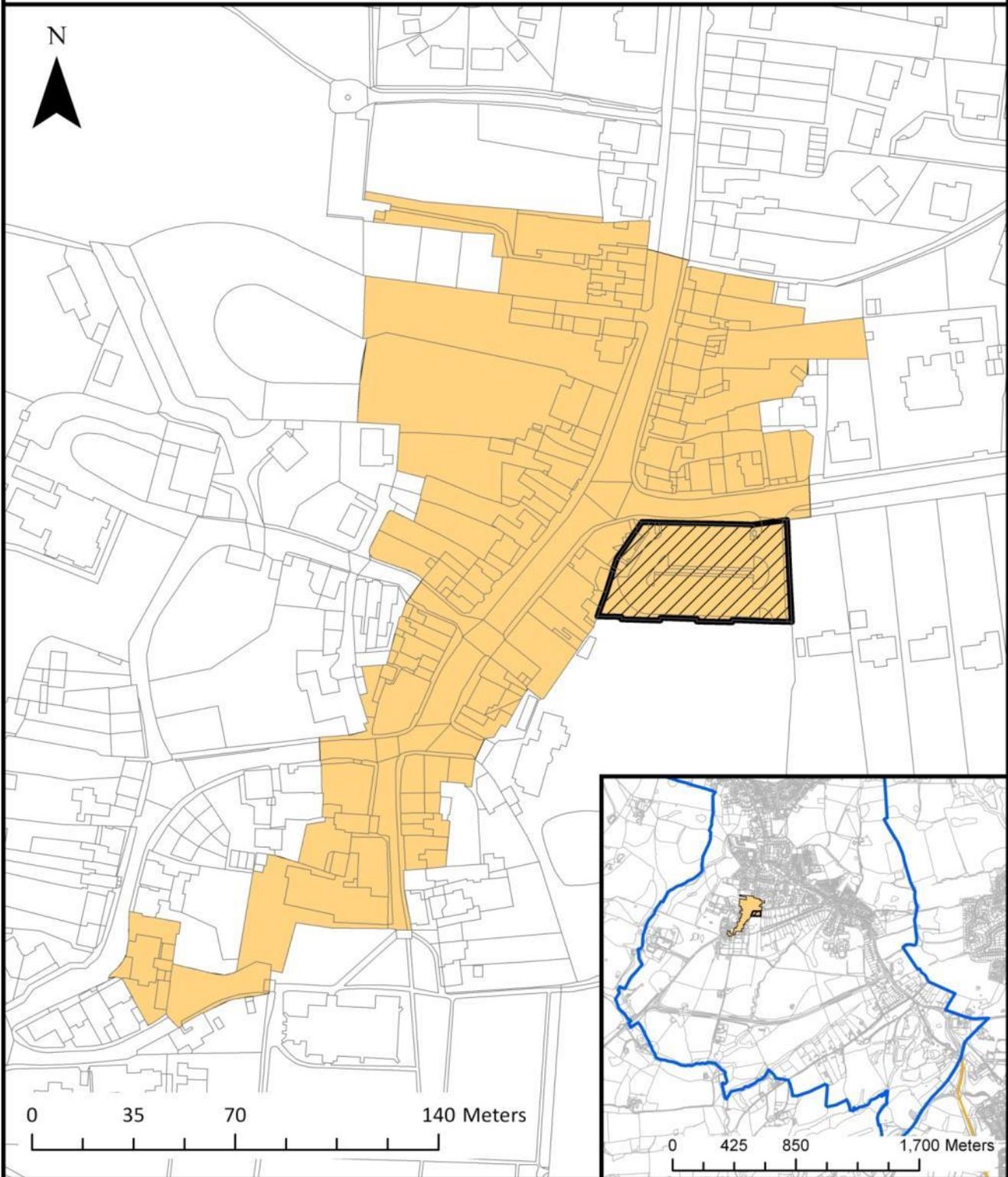
The majority of shop units are small and shopping provision is conveniently located in relatively compact clusters. The centre provides a basic range of convenience food shopping, a post office as well as a number of fashion and home ware shops known collectively as the Cuckfield Boutiques which widen the catchment of the centre. The monthly local food Market which supports growers and producers from the area adds to the attraction of the village centre.

Set in the historic heart of the village, the mix of small shops, cafes/ restaurants, traditional public houses and Cuckfield Museum forms part of the tourism offer of the Parish which attracts visitors from surrounding larger towns and those staying locally in tourist accommodation.

The centre is served by public transport and is well linked by streets and twittens to the surrounding residential areas. It is located to the south of the village and is most accessible on foot or bicycle to the southern and central parts of the village. There is a car park located off

Broad Street. Whilst adding to spending capacity in the village centre, the new housing proposed in the Plan is unlikely to result in a significant increase in expenditure in the village. Nevertheless, the Plan should enable the opportunity for businesses to expand or for new businesses to locate within the centre through extensions to existing buildings or the change of use of premises currently not in business or community uses. The type and level of activity proposed should not have an adverse effect on the character and appearance of the locality or on the amenities of local residents. Where feasible, residential uses should be provided on upper floors to optimise the potential of the site and add to the activity within the centre throughout the day and evening.

# Map 8 – Cuckfield Village Centre



### Key

-  Adjoining Parish Boundaries
-  Plan Area
-  Car Park (CNP15)
-  Cuckfield Village Centre (CNP12)



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The important role of the centre of Cuckfield to the village and the wider catchment means that its function and range of facilities should be retained and reinforced. The National Planning Policy Framework says that Neighbourhood Plans should promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places and public houses. Exceptionally, in the case of a commercial enterprise, a change of use may be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated that an existing use or another acceptable ‘Use Class’ within the village centre is no longer viable. In demonstrating that an existing use is not viable, applicants must produce evidence that genuine and sustained efforts to promote, improve and market the facility at a reasonable value have failed. Community facilities within the centre are protected by Policy CNP 18 – New School Buildings and CNP19 – Retention of Community Building.

### **Policy CNP 11 – Cuckfield Village Centre.**

- a) Proposals for the change of use of premises to shop, financial and professional service, restaurant, cafe, public house, hot food takeaway, hotel, office, place of worship, public hall, health centre, crèche, day nursery, museum, library, art gallery and exhibition hall (Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, C1 and D1) will be permitted within Cuckfield village centre, as defined on Map 8 - Cuckfield Village Centre, provided a mix of uses is maintained. Extensions to such uses will also be permitted.
- b) Residential use of upper floors should be retained and encouraged where appropriate.
- c) The loss of existing business premises (Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, and C1) within the village centre will be resisted unless an equivalent replacement facility is provided within the centre, or where it is demonstrated that the continued operation of a business or service is no longer financially viable. If a specific business or service is no longer financially viable, a use from the range of acceptable Use Classes should be sought for the premises.

<b>Monitoring Indicators</b>	<b>Targets</b>
Number of business premises in the village centre in 2012	No loss of business premises (Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1, and C1) within the village centre

## Whitemans Green Neighbourhood Centre

Whitemans Green neighbourhood centre comprises a small cluster of buildings serving the day to day needs of the northern part of Cuckfield and passing trade and is located within the Whitemans Green Conservation Area.

The small centre comprises a shop with Post Office, a public house and a fuel station with retail use. The mix of uses is shown in the Whitemans Green neighbourhood centre background document ([www.cuckfield.gov.uk](http://www.cuckfield.gov.uk)). The public house site has capacity to be used more intensively for additional residential development but the function of the public house should be retained in any development. As a site within the Whitemans Green Conservation Area, any development would need to comply carefully with Policy CNP 1 - Design of New Development and Conservation.

The centre is well linked by streets and footpaths to the surrounding residential areas, including the ancient twitten to Ardingly Road. It is an important facility for the northern residential areas in particular which are located some distance away from the village centre. The important role of the neighbourhood centre means that its facilities should be retained. Exceptionally, a change of use may be permitted where it can be clearly demonstrated that an existing use is no longer viable. In demonstrating that an existing use is not viable, applicants must produce evidence that genuine and sustained efforts to promote, improve and market the facility at a reasonable value have failed.

### Policy CNP 12 – Whitemans Green Neighbourhood Centre

The loss of the existing shop and public house (Use Classes A1 and A4) within the Whitemans Green neighbourhood centre, as defined on Map 9 – Whitemans Green Neighbourhood Centre, will be resisted unless an equivalent replacement facility is provided within the neighbourhood centre, or where it is demonstrated that the continued operation of a business is no longer financially viable.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Number of premises in the neighbourhood centre in 2012.	No loss of the existing shop or public house premises within the Whitemans Green neighbourhood centre.

# Map 9 - Whitemans Green Neighbourhood Centre



## Key

-  Plan Area
-  Whitemans Green Neighbourhood Centre (CNP13)



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## Shop Fronts

Shops and other commercial buildings within Cuckfield village centre contribute to the character of this part of Cuckfield Conservation Area. Most occupy listed buildings.

Shop fronts form an important element in the street scene, both individually and in terms of their collective impact. Some of the premises have retained traditional shop fronts with attractive detailing whilst others detract from the character of the Conservation Area. The Cuckfield Conservation Area Appraisal Proposals for Enhancement seeks to encourage a high standard of shop front design. Traditional shop fronts should be retained as an integral part of the character of a building and the Conservation Area.

Proposals for replacing existing shop fronts will only be allowed where the existing shop front has no particular architectural or historic quality in itself or does not contribute to the character of the Conservation Area. Where replacement is allowed, the design should respect not only the building but also the overall character of the Conservation Area. All elements of the shop front are important including the shop width, the depth of stall riser and fascia and signage. Standard corporate images may need to be adapted to meet particular circumstances and to respect the character of the building and the Conservation Area.

Advertising within the Conservation Areas is generally restrained. Excessive advertising defeats its own objective by creating a clutter of signs and destroying the common asset of an attractive, historic environment.

The commercial character of the village high street should be maintained with well-designed shop fronts and low key advertisements.

### **Policy CNP 13 - Shop Fronts and Advertisements**

Proposals for new shop fronts, or alterations to existing shop fronts, will be permitted where the following criteria are satisfied:

- a) The proposal would not result in the loss of a traditional shop front or features and details of architectural or historic interest;
- b) The proposal would be in sympathy with the architectural style, materials and form of the building(s) of which it would form part and the character of the Conservation Area; and
- c) Where a fascia is to be applied, it would be of an appropriate height which would be in scale with the overall height of the shop front and other elements of the building and would not intrude over the first floor level.

An advertisement will be permitted where it would be designed, constructed and sited so as to preserve and enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Areas and would not cause visual clutter in the street scene, or cause significant harm to the appearance of any building on which it would be displayed because of its size, design, construction or materials.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Number of traditional shop fronts in the village centre.	No traditional shop fronts lost in the village centre.

## Business Development in the Countryside

### Conversion and Expansion of Rural Buildings for Business and Tourist Uses

Although agriculture (including forestry) provides less than 1% of employment within the Parish, it remains an important part of the rural economy and is also instrumental in protecting the character and appearance of the landscape and potentially enhancing local biodiversity. The rural economy has been changing during the past decades, with a trend towards farms diversifying from traditional activities, primarily through the re-use of farm and other rural buildings for commercial, non-agricultural purposes.

Tourism also plays an important part in the local economy and some tourist accommodation is located in the countryside outside the village.

The Neighbourhood Plan wishes to continue to enable the reuse of suitable rural buildings for small scale, low impact business and tourism uses. Re-use of rural buildings for residential purposes would not normally be permitted.

The re-use of agricultural buildings should not prejudice the agricultural unit itself. Proposals for the re-use of recently constructed agricultural buildings, including those erected under permitted development rights, which have not been used or little used for their approved/intended agriculture purpose, should be refused. The building to be re-used will be capable of reuse without substantial reconstruction or extensive alteration. Works of adaptation should not materially alter its appearance and setting.

The National Planning Policy Framework allows well designed new business premises in the countryside. Whilst the principle of such development is therefore acceptable, the Plan also seeks to protect and enhance valued landscapes and formal and informal recreational amenities, protect views from public areas, prevent the coalescence of Cuckfield and Haywards Heath and minimise impacts on biodiversity. For these reasons, any proposals for new buildings will need to be suitably located and of appropriate scale, form and design so as to comply with Policy CNP 3 - Preventing coalescence between Cuckfield and Haywards Heath, Policy CNP 5 - Protect and enhance the countryside, and would result in a high quality design in accordance with Policy CNP 1 - Design of New Development and Conservation as well as not adversely affecting the amenities of local residents and other countryside users.

Similarly, the small scale, low impact extension of rural buildings in business or tourist use will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that it is essential for the operation of the existing occupier and in accordance with Policy CNP 3 - Preventing coalescence between Cuckfield and Haywards Heath, Policy CNP 5- Protect and enhance the countryside, and would result in a high quality design in accordance with Policy CNP 1 - Design of New Development and Conservation. The design and volume of any extension should be subservient to the original building and present a satisfactory composition.

Development should not result in a large, bulky or intrusive building in the landscape which is likely to have a detrimental impact on an area largely free from development. The impact of the development on the countryside is clearly greater if located in a highly visible location. However, the test of impact still applies even if there are limited or no public views of it as, if allowed, the argument could be repeated, with a potentially more serious cumulative impact on the urbanisation of the countryside as well as public amenity value (health and well-being, views, dog walking, access to green space, etc.) and for these reasons would be unacceptable. In some locations any development may be inappropriate.

### **Policy CNP 14 - Business Development in the Countryside**

Outside the Built Up Area Boundary, as defined on Map 2 – Cuckfield Built Up Area Boundary, the following proposals will be permitted:

- a) The change of use of a rural building to business or tourist uses;
- b) A well-designed new building for business or tourist uses
- c) A proportionate and well-designed extension of an existing building in business or tourist use.

The scale and form of any proposal should not adversely affect the character and appearance of the countryside in accordance with Policies CNP 5 and CNP 10, the locality and the amenities of local residents and other countryside users.

<b>Monitoring Indicators</b>	<b>Targets</b>
Disused floor space in buildings located outside the BUAB.	Reduction in disused floor space in buildings located outside the BUAB

## 4.4 Infrastructure

The Cuckfield Infrastructure Assessment May 2013 ([www.cuckfield.gov.uk](http://www.cuckfield.gov.uk)) identifies a range of infrastructure requirements over the plan period. This includes a review of:

- External Influences
- Getting around
- Sustainability
- Community Infrastructure
- Leisure
- Green Infrastructure and Open Spaces

A range of criteria have been used to assess priorities for the village (including funding sources and availability) and these are outlined in the sections below.

## 4.5 Getting Around

### *Objectives*

- To ensure that new development is well connected to village facilities by a range of transport modes, including walking, cycling and public transport and, where appropriate, makes suitable provision towards new sustainable transport infrastructure
- To ensure safe vehicular and pedestrian access and promote pedestrian safety
- Supporting the maintenance of bus services during peak times and connections with other services
- To ensure that the twittens (Cuckfield's public rights of way for non-motorised users) are well maintained and continue to provide access to the surrounding countryside

### *Policies*

The NPPF is clear that transport proposals need to be balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes, giving people a real choice about how they travel. However, the government recognises that different policies and measures will be required in different communities and opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary from urban to rural areas.

The transport situation in Cuckfield Parish is similar to many other villages in the South East:

- High car ownership and an increase in car traffic.
- Bus connections from outlying villages and to larger centres but these are limited at peak times and not possible outside the peak.
- Inadequate village centre parking.

### **Transport Infrastructure**

Traffic flow is generally reasonable but peak hour congestion occurs on High Street, London Road and at the Ardingly Road, London Lane and Broad Street junctions. Congestion also occurs close

to the schools during term time due to the number of buses being used to bring in children from outside the parish and car born journeys. The schools also host a number of events which can attract a large number of people in short period of time.

There has been one serious incident in the past 12 months in Ardingly Road involving a primary school child and a larger number of slight accidents (27 in the last 6 years – source West Sussex County Council).

There is some pedestrian/ vehicle conflict in the village centre but a good interlinking network of twittens and ancient paths within the village and into the countryside.

### **Village Centre Car Park**

The existing village centre car park is well located to serve the village centre facilities and is essential to the commercial and community uses which contribute to the vitality and viability of the centre. The Neighbourhood Plan wishes to retain the car park for this purpose for the plan period.

### **Policy CNP 15 – Village Centre Car Park**

Land identified on Map 8 – Cuckfield Village Centre, should be retained as a public car park

<b>Monitoring Indicators</b>	<b>Targets</b>
Provision of village centre car park.	No reduction in number of car parking spaces.

### **Development Proposals**

Development brought forward through the Neighbourhood Plan will have an impact on the transport situation of the Parish. Further, there are proposals adjacent to the Parish such as the Burgess Hill Northern Arc which are likely to have a traffic impact on local roads. With peak hour congestion and minor accidents already occurring in the village, it is important that future proposals do not exacerbate this situation. This Neighbourhood Plan seeks to manage transport through controlling the amount and location of development, promoting alternative modes of travel and bringing forward transport proposals.

The Neighbourhood Plan allocates sites for additional housing development which are well located in terms of the village facilities. In addition, brownfield sites are allocated for housing development slightly further from the village on the former Court Meadow School and Horsgate House, Hanlye Lane. Residential development proposals should ensure sustainable transport links to the principal village facilities including the village centre, the primary and secondary schools and recreation open space. Planning applications for residential development should demonstrate that suitable sustainable transport connections from the site by safe, convenient and direct footpaths and cycle routes and public transport are available or will be provided to the principal village facilities, including sites in the north to Whitemans Green neighbourhood centre.

The Neighbourhood Plan also enables small scale residential development within the built up area as well as business and tourist-related opportunities, school expansion and village centre proposals and such development can be expected to come forward during the plan period.

All new development will be expected to provide safe vehicular and pedestrian access into the site and promote pedestrian safety beyond the development. In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way.

Where adequate transport infrastructure is not available to serve the development, the development should provide, or contribute towards, appropriate measures which will address the identified inadequacy and assist walking, cycling, public transport and other highway improvements and traffic management measures which promote pedestrian safety such as safer routes to school.

Both Warden Park Academy and Holy Trinity CE (A) Primary schools have School Travel Plans.

Where proposals would add to traffic congestion in the village or inappropriate traffic on rural lanes, development should bring forward proposals to mitigate any traffic impact on the village and surrounding lanes or contribute funding towards local transport schemes.

Impacts from development changes which are outside the plan area, but which will affect Cuckfield's infrastructure, will be appraised and identified with the relevant infrastructure provider for mitigation requirements.

### **Policy CNP 16 – Transport Impact of Development**

Proposals will be permitted where they meet the following criteria:

- a) Safely located vehicular and pedestrian access with adequate visibility exists or could be created; and
- b) Development proposals would ensure sustainable transport links to the principal village facilities including the village centre, the primary and secondary schools and recreation open space are provided; and
- c) Where adequate transport infrastructure is not available to serve the development, the development would provide, or contribute towards, appropriate measures which will address the identified inadequacy and assist walking, cycling, public transport and other highway improvements; and
- d) Where development would add to traffic congestion in the village or inappropriate traffic on rural lanes, proposals should be brought forward to mitigate any traffic impact or contribute funding towards local transport schemes
- e) Development proposals for new developments should include secure cycle storage and ideally storage for children's buggies and mobility scooters where appropriate
- f) Development proposals would maintain or enhance the existing routes of the twittens (public rights of way).

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Traffic accident frequency and severity within the Parish.	No increase in the number of traffic accidents reported in the Parish.

### Local Transport Schemes

Cuckfield has seen 27 new dwellings completed in 2011/12 and there are planning permissions for a further 90 dwellings. These developments are due to make funding contributions towards local transport schemes through planning agreements.

The Neighbourhood Plan emphasises the importance of the centre of Cuckfield as the economic and social hub of the village as well as the historic core. The area is important for residents and visitors alike and forms part of the tourist attraction of the village. In terms of transport proposals, the aim is to make the High Street and the adjoining sections of Broad Street and South Street more pedestrian friendly to improve pedestrian safety and access (including safer routes to school) , and enhance footpath, bridleways and cycle ways.

Traffic calming measures combined with improvements to the pedestrian environment should improve the attractiveness of the centre as well as encouraging non-stopping through traffic to use the A23 or Cuckfield bypass. The Cuckfield Conservation Area Appraisal Proposals for Enhancement suggests carrying out a comprehensive street audit and identifying a scheme to manage and calm traffic and improve the appearance of the street scene. This includes discussing with West Sussex County Council restricting heavy vehicles in the village centre by narrowing the entrances to the village; changing the road surface of the lower High Street and South Street to calm traffic through the village and preventing car parking on pavements by providing additional cast iron bollards in the High Street. The specific proposals to be included in any longer term scheme will need to be developed and agreed through local consultation and with West Sussex County Council as part of a comprehensive village centre scheme.

The following schemes are part of the Parish Highways and Traffic Plan (and included in the Cuckfield Infrastructure Assessment – [www.cuckfield.gov.uk](http://www.cuckfield.gov.uk)), being developed by the Parish Council in conjunction with West Sussex County Council. The proposals are not exclusive but an indication of what has been considered mainly for the short term:

<b>Short Term</b>	1-2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• London Lane build-outs to slow traffic</li> <li>• Speed Reduction at Whitemans Green</li> <li>• Crossings and improved cycling in Ardingly Road</li> </ul>
	2-3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pedestrian Crossing point in London Road</li> <li>• Cycling Improvements in Broad Street</li> </ul>
	3-5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvements to the Parking and Bus Stops in Broad Street</li> <li>• Improvements to the Roundabout at Whitemans Green</li> </ul>
<b>Medium – Long Term</b>	5–20 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvements to the pedestrian environment in the High Street area</li> </ul>

In addition the following will be pursued:

- a) Resolution of car parking capacity in the Memorial Recreation ground and at Whitemans Green.
- b) Additional Signage indicating historic village centre.

Many of the schemes will be funded by developer funding from permitted or proposed development.

## 4.6 Wellbeing and Leisure

### *Objectives*

- To ensure that sufficient community and leisure facilities are maintained to serve the Parish including new provision in association with new development.

### *Policies*

Cuckfield is fortunate to have a strong community spirit reflected in the number of groups and activities taking place. These groups have strong coordinating bodies such as the Parish Council, Holy Trinity Church, Baptist Church, Scouts, Cuckfield Society, Independent State of Cuckfield, sports clubs, school based activities and youth clubs. They need places in which to meet and there are a number of excellent facilities within the village including the newly adapted Church and Old School; the primary and secondary schools; the Queen's Hall and the Youth Club and Scout Hut buildings.

There is also a need for exercise whether it is walking to school or to the village centre, playing sport, digging an allotment or informal walking in the countryside. Safer pedestrian facilities are sought in the Getting Around section of the plan but the uplifting walks into the surrounding countryside (including the long distance High Weald Landscape Trail) are an important local resource in the health and wellbeing of the local community. The Cuckfield Medical Practice is located in modern, purpose built and accessible premises in the village. Nevertheless, as the village grows, there is more pressure on existing facilities and it is important that sufficient infrastructure is provided in association with new development.

An Open Space Assessment is available at [www.cuckfield.gov.uk](http://www.cuckfield.gov.uk).

The NPPF encourages planning policies to aim to achieve places which promote:

- Opportunities for meetings between members of the community who might not otherwise come into contact with each other and plan positively for the provision and use of community facilities (such as meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments. Policies should guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs.

### **Open Space**

Whilst the provision of open space within the built up area is limited, there is generally good provision of open space serving the village in terms of the quantity, quality and accessibility of local amenity areas, formal play areas and sports pitches, school playing fields, allotments or informal recreation through the extensive footpath network and access to woodlands and countryside. The NPPF states that existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should generally not be built on. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect existing open space in the village (Policy CNP 2) while other open spaces such as recreation grounds, allotments, sports pitches and natural open space are located outside the

built up area and are thus protected through Policy CNP 5 along with the surrounding countryside for the benefit of the local community and tourists alike.

### **Amenity Open Space**

Amenity open space is defined as open space which provides informal activities and visual enhancement to residential areas.

As a consequence of development, the Parish Council will own, and subsequently manage, new areas of amenity open space off Bylanes and Ardingly Road. The areas are appropriately outside the village boundary and are unsuitable for built development. The areas will be laid out and maintained by the Parish Council to provide opportunities for informal activities and to enhance the appearance of the adjoining residential areas and the setting of Cuckfield. Both sites form part of the setting of the village and, in the case of Ardingly Road and Bylanes Close, the amenity open space allows for the protection of the distinctive views of the countryside. In general, the natural and ecological features of the sites should be retained and the Parish Council will look to enhance the biodiversity of both areas.

### **Allotments**

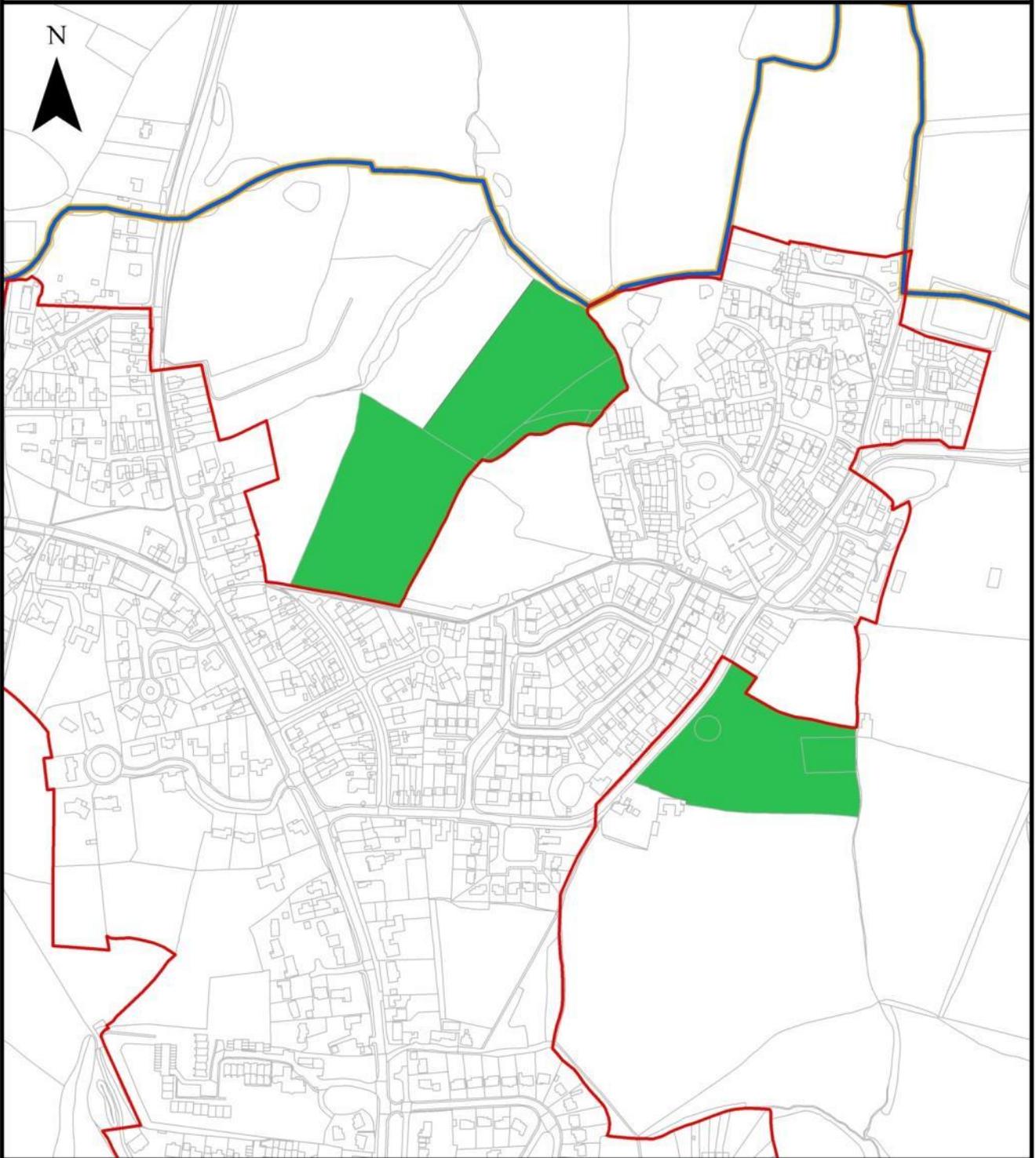
The Parish Council has a waiting list of over 20 households for allotments, all from the southern part of the village, and there is a need for further allotments to meet existing and future need. The current provision is well distributed on three sites to serve different residential areas at the north, centre and south of the village. The Parish Council will need to explore suitable opportunities to provide further allotment space.

### **Policy CNP 17 –Amenity Open Space**

Sites to the west of Bylanes Close and to the south of Ardingly Road, as defined on Map 10 – Amenity Open Space, are allocated as amenity open space.

<b>Proposed Monitoring Indicators</b>	<b>Proposed Targets</b>
Provision of Open Space.	Delivery of identified Open Space in the Plan period.

# Map 10 - Amenity Open Space



## Key

-  Built up area boundary
-  Cuckfield Neighbourhood Plan Area
-  Parish Boundaries
-  Amenity Open Space (CNP17)

0 180 Meters



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## **Sports Pitches**

The Mid Sussex PPG17 Assessment (2006) concludes that most sports are well catered for in the Parish but identifies a need for more rugby pitches in Haywards Heath/Cuckfield. Part of the demand will originate from Cuckfield Parish. The Mid Sussex Local Plan (2004) allocates land outside the Neighbourhood Plan area for an extension to Whitemans Green Recreation Ground to allow Haywards Heath Rugby Club to develop an additional pitch or mini-pitches and this provision has now been made. There may be further plans for expansion and diversification of the sports facilities over the Plan period which should include additional parking facilities. Both the Chatfield Road and Bylanes housing sites have contributed to future provision at Whitemans Green through the provisions of the Mid Sussex District Council Development and Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document (2006).

The Neighbourhood Plan recognises the importance to Cuckfield and the District of the sports provision at Whitemans Green, which is partially within the plan area. Haywards Heath Rugby Club and Cuckfield Cricket Club have plans to improve their sporting facilities in the near future. The Worsley recreation park pavilion will need some investment over the plan period, which could include accommodation for the tennis club.

The Cuckfield Infrastructure Plan assesses overall sport provision for the plan area. The plan will monitor any applications which come forward and the Parish Council will wish to see any proposal protect and enhance the high quality and sensitive landscape which is within the High Weald AONB and the setting of the village.

The impact of traffic through the village and the Parish together with parking would need to be tested against Policy CNP 16 and where necessary the development should provide, or contribute towards, appropriate mitigation measures.

New homes will add to the demand for improved or additional allotment or sport pitch provision and each new dwelling will be expected to contribute to improving such facilities (Policy CNP 22). The Parish or District Council may be prepared to adopt and maintain properly laid-out open space, subject to the payment by the developer of a commuted sum to cover the cost of future maintenance. A schedule is set out in the Mid Sussex District Council Development and Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document (2006) which enables maintenance costs to be calculated. Future development in the Parish will be expected to contribute to implementing this proposal.

## **School Provision**

Cuckfield is served by the Holy Trinity CE (A) Primary School and Warden Park Academy. Both schools are located within the built up boundary of the village. Holy Trinity Primary School is at capacity which can result in intake restrictions applying to children in the Parish. Both the Chatfield Road and Bylanes housing sites have contributed to future school provision in West Sussex under the provisions of the Mid Sussex District Council Development and Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document (2006). New homes will add to the demand on existing schools and each new dwelling will be expected to contribute to additional provision at the two local schools (Policy CNP 18).

### *Holy Trinity Primary School*

Following expansion of the village, Holy Trinity Primary School is drawing up proposals to move towards a 2 form entry (currently 1.5). This would mean an additional 3 class rooms and additional communal accommodation such as toilets, staff room and main assembly hall. The current proposal is to extend the building to the east onto what is currently the 'top playground'. This would be acceptable in principle as the site is contained by a well hedged and treed boundary and is within the Built up Area Boundary of the village. A replacement playground area would be required and this could be sited within the school grounds to the south, being careful to avoid removal of the wooded areas. This would be an acceptable open use in an Area of Important Open Space.

### *Warden Park Academy*

The school currently hosts approximately 1500 pupils. There are plans to replace some temporary buildings with permanent new buildings within the BUAB. There is interest from the government for Warden Park to expand to include a sixth form; such a change would be likely to require additional facilities. The Built up Area Boundary of Cuckfield has been amended to allow for future extensions within 25 metres of the existing buildings should this be required in the future. This has the effect of containing new buildings close to existing development and preventing a sprawl of buildings to the south of the village. New development should be well designed (Policy CNP 1) and enhance, and not have a detrimental impact on, the sensitive landscape or the setting of Cuckfield in accordance with Policy CNP 5.

The school aims to construct an artificial pitch with modern lighting to the southwest of the current auditorium/gymnasium. This would include some small storage sheds. This would be a generally open use appropriate to it being outside the built up area boundary. The character area forms part of the undeveloped, treed, southern edge to this part of Cuckfield and the impact of any lighting should not have an adverse impact on the landscape setting of the village. The means of lighting should be unobtrusively sited and well screened by landscaping or other site features and the design and specification of the lighting should minimise glare and light spillage.

### **Policy CNP 18 – New School Buildings**

Additional school buildings at Holy Trinity Primary CE (A) School and Warden Park Academy will be permitted within the Built Up Area Boundary.

#### **Proposed Monitoring Indicators**

Number of school buildings developed outside the BUAB.

#### **Proposed Targets**

No new school buildings developed outside the BUAB.

## Community Buildings

Cuckfield has a number of excellent facilities within the village for groups needing places to meet. Community buildings in the village include the newly adapted Church, the Old School next to the Church, Holy Trinity Primary School, Warden Park Academy, the Queen's Hall, the Youth Club building, Scout Hut, the Rugby Club and the Cricket Pavilion. The Baptist Church has also received planning permission for new premises which will further add to this capacity.

To maintain the social fabric of the Parish, the range of existing well used facilities needs to be maintained and enhanced. The need is accentuated as the amount of additional development in Cuckfield increases.

There may be pressure to convert existing community buildings to other uses such as residential development during the plan period but the Neighbourhood Plan will resist the loss of such facilities which contribute significantly to the social fabric of the parish.

### Policy CNP 19 - Retention of Community Buildings

The loss of existing community buildings (Use Class D1) will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that demand within the locality for the facility no longer exists or that suitable alternative provision is made elsewhere.

Monitoring Indicators	Targets
Number of community buildings within the Parish at the start of the Plan period.	No loss of community buildings within the Parish.

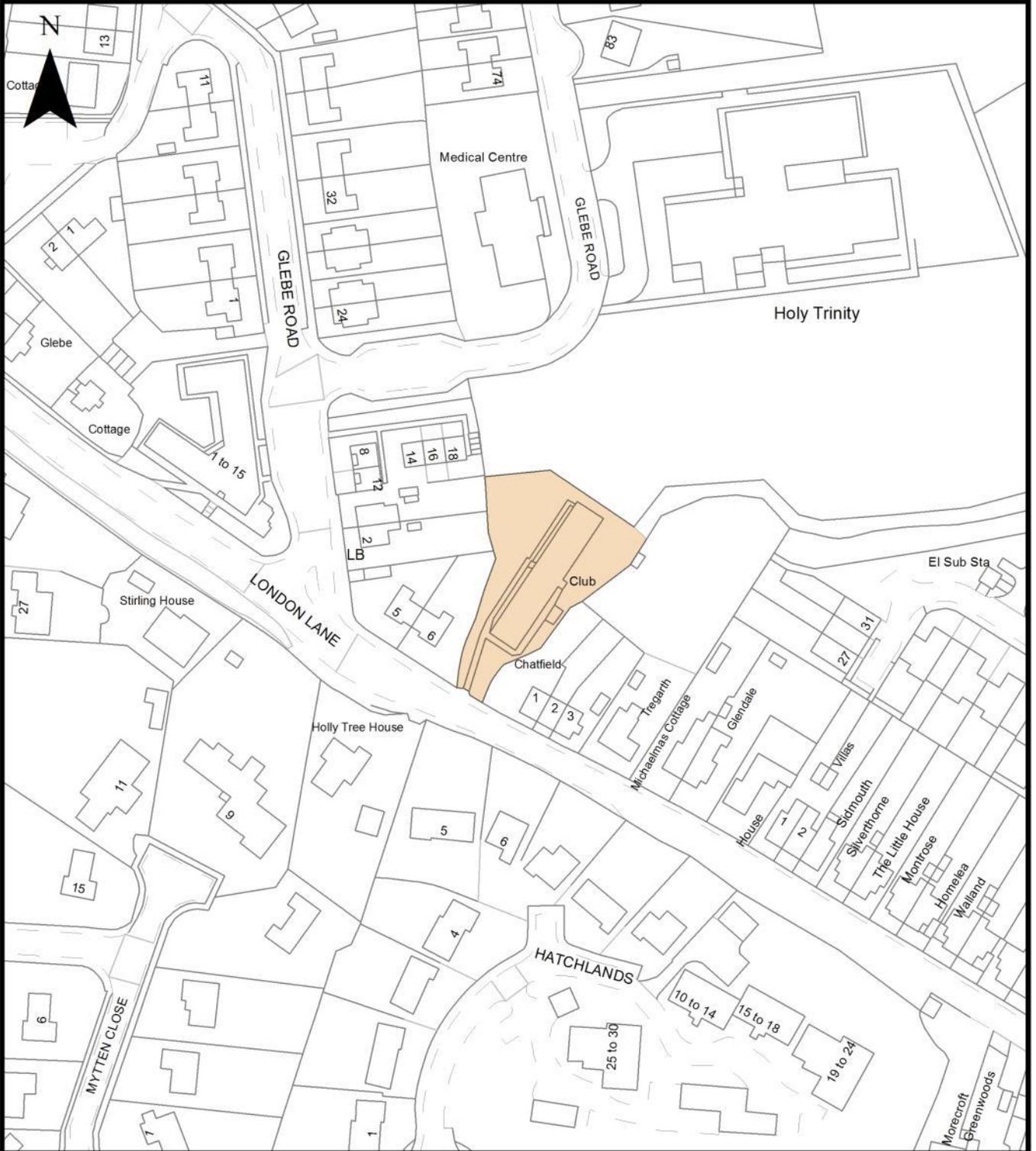
#### *The Queen's Hall*

The Queen's Hall is well maintained by the Parish Council and no significant improvements are anticipated over the next 20 years. Improvements have been made recently to the store room, basement and services. It is a valuable source of income for the Parish Council through weddings and hire.

#### *The Youth Club*

The Youth Club Building is a vital community asset and is in need of improvement. (The plan recognises youth provision at Holy Trinity Church). The building is currently owned by West Sussex County Council and used primarily by the Cuckfield Playgroup and Orchard House. The playgroup has been established for over 45 years to provide high quality care and education for 2.5 - 5 year olds from the village community and surrounding area. Orchard House is an organisation in Cuckfield which offers care and accommodation for children who have a severe learning disability, normally from the age of 10 to 18, who have been assessed as needing a residential placement. Representatives from WSCC have made clear their intention to undertake a community asset transfer of the building to a community organisation. The current users have therefore looked to the Parish Council to take over the running of the building.

# Map 11 – Improved Community Buildings



## Key

 CNP20 - Youth Club Building, London Lane

0 30 Meters



Map produced by:

**Cuckfield Parish Council**

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Ordnance Survey 0040086631

The building is in a poor state of repair and will require significant investment to sustain activity in the long term. Consultation on the options for the Neighbourhood Plan indicated that around 85% of respondents felt that the services provided are valuable to the community and should be maintained. Some 75% believed that if available the site should be redeveloped to enable the continuing provision of the existing services. There was strong opposition in the consultation to the redevelopment of this site for housing development and suitable alternative sites have been identified for housing provision. The proximity of this site to Holy Trinity Primary School makes it ideal for those with children at both institutions. It also opens up the possibility for the use of the Youth Club Building for wrap around child care. The Neighbourhood Plan therefore proposes that the building is rebuilt within the existing site as a centre that benefits the children, young people and the wider community in and around Cuckfield. Improvements to the youth club building will take place within the existing site.

Other facilities may require improvement over the 20 years of the plan.

Development should contribute funding towards the enhancement of the existing stock of community buildings which serve the locality. Contributions will be spent on the extension or improvement of existing community buildings.

### **Policy CNP 20 - Improved Community Buildings**

The Youth Club Building, shown on Map 11 – Improved Community Buildings, will be retained and improved as a centre that benefits the children, young people and the wider community in and around Cuckfield.

<b>Monitoring Indicators</b>	<b>Targets</b>
Condition of playgroup and youth club building, London Lane.	Fit for purpose building by the end of the Plan period.

### ***Infrastructure Contributions***

The development of sustainable communities requires the provision of a wide range of local facilities and services.

Mid Sussex District Council has adopted a Development and Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document (2006) which supplements a number of saved Local Plan policies seeking developer contributions. This is currently used as the basis for seeking contributions towards local infrastructure and has already raised funding for a number of local highway projects, the primary school, open space provision and enhancement and improvements to the Queen’s Hall. This SPD only applies to developments of 6 or more dwellings, meaning neither smaller scale residential development nor non-residential development have to contribute. In the case of non-residential development, the requirement for infrastructure is considered on an individual basis.

In future, most development will be expected to contribute towards infrastructure through the Community Infrastructure Levy. The levy is intended to help pay for the infrastructure required to

support new development though it should not be used to remedy pre-existing deficiencies unless the new development makes the deficiency more severe.

Most buildings that people normally use will be liable to pay the levy, once introduced, and all but the smallest building projects will be expected to make a contribution towards additional infrastructure that is needed as a result of their development, subject to an appropriate assessment of viability. Mid Sussex District Council as the charging authority will set the levy and will decide on what infrastructure the funding is spent, taking into account the clear local infrastructure priorities set out in the Neighbourhood Plan (set out below) and Cuckfield Infrastructure Assessment ([www.cuckfield.gov.uk](http://www.cuckfield.gov.uk)). The Community Infrastructure Levy should normally be spent on infrastructure needs in the locality of the scheme that generated it.

The Planning Act 2008 provides a wide definition of the infrastructure which can be funded by the levy including transport, schools, play areas, parks and green spaces, cultural and sports facilities and health and social care facilities. This gives local communities flexibility to choose what infrastructure they need to deliver their development plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan has identified infrastructure requirements needed to support new development. These are:

- Traffic management measures including:
  - London Lane build-outs to slow traffic and potentially deter larger vehicles from using this route
  - Speed Reduction at Whitemans Green
  - Crossings and Cycle Lane in Ardingly Road
  - Pedestrian Crossing point in London Road
  - Cycle Lane Improvements in Broad Street
  - Improvements to the Parking and Bus Stops in Broad Street
  - Improvements to the Roundabout at Whitemans Green
  - Improvements to the pedestrian environment in the High Street
- Intensification of sports provision at Whitemans Green
- Resolution of car parking capacity in the Memorial Recreation ground and at Whitemans Green
- Additional Signage indicating historic village centre
- Expansion of Holy Trinity Primary School to a 2 form entry school
- Improvement of the playgroup and youth club building, London Lane
- Additional green infrastructure within new developments or adjoining areas

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is the government's preferred vehicle for the collection of pooled contributions and the Parish Council would wish to see the above schemes included in the District Council's CIL Infrastructure Development Plan which identifies all types of

infrastructure needed to support new homes and businesses in the district over the next 20 years. The Parish Council would wish to see the timely release of funding to implement these local priorities. Other public and private sources of funding will be available to contribute to the local priorities listed.

If the CIL Infrastructure Development Plan is not in place, pooled contributions may be sought from up to five separate planning obligations for an item of infrastructure. The limit of five applies to types of general infrastructure contributions, such as education and transport. In assessing whether five separate planning obligations have already been entered into for a specific infrastructure project or a type of infrastructure, local planning authorities must look over agreements that have been entered into since 6 April 2010.

### **Policy CNP 21 - Securing Infrastructure**

Any development permitted will be expected to ensure provision of the necessary social, physical and green infrastructure needed to support the proposed development, or the additional infrastructure identified in the Neighbourhood Plan which can be provided in a timely manner, through developer contributions subject to an appropriate assessment of viability.

<b>Monitoring Indicators</b>	<b>Targets</b>
Infrastructure delivered through developer contributions, including S106 contributions and Community Infrastructure Levy.	All infrastructure identified in the Neighbourhood Plan and within Mid Sussex District Council CIL Schedule within the Cuckfield area, to be delivered by the end of the Plan period.

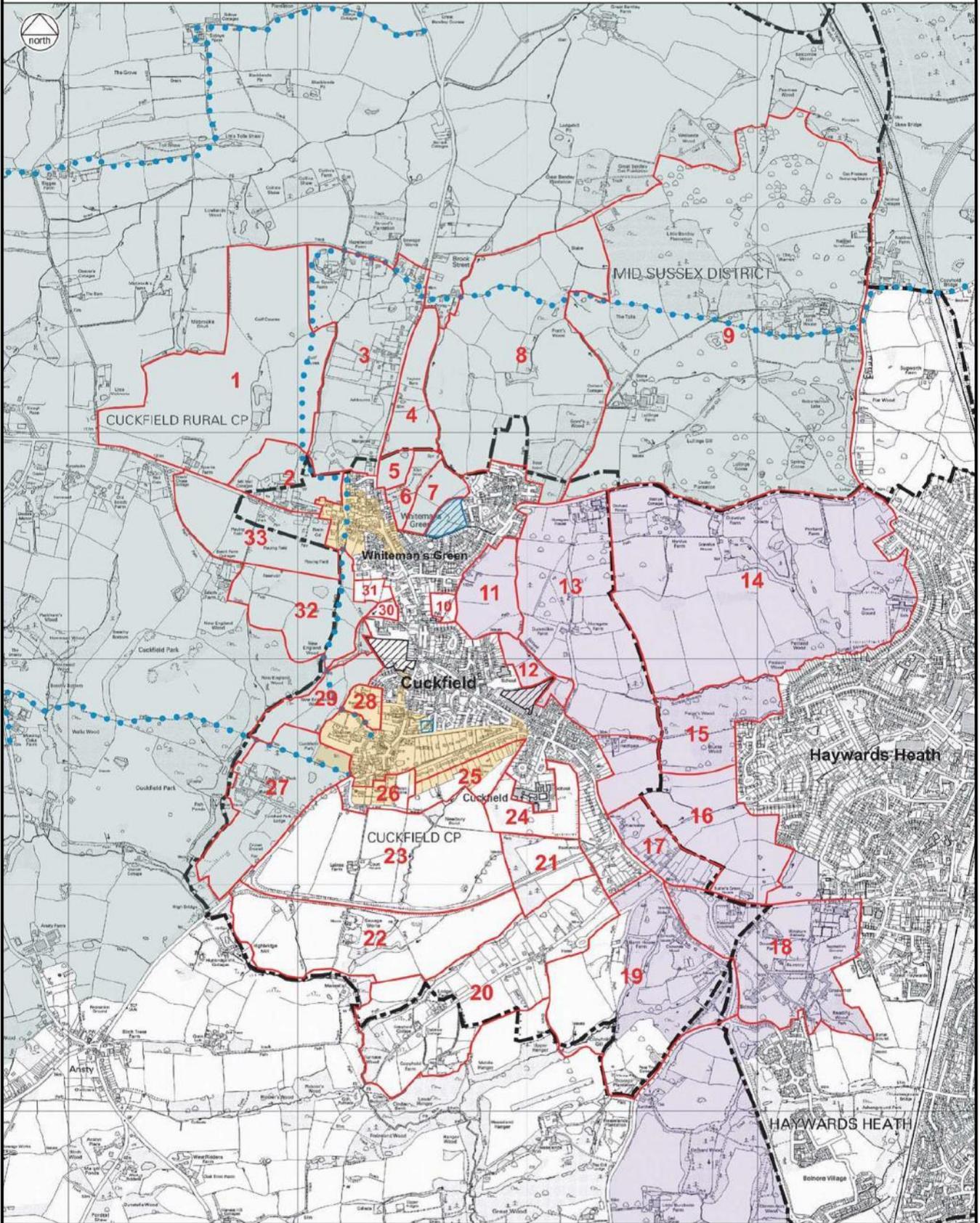
## **Section 5: Monitoring and Review**

Effective monitoring is an essential component in achieving sustainable development and sustainable communities. Monitoring provides crucial information to establish what is happening now and whether policies are working.

The Neighbourhood Plan sets out the long-term spatial vision for Cuckfield Parish with agreed objectives and policies to deliver the vision in the period up to 2031. Where relevant, targets are set in the Plan against which the delivery of the policy will be measured. Monitoring will evaluate the progress being made towards delivering the spatial vision and assess the extent to which the policies are being implemented.

Where monitoring shows that progress towards targets is unsatisfactory the Parish Council will review the situation and, where necessary, take remedial action. This may include pro-active measures to bring forward sites for development through a review of the plan or action to secure the timely provision of infrastructure. If necessary the Neighbourhood Plan will be formally reviewed, though circumstances which would require a review cannot be envisaged in the next 10 years.

# Map 12 – Landscape Character Assessment Areas



KEY	
<span style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px;">1</span>	Local Character Areas
<span style="border-bottom: 1px dashed black; width: 20px; display: inline-block;"></span>	Parish boundaries
<span style="border: 1px solid black; background: repeating-linear-gradient(45deg, transparent, transparent 2px, black 2px, black 4px); width: 20px; height: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span>	Recent development / development under construction
<span style="border: 1px solid black; background: repeating-linear-gradient(-45deg, transparent, transparent 2px, black 2px, black 4px); width: 20px; height: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span>	Committed development
<span style="background-color: #d9ead3; width: 20px; height: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span>	High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)
<span style="border-bottom: 1px dotted blue; width: 20px; display: inline-block;"></span>	Sussex Ouse Valley Way & High Weald Landscape Trail
<span style="background-color: #fff2cc; width: 20px; height: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span>	Conservation Areas
<span style="background-color: #f4cccc; width: 20px; height: 10px; display: inline-block;"></span>	Gap Policy area

CLIENT:  
Cuckfield Parish Council

PROJECT:  
Cuckfield Character Assessment

TITLE:  
Landscape Character Areas, Designations & Policy

SCALE AT A3:  
1:15,000

DATE:  
March 2012

533.3 / 02 C

HDA 3

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