

Ansty, Staplefield & Brook Street Neighbourhood Plan

2015-2031



Submission Stage Version (Regulation 16)

January 2016

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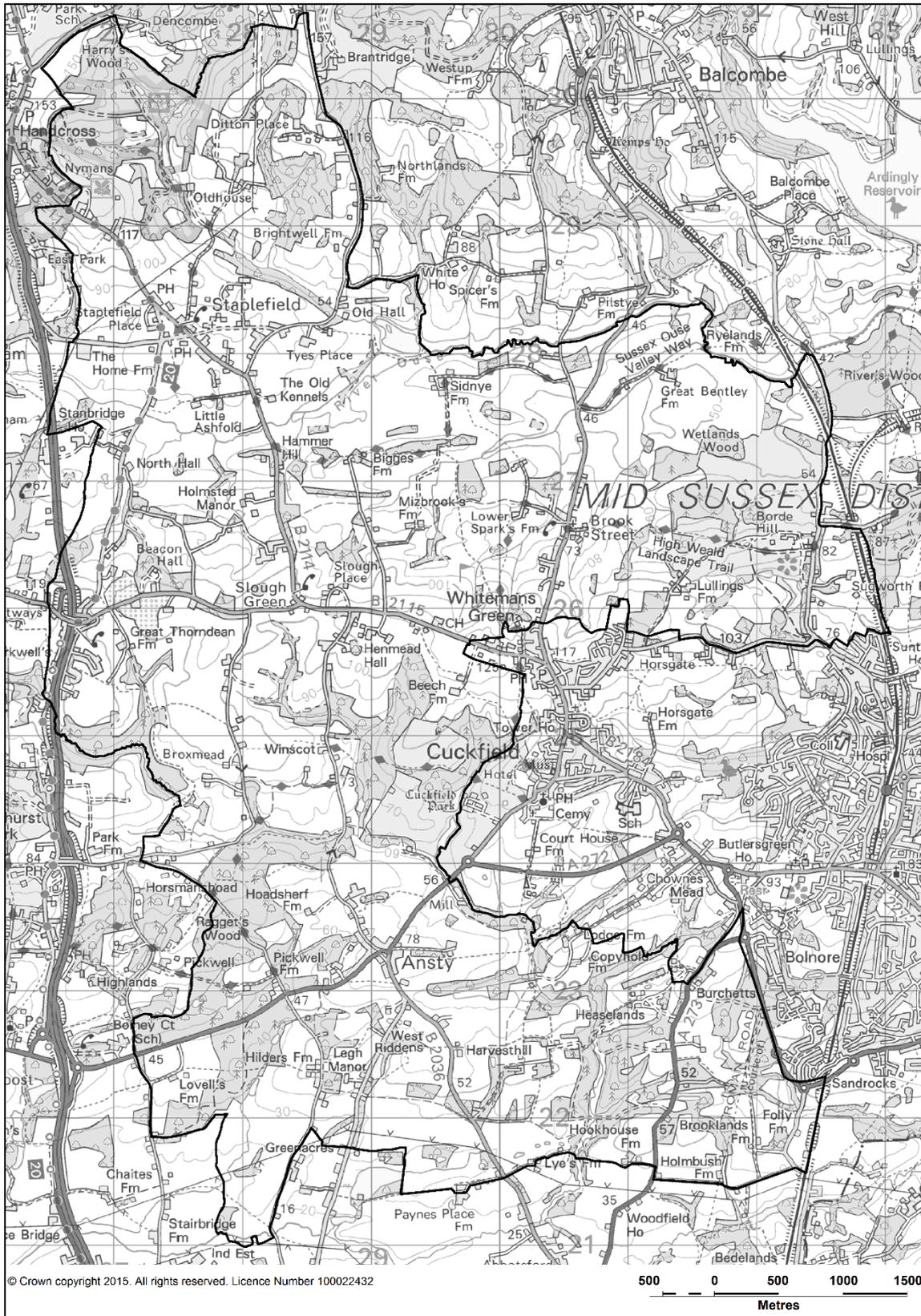
1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document represents the Neighbourhood Plan for Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street (the 'ASBSNP'). It represents one part of the development plan for the neighbourhood plan area over the period 2015 to 2031, the other part being the 2004 Mid Sussex District Local Plan.
- 1.2 Mid Sussex District Council, as the local planning authority, designated the Neighbourhood Area in October 2012 to enable Ansty and Staplefield Parish Council to prepare the Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan has been prepared by the community through the Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (referred to as the 'NPEX').
- 1.3 The ASBSNP is being prepared in accordance with the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012. The NPEX has prepared the plan to establish a vision for the future of the parish and to set out how that vision will be realised through planning and controlling land use and development change over the plan period 2015 to 2031.



- 1.4 The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to guide development within the neighbourhood plan area and provide guidance to any interested parties wishing to submit planning applications for development within the neighbourhood plan area. The process of producing a plan has sought to involve the community as widely as possible and the different topic areas are reflective of matters that are of considerable importance to Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street, its residents, businesses and community groups.
- 1.5 Each section of the plan covers a different topic. Under each heading there is the justification for the policies presented which provides the necessary understanding of the policy and what it is seeking to achieve. The policies themselves are presented in the blue boxes. It is these policies against which planning applications will be assessed. It is advisable that, in order to understand the full context for any individual policy, it is read in conjunction with the supporting text.
- 1.6 Figure 1.1 below shows the boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area, which is contiguous with the boundary of Ansty and Staplefield parish apart from a small area in the far south-east of the parish which is proposed for the Burgess Hill Northern Arc in the Mid Sussex Emerging District Plan and land to the east of the railway line between Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill, this latter part being planned for within the Haywards Heath Neighbourhood Plan.

Figure 1.1: Ansty, Staplefield & Brook Street Neighbourhood Plan area



National policy

1.7 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states:

"Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need. Parishes ... can use neighbourhood planning to set planning policies through neighbourhood plans to determine decisions on planning applications (para.183).

Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community. The ambition of the neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area.

Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. 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. Neighbourhood plans should reflect these policies and neighbourhoods should plan positively to support them. Neighbourhood plans and orders should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies (para.184).

Outside these strategic elements, neighbourhood plans will be able to shape and direct sustainable development in their area. Once a neighbourhood plan has demonstrated its general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and is brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the Local Plan for that neighbourhood, where they are in conflict. Local planning authorities should avoid duplicating planning processes for non-strategic policies where a neighbourhood plan is in preparation (para.185)".

1.8 The relevant Mid Sussex District Local Plan was adopted in 2004 and, under the guidance provided by the NPPF, is considered to be out of date. There is an emerging Local District Plan covering the period to 2031 which is a material consideration and has provided much of the strategic context for the neighbourhood plan. The Neighbourhood Plan will be reviewed every 3-5 years, in line with the Local District Plan.

Consultation

1.9 The NPEX has developed the Neighbourhood Plan through extensive engagement with the community. This includes:

- a parish wide Housing Needs Survey;
- a questionnaire sent to each household to gather general views on the issues and challenges facing the parish;
- several open meetings and three Visioning Days to provide information on the Neighbourhood Plan process and gather opinion on key issues;
- a second questionnaire sent to each household specifically to gather views on the proposed sites for development that were submitted to the NPEX;

- events for the community to meet the site developers or owners and see their outline proposals; and
- publication of all key documents on the Parish Council website.

1.10 The process has ensured close connection with the residents of the three settlements, Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street, by including a representative from each Resident Association on the NPEX.



2 LOCAL CONTEXT

History of Ansty & Staplefield

2.1 The parish consists of three main settlements, Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street.

Ansty

2.2 Ansty is about a mile south of the larger village of Cuckfield and is the only village with a boundary within the Parish of Ansty and Staplefield. The centre of the village is set on the top of a hill and this is probably where its name originated from, Ansty being the Saxon for a 'tear shaped hill'.



2.3 There are a number of listed houses and houses that show signs of late medieval origins. These include: Ansty Farm (now the Old Place), Hoadsherf Farm, Pinks Farm (now Buttlers Farm) and Crouchlands Farm (now the Ancient Farm) which is a fine example of a Wealden house. There has been little development within the village with only two properties built since the 1980s.

2.4 In the centre of the village there is a garage with a small shop and a car dealership.

2.5 The village is a mainly ribbon development on the A272 and the B2036. It is a busy thoroughfare for traffic travelling to and from Haywards Heath, Burgess Hill, the A23 and A24. Over the years, traffic within the village has increased dramatically. This is likely to continue to increase, due to large scale developments in Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill, unless better alternatives are provided.

2.6 In the 1920s a village hall was built using an ex-World War I hut. This still remains and houses a thriving sports and social club with a number of sports including snooker, darts, football, cricket and a women's stoolball team. Numerous groups meet in the village hall; these include the Garden Club, Arts and Crafts, the Friendship Club and the Games Afternoons. There are also diverse events held at the village hall from fishing tackle sales to quiz night and barbecues. Many events are held to raise funds for a new hall which is in desperate need of replacement.



Staplefield

- 2.7 Staplefield is between the much larger villages of Cuckfield and Handcross, in the valley of the River Ouse and south of the Weald Forest Ridge. It is in the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and was designated a Conservation Area in 1984. Staplefield probably got its name from 'staple', meaning a stake and 'field' indicating an area of cleared forest as this part of the Weald was heavily reliant on woodland industries.
- 2.8 The village is set around two areas of common land, Staplefield Common and Upper Common, where several lanes and trackways meet the road from Handcross to Cuckfield. Staplefield has a low density of buildings. The roads and lanes through the village are edged by trees, woodland, hedgerows and fields, buildings rarely face one another.



- 2.9 The main characteristic of the village is its green space. The large green, Staplefield Common, is at the centre of the village. The buildings around it are widely spaced: trees, fields and hedgerows dominate the scene. There is a stand of scots pines on the northern edge, home to a rookery. Upper Common is a smaller green, again bordered by trees and fields with some informally arranged houses.
- 2.10 Staplefield has two schools, St Mark's Primary School and Brantridge Special School, which provides residential care for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties.
- 2.11 The improvements to the A23 are improving the village environment. Closure of the Staplefield/Slaugham junction has reduced traffic. More tree planting and the new road surface should reduce noise pollution. The change of speed limit through the village from 40mph to 30mph is another positive feature.



- 2.12 Some of the village's timber frame houses survive – Dillions Farm, Northlands Farm, Little Ashfold and parts of Staplefield Grange and Barnhall, but many must have disappeared or have been considerably rebuilt like North Hall and Tyes Place.
- 2.13 More recently, only houses replacing existing houses have been built in the village, with the exception of a new Forester's house off Brantridge Lane. Where possible most houses have been extended and modernised.

Brook Street

- 2.14 Brook Street is a rural hamlet to the north of Cuckfield/Whiteman's Green on the B2036. There are approximately 60 residences many of which are timber framed, period listed properties dating from as far back as the 16th/17th century. There are examples of pre-1600 'Hall' houses (houses without chimneys where smoke escaped through a hole in the roof). These are mostly in Sparks Lane.
- 2.15 It was originally a Saxon settlement spread out amongst the various streams, forming tributaries to the Ouse which gave easy access to water. There are remains of a small stone bridge crossing one of these streams that could be of the Roman period.

- 2.16 Brook Street lies generally within the heart of the designated and protected High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.



- 2.17 In medieval times, Brook Street had four important farms. Northlands (so named because it was the most northerly land holding of the Arundel estate, later to become part of the Sergison Estate), Tanyards Farm, Great Bentley Farm and Sidnye Farm originally documented in 1296. Sidnye, Great Bentley and Lullings Farms - Lullings Farm is also in Brook Street - are still working farms and constitute a substantial proportion of the overall 2 thousand acre Borde Hill Estate largely given over to dairy cattle and sheep farming. Northlands, Tanyard and five other timber framed farmhouses were all originally working agricultural farms prior to being sold off in more recent years as private residences. Borde Hill Gardens provide 17 acres of formal garden and are a popular tourist attraction.

- 2.18 Northland still hosts community events in Opal's Field using the original Brook Street Apple Press for the making of cider. There is also a secret 'Brook Street Rowing Club'.



- 2.19 There is a commercial element within the hamlet comprising 'Picturesque Gallery' which is in All Saints Mission Chapel, Brook Street, Barker's Garage, Village Garage Services, Cuckfield Accident Repair Specialist and Brook Street Garage, all of which are in Sparks Lane.
- 2.20 There are a number of well used public footpaths and bridleways. These include stretches of the High Weald Landscape Trail and the Ouse Valley Trail which are popular with hikers, dog walkers and families with children.
- 2.21 The landscape consists of a patchwork of ghyll woodlands, streams and ponds against an agricultural backdrop. There is an abundance of diverse animal life including otters, bat colonies, deer, badgers, snakes, toads and a wide variety of woodland and farmland birds.

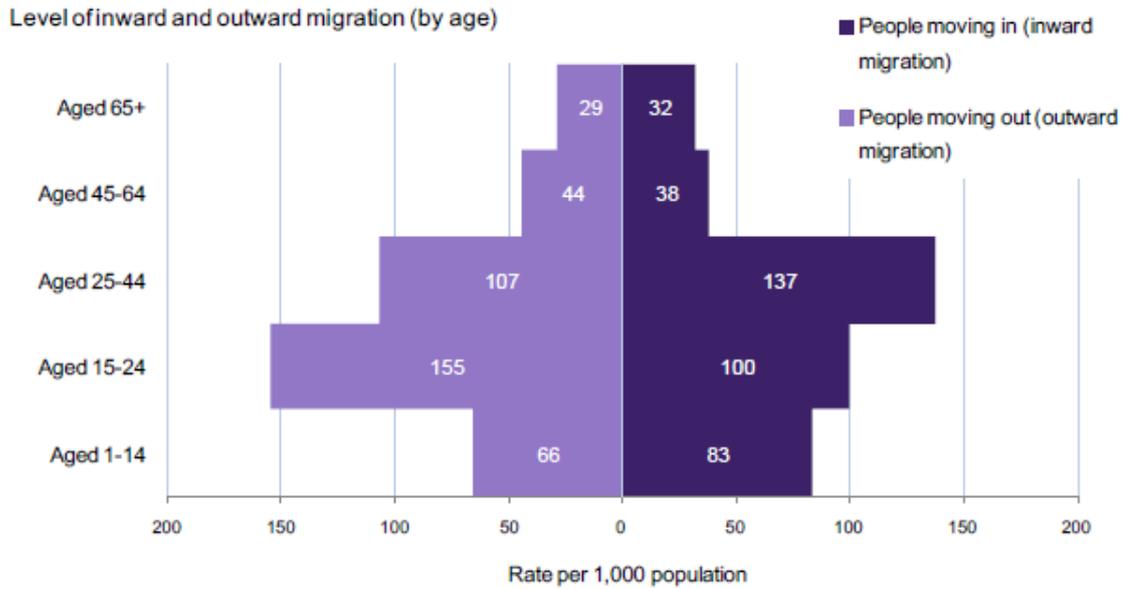


Profile of the community today

- 2.22 Unless stated otherwise, the profile of the community has come from the 2011 Census and reflects the position for the whole parish, which is slightly larger than the Neighbourhood Plan area. The comparisons made are with the national picture for England.

Population and households

- 2.23 The parish has a population of 1,755, living in 640 households. It has:
- A slightly above average proportion of children;
 - An above average proportion of people of retirement age, at nearly 20%;
 - Nearly 50% of households are made up of married couples (both with and without children)
 - The pattern of migration shows the parish to be popular with young parents and their children whereas when children reach early adulthood, they appear to be leaving to live elsewhere.



Source: ACRE/OCSI/AIRS (2013) *Rural community profile for Ansty and Staplefield*

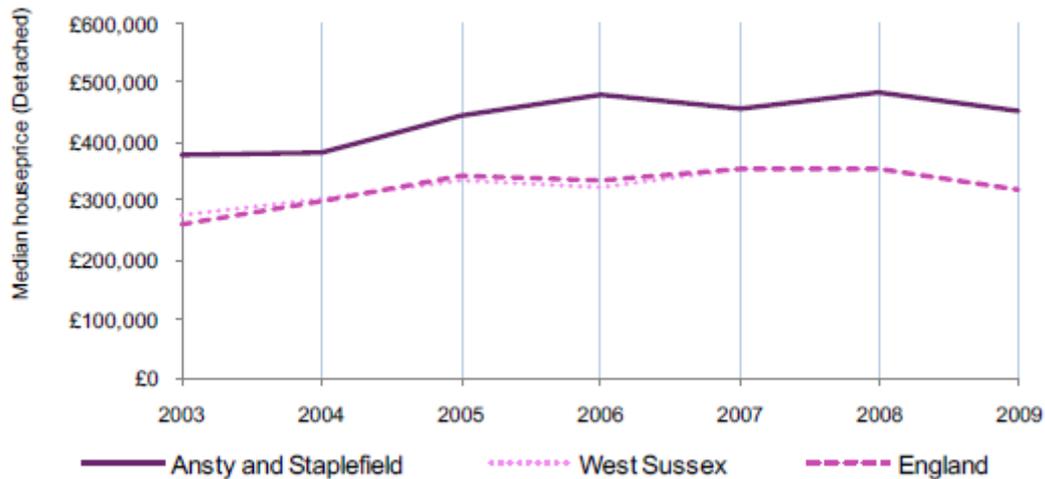
- **Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street is a place popular with young people bringing up families and also for retirees but sees young adults leave to live elsewhere.**

Housing

2.24 There are 677 dwellings in the parish:

- More than 50% of these dwellings are detached, more than double the national average;
- There is above average owner occupation with few social rented properties;
- The affordability ratio is well above the national average, with average house prices more than 20 times the median incomes for the lowest 25% of household incomes;
- The average price of a detached property is over 40% higher than the national average.

Median house price for detached houses



Source: ACRE/OCSI/AIRS (2013) *Rural community profile for Ansty and Staplefield*

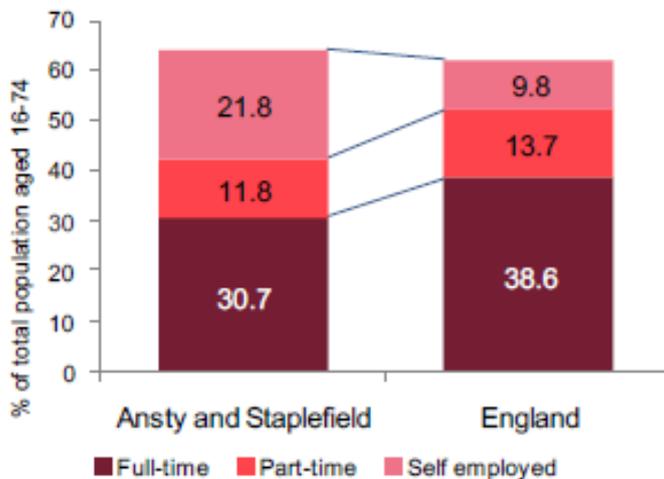
- **Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street is an area where affordability is an issue, coupled with a lack of affordable housing.**

Economy

2.25 There are nearly 900 economically active residents in the parish:

- Economic activity is at the national average;
- Full-time employment is well below the national average;
- Self-employment is very high, at nearly 22% of people aged 16-74;

People in employment, by employment status



Source: ACRE/OCSI/AIRS (2013) *Rural community profile for Ansty and Staplefield*

- Rates of working from home are also very high, at over 10%;
- Over half the working population works in highly skilled occupations;
- Unemployment is very low;
- **There is a buoyant local economy of highly skilled, self-employed people, with many working from home.**

Local infrastructure

- 2.26 There is a high reliance on car travel for movement, partly linked to the limited amount of public transport available. There are issues relating to speeding vehicles in all three settlements and the traffic is likely to significantly increase with the development of the Burgess Hill Northern Arc. In particular the centre of Ansty will be affected.
- 2.27 The only pub in Ansty closed in 2011 but there are still two pubs in Staplefield. The petrol station and garage at Ansty has a small shop which was expanded in 2015. There are no health facilities located in the parish. Both Ansty and Staplefield have village halls and cricket facilities, with Ansty also providing for football as well.
- 2.28 Over the years, Ansty's Village Hall and Sports and Social Club have supported a vibrant social and sporting hub both for the inhabitants of the village and the neighbouring communities of Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill. Both organisations operate from a shared building which has a long history of providing a wide community of users the opportunity to participate in long

standing clubs and societies (e.g. arts and crafts and gardening) and other social and sporting activities (including football, cricket, stoolball, snooker and darts).



- 2.29 The building is now the only public meeting place in Ansty, the village having lost its church, shop, post office and public house. The building remains in heavy use, despite having passed its useful life many years ago and being very dilapidated. Over the year people make over 6,000 individual visits to Ansty to participate in sporting and other recreational activities. Current use is nevertheless limited as the poor state of the building holds back demand and restricts growth.
- 2.30 A long held vision to develop a new Ansty Village Centre and bring the Village Hall and Sports and Social Club into a single charitable organisation is in hand. A site has been identified on the Recreation Ground and after wide local consultation, planning permission has been granted for a new Village Centre.
- 2.31 The new Centre has the support of The Ansty Village Hall Trust, Ansty Sports and Social Club, Ansty Residents Association Ansty and Staplefield Parish Council and Mid-Sussex District Council.
- 2.32 The Recreation Ground, abutting the Village Hall, is the only public space in Ansty. It is a facility for organised sports and together with an adjoining field leased by Ansty Sports and Social Club offers cricket, stoolball and football. This space is used informally by the public too, e.g. dog walking and children's games. In the south-west corner of the Recreation Ground is a children's playground and car park. It is hoped that the new charitable organisation will eventually manage this whole site together with the new Centre as an integrated community facility.

Local Plan policy

2.33 The Mid Sussex Local Plan 2004 is the existing development plan and therefore the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan have to be in general conformity with its saved policies. The strategic policies of relevance to the Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street Neighbourhood Plan are:

- General Polices: G1-G3
- Countryside Policies: C1 (Protection of the Countryside), C4 (Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty), C5 (Area of Importance for Nature Conservation),
- Built Environment Policies: B10 (Listed Buildings), B15 (The Setting of Conservation Areas), B17 (Historic Parks and Gardens), B18 (Archaeological Sites)
- Housing: H2 (Commuted Payments towards Affordable Housing), H3 (Rural 'Exception' Housing), H11 (Housing in the Countryside)
- The Economy: E2 (Retention of Land for Business Purposes)
- Shopping: S6-S7 (Local Shopping Areas and Individual Shops)
- Transport: T3 (Heavy Goods Vehicles), T4 (New Development), T8 (Roadside Facilities)
- Recreation and Tourism: R1 (Recreation), R13 (Tourism)
- Community Resources: CS1 (Education), CS12 (Public Sewerage), CS13-CS15 (Land Drainage), CS16 (Water Quality)

2.34 In addition, there is Policy AN1 (Ansty Recreation Ground) which is of direct relevance to Ansty.

2.35 It should also be noted that the other saved polices will be relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan.

2.36 It is important that the policies in the emerging District Plan are also taken into account. The most relevant strategic policies in the June 2015 Pre-Submission Draft District Plan are:

- DP1 (Sustainable Development in Mid Sussex)
- DP2 (Sustainable Economic Development)
- DP4 (Village and Neighbourhood Centre Development)
- DP5 (Housing)
- DP6 (Settlement Hierarchy)
- DP7 (General Principles for Development at Burgess Hill)
- DP9 (Strategic Allocation to the north and north-west of Burgess Hill)
- DP10 (Protection and Enhancement of Countryside)
- DP11: (Preventing Coalescence)
- DP12 (Sustainable Rural Development and the Rural Economy)
- DP13 (New Homes in the Countryside)
- DP14 (High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty)
- DP18 (Securing Infrastructure)
- DP19 (Transport)
- DP20 (Rights of Way and other Recreation Routes)

- DP21 (Communications Infrastructure)
- DP22 (Leisure and Cultural Facilities and Activities)
- DP23 (Community Facilities and Local Services)
- DP24 (Character and Design)
- DP25 (Dwelling Space Standards)
- DP28 (Housing Mix)
- DP29 (Affordable Housing)
- DP32 (Listed Buildings and Other Buildings of Merit)
- DP33 (Conservation Areas)

3 VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Challenges for Ansty & Staplefield

- 3.1 The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to address, as far as is possible, the challenges that face the community of Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street. In summary these challenges are:
- The lack of smaller housing units for local residents to address the needs of both the ageing population and first-time buyers.
 - The lack of affordable housing for parish residents.
 - Pressure for development in countryside and the need to maintain and enhance the high quality natural environment, wildlife networks and biodiversity of the parish.
 - The need to maintain distinctive village identities despite the expansion on the north side of Burgess Hill.
 - Problems with traffic volume and speed relating to the expansion of Burgess Hill. Ansty is likely to be most affected.
 - Infrastructure improvements are needed including Ansty Village Centre, Staplefield Pavilion and childrens' play areas in order to maintain thriving communities.

Vision for Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street

- 3.2 In consultation with the community, the established vision for Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street is as follows:

'In 2031 the villages of Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street will remain distinct communities from the larger nearby towns and villages such as Burgess Hill and Cuckfield, having seen no significant expansion of their settlements into the surrounding countryside.

Ansty will have accommodated new housing to help meet the demand and need for new and affordable homes by using land within or close to the established settlement boundary. A mix of housing ensures that smaller houses are available for young families as well as older people wanting to downsize.

The heritage and landscape assets of the area will have been protected, including the Staplefield Conservation Area and the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The three small communities continue to thrive and support the community facilities such as the village halls and sport facilities as well as the pubs and other small businesses.

All the settlements are better connected to each other and other surrounding villages through improved cycle routes and and multi-user routes.'



Neighbourhood Plan Objectives

- 3.3 The objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan as identified through engagement with the community are as follows:
1. To protect the environment of the Neighbourhood Plan area in terms of its rural identity, landscape setting and local green spaces of importance.
 2. To protect the heritage of the Neighbourhood Plan area, particularly the Staplefield Conservation Area.
 3. To contribute to meeting the local housing need, including affordable housing for those with a local connection to the parish.
 4. To provide a mix of house types.
 5. To minimise the negative impact of traffic and encourage safe walking and cycling.
 6. To support and enhance the community facilities serving the parish.

4 SPATIAL STRATEGY

Built-Up Area Boundary

- 4.1 In a rural neighbourhood plan area such as Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street, it is particularly important that development is directed to appropriate locations and that sprawl is avoided. The purpose of a physical limits boundary is to help to provide that direction.
- 4.2 It is expected that the focus of development will be in the settlement of Ansty. The village needs to accommodate a degree of growth in order to prosper. However, this must be balanced against the need to preserve its role as a rural settlement which does not encroach unduly on the open countryside that surrounds it.
- 4.3 Staplefield, being within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), is not considered to be a suitable location for expansion in light of this designation so the identification of a BUAB would serve no real purpose. This is reinforced by the fact that there is sufficient potential from alternative sites for development that are located outside the AONB to address needs over the plan period. In addition, the layout of the village would make it difficult to identify a logical BUAB.
- 4.4 The Mid Sussex Local Plan 2004 defines a BUAB for Ansty. Policy C1 of the Local Plan protects the adjoining countryside from unnecessary development. Policy C1 states:

"Outside built-up area boundaries...the remainder of the plan area is classified as a Countryside Area of Development Restraint where the countryside will be protected for its own sake. Proposals for development in the countryside, particularly that which would extend the built-up area boundaries beyond those shown will be firmly resisted and restricted to:

(a) proposals reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture or forestry;

(b) proposals for new uses in rural buildings of a scale consistent with the building's location;

(c) in appropriate cases, proposals for the extraction of minerals or the disposal of waste;

(d) in appropriate cases, proposals for quiet informal recreation and/or tourism related developments;

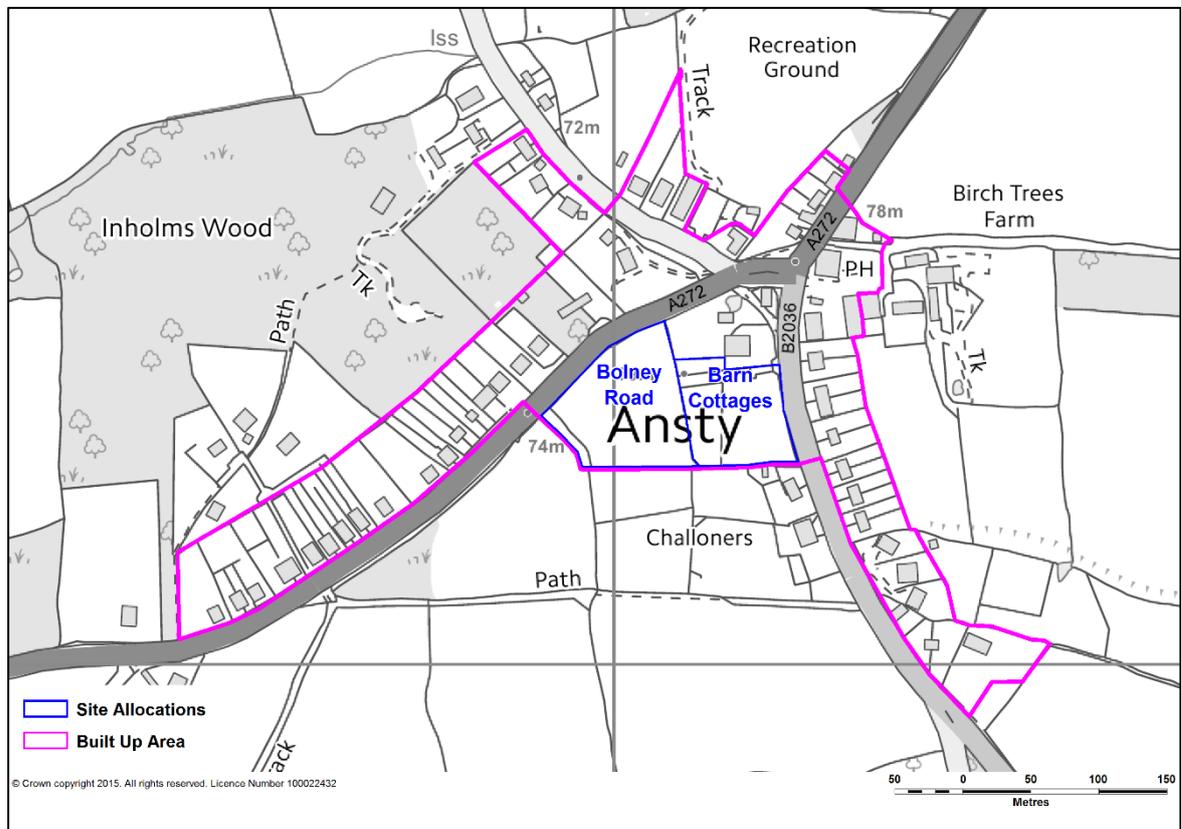
(e) proposals for facilities which are essential to meet the needs of local communities, and which cannot be accommodated satisfactorily within the built-up areas;

(f) proposals for which a specific policy reference is made elsewhere in this Plan; and

(g) proposals which significantly contribute to a sense of local identity and regional diversity."

- 4.5 The emerging Mid Sussex District Plan has an equivalent policy (Policy DP10: Protection and Enhancement of Countryside) which states that BUABs can be reviewed by neighbourhood plans.

With the proposed site allocations (Policies AS5-AS8) it is appropriate to alter the BUAB for Ansty to reflect these development sites.



POLICY AS1: BUILT-UP AREA BOUNDARY

Development in the neighbourhood plan area shall be focused within the built-up area boundary of Ansty settlement as identified on the Proposal Map.

Development proposals will be supported within the built-up area boundary subject to compliance with other policies in the development plan.

Development proposals outside the built-up area boundary will not be permitted unless:

- they comply with the countryside policies of the Mid Sussex Local Plan 2004 or the District Plan once it is adopted; or
- they relate to necessary utilities infrastructure where no reasonable alternative location is available.

Local Gaps

- 4.6 The Mid Sussex Emerging District Plan proposes a major strategic development in north-west Burgess Hill. The proposed development area reaches up to the boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area but includes the southern part of the parish. This will therefore serve to bring the urban area of Burgess Hill closer to the settlements in the Neighbourhood Plan area. In particular, there will be a reduced gap between Burgess Hill and the settlement of Ansty.
- 4.7 Policy DP11 of the Emerging Local Plan seeks to prevent coalescence between the towns and villages in the district. It specifically states that local gaps can be identified in Neighbourhood Plans where there is robust evidence that development within the gap would result in coalescence and the loss of amenity and identity of nearby settlements.



- 4.8 It is therefore considered vital therefore that the gap between Ansty and Burgess Hill is preserved so that the strategic development does not significantly reduce or entirely eliminate the gap with Ansty.
- 4.9 The same principle applies to the potential threat of expansion of Cuckfield eliminating the gap between Brook Street and Cuckfield. Indeed this gap is narrower than that between Ansty and Burgess Hill. Brook Street is a very small settlement but its residents have been clear that it does have a separate identity – people do associate with coming from Brook Street.
- 4.10 The third gap that is important to preserve is that between Ansty and Cuckfield. The Sustainability Appraisal demonstrated that development on the edge of Ansty which would serve to narrow this gap would have a significant detrimental impact on views of the ancient woodland and Cuckfield to the east.

POLICY AS2: LOCAL GAPS

Development proposals are expected to demonstrate that they do not significantly reduce the gap with any neighbouring settlement either individually or cumulatively. The particular gaps of relevance are:

- Between Ansty and Burgess Hill
- Between Brook Street and Cuckfield
- Between Ansty and Cuckfield

Development proposals must also address the requirements of Policy DP11 of the Mid Sussex Emerging Local Plan (Preventing Coalescence).

High Weald Area of Outstanding Beauty

- 4.11 A key objective of the Neighbourhood Plan is to retain what is good about Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street. One of the most important aspects of this is the high quality environment of Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street and their setting as small rural villages in a very attractive environment. The plan recognises the need to retain this and, where possible, to enhance the environment of the village.
- 4.12 In particular, the need to retain the rural identity of Ansty and Staplefield parish is seen as important, with part of this being the need to retain its setting within what local people consider to be an outstanding landscape. Indeed, its setting within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) confirms this opinion.
- 4.13 The NPPF affords a significant level of protection to land with AONB status. Paragraph 14 – one of the key paragraphs in the NPPF – states that the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development means that Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs unless specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted. It then makes reference to AONB as one such example of a restrictive policy.
- 4.14 Policy DP14 of the Mid Sussex Emerging Local Plan reinforces this for the High Weald AONB. It states that development within the area will only be permitted where it conserves or enhances natural beauty and has regard to the High Weald AONB Management Plan.
- 4.15 The policy context is therefore clear. However, the community of Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street has expressed a desire to provide further policy support for these principles of protection in the Neighbourhood Plan. This does not restrict growth as the Neighbourhood Plan is able to address the needs of the community over the plan period without recourse to considering sites within the AONB.

POLICY AS3: HIGH WEALD AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY

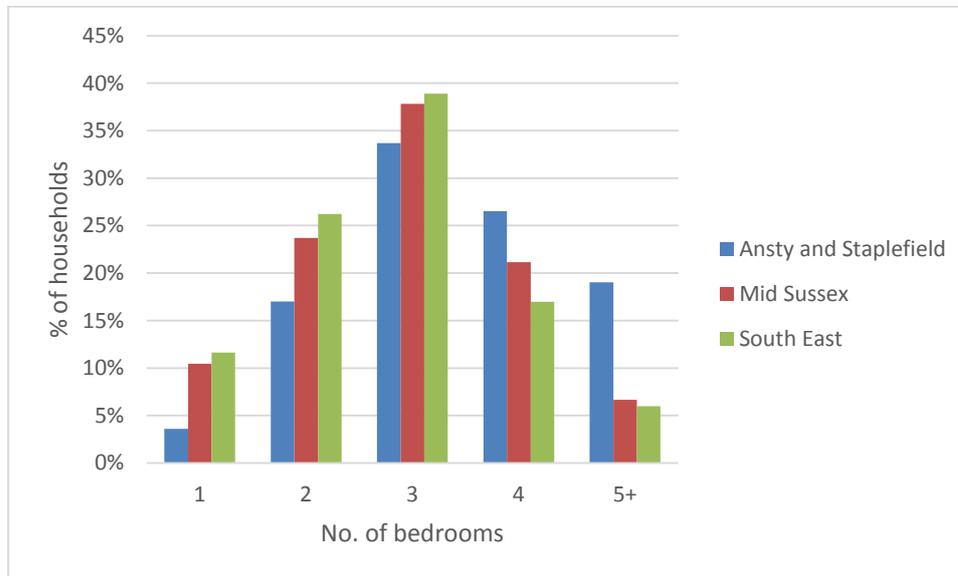
Development proposals within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the neighbourhood plan area (as shown on the Proposals Map) must demonstrate how they address the requirements of the NPPF and the Mid Sussex Emerging Local Plan. In particular, proposals must:

- conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB area; and
- demonstrate how they meet the objectives of the High Weald AONB Management Plan; and
- demonstrate that there are no suitable alternative sites for the development that lie outside the High Weald AONB area.

5 HOUSING MIX

5.1 The analysis in Section 2 showed that Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street has a very high proportion of detached properties. Figure 5.1 below supports this, showing that the parish has a significantly above average proportion of dwellings of at least four bedrooms.

Figure 5.1: Number of bedrooms



Source: 2011 Census

5.2 In fact, nearly half of all the properties in the parish have at least four bedrooms. By contrast, the proportion of smaller properties is very low; just 21% of the housing stock is either 1- or 2-bedroomed properties compared to 34% across the district and 38% across the region. Given the growing proportion of smaller households in Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street – led by the growth of those of retirement age in particular - there is a potential mismatch between the supply of properties (which are large) and the needs of households (which are for smaller properties).

5.3 It is expected therefore that the demand for smaller properties – particularly by those currently living in large family properties in Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street now looking to downsize since children have grown up and moved out – will be significant. In the Neighbourhood Plan survey, nearly 50% of respondents live in a household totalling two people, despite the high proportion of large properties.

5.4 The North West Sussex SHMA Update recommends that for affordable housing in Mid Sussex, a range of dwelling sizes should be secured through policy that provide the following split¹:

- 1-bed: 25%
- 2-bed: 50%
- 3-bed: 20%
- 4+ bed: 5%

¹ Chilmark Consulting (2014) *North West Sussex Housing Market Area – Affordable Housing Needs Model Update*, for Horsham District Council, Crawley Borough Council and Mid Sussex District Council, Table 17

- 5.5 The SHMA does recommend that, when seeking to establish broad requirements for different types and sizes of new market housing, this should take account of existing pressures and market signals of shortage. Evidence of property prices summarised in Section 2 showed that the high prices and the lack of smaller properties mean that buying a property is almost certainly out of the reach of almost all first-time buyers.



- 5.6 This is supported by the Ansty and Staplefield Housing Needs Survey, undertaken in 2012 by Action in Rural Sussex. This identified 26 households in need of an affordable property in the parish, with 18 of these households either being single person households or a couple without children. As at October 2015, the Mid Sussex Housing Register recorded the following needs:

- Where the parish is a first choice by the applicant and they have a local connection:
 - Ansty has one household with a 1-bed requirement
 - Staplefield has one household with a 2-bed requirement
- All households with a local connection to the parish:
 - Ansty has six households, four with a 1-bed requirement and two with a 2-bed requirement
 - Staplefield has four households, two with a 1-bed requirement and two with a 2-bed requirement.

- 5.7 The Housing Register will have lower figures than the Housing Needs Survey because many people will not put themselves on the Housing Register because they do not consider that there is any reasonable prospect of securing a home this way. What this does reinforce is that the need for affordable housing is focussed on smaller properties.

- 5.8 Policy DP28 of the Mid Sussex Emerging Local Plan states that housing development will provide a mix of dwelling types and sizes that reflects the current and future local housing needs.

- 5.9 The evidence above, combined with the evidence from the local community, collectively demonstrates that the need for a greater number of smaller dwellings at an affordable price is

required for first-time buyers and older residents wishing to downsize in Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street. Indeed, the provision of a larger supply of smaller units will help to reduce the price and make entry-level housing more affordable in Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street. This is reflected in Policy AS4.

POLICY AS4: HOUSING MIX

Residential developments must provide a mix of dwelling sizes (market and affordable) that reflect the best available housing evidence.

In the early part of the plan period, the housing evidence requires a particular emphasis on the provision of 1- and 2-bed dwellings. It is therefore expected that in the early part of the plan period the majority of new dwellings on individual developments shall be a balanced mix of 1- and 2-bed dwellings.

6 RESIDENTIAL SITE ALLOCATIONS

6.1 This section of the Neighbourhood Plan allocates land for residential development.

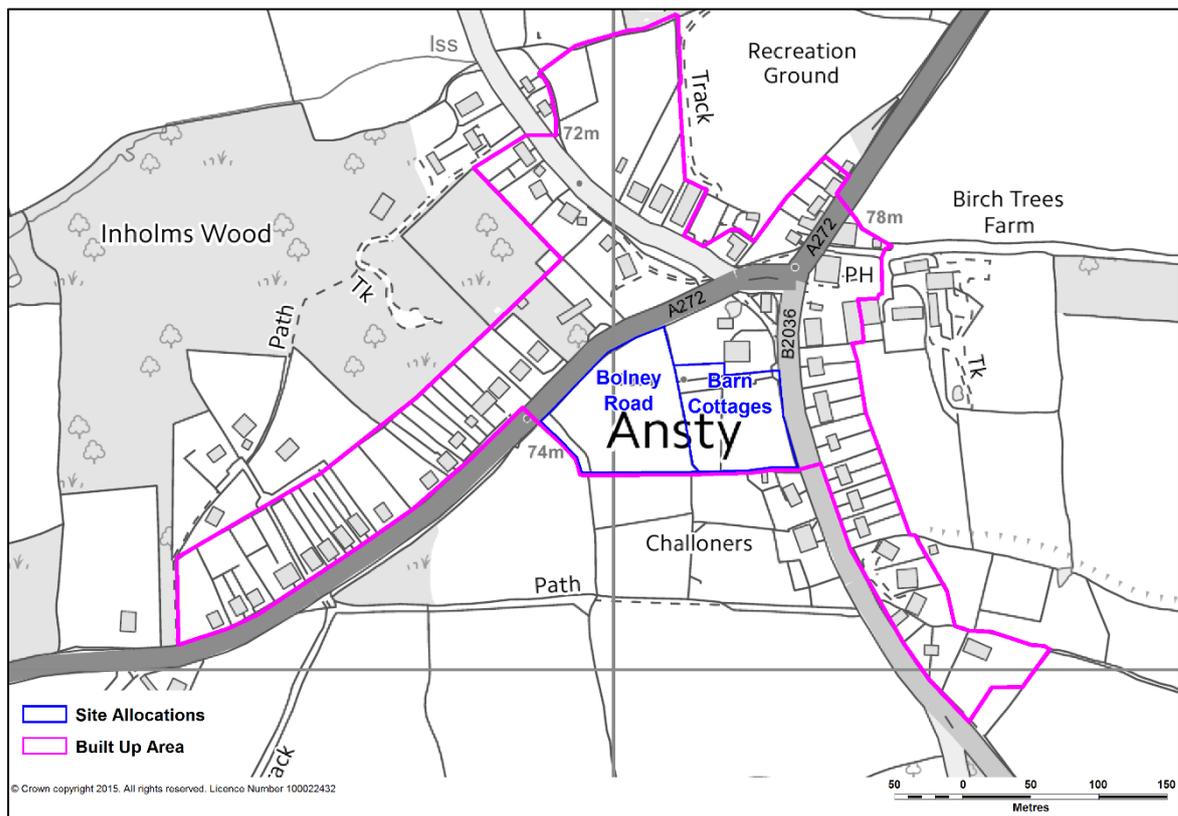
Housing requirements

- 6.2 It is important that the site allocations deliver an acceptable proportion of the overall district-wide housing need that needs to be accommodated within the villages in Mid Sussex. Policy DP5 of the Mid Sussex Emerging District Plan has a preferred strategy of approximately 1,730 dwellings being delivered through neighbourhood plans in the rural areas or a District Site Allocations Document. This would be over the period 2014 to 2031.
- 6.3 Mid Sussex District Council, through the development of its Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) has worked with the NPEX to establish what an appropriate level of growth is for the neighbourhood plan area. The June 2015 HEDNA Update Assessment² established that the distribution of objectively assessed need to Ansty and Staplefield parish, based on the proportion of the District's households/population in the 2011 Census, was 132 dwellings over the plan period.
- 6.4 The HEDNA Update makes clear that whilst these figures can be used to guide neighbourhood plans, they are by no means a requirement or target. Neighbourhood Plans need to take into consideration local evidence on constraints, suitability/availability of sites to meet this need, and sustainability considerations, which ultimately help determine the overall plan provision number within the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.5 For Ansty and Staplefield, a significant consideration is the proximity of the neighbourhood plan area to Burgess Hill and in particular the proposed strategic development to the north and north-west of the town. In addition, a significant proportion of development will occur at Sandrocks. This will address a significant proportion of the housing needs of Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street over the plan period.
- 6.6 Coupled with this is the limited potential of the settlements in the neighbourhood plan area to sustainably accommodate growth. The Neighbourhood Plan area is very rural in nature and the level of service provision in the three centres of Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street is limited. This will inevitably restrict the levels of growth that can sustainably be brought forward.
- 6.7 Lastly, the rural nature of the Neighbourhood Plan area is significantly reinforced by the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty that covers much of the area.
- 6.8 In light of this, the proportion of the objectively assessed housing need for Ansty and Staplefield parish that is required to be accommodate within the Neighbourhood Plan area over the plan period 2014-2031 is much lower than the theoretical objectively assessed need figure of 132 dwellings in the HEDNA Update. Since the start of the plan period, 15 dwellings have been granted planning permission. It is therefore considered that these dwellings in the planning pipeline, along with the site allocations identified in Policies AS5 and AS6 (which are proposed to accommodate approximately 26 dwellings) and a small number of windfalls that will inevitably come forward within the villages, is sufficient to address the needs of the community and the wider needs in the Mid Sussex Emerging District Plan.

² Mid Sussex District Council (June 2015) *Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) – Update*, Table 18

Approach

- 6.9 The approach taken in the Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street Neighbourhood Plan is to identify housing allocations which achieve the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan whilst also providing a clear spatial strategy for contributing towards the delivery of the emerging Mid Sussex Local Plan housing requirement for the villages in the district.
- 6.10 In addressing the needs of Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street today, there are already sites in the planning pipeline which will serve to provide new homes for the community as well as placing additional demands on the infrastructure of the neighbourhood plan area. However, in order to recognise the growing needs of the community over the whole plan period, it is important to plan for further growth, provided it meets the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.11 The following sites are proposed for allocation:
- Barn Cottage, Ansty - for approximately 8 dwellings
 - Bolney Road, Ansty – for approximately 18 dwellings



Barn Cottage, Ansty

- 6.12 This land totals 0.56 hectares and is currently an agricultural field. To the north is a residential property, with the remainder of the site surrounding by fields. The eastern boundary with the B2036 road has a thick mature tree belt on the site and it will be important that this is largely retained in order to screen the site from the road.
- 6.13 The site is very close to the centre of the village. Access is via a footway on the eastern side of the B2036 which would require crossing of this road. However, visibility is clear and it is considered that this would not represent a hazard to pedestrians.
- 6.14 The site is considered to be suitable to accommodate approximately 8 dwellings.

POLICY AS5: LAND AT BARN COTTAGE, ANSTY

Planning permission will be granted for residential development on 0.56 hectares of land at Barn Cottage, Ansty, subject to the following criteria:

- the provision of a range of house types and in accordance with Policy AS4 of this Plan; and
- the tree belt on the eastern boundary of the site is largely retained and appropriate boundary treatment and landscaping consisting of native species provides screening of the development from the B2036 road.

Land off Bolney Road, Ansty

- 6.15 This land totals 0.52 hectares and is currently an agricultural field. The site is largely surrounded by mature trees, with residential development to the north-east and on the other side of the A272 Bolney Road. As such, the site is compact and well contained and its development, along with that at Barn Cottages, will not significantly alter the settlement pattern of Ansty. In order to ensure that the site is not excessively visible, the mature trees around the boundary of the site should, where possible, be retained.
- 6.16 The site is close to the centre of the village. Pedestrian access is via a footway on the western side of the A272 which would require crossing of a busy road. It is important that this is addressed in order that there is a safe path into the centre of the village in order to access the bus stop, village hall and shops.
- 6.17 In order to overcome the fact that the site is approximately two metres above the roadway, the vehicular access point would have to be in the far south-western corner of the site. This would require the removal of a small number of existing trees, but only sufficient to create the necessary space for the access road. It is vital that visibility at the junction is maximised through good design.
- 6.18 There could potentially be issues in respect of the capacity of the drainage system running along the A272. Therefore, before any additional surface drainage is permitted to discharge into it, a full and comprehensive survey and analysis of the new and existing systems are undertaken
- 6.19 The site is considered to be suitable to accommodate approximately 18 dwellings. This small allocation, along with the land at Barn Cottages, will represent organic growth that is more appropriate for a village location.

POLICY AS6: LAND OFF BOLNEY ROAD, ANSTY

Planning permission will be granted for residential development on 0.52 hectares of land off Bolney Road, Ansty, subject to the following criteria:

- the provision of a range of house types and in accordance with Policy AS4 of this Plan; and
- the tree belt surrounding the site is, where possible, retained and further enhanced with native species; and
- access is provided from the south-western corner of the site in order to overcome the change in levels, with visibility maximised; and
- safe pedestrian access into the village is provided where possible; and
- sufficient surface water drainage capacity is provided.

7 LEISURE AND RECREATION

Local Green Spaces

- 7.1 One of the key features that gives Ansty its rural village identity is the Village Centre with the Recreation Ground located as part of it.
- 7.2 Under the NPPF, neighbourhood plans have the opportunity to designate Local Green Spaces which are of particular importance to the local community. This will afford protection from development other than in very special circumstances. Paragraph 77 of the NPPF says that Local Green Spaces should only be designated:
- *"where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;*
 - *where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and*
 - *where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land."*



- 7.3 Over the years Ansty's Village Hall and Sports and Social Club have supported a vibrant social and sporting hub both for the inhabitants of the village and the neighbouring communities of Haywards Heath and Burgess Hill. Both organisations operate from a shared building (the 'Village Centre') which has a long history of providing a wide community of users the opportunity to participate in long standing clubs and societies (e.g. arts and crafts and gardening) and other social and sporting activities (including snooker and darts).
- 7.4 The building is now the only public meeting place in Ansty, the village having lost its church, shop, post office and public house.

- 7.5 The Recreation Ground, abutting the Village Hall, is the only public green space in Ansty. It is a facility for organised sports and together with an adjoining field leased by Ansty Sports and Social Club offers cricket, stoolball and football. This space is used informally by the public too, e.g. dog walking and children's games. In the south-west corner of the Recreation Ground is a children's playground and car park. It is the intention that the new charitable organisation will eventually manage this whole site together with the new Village Centre as an integrated community facility.

POLICY AS7: ANSTY VILLAGE CENTRE AND RECREATION GROUND

The Ansty Village Centre and Recreation Ground, as shown on the Proposals Map, is designated as a Local Green Space.

Proposals for built development on the Village Centre and Recreation Ground will not be permitted unless the proposal is of a limited scale and nature, can be clearly demonstrated that it is ancillary and enhances the role and function of the Village Centre and Recreation Ground.

Improvement of community facilities

Policy justification

- 7.6 The communities of Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street each have important community facilities at their heart. Ansty has the Village Centre and Staplefield has the Pavilion. Both support community activities, including sporting activities on the adjacent recreation areas.
- 7.7 The Village Centre remains in heavy use, despite having passed its useful life many years ago and being very dilapidated. People make over 6,000 individual visits annually to Ansty to participate in sporting and other recreational activities. Current use is nevertheless limited as the poor state of the building holds back demand and restricts growth.
- 7.8 A long held vision has therefore been to develop a new Ansty Village Centre and bring the Village Hall and Sports and Social Club into a single charitable organisation is in hand. A site has been identified on the Recreation Ground and after wide local consultation, planning permission was granted in 2014 for a new Village Centre. The new Centre has the support of the Ansty Village Hall Trust, Ansty Sports and Social Club, Ansty Residents Association, Ansty and Staplefield Parish Council and Mid-Sussex District Council.
- 7.9 The same principle applies to the Pavilion in Staplefield which will need upgrading and improving at some stage during the plan period.
- 7.10 It would be expected that part of the cost of these improvements would be funded through developer contributions, and specifically a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), once it is put in place by Mid Sussex District Council. This funding could then be used to draw in grant funding from wider sources.
- 7.11 Policy DP22 of the Mid Sussex Emerging Local Plan provides support for the provision of new and/or enhanced leisure and cultural facilities. It also protects against the loss of such facilities, with improved re-provision in a suitable location considered to represent an alternative solution. However, for Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street, these facilities are very well located for the communities they serve and form a key part of the heart of these communities. The preferred solution therefore is for improved provision of these facilities on their current sites.

POLICY AS8: IMPROVEMENT OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Proposals that would result in the improved provision of community facilities will be strongly supported. In the case of the Village Centre in Ansty and the Pavilion in Staplefield, this is particularly the case for proposals that would re-provide and improve such facilities on the existing site.

Ansty Recreation Ground

- 7.12 The 2004 Mid Sussex Local Plan allocates land immediately to the north of the Recreation Ground for an extension to the existing playing fields. The reason for the allocation was that Ansty has a lack of provision of outdoor recreation space when compared to reasonable standards. When the District Plan supercedes the 2004 Local Plan, the saved policies will be lost therefore the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to replace this policy.

POLICY AS9: ANSTY RECREATION GROUND EXTENSION

Land immediately north of Ansty Recreation Ground is allocated for recreational use, as an extension to the existing playing fields.

8 HERITAGE

- 8.1 A significant area of land in and around Staplefield village is a conservation area. The village was designated a Conservation Area in 1984. The buildings are predominantly residential and comprise a range of ages and styles. Although few are listed, their variety gives the village character and interest.
- 8.2 The general requirements that planning applications are required to address in conservation areas is established in the NPPF. Moreover, Policy DP33 of the Mid Sussex Emerging Local Plan provides more guidance on particular matters such as landscaping and pavements which should be addressed.



- 8.3 The policy context is therefore clear. However, the community of Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street has expressed a desire to provide further policy support for these principles of protection in the Neighbourhood Plan.

POLICY AS10: STAPLEFIELD CONSERVATION AREA

Development proposals within the Staplefield Conservation Area, or that would affect the setting of the Conservation Area, must demonstrate that they have properly addressed the requirements of national planning policy and guidance and Policy DP33 of the Mid Sussex Emerging Local Plan.

9 BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE

- 9.1 The modern economy is changing and increasingly needs good communications infrastructure as a basic requirement. The 2011 Census highlights how people are working differently to a generation ago – in Ansty and Staplefield parish, over 10% of people work from home and nearly 22% are self-employed. Commonly this is in service activities that simply require access to a computer and a broadband connection.
- 9.2 The need for high speed broadband to serve Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street is therefore paramount. Broadband speeds are reported by residents to be poor and it is therefore a fundamental constraint to the continuing expansion of self-employed activity for those working from home or from a small office.
- 9.3 Government has recognised that there is a significant gap in availability of basic and superfast broadband, particularly in rural areas where British Telecom (BT) and other national providers have not invested in upgrades to the network and have allocated £530m through the Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) programme to deliver superfast broadband to 90% of premises by 2015 and have recently allocated an additional £250m to increase coverage to 95% of premises by 2017 and 99% by 2018.
- 9.4 However, as the commitment is for upgrades for 90% of premises, not all properties in Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street will receive this by the end of 2015 and may have to wait until 2018 or beyond before they receive access to superfast broadband without additional local authority intervention.
- 9.5 Whilst BT has an obligation to provide a landline to every household in the UK and developers are expected to want to facilitate high speed broadband provision otherwise their developments will be substantially less marketable, there have been instances where developers have not contacted Next Generation Access (NGA) Network providers early enough in the process for fibre and ducting to be laid, or they have a national agreement with a cable provider that is not active in the area, leaving new housing developments with little or no connections.
- 9.6 Policy AS10 seeks to ensure that all new housing, community and commercial development in the neighbourhood area is connected to superfast broadband.

POLICY AS11: HIGH SPEED BROADBAND

It is expected that all new properties should be served by a superfast broadband (fibre optic) connection. The only exception will be where it can be demonstrated, through consultation with NGA Network providers, that this would not be possible, practical or economically viable. In such circumstances sufficient and suitable ducting should be provided within the site and to the property to facilitate ease of installation at a future date.

10 ECONOMY

- 10.1 There are very few dedicated commercial units within the Neighbourhood Plan area that provide employment. One of the few such areas is in Sparks Lane where there are a small number of light industrial units, all providing vehicle repair services. Not only do these provide employment but they also provide key services of value to the local community.
- 10.2 It is proposed that such units are protected against being lost to other uses. To do so, it is necessary to restrict the demolition or conversion of existing commercial premises (B-class uses) for non-commercial purposes. Only if it is clearly demonstrated that there is little prospect of the existing building or land being used for employment-generating purposes can this be permitted.



- 10.3 In order therefore to demonstrate that commercial land or property can be redeveloped for non-commercial uses, the land or buildings must not have been in active use for at least twelve months and it must be clear that there is little or no prospect of the premises or land being reoccupied by an employment-generating user in the future. This must be demonstrated by a sustained marketing campaign lasting at least six months, undertaken through an appropriate commercial agent. This must show that all reasonable steps have been taken to market the property and that there has been no interest from a credible party.

POLICY AS12: PROTECTION OF EXISTING COMMERCIAL PREMISES OR LAND

There will be a strong presumption against the loss of commercial premises or land (B-class) which provides employment or future potential employment opportunities. Applications for a change of use to an activity that does not provide employment opportunities will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that:

- the commercial premises or land in question has not been in active use for at least 12 months; and
- the commercial premises or land in question has no potential for either reoccupation or redevelopment for employment generating uses and as demonstrated through the results both of a full valuation report and a marketing campaign lasting for a continuous period of at least six months.

11 TRANSPORT

Traffic

- 11.1 The proposed development of north-west Burgess Hill will significantly increase the levels of vehicle traffic in the wider area. It is accepted that this traffic cannot be prevented from travelling through the Neighbourhood Plan area and particularly the villages in the area. However, it is recognised that such traffic would commonly be 'rat running', bringing with it the problems of speeding as well as increased volumes of traffic on what are small, rural roads.
- 11.2 Policy DP9 of the Mid Sussex Emerging Local Plan states that the development of north-west Burgess Hill must deliver measures to mitigate the impacts on the local road network in the surrounding area. This is supported and it is envisaged that some of the measures may relate to traffic management at key points within the Neighbourhood Plan area.
- 11.3 The community of Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street considers it very important that contributions from development are used to address traffic management matters within the Neighbourhood Plan area, linked to the strategic development at north-west Burgess Hill. The use of such contributions, including those collected through the Community Infrastructure Levy, for traffic management schemes will be welcomed.

POLICY AS13: TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

The provision of traffic management solutions to address the impacts of traffic arising from development at north west Burgess Hill will be strongly supported. This includes either directly provided solutions or the use of contributions from development to contribute towards the costs of provision.

Cycling and walking

- 11.4 In a rural area such as Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street there are many ways to enjoy the countryside. However, movement around the rural areas without access to a car is less straightforward. The Neighbourhood Plan area is close to several larger urban centres and it is considered important that non-vehicular access to such centres is improved. This is both for leisure purposes and also for commuting.
- 11.5 In particular, the community has identified to need to improve cycling and walking routes to Cuckfield, Haywards Heath and the surrounding villages. At present, National Cycle Route 20 passes through Staplefield and the village has a 'Safer Walk to School' route.
- 11.6 The development of a more comprehensive footway and cycleway network requires the agreement of the relevant landowners and it will be important that the Parish Council and other interested parties work with Mid Sussex District Council and West Sussex County Council to achieve this under the requirements of the relevant legislation.
- 11.7 Funding for this project will come from a variety of sources. There are a number of bodies that provide grants, including Entrust, the Environment Agency, the Heritage Lottery Fund, Grant Net and the Charity Commission. This could also be supported by the use of developer contributions and specifically the Community Infrastructure Levy.

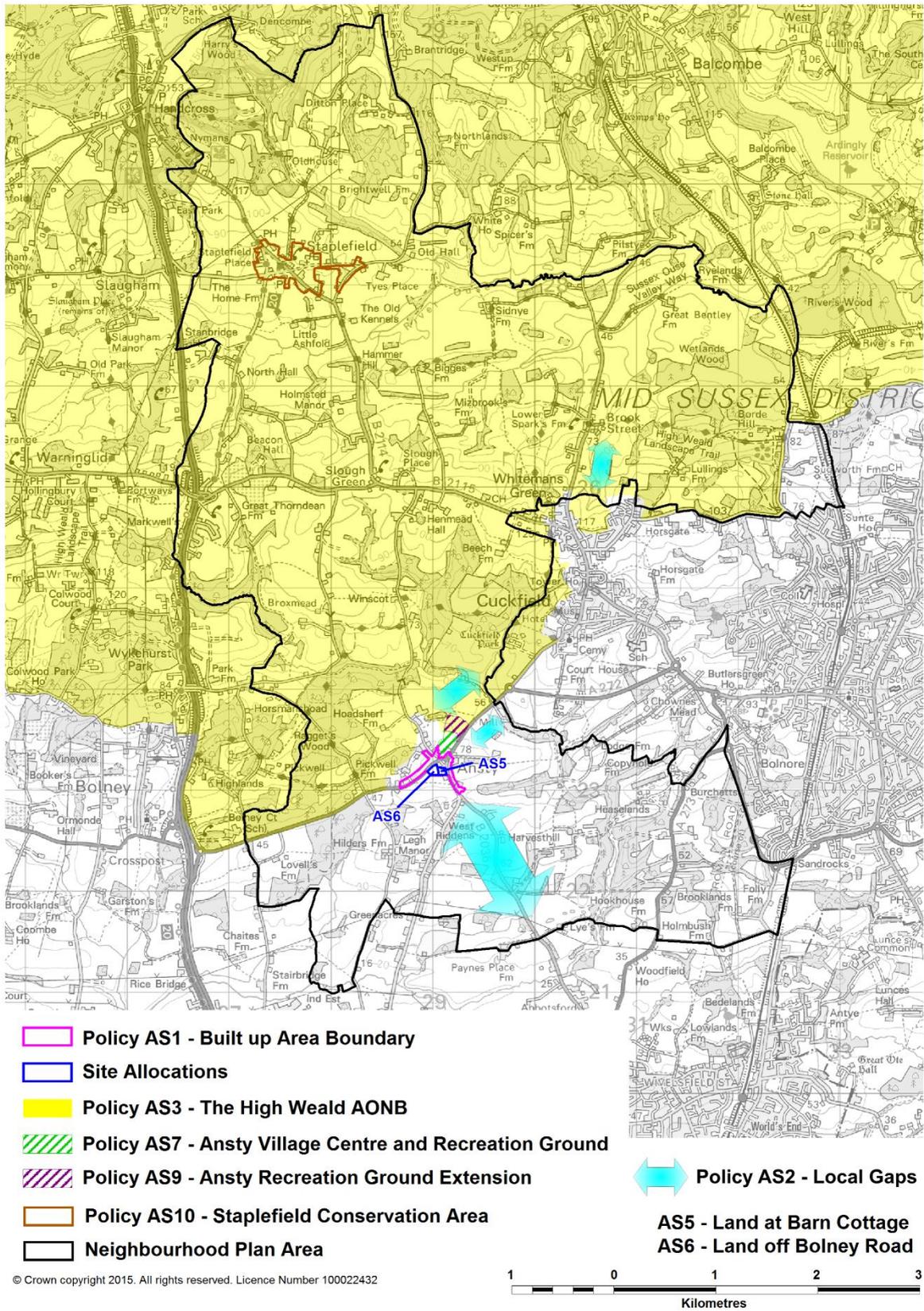


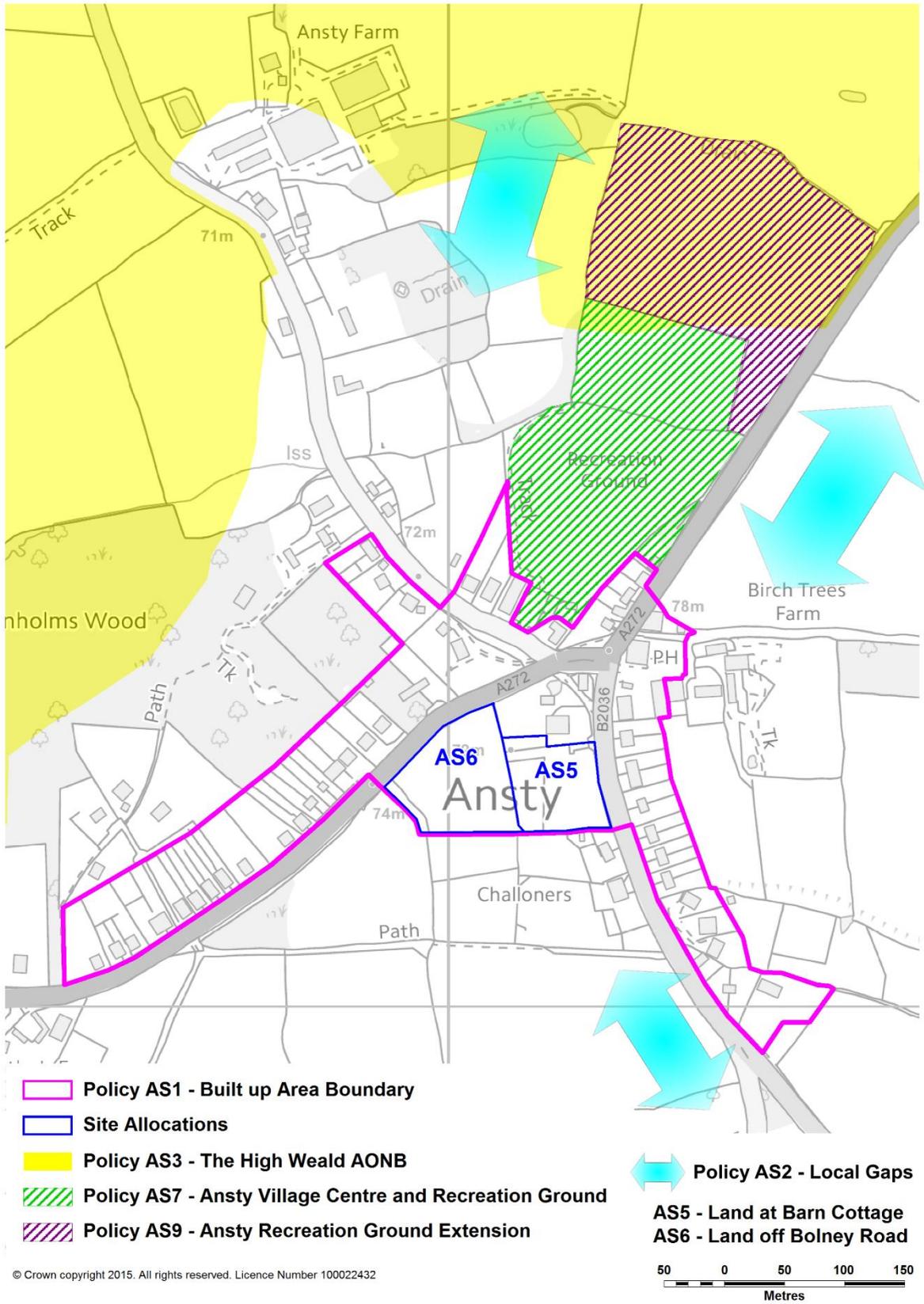
POLICY AS14: WALKING AND CYCLING ROUTES

The provision of improved walking and cycling routes to Cuckfield, Haywards Heath and other surrounding villages will be strongly supported.

Ansty and Staplefield Parish Council will work with Mid Sussex District Council, West Sussex County Council and other interested parties to put in place an improved walking and cycling network.

12 PROPOSALS MAPS





GLOSSARY

- **Affordable housing** - Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market
- **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)** – a fixed, non-negotiable contribution that must be made by new development. It is chargeable on each net additional square metre of development built and is set by Mid Sussex District Council.
- **Local Plan** – the planning policy document produced by Mid Sussex District Council covering Ansty and Staplefield parish. This addresses strategic planning matters and the Ansty, Staplefield and Brook Street Neighbourhood Plan, as required by the National Planning Policy Framework, must be in general conformity with the Local Plan. Mid Sussex District Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan that will supersede the current 2004 plan. It is important that the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to be in conformity with the emerging Local Plan as well.
- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** – the national planning policy document which sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
- **Social rented housing** - Housing owned by local authorities and private registered providers for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime.
- **Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)** – an evidence base exercise undertaken by all local authorities to determine the amount of land that has theoretical potential for housing development. All sites put forward are considered for their availability, suitability and deliverability for housing. If a site addresses all of these requirements then it is considered to have theoretical potential for housing development; however this does not mean that the site will be brought forward for development or that a planning application will be granted planning permission. All sites for consideration are collated through a ‘Call for Sites’ exercise which invites anyone to put forward land for consideration through the SHLAA process.

