



Hailsham & Hellingly

MASTERPLAN

A Programme for the Future



Hailsham Town Council & Hellingly Parish Council

January 2009

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RETAIL CAPACITY STUDY



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INTRODUCTION

1. Plan Objectives

- To provide a strategic document to guide and co-ordinate future development in the Parishes of Hailsham and Hellingly, but not to duplicate nor to seek to repeat national or regional planning policies that are to be found elsewhere
- To provide a document that can inform and supplement but not supplant the Wealden Local Development Framework
- To identify the present local infrastructure and to highlight additions, changes or upgrades that may be required to accommodate present and future developments
- To ensure that the needs of all sections of the community from the very young to the more senior are addressed
- To enhance the economic performance and potential of the area
- To improve the quality of life for all residents
- To conserve and enhance the landscape setting of the town

Area Covered

The parishes of Hailsham and Hellingly.

2. History

2.1. Hailsham is already the largest settlement in the southern half of the Wealden District and the largest inland town in East Sussex, with some 8475 (9085 including Hellingly) homes and a population of 19,836 (21,388 including Hellingly). The town is located approximately six miles north of Eastbourne, between the middle reaches of the Cuckmere River to the west and the Pevensey Levels to the east, with the extensive Wilmington Wood reaching to the town's edge in the south.

2.2 Hailsham has been an established market town since 1252 and still retains its historic core around Market Square and St Mary's Church. The High Street, Market Square, Market Street and George Street retain much of their original architecture with the major town centre developments having taken place behind the existing retail frontages and on a scale that did not dominate the original street scene.

Although there are many fine examples of early architecture - the Corn Exchange, The Pavilion, Town House, The Grenadier and Courtlands to name but a few - the modern tendency for large plastic fascias does little to enhance the attractiveness of the street scene.

However, the upper elevations and varied roofline of much of the main shopping thoroughfares, together with the many views of St Mary's Church, does much to retain the market town appearance and feel about the retail centre of the town.

2.3. The town experienced considerable growth during the twentieth century, with significant residential estate development occurring in the post-war years. Since 1978, the population has increased from around 14,000 to almost 21,000.

The most recent house building has taken place on the western and southern edges of the town, contributing towards a population increase of over 3,000 people during the past decade. Wealden District Council's Non Statutory Plan Local Plan (approved in December 2005) included provision for a further 1250 new homes for most of which outline planning consent has now been given.



View of Hailsham Town Centre from St Mary's Church tower

2.4. Today, Hailsham serves as a local employment centre, providing a range of jobs in manufacturing and services, and also as a local shopping centre for the residents of both Hailsham itself and the surrounding rural area(s). Developments at Vicarage Field, The Quintins, St Mary's Walk and the Tesco store in North Street have strengthened the retailing role of the town centre and the Freedom Leisure Centre in Vicarage Lane has increased recreational opportunities.

However, the proximity of the sub-regional shopping and employment centre at Eastbourne and the regional centre at Brighton, the present 28 empty shops and 8 charity shops in the retail town centre, and the loss of major employers such as Marlow Ropes and Abbot Joinery, combined with an historically low wage and low skill employment centre in Hailsham, means that economic revitalisation will represent a major challenge.

2.5. In view of the rapid development that has taken place in recent years and the need for the town to assimilate, both physically and socially, recent past development and the significant housing commitment still remaining, it could be argued that Hailsham would benefit from a period of consolidation.

In the context of the East Sussex Brighton and Hove Structure Plan 1991-2011 housing requirements, there is probably no need to release further sites for residential development, and existing industrial and business commitments in and around the town are sufficient to meet the likely employment needs of existing and future residents.

However, the South East Plan places Hailsham and Hellingly within the South Coast Sub Region. The areas of Hailsham and Polegate in particular are identified as capable of providing for further growth. It is likely therefore that this area will, over the next 20 years, need to provide for an additional 3000/5000 new homes and appropriate employment land.

2.6. There are major landscape and environmental constraints affecting further outward expansion of Hailsham. Development to the north or south would intrude into open countryside and conflict with the strategic policy of maintaining the existing countryside gaps between the town and Hellingly and the town of Polegate, whilst the proximity of the Pevensey Levels SSSI constrains further expansion on the eastern side of the town. Development on the western side of Hailsham, beyond the A22, would be likely to result in the loss of attractive areas of open countryside, which are important to the rural setting of both the town itself and to Lower Horsebridge and Upper Dicker.

2.7. Hitherto Wealden District Council's strategy for the town has been to maintain and develop the role of Hailsham as a housing, local employment, shopping and services centre, and has involved striking a balance between the demands for new housing, the need to improve local employment opportunities and the protection of the environment. Its objectives have been as follows:

- To conserve and enhance the landscape setting of the town;
- To maintain and enhance the function of the town as a local employment, shopping and service centre;
- To maintain and improve the range and choice of local employment opportunities;
- To maintain and further promote the economic viability and vitality of the town centre;
- To create a safe and attractive environment in the town centre for shoppers and pedestrians, whilst reducing traffic congestion and improving accessibility
- To maintain and widen the range of community facilities and amenities.

2.8. Hellingly

2.8.1. The parish of Hellingly lies immediately to the north of Hailsham. There is no single settlement, rather a collection of eight or more local areas, the most well known

of which is the “village“ centred on the Church of St Peter and St Paul. The parish has a population of 1552 and some 610 dwellings.

There is a primary school, a cemetery, a village hall, recreation ground, church, chapel and various local shops and public houses, but otherwise the residents of Hellingly look to Hailsham to satisfy the majority of their immediate needs. Until recently, there have been no major developments in the Parish. However, the closure of the former Hellingly Hospital and the grant of planning permission for 400 new homes on the site will change all that.

In the past, as the Parish has grown, those areas that have been developed such as London Road and Anglesey Avenue have, by parish boundary changes, been absorbed into a larger Hailsham, a practice that is likely to continue. The real threat to Hellingly from the new housing is likely to be the impact of the additional traffic on the rural road system and the increased competition from the new residents on already scarce resources.



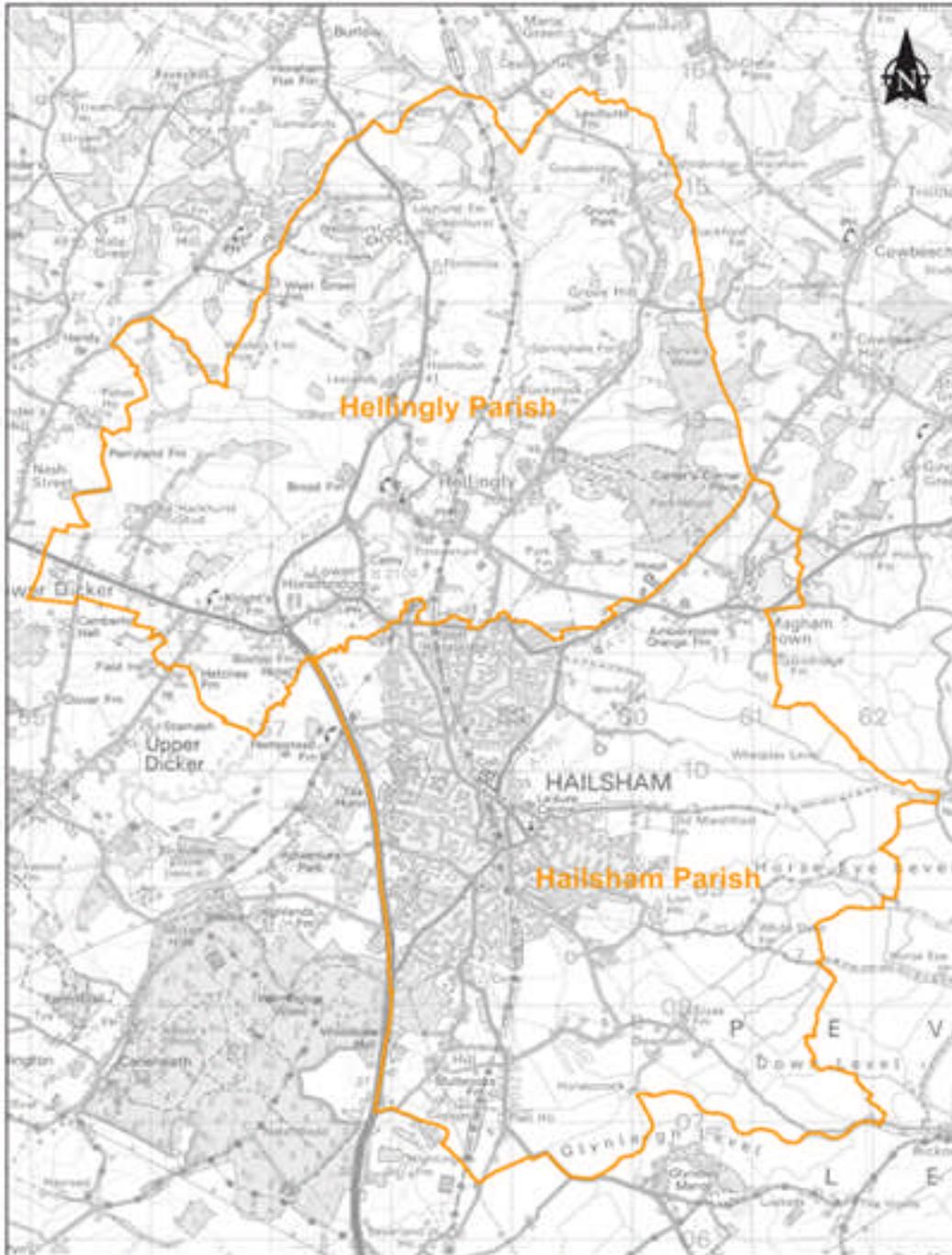
Church Lane, Hellingly



Church Path, Hellingly

3. Present Position

Development Boundary



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Not to scale



 : Parish boundary

- The present development boundary for Hailsham has sought to conserve the rural setting of the town and protect open countryside from intrusive development.

The development boundary includes existing housing and industrial commitments and allocated sites, but excludes some peripheral areas in order to protect their low density, more rural character and prevent any extension of ribbon development along the approaches to the town.

Along the northern edge of the town, the development boundary has followed Upper Horsebridge Road and the built-up area north of Hawkswood Road in order to prevent any encroachment of development into the open countryside gap between Hailsham and Hellingly.

The present development boundary excluded the scattered development which extends eastwards from Battle Road along the A271, in order to prevent any intensification of development in this sensitive fringe location.

- On the eastern side of Hailsham, it has been considered important to continue the longstanding policy of preventing new development in order to protect the character of the Pevensy Levels and the sensitive landscape setting of the town.

The development boundary generally has followed the clear physical boundary provided by Battle Road and residential development on the Town Farm Estate in order to prevent any encroachment of development towards the open marshlands of the Levels.

It has excluded scattered properties along the eastern side of Battle Road, where any consolidation of development would be intrusive in views across the Pevensy Levels and detract from the setting of the town.

- On the north side of Marshfoot Lane, the development boundary incorporates the site of the new Whitehouse Primary School, land allocated for housing adjacent to the town centre and the well consolidated ribbon of houses that extends beyond.
- Along the southern fringe of the town, the development boundary incorporates the existing housing and business commitments, but elsewhere closely follows the existing built-up area in order to preserve the rural character of the surrounding landscape and prevent any further encroachment of development into the open countryside gap between Hailsham and Polegate.

The wooded ghyll which runs to the south of Ingrams Way and Southbanks Close is a particularly significant landscape feature which screens the south-western edge of the town and provides a clear physical boundary between the built-up area and the open countryside beyond.

- Along the western edge of Hailsham, the development boundary generally follows the extent of the existing built-up area, and current commitments.

4. Local Development Framework Issues & Problems

4.1. Spatial Vision

In preparation for the delivery of its Local Development Framework in 2007, Wealden District Council published an “*Issues and Options*” consultative document in which it set out its suggested spatial vision for Hailsham as follows:

- Improving Hailsham’s economic performance and accessibility
- Reducing the deprivation in parts of Hailsham
- Reducing congestion and the impact of through traffic in the historic centre
- Enhancing the town’s role as a service centre and improving its retail offer
- Improving local services and maximise opportunities for town centre regeneration
- Improving the quality of entrances/approaches to the A22 as ‘gateways’ to the town
- Enhancing the town’s tourism role as a potential gateway to ‘1066 country’
- Maintaining a cattle market in the vicinity of the town
- Providing a central bus station
- Providing new parks for the town, as part of development of town extensions, linked to the cuckoo trail

With the exception of the need for a bus station, for which the Town and Parish Councils did not see a demand, and the removal of the reference to 1066 country, the two Councils found themselves broadly in agreement with the vision.

4.1. Potential for Future Development

Given the South East Plan comments on the need to identify further development land in the South Coast Sub Region, the same “*Issues and Options*” consultative document also comments in relation to the potential for further development in Hailsham:

5.32 The town has opportunities for development in and near the town centre (which, although attractive, has considerable problems of traffic congestion), and a number of key brownfield sites..... There is the potential to link some of the brownfield (and possibly greenfield) sites in and around the town centre in ways which might improve its townscape and connectivity, whilst improving retailing and helping resolve the traffic problems. As with all of the towns, infrastructure and enhancement will require development such as housing to fund it.....

5.33 Some of the development options for Hailsham may require a relief road to the North and/or the South of the Town to ensure traffic filters on to the A22 rather than through the town centre. The routing of these provides challenges, as there are no easy options.Growth options would also need to provide a park or parks the town currently lacks, possibly linked to the Cuckoo Trail Sewerage capacity at the Hailsham South and North treatment works will impact upon all options here unless new capacity is developed. There is very limited spare primary health care capacity.

The Hailsham and Hellingly Masterplan seeks to identify some of the major constraints and needs of Hailsham and Hellingly, both in the context of the present proposed developments and the likelihood of future development.

ROADS

Key to any successful settlement is accessibility and sustainability. The main roads linking the town to the outside and the network of local roads allowing traffic to circulate in and around the town have therefore been looked at, to assess their present effectiveness, to consider necessary improvements for the present traffic flows, and to accommodate any future increases.

The overall conclusion reached was that, with very few exceptions, the road structure was poor and inadequate to cope with further expansion and that there needed to be an in-depth review of the entire road system into and around the town.

Consideration of the roads fell into four broad areas:

- Ring Roads
- Gateways
- Town Centre
- Local Difficulties

1. Ring Roads

It has been suggested that the Masterplan should concentrate on a global/spatial vision for the town and not the detail, and should visualise the ongoing problems that will be exacerbated by the town's expansion. With this in mind, the possibility of two new roads to serve as relief roads to the town centre and to open up land for future development (should this be required) have been identified, namely:

- A southern relief road passing around the periphery of the town on the Eastern and South sides from the junction of the A271 and Battle Road, to the roundabout at the junction of the A22 and South Road, and
- A relief road for Lower Horsebridge linking the A271 through to Battle Road, by-passing Lower Horsebridge and Union Corner.



A271 / North Street junction, Lower Horsebridge



A271 / Battle Road junction, Hailsham

The proposal for a southern relief road would provide for junction connections to Harebeating Lane, Marshfoot Lane, Mill Road, Station Road, Ersham Road, and Summerhill. This route is considered feasible from a construction point of view, and, at its lowest point, would be above the Pevensy Marshes flood plain levels. Additionally, there are very few, if any, houses on the route.

Although it is appreciated that, given the length of the road, the cost of construction would be considerable and possibly not capable of being funded wholly from developer contributions. However, it could open up land east of Battle Road for building, (should this be required) and also make it possible to extend the Station Road Industrial Estate, which could be accessed without going through the town centre, thus providing more land for employment. It would also create a defensible boundary for the town.

The decision by Wealden District Council to move all of its offices to Hailsham will result in a further 250 employees in the town, plus many visitors making more desirable a means of accessing the town centre directly from the A271.

If it is considered to be impracticable to implement the southern relief road in its entirety, consideration should be given to that section of the road from the A271 to the back of the Leisure Centre in Vicarage Lane and the new White House School in Marshfoot Lane, with a spur connecting through to Vicarage Lane. This shorter section would open up the potential for development on the East side of the town, and of accessing the area of land allocated in the Wealden Non Statutory Plan for community uses, as well as the present district council offices, leisure centre and community facilities in Vicarage Fields. The connecting spur would also provide convenient access to the town centre.

The proposal for a Horsebridge by-pass formed part of the earlier considerations on the Wealden Non Statutory Local Plan, but neither of the then proposed routes found favour, and the scheme was subsequently dropped. However, it is suggested that a route leaving the A271 close to the Boship roundabout and passing south of the Horsebridge recreation ground crossing the A271 by the scout hut, and then running north of the linear development along the A271 before rejoining the A271 either at Union Corner or Amberstone, might be feasible, less intrusive, and therefore more acceptable.

The integrity of the proposed circular and relief roads should be maintained when consideration is given to future planning applications and development.

2. Gateways

Gateways are an essential feature of any town. They are in effect the front door and create the visitors first impression. Where they are good, they can encourage visitors and more importantly inward investment from those seeking to relocate their business to a town. Where they are poor, they can send out all the wrong messages.

In the case of Hailsham, the principal “gateways” are:

- From the A22 and the East (Diplocks Way /South Road)
- From the A271 and the North (Hempstead Lane/London Road; Hawks Road; Battle Road) and
- From the South (Ersham Road)



Hempstead Lane gateway, Hailsham



South Road / Diplocks junction, Hailsham

None of the present gateways are considered satisfactory:

Diplocks Way:

The road surface is poorly maintained; pedestrian pavements and kerbs are uneven and poorly maintained; the grass verges are unkempt and heavily rutted; the feature roundabouts are weed-ridden and unattractive.

On road parking, both for loading and long-stay creates congestion and interrupts traffic flows; uncoordinated and therefore unattractive trade signage, poorly maintained and visually unattractive frontages, and poor quality landscaping and street furniture, all add to the poor visual impression and as a (if not the) primary gateway, gives out all the wrong messages about the town.

Where possible, the road should be widened by the creation of off-road parking and loading bays at the expense of the presently poorly maintained grass verges. The kerbs should be reset, the road resurfaced and a comprehensive landscape, signage, and frontage plan prepared with encouragement offered to property owners to upgrade their own properties.

Much of these improvements were covered in the Olesen report prepared in 2005, but never implanted.

South Road:

The first section from the A22 to Arlington Road East is acceptable. However, an obvious improvement would be a roundabout replacing the present mini roundabout at Ersham Road and the junction with Diplocks Way. Additionally, the removal of the South Road former railway bridge and its replacement with a roundabout would afford better access to Western Road, George Street, and Station Road. Finally, the present traffic calming measures are felt to be ineffective and to contribute to traffic congestion.

Hempstead Lane:

Planning agreements with developers for Welbury/Woodholm Farms and Woodside require contributions for a roundabout at the junction of Gleneagles Drive, Hempstead Lane and the new estate road that will be constructed to serve Welbury Farm; for a longer deceleration lane on the left turn in from the A22; and for junction improvements at Leap Cross.

In view of the planning consents that have been granted for residential developments at Welbury, Woodholm (460) and Woodside (77) Farms, and in order to reduce the probability of greater use of Gleneagles Drive as a rat run, the preference is for the junction with the A22 to be a roundabout, and for an improved roundabout or possibly traffic lights at Leap Cross mini roundabout. In addition, further pavements on both sides of the carriageway and a pedestrian crossing are required in Hempstead Lane.

London Road:

Possible redevelopment of Horsebridge Mill will cause problems, and the proposal for a small roundabout may not be the correct solution. Welbury Farm developers are to make improvements, which consist of taking out the curve immediately to the west of the junction. There appears to be no overall plan for this junction and each planning application comes up with different solutions. Early consideration should be given to a comprehensive redesign of the junction.

Hawks Road:

Alterations are planned for Union Corner (the junction with the A271 and Park Road) under the planning agreement with the developers of Hellingly Hospital. However, as already referred to, improvements are also required at Leap Cross where Hawks Road meets London Road and Hempstead Lane.

Battle Road:

A new roundabout is proposed as part of the development at the Junction of the A271 and Battle Road, but the junction of Battle Road and London Road presently creates delay and congestion and requires redesign/improvement.

3. Town Centre

An essential component to the revitalisation of the town centre is the management of the town centre traffic flows. The previous one-way system worked relatively well for most of the day, but there were problems at key junctions, at peak hours.

The reversion of North Street to two-way traffic has diverted much through traffic away from the High Street and George Street, but has created problems at the junctions of George Street and North Street and of Station Road and North Street and Western Road and South Road.

Long-stay on street parking, particularly in the High Street and in George Street, both inhibits shoppers, and, in the case of George Street, can cause blockages when those seeking to unload double park.

If the retail centre is to remain vibrant, and more importantly to expand, then the main shopping centre needs to be made an attractive shopping experience. Ease and speed of access in and out of the town, convenient free parking and pedestrian-friendly shopping areas are a must.

Where new development takes place, as in North Street, attractive walkways linking to other shopping zones are vital to retain the additional shoppers in the town.



Vicarage Field, Town Centre



St Mary's Walk, Hailsham

- **High Street**

The High Street needs to be made more pedestrian-friendly. The reversion of North Street to two-way traffic has already resulted in less through traffic using the High Street.

Widening the footpaths and narrowing and slowing the vehicle running areas, together with the removal of long-stay parking within the High Street could change and enhance the use of this area by those people essential to maintaining its viability – the shoppers.

Shopkeepers initially may be reticent, and oppose these changes. However, looking at the longer term vitality and viability of the shopping centre, it is essential to improve the shopping experience of Hailsham and to encourage shoppers to use the centre and to promote its future.

Some shopkeepers wish to keep parking in the High Street, as they believe it brings passing trade. However, time restricted parking would still enable people to use the shops and yet prevent all-day parkers who bring little trade to the shops. Limited parking, but allowing loading and unloading for those shops with no rear access, should satisfy the traders' requirement and allow time for the business done in most of shops.

At the moment, there is no mechanism for enforcement, but all the town car parks have waiting restrictions. Attempts to impose parking charges other than for long term parking are considered to be counter-productive to town centre regeneration and will therefore be resisted.

Pedestrianisation should also be considered. For those shops that have no back entrances, loading and unloading would be difficult, but could be done when the town is not busy, i.e. before 9 am and after 5 pm.

An alternative could be partial pedestrianisation, i.e. allowing buses, taxis and hearses but stopping through traffic (exceptions may also be required for funeral corteges which follow the hearse closely).

- **North Street**

There continue to be reservations about reverting this road to two-way traffic. It is important, if the town is to capture and retain those shoppers visiting Tesco so that they use other town centre shops, that access between Tesco and the town centre is both preserved and improved. It is thought that two-way traffic in North Street does nothing to enhance this objective, and may create a physical barrier to those wishing to cross over to use the High Street. So far, it is too early to judge. Additionally, problems have been experienced with the junction of George Street and North Road and with access and egress to Station Road and Western Road.

- **Vicarage Lane**

Vicarage Lane is considered inadequate to take traffic around that side of the town and has problems at either end. Consideration should be given to it becoming one-way for its entire length.

- **Summerheath Road**

Is there potential for this road to take some of the through traffic away from the town centre particularly with the replacement of the South Road bridge with a roundabout?

4. Local Difficulties

Many of these have already been identified in the preceding paragraphs, however, in addition, the following have been considered:

Boship Roundabout – very heavily congested in the morning rush hour for traffic coming north on the A22 or from the A271. The proposed new filter lane (part of the planning agreement on the Hellingly Hospital development) may help with traffic from Horsebridge, but does nothing for the northbound traffic. It is probable that the capacity of this roundabout needs to be increased

Arlington Road West junction – this junction is fairly blind on the top of the hill. An acceleration lane for traffic joining the A22 similar to the coned lane on speedway nights would be a great help.

A22/Coldharbour Road junction – is very difficult and almost impossible to turn right at peak times.

Hackhurst Lane Industrial site – the new junction on the A22 should be a roundabout, as was in the original plans.

A267 towards Horam – this road needs speed restrictions – 50 mph.

A271 towards Bexhill – heavy goods vehicles should be discouraged from using this road as a primary route to the east. Such vehicles should be directed to the Cophall Roundabout and the A259.



A22 / Boship Roundabout, Hailsham



A22 junction, Hackhurst Lane Industrial Estate

Conclusion

The belief is that the current road system cannot accept more traffic created by the continued expansion of houses and also industry.

It is important that an in-depth study is undertaken before permission is given for further expansion, and this should include consultation with Hailsham Town and Hellingly Parish Councils, local residents, retailers and businesses.

The creation of relief roads should be considered as priorities to any further expansion.

WATER, SEWERAGE & DRAINAGE

1. Water

It is now generally accepted that the South East is an area of water shortage. Climate change and increasing demand brought about by increased personal consumption and new developments all add to the problem. The District has a number of reservoirs. The water companies are examining expansion at Bewl Water to help meet demands over the next 20 years or so, and a new reservoir, just over the district boundary at Clay Hill (in Lewes District).

The draft South East Plan would allow some expansion of reservoirs, providing it is carried out in parallel with measures to reduce leakages and to increase water efficiency in existing homes and new ones (as now proposed in the Government's Code for Sustainable Homes) and improving sustainable drainage. The Environment Agency and local water companies are confident that these measures will be sufficient to deal with water demands from population increases and new development in the future.

However, it is understood that it is questionable that there exists adequate headroom (that is to say the difference between peak supply and peak demand) in extended dry periods, otherwise it would not have been necessary to impose hosepipe restrictions in Hailsham in 2006/7.

Although a new pipeline linking Bewl Water to Hazards Green is in the process of completion, it is thought that unless, and until, completion of a new reservoir at Clay Hill, there will be uncertainty about sufficient water supplies beyond 2016.

2. Sewerage

According to Wealden's Issues and Options consultation:

"Southern Water is currently undertaking a Water Cycle Study to determine what new waste water treatment facilities are required to accommodate proposed housing numbers as outlined in the Draft South East Plan. This is particularly pertinent with respect to Hailsham and Polegate as the Environment Agency has indicated that they would not wish to see increased volumes of treated effluent being discharged into the Pevensey Levels (RAMSAR Site) from the two treatment works serving Hailsham and Polegate.

It is understood from the Environment Agency that technology will not be able to resolve the issue at the Hailsham North Waste Water Treatment Works, which serves Hailsham. On 1st January 2006 there was spare capacity for 2,800 new dwellings at the waste water treatment works whilst the Hailsham South treatment works, which serves the Polegate area, had a maximum spare capacity on 1st January 2006 of 1,900 dwellings. Ongoing studies may further reduce these 'headways'. The Southern Water 'Water Cycle Study' is examining the options for further waste water treatment infrastructure, which may include either draining into the Cuckmere Catchment or a new long sea outfall. The timescale for these infrastructure works, of 15 years, could severely prejudice the strategy of the South East Plan to focus growth in Wealden in

the Sussex Coast Policy Area and is driven by short term OFWAT financial regulations which the Government has acknowledged will need to be changed .”

Southern Water provided the following statement in response to a recent enquiry as to capacity:

“Southern Water has been in discussions with both the Environment Agency and Wealden district council regarding growth provision in Hailsham. The Agency is not prepared to increase the current consented Dry Weather Flow at either of the Hailsham works. However there is some capacity at both works available before this headroom is taken up (which, on current forecasts will take us to about 2015). As part of Southern Water's 5 year Business Plan process we are currently developing a scheme for wastewater provision for when growth exceeds the current consented limits at the two works. This will comprise a new effluent discharge point either to the Cuckmere or the sea. We have had preliminary discussions with the Agency regarding this and they have provided indicative discharge standards for us to develop a scheme against.”

As a small town, Hailsham gradually but progressively developed outward from its small Victorian core, and as such, as with its road system, the original infrastructure has extended with it. The early drainage system to the town was built as a combined system, whereby both foul water sewerage and surface (rain) water is collected into the same piped system.

The effect is that, in times of heavy rainfall, the normal “dry weather flow” (i.e. the normal foul water discharge in the system), is multiplied by many times, depending on the severity of the storm. Early sewage treatment was very rudimentary at the old Station Road works, and excess flows and sedimented solids (sludge) were disposed of onto the surface of local fields owned by the council.

The Hailsham Southern Treatment works takes additional foul water flows from the Polegate / Willingdon area pumped via a large diameter pipeline running along the Cuckoo Trail. This large diameter pipeline has on occasions leaked. In addition, because of its size and length, it holds sufficient sewerage, that anaerobic action commences in the pipeline before discharge to open air at the inlet works at Station Road, causing considerable smell nuisance, particularly when there is little wind to disperse it.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The majority of the new developments at the present time will drain into the North works, i.e. Hellingly Hospital, Welbury/Woodholm, Woodside and Battle Road. However, there are large developments proposed for Polegate and Willingdon and these will all drain to the South Works. Apart from the major developments, there are several small sites with planning permission and almost certainly there may be more. The numbers of houses on these sites will all add up to significant number.



Hailsham North Wastewater Treatment Works

It would appear that Southern Water and the Environment Agency both believe that a new effluent discharge point will be required before further development sites are given planning permission. An independent review of the capacity of both Hailsham sewerage works should be undertaken before any further development is permitted, either in Hailsham and Hellingly or Polegate and Willingdon.

FLOOD RISK IN HAILSHAM & HELLINGLY

The Environment Agency has recently produced a report the “Cuckmere & Sussex Havens Flood Management Plan” in November 2006 looking at the probability of flooding over the next 100 years, taking into account climate change and future development. The purpose of the report is to manage flood risk in the future.

There are 3 areas in this report that impact on Hailsham:

- **The Upper Cuckmere at Hellingly**

The river frequently floods in this area.

It is essential that routine maintenance to the river – i.e. removing fallen trees is carried out. This can keep the level low enough to prevent houses flooding, but it is often a matter of only inches.

Government funding for this type of work has been scaled back, and pressure needs to be applied constantly at a local level.

The Environment Agency has decided to do no extra work in this area. With climate change, floods may be more frequent and higher, but few, if any, extra properties will be flooded.

Several local fields act as Flood Plains. It is essential that no development is allowed to take place on these, particularly those that act as part of the green gap between Hellingly and Hailsham.

Horsebridge Mill and Bakers Farm Park are also affected by the river flooding. Recent planning applications, which have not been passed, have required work to the system here to reduce the flooding on Bakers Farm as part of any planning agreements. This should be an essential part of any future applications.

- **The urban area of Hailsham and Horsebridge**

There have been many instances of flooding to houses and roads in this area, but they have nearly all been caused by urban drainage systems not coping with heavy flow.

The Environment Agency has decided that work will be carried out in the future to alleviate this, particularly with the expansion of the developed area for housing. This should be monitored and new developments scrutinised for SUDS.

- **The Pevensey Levels**

The developments at Hellingly Hospital and Battle Road will drain into the Pevensey Levels.

The Levels are a RAMSAR and SSSI site and as such are protected and therefore, unlikely to be built on. However, there is land on the fringes that may be developed. The whole area is a Flood Plain.

The risk of flooding to electricity sub-stations and other vital infrastructure need to be assessed.

TRANSPORT

At present, the only public transport links to Hailsham are provided by the bus companies, the railway having closed in the late 1960s.

Bus companies will react to a rise in demand if it occurs, but are unable to create demand.

Most people from the immediate BN27 area access Hailsham by car. The combination of having to wait for a bus – not a very frequent service – and free car parking, make it much easier to drive in if you can.

The current perception is that the buses take people out of the town rather than bringing them in.

Bus passengers seem to be mostly pensioners using free passes. This doesn't particularly help the bus companies, as they state the revenue they receive is inadequate.

Students use the buses particularly to access higher education colleges in Eastbourne. Free bus pass passengers do, however, help reduce traffic congestion, as many older people find it much simpler to catch the bus and not drive into the town centre and have to park.

- **Hailsham is currently served by four main bus routes:**

The 52 from Eastbourne to Tunbridge Wells – hourly.

No service on Sunday or after 6 pm from Eastbourne in the evening.

The 54 from Eastbourne to Uckfield/East Grinstead – mostly 2 hourly.

Some of the buses do not go beyond Uckfield.

Recently cut from hourly to 2 hourly due to light loading north of Hailsham, but sorely missed by people who live on or off the A22 north of Boship Roundabout.

With an increased population, it may be possible to restore a more regular service.

No Sunday service. Last bus 18.33 on weekdays.

The 51 from Eastbourne/Hailsham down Hawks Road to Horsebridge (A271) and back through Anglesey Avenue.

2 per hour from March 23rd.

Hopefully this will address the present problem of the 3 routes all leaving Eastbourne within 20 minutes leaving a 40 minute gap.

Sunday service.

No.98 –Eastbourne/Bexhill and Hastings – inland route.

Hourly service. No Sunday service.

No.11 – Hailsham/Stone Cross, Eastbourne Terminus Road, Old Town, Polegate.

2 per hour during daytime Mon/Sat.

No.18 – Langley –Terminus Road, Dist. Hospital, Willingdon, Polegate, Hailsham, Anglesey Ave.

2 per hour Mon/Fri only.

Hailsham, Polegate, Willingdon, Hospital, Langney, Sovereign Harbour South.
Morning only Mon/Fri.

No.22 - Battle, Herstmonceux, Hailsham, Langney, Eastbourne.

Only 1 service each way per day 9.50 from Hailsham am Leaves Eastbourne 13.55 Mon/Fri.

No.143 between Hailsham and Lewes – 4 each way per day (this service has increased to cover the withdrawal of the Brighton and Hove service).

Originally, local bus services were provided primarily by Eastbourne Buses, Cavendish Buses and Stagecoach, supplemented by other bus companies such as Brighton Buses (service has been withdrawn), the Cuckmere Valley Community Bus, and services to Waitrose (free bus to bring people to the store) and Asda (free bus to take people to the Marina superstore – which takes trade out of the town). The recent acquisitions by Stagecoach of Eastbourne and Cavendish Buses may result in some rationalisation, and hopefully an overall improvement of the services.



Hailsham High Street bus services



Cuckmere Community Bus

- **Opportunity for new services:**

The planning agreements for Hellingly Hospital, Battle Road and Woodside, Welbury and Woodholm Farms require developers to agree substantial payments to secure a high frequency bus service to Polegate and Eastbourne.

Should this be another long distance bus route?

No, we do not believe this would be practical.

Should it be a link bus onto the other routes?

Yes. Rather than long distant link, it is felt that there could be attractions/advantages in a circular route operated by one or more small local buses and linking the residential parts of the town to the retail and employment centres and bus interchanges.

A suggestion – a circular route – working in both directions:

1. Start at Hellingly Hospital – go down New Road (no bus service now)
Connects to 98 for Bexhill and Hastings
Up Battle Road – connects to 54 for Uckfield

Past secondary school
Into town centre – 52, 54, 98, 51 (Waitrose, Co Op, Tesco)
Down South Road – turn into Diplocks – serves industrial estate, Focus, Argos etc
Over A22 to serve Knockhatch
Back round the roundabout up Gleneagles (no bus service now, unless Cavendish run one)
Back of Grovelands School
Through Welbury Farm
Down to London Road – 54,51, 52
Hellingly Village Hall – 52 – Hellingly School
Through Hellingly Village – no bus service now
Down Station Road – no bus service now
Back to Hellingly Hospital
(This route would not cover Hawkes Farm School, which might be included if alternate buses continued along Park Road to Union Corner, before turning left along the A271 to Battle Road)

2. The above in reverse

Apart from serving the hospital development, this would bring a local bus to many more people in the surrounding countryside and would pass many major sites, i.e. schools, stores etc.

It was suggested that a circular bus could take in Town Farm, but it is understood that Eastbourne Buses tried that with the 51 service and had minimal passengers.

• Integrating Public Transport:

Better timetabling is needed to interchange with the trains at Polegate. As there are at least 8 trains an hour through the station, it is obviously not possible to connect with every one. At present, there is an early morning service where people from Hailsham have to change at Polegate onto a train to get to the factories in Hampden Park. However, the train leaves two minutes before the bus is due to get there.

Tickets should be interchangeable between different bus companies operating in the same area.

It should be possible to buy a through ticket locally using bus and rail, i.e. Hailsham/Polegate/Hampden Park.

It is possible at the moment to buy a rail/bus ticket. This is only sold by railway ticket sellers. It allows people to use the bus to and from the station.

There is also an internet ticket called 'The Downlander'. This gives all-day travel in the South Downs area on the train, and all-day travel on buses run by Eastbourne Buses, some Brighton and Hove Services, the Cuckmere Community Bus, and the county Rider services.

• Monorail/Light Railway etc. Hailsham to Polegate

It is not acceptable that a town the size of Hailsham does not have a rail link. This should be kept on the agenda to be looked at in the future. Most of the former Cuckoo

Line is still there as a cycle/footpath. If reinstatement of the railway is not considered practical, then consideration should be given to a light monorail, which it is suggested might run beside the footpath.



Cuckoo Trail / Former 'Cuckoo Line' railway track

- **Cycle Ways**

There is one very good and heavily used cycle path in the Cuckoo Trail. It is used by all sorts of people, from long distance cyclists to family groups with children trying to learn to ride a bike. Its main use is for leisure and probably not much as a means of getting to the town centre for work, school or shopping.

Accessing the Town by bicycle does not seem to be part of the local culture. Not many cyclists are seen on the roads, in spite of the flat terrain. There are very few dedicated cycle lanes – the junction of Battle Road and the A271 has a few yards. Some cyclists state that the roads are too narrow and too dangerous.

Plans for the redevelopment of Hellingly Hospital foresaw the chance to join this up to the Cuckoo Trail and provide access to Hailsham. There are exits from the site, both onto the Drive and through the privately owned Park Farm road.

A reasonably safe route could be achieved from the Park Farm road, along New Road. It is then only a short distance up Station Road Hellingly to the Cuckoo Trail. There are plans to put traffic calming measures in Station road.

Alternatively, it might be possible from the Park Farm road to link to Park Gate and, from there, to the development on the corner of Battle Road and the A271 joining the present footpath that then links to Harebeating Lane and beyond to the town centre.

The Hellingly Hospital planning agreement includes the provision of a cycle/footway along Park Road to A271, pedestrian refuge crossing points on the A271, and improved pedestrian/cycle facilities along the A271.

It should also be possible to connect Welbury and Woodholm Farms with the Cuckoo Trail and, in the case of Welbury Farm, to use links through Grovelands and the Country Park to the Diplocks Way Estate and beyond to Arlington Road East.

- **Footpaths**

The surrounding countryside is served with a network of public footpaths, and some bridleways. Many of them cross the Cuckoo Trail and there are some circular routes.

Access is also easy to the small lanes on Pevensey Marshes.

Within the town there are several “twittens” to allow pedestrians to move around without always having to stay on the roads. They serve as “cut-throughs” to various parts of the town.

- **Footways**

Some of the more peripheral parts of the Town do not have adequate footways. The opportunity should be taken, with the aid of developer contributions, to introduce footways of an appropriate width where they do not already exist.

RETAIL

Positive public comments on Hailsham of today:

- More 'relaxed' shopping environment than Eastbourne or Brighton
- Traditional High Street – can walk to everything
- Safe and secure shopping
- Ease of free parking
- Plenty of places to eat and drink
- Interesting specialist shops

Negative comments:

- Too many empty shops
- Too many charity shops
- Not enough clothing shops
- Too many cars in the High Street
- Some pavements are too narrow for pedestrians (when busy)
- Shortage of car parking at busy times/days

Town Centre

Town centres are important to the economic, social and cultural life of the District and provide a range of financial and professional services, business uses, community and leisure facilities, as well as shops. A healthy and prosperous shopping centre is a key factor in attracting investment, not only to the town centres themselves, but also to a much wider area.

Hailsham town centre is the commercial core of Hailsham, with a variety of shops, offices and other businesses providing shopping facilities and employment opportunities for the town and its surrounding area. It is also a focus for civic and community uses, as represented by the District and Town Council offices, the Freedom Leisure Centre and Hailsham Health Centre.

Within the shopping hierarchy, Hailsham ranks as a local shopping centre. Competition from the much larger sub-regional shopping centres at Eastbourne and Tunbridge Wells and the regional centre of Brighton means that Hailsham is likely remain a local shopping centre concentrating more on convenience goods and local services rather than on durable or comparison goods, such as clothes and furniture.

The Council is committed to working with Wealden District Council, the Chamber of Commerce and other bodies in seeking ways to improve the overall attractiveness of the town centre, both to create a more pleasant environment for shoppers and to increase the likelihood of investment in new retail facilities.

The Council will support and encourage proposals that would improve the quality and the quantity of retailers within the main shopping centre. Specifically, it will promote traffic calming measures and other environmental improvements in North Street, the High Street, George Street and Market Square.

The Council will also seek to ensure that the town shops capture much of the increased shopper numbers who will visit the new Tesco development in North Street, and will support and promote proposals that improve the visual appearance of North Street and create attractive and convenient walking links between North Street and the High Street.

All development proposals in the Town Centre will be expected to achieve a high standard of design. Large-scale developments will also be expected to increase the potential for shoppers to use public transport and to walk or cycle with convenience and safety.

Hailsham Council will look for adequate, appropriately located and well-signed servicing and parking, and appropriate highway measures to ensure that effective traffic management is achieved where necessary.



Vicarage Field, Hailsham Town Centre



Quintins Centre entrance, High Street

Main Shopping Area

The main shopping area has developed north and east from Market Place, along the High Street and George Street. The Quintins development, located beside the longer-established Vicarage Field precinct, created a more central focus for shopping in Hailsham, while the units at St Mary's Walk make a significant contribution to the variety and quality of retail facilities in the town.

The main shopping area incorporates the principal shopping frontages along the High Street, the pedestrian precincts of Vicarage Field, the Quintins and St Mary's Walk, and with the new Tesco store in North Street (which both extends the shopping floor space and the retail centre), now also includes the area west of North Street, which had previously been identified for longer term retail development as discussed below, but excludes the more peripheral commercial areas where intensification is not favoured.

New Shopping Development

Hailsham competes with Eastbourne for both convenience goods (day-to-day) shopping and higher order durable goods shopping. In 1996, a new (Waitrose)

supermarket opened in Vicarage Field, replacing a much smaller food store on the same site. It was envisaged that this new store, together with the (Co-Op) supermarket in the Quintins, would help to retain a proportion of the convenience trade previously being lost from the town to competing stores elsewhere, principally in Eastbourne. However, this has proven not to be the case and a recent retail study undertaken on behalf of Wealden District Council for the non-statutory local plan, concluded that only 18% of convenience shopping of Hailsham residents took place in the town. Although this figure was expected to rise to approximately 43% following the opening of Tesco in North Street, there is clearly still room for further improvement.

The retail study commissioned by Wealden Council indicated that Hailsham town centre could support around 1,118 square metres net of additional convenience goods floor space by 2011. The study also indicated that there was scope in expenditure terms for 2,100 square metres net durable goods floor space in the town centre.

It is therefore important to look ahead and identify areas in the town centre that would be suitable for retail redevelopment, in order to retain the purchasing power presently being lost to other centres, to provide the additional space likely to be required by proposed housing growth around the town, and to protect the town centre against the dissipation of retailing to the periphery of the town that will inevitably occur unless it can be demonstrated that the Town has made adequate provision within the town centre.

The Town Council commissioned Tibbalds, a firm of town planners and urban designers, to undertake a retail capacity study to ascertain the capacity of sites within the main shopping centre and on additional land identified by the Council as possible extensions thereto to accommodate the additional space identified in the Wealden retail study. A copy of the Tibbalds report appears in Appendix 1. It will be seen from this, that it is considered that there is sufficient capacity in the main shopping area and on the possible extensions that have been identified, to meet the projected needs.

Within the main shopping area, there are areas considered suitable for redevelopment and areas of under-developed land and properties. Both Vicarage Field and the Quintins centres are considered to be dated developments that do little to advance the character of the town centre. Both it is felt that it could be redeveloped, providing more attractive shopping facilities more appropriate to present retailer needs. The car park between the Quintins Centre and North Street and behind St Mary's Walk, and the car park in Vicarage Lane behind the High Street, with suitably designed schemes, could accommodate additional retail space as well as the present car parking, albeit on a different level.

Additionally, redevelopment of the Health Centre site in Vicarage Field, of the remaining part of North Street, and the Police Station in George Street (both of which are allocated for retail uses within the Wealden Non Statutory Plan) and inclusion of extensions to the main shopping area to include the site of Wealden District Council offices in Vicarage Lane and the Victoria Road car park and fire station, would provide additional town centre shopping space sufficient to meet the requirements of those retailers wishing to establish new businesses in the town.

Preliminary discussions have in the past taken place with relevant landowners but have so far failed to result in satisfactory proposals coming forward. However, the landowners have expressed a willingness to consider the proposals.

In order to achieve an uplift in the town centre retail area, it is proposed therefore that the defined town centre shopping area should be extended to include the police and fire stations, the two halls and car park in Victoria Road, and the small parade of shops on the corner of George Street and Station Road extending along Station Road to Garfield Road, and to include the site of the District Council offices on the East Side of Vicarage Lane, in addition to retaining the presently undeveloped land and buildings in North Street.

It is recognised that the site in Victoria Road, George Street and Station Road contains a number of existing uses, including small shop and office premises, flats, and a public house (recently closed). Redevelopment might involve considerable disruption and the relocation of these uses to appropriate sites and buildings. But, it is believed the area represents an appropriate location for longer term redevelopment, and is well located to the main shopping area and with good road access.

Elsewhere within the main shopping area, the Council aims to improve the quality of shopping facilities by encouraging small-scale redevelopments, the refurbishment and annexation of existing premises, and better and more sympathetic shop signs and frontages.



Quintins Shopping Centre car park, North Street

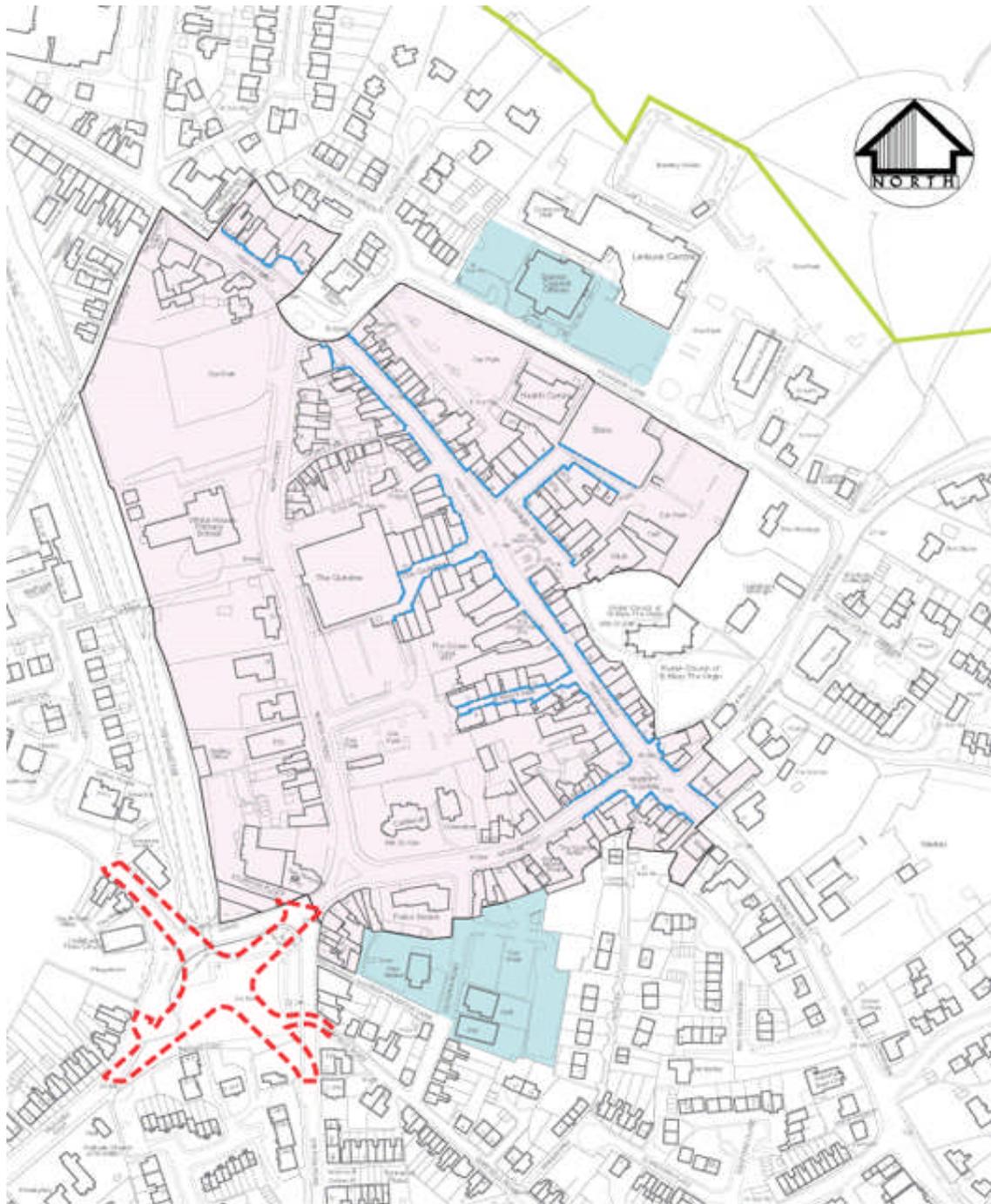


Victoria Road car park

Primary Shopping Frontage

The vitality and viability of the town centre depends, amongst other things, on developing a wide range of attractions and amenities. Hailsham Council wishes to encourage a mix and diversity of uses. Different but complementary uses during the day and in the evening can reinforce each other, enhancing the attractiveness of the town centre to residents and visitors, extending shopping visits and encouraging dual trips. A variety of different uses also assist in providing increased activity and natural surveillance.

The Council supports mixed-use developments in the town centre. Class A2 uses, such as banks and building societies, and Class A3/4/5 uses, such as cafes and restaurants, generate pedestrian activity and can enhance the attractiveness of the main shopping centre. However, such non-retail uses should not dominate nor prejudice the vitality and variety of the shopping. A careful balance needs to be struck between the occasional provision of service or other non-retail uses at ground floor level and the potentially adverse impact of a concentration of such uses in locations where they could undermine the retail function of the main shopping centre. A primary shopping frontage, which should predominantly remain in retail use at ground floor



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Scale 1:2,500 @ A3



level, has therefore been defined in the main shopping centre of Hailsham. There comes a point in any High Street where consideration should be given to limiting the percentage of non-retail frontage in the primary retail frontage zone.

Where a change of use from retail to Class A2 or A3/4/5 use is considered acceptable in the primary shopping frontage, it is important that visual interest for passers-by is maintained at street level. This may be achieved by the provision of a window display or by providing views into the building to make its function apparent. At the very least, windows can put 'eyes on the street' and contribute to safety as well as interest. In the case of proposals for A3/4/5 uses and amusement centres, full regard will be had to the potential impact of smells, litter, parking, noise and other disturbance on the amenities of the area. Where appropriate, the Council will seek conditions to control noise, opening hours and outside activities.

Outside of the primary shopping frontage, and within the main shopping centre, a diversification of uses may be appropriate, in accordance with Government advice in PPS6. However, Policy BS5 of the Wealden non Statutory Plan would generally prevent the conversion of offices, or other business premises falling within Use Classes B1-B8, to other uses.

Nevertheless, there is considered to be some scope for increasing the amount of housing, offices, and leisure facilities within the town centre.

Edge of Centre Locations

Normally, only if it can be demonstrated that no suitable site is available within the main shopping centre, will retail proposals on edge-of-centre sites be welcomed. This follows the sequential approach set out in PPS6. In accordance with Government guidance and Structure Plan Policies, to be acceptable, such proposals need also demonstrate that there will be no adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre. The submission of a retail impact study and clear evidence that there is no other suitable town centre location for the proposal should be a requirement.

The definition of edge-of-centre depends on the specific circumstances of each town. It is important to defend the retailing focus of the town centre and its attractiveness. The primary consideration is normally the ease with which shoppers can walk between the proposed store and the main shopping centre. This is determined by a range of factors including distance, the overall quality and convenience of the physical linkages, barriers to movement such as busy roads or car parks, and local topography. In Hailsham, the conservation area makes an important contribution to the local distinctiveness and character of this market town, and the likely impact of any new development upon the conservation area and the street scene will also be an important consideration.

Outside of the main shopping centre, there is a wide range of retail facilities, including smaller local centres, individual shops or parades serving the needs of their immediate neighbourhoods, and large retail warehouses. The Council recognises the importance of neighbourhood shopping and service facilities, particularly in helping to reduce the need to travel.

Further retail provision of an appropriate size within or on the edge of existing neighbourhood centres will be supported, provided that there is no unacceptable

impact on the residential amenities of the surrounding area. The Council will also encourage proposals for small-scale convenience shops which provide for the day-to-day shopping needs of local communities. Wealden District Council is required to maintain an adequate supply of business land and premises in relation to Structure Plan requirements. The significant loss of either housing or business land within the town to retail development should therefore be resisted.

The areas to the north and south of the main shopping area contain a mixture of both specialist and general shops, together with a range of local services, small office uses and dwellings. It is considered that any significant intensification of shopping uses in these areas should be resisted in view of the lack of off-street car parking and the policy to concentrate new shopping floor space into the main shopping area. Other town centre uses such as offices, restaurants, etc, may be acceptable subject to access, parking and amenity considerations.



Hawkwood Road shop parade, Hailsham



Lansdowne Crescent shop parade, Hailsham

A Longer Term Vision for Hailsham as a Retail Centre

• FUTURE OBJECTIVES

A) Support Hailsham as a 'Niche' Town for destination shopping and experiences.

- Current Examples: Hailsham Cellars, Camera Centre, Special Occasions, Waitrose, Curtain Shop, Prezzo, Costa, Homely Maid, Freedom Leisure

B) Retain retail focus on the centre triangle, Vicarage Lane, High Street, George Street and North Street

- Encourage larger retail units in the Centre triangle – such as, extension over the Quintins car park, combining/enlarging some High Street units.
- support for removal of Police and Fire Stations from George Street, replacing with large retail units (national brands)
- seek retail re-development of the rest of North Street
- Replace the Wealden District Council offices with a shopping centre, should they relocate or rebuild
- Discourage Diplocks Way/South Road turning into an alternative High Street.

C) Planning Controls. Use existing and campaign for local right to identify and support new types of retail 'destination shopping'.

D) Support move to a limited pedestrian priority High Street

- limit parking by reducing spaces and restricting length of stay
- wider pavements at some points
- limit times of private through traffic/deliveries

E) Gain local control over parking, as this is essential to maintain Hailsham as a profitable retail centre. Negotiate with Wealden District Council and East Sussex County Council to have Town control of both on-street and off-street parking. Differential parking schemes for workers and shoppers.

F) Negotiate with property owners to improve visual appearance of shops, including reverting/converting to appropriate features sympathetic to street scene.

G) Improve shopping experience

- by weather shield canopy over all high Street shops (similar to Vicarage Fields)
- provision of centrally located public conveniences
- provision of areas of covered seating for taxis and public transport

HAILSHAM MARKET

Markets have been held in Hailsham since 1252. The present livestock market remains the last cattle market in the whole of East and West Sussex and currently provides a vital service to farmers and graziers on the adjoining South Downs, the Levels and the High and Low Wealds.

The distance to other markets at Ashford in Kent or Salisbury in Wiltshire would mean that some of the present users of Hailsham would be unable to market their livestock.

Without the local market, the profitability and viability of many of the smaller farms and livestock enterprises would be at risk. Should these fail, then the way in which the surrounding countryside is farmed and the resultant pastoral landscape, would change, not to mention the financial affects that would be experienced by many local businesses that presently serve the farming community.

Hailsham is proud of its livestock market and values the trade that this brings to the town and the support that it provides to the local rural economy.

It therefore wishes to preserve the market as a commercial market with community benefit and would strongly oppose any attempt to redevelop the present site in Market Street for any use other than as a market.

However, should the livestock market close, the Town Council supports the view expressed in the Wealden Non Statutory Plan that the alternative use for the site in view of its location would be for residential use.



Hailsham Market in action

EMPLOYMENT LAND

Business

The majority of the business activity is contained on three main business areas:

Diplocks Way Business Area, which extends to 24 hectares, **Station Road Business Area**, some 7 hectares in extent, and **Hackhurst Lane Business Area** in Lower Dicker, some 3.3 hectares

A further 2 hectares of land are allocated for business purposes at Old Swan Lane.

Other business areas in the town and within the town centre itself are much smaller and include eleven starter units at Leap Cross Business Centre on London Road.

A study of business land requirements for the Wealden Non Statutory Plan, which took account of the additional workforce associated with new housing development, existing commitments in Hailsham, and market demand for property, indicated a need for an additional 4 hectares of land to be allocated as a new business park. A well located site with good access would be needed to attract the necessary investment and business development.

The existing business allocation on the former sewage works site at Old Swan Lane and the proposed extension to the Station Road industrial estate, both of which are accessed from Station Road, have so far not proved attractive for investment.

- **Diplocks Way Industrial Estate, Hailsham**

This estate is situated to the east of the A22 and west of South Road (A295), approximately 0.5 miles to the south west of Hailsham town centre. The main estate roads are Diplocks Way and Apex Way. It also has direct access off the A22, giving easy access to the A27 and A267.

Hailsham Retail Park (Focus DIY, Argos, Sussex Beds, etc) and Chandler's BMW car dealership are situated at the entrance to the estate off the A22. A large new development, Ropemaker Park, comprising industrial units, a day nursery and a convenience store is under construction at the South Road entrance to the estate.

Industrial occupiers on the estate include Dobbs Distribution, DHL, Hanson, South Coast Catering Equipment and Alsford Timber.

The estate contains buildings of different ages, the oldest dating from the 1960s. Most of the older buildings on the estate appear to be generally functional and fit for purpose. Most are likely to have an economic life beyond 2025.

There is a cleared site currently being marketed on Apex Way, which has redevelopment potential, as do a number of low density depot type sites on the estate (e.g. Gas Sales, Greenshields JCB etc).

Otherwise, most of the existing buildings have relatively high site coverage and are unlikely to offer any significant redevelopment opportunities before 2025.

The residential area and playing fields to the north of the estate also restrain the opportunities to expand this industrial area.

- **Station Road Industrial Estate, Hailsham**

Situated to the south west of Station Road, approximately 0.5 miles to the south east of Hailsham town centre. The main estate road is Station Road. Within 1.5 miles from the A22, giving access to the A27 and A267.

The estate contains a mix of different aged buildings, the oldest dating from the 1960s. Some of the older buildings have recently been refurbished by the estate owners.

Most of the older buildings on the estate appear to be generally functional and fit for purpose. All are likely to have an economic life beyond 2025.

There is a cleared site in the south-west corner of the estate with planning consent for industrial development. In addition, there is a large open storage area along the eastern boundary of the estate, which may have development potential. Otherwise, most of the existing buildings have relatively high site coverage and are unlikely to offer any significant redevelopment opportunities before 2025.

The estate is bounded by residential areas to the north and west. The only possible direction for any future expansion of the estate would be into an area of farmland to the south and east.

Station Road is relatively narrow and parked cars in the residential areas to the north and traffic calming measures to the south of the estate create access difficulties for lorries.

- **Swan Business Centre, Hailsham**

Situated to the east of Station Road and to the north of Old Swan Lane, approximately 0.75 miles to the south east of Hailsham town centre. Within 1.75 miles from the A22, giving access to the A27 and A267.

This small estate contains a mix of one and two storey modern office and industrial units.

All of the buildings on the estate appear to be generally functional and fit for purpose and are likely to have an economic life beyond 2025. In addition, the estate has high site coverage and which means it is unlikely to offer any significant redevelopment opportunities before 2025.

However, it is adjacent to a Household Waste Recycling Centre and a coal merchant's depot, both of which may have development potential.

The estate is roughly triangular in shape and is bounded by roads on two sides and fields on the other. The latter area has outline planning consent for industrial development.

However, lorry access to this estate is difficult due to traffic calming measures on Station Road to the north and narrow country lanes to the south.

- **Hackhurst Lane, Lower Dicker**

Situated to the north of the A22, approximately 1 mile to the west of its junction with the A267 and A271. The estate has direct access off the A22 via a narrow road, which is not ideal for lorry access. Hailsham town centre is approximately 3 miles to the east. This small estate contains a mix of one and two storey industrial units dating from the 1960s.

Some of the buildings are in poor condition, but most appear to be generally functional and fit for purpose. Most are likely to have an economic life beyond 2025. The estate has high site coverage and is unlikely to offer any significant redevelopment opportunities before 2025.

The estate is bounded by Hackhurst Lane to the east, residential properties to the south and farmland/woodland to the north and west.

The estate is some 3 miles from Hailsham town centre.



Diplocks Way Industrial Estate



Station Road Industrial Estate



Swan Business Centre, Station Road



Hackhurst Lane Industrial Estate, Lower Dicker

Extensions

- **The Land Adjacent to Station Road and Old Swan Lane, Hailsham**

Presently de-allocated for employment use in the non-statutory Wealden Local Plan 2005.

Situated within 1.75 miles from the A22 and 0.75 miles from the town centre, which is served by a number of bus routes.

An outline planning permission (WD/03/0296) was granted on 20 November 2003 for B1c industrial development. The site is 1.7 hectares and based upon a site cover of 35%, the site could accommodate approximately 5,950 sq m of B1c.

This backland site is regular in shape and generally level. It comprises farmland and is situated to the rear of a solid fuel depot and the Swan Business Centre on the northern side of Station Road, close to its junction with Old Swan Lane.

Access to the site will be directly from Station Road. This location is adequate in terms of private and public transport.

The site is relatively well located in relation to the A22, the town centre and the existing industrial areas, but access to it is severely restricted by traffic calming measures in the residential areas to the North West on Station Road.

- **Former Bibby's Mill Site, Station Road, Hailsham**

Vacant brownfield site. Situated within 1.5 miles from the A22 and 0.5 miles from the town centre, which is served by a number of bus routes.

Full planning permission WD/02/0109 was granted on 13 November 2003 for 636sq m of B1, 2,726 sq m of B2 and 1,243 sq m of B8 uses.

The site is situated adjacent to the south-west end of the existing Station Road Industrial Estate, approximately 0.5 miles to the south east of Hailsham town centre. Vehicular access to the site is via the existing estate roads.

The site is generally level, but irregular in shape. It comprises a cleared brownfield site formerly occupied by an agricultural feedstuff merchant, which is bounded to the south by farmland; to the north and east by the existing Station Road Industrial Estate and is separated from a residential area to the west by the Cuckoo Trail.

Station Road suffers from relatively poor access (compared with the Diplocks Way Industrial Estate) through a residential area. Nevertheless, this is still a popular estate. The estate owners are carrying out a programme of refurbishment of older units and whilst there are currently around six vacant units, a similar number have recently been let.

The site is well located for both public and private transport in relation to the A22, the town centre and the existing industrial areas off Station Road. It is well-suited for traditional industrial estate type development, subject to any issues over access being overcome. As a result, it should be promoted for industrial development within B1, B2 and B8 uses.

- **Land Adjoining Hackhurst Lane Industrial Estate, Lower Dicker**

Vacant greenfield site.

Situated within 1.5 miles from the A22 and 0.5 miles from the town centre, which is served by a number of bus routes

The site was allocated under Policy VB22.2 of the 1998 Wealden Local Plan. Full planning permission WD/01/1945 was granted on 30 December 2002 for a change of use from vacant land to industrial and warehousing (B1, B2 and B8). It is 3.61 hectares and based upon a site cover of 35%, the site could accommodate approximately 12,635 sq m of B1/B8.

This backland site is generally level, but is irregular in shape. It comprises farmland and a wooded area, which is bounded to the north, south and west by farmland and to the east by the existing Hackhurst Lane Industrial Estate. Vehicular access to the site from the A22 is currently via Hackhurst Lane and the existing estate roads. However, as part of the planning permission, a new access road is to be constructed leading from the A22 directly into the subject site.

The location at Lower Dicker is adequate in terms of private transport, the site being accessed directly off the A22. Whilst some bus routes run along the A22, the site, located approximately 3 miles to the north west of Hailsham town centre, is generally poorly served by public transport.

However, Lower Dicker is a small, scattered settlement with little in terms of facilities for the local workforce. The nearest large business area is Hailsham, some 3 miles to the south-east.

Agents marketing the site say that they have received a number of enquiries whose requirements range from small workshops and office suites to 100,000 sq ft plus warehouse and major office headquarters. The level of enquiries has been such that the developers are now planning to apply for phase 2 of this project, which would include another 5.4 hectares of land.

The site is well located in relation to the business areas of Lewes, Uckfield, Heathfield, Hailsham and Eastbourne and will have direct access off the A22. It is well-suited for traditional industrial estate type development.



Land adjacent to Station Road and Old Swan Lane



Former Bibby's Mill site, Station Road, Hailsham

Conclusions

The three existing estates together provide in excess of 34 hectares of business space and a further 2 hectares of land is allocated at Swann Barn. Consented extensions not yet built out at Station Road and Hackhurst Lane add a further 7.5 hectares with potential for a possible further 5.4 hectares at Hackhurst Lane.

Although fully developed, there is a turnover of tenants on all three estates resulting in a number of units becoming available for re-letting.

Provided that the allocated sites at Diplocks Way and Station Road are retained as employment land and do not become retail space, and provided that the access difficulties of Station Road are addressed, it is felt that there is sufficient employment land available within the town and that future growth should be concentrated on the presently undeveloped sites and thereafter at Hackhurst Lane.

A southern relief road mentioned elsewhere in this plan could overcome the present access difficulties associated with Station Road. Otherwise, the removal of the South road bridge together with a comprehensive retail redevelopment of the corner of Station Road and George Street and the imposition of parking restrictions in Station Road, may all together or in part alleviate some of the present difficulties.

The closure of the former Hellingly hospital and the possible relocation of the remaining healthcare uses on the northern side of the Drive at Hellingly raises the possibility of some business space (B1) becoming available in the Drive where the Wealden non statutory plan indicates that mixed business uses may be appropriate.

HOUSING

The East Sussex Structure Plan set out broad policy guidance for development at Hailsham for the period to 2011.

“It is a location where, following a period of consolidation, major peripheral expansion for housing and associated facilities may take place as part of the new strategic housing allocations required for 2006 – 2011. This is subject to the availability of appropriate transport infrastructure and any other necessary measures, to ensure that it would not add to transport problems locally and in the wider area.”

In the light of Structure Plan policies, Wealden’s Non Statutory Local Plan set out objectives for Hailsham as follows:-

“(1) to strengthen Hailsham’s role as a residential, employment, shopping and service centre;

(2) to regenerate the town centre, increasing accessibility and improving the range and quality of shopping and other services;

(3) to provide additional local employment to serve both existing and future residents;

(4) to provide for around 1220 new homes to include affordable housing with appropriate infrastructure, community services and facilities, minimising the adverse impact of development on the landscape setting of the town “



View of Pevensey Levels from St Mary’s Church tower

Urban Extensions

With the exception of the brown field previously developed land at Hellingly Hospital, the majority of the 1220 new homes were to be provided through Urban Extensions.

These included 400 dwellings at Welbury Farm/Woodholm Farm, and a further 385 dwellings on smaller scale urban extensions at Arlington Road East, Station Road, south of Howard Close, east of Battle Road, Amberstone, and south of Hempstead Road, together with a flatted development of 50 dwellings alongside a number of community uses on land to the east of Battle Road.

In the event, since approving the non statutory plan in December 2005 Wealden District Council and the planning inspectorate, on appeal, have given planning consent for a total of 1191 new homes with the potential for a further 125 on allocated sites for which permission has yet to be sought as follows:-

<u>Location</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Affordable</u>
<i>Hellingly Hospital</i>	400	120
<i>Welbury Farm</i>	360	108
<i>Woodholm Farm</i>	100	30
<i>Land at Battle Road</i>	146	44
<i>Woodside</i>	75	23
<i>Arlington Road East</i>	70	21
<i>Dunbar Drive</i>	40	12
<u>Total</u>	<u>1191</u>	<u>358</u>
<i>Station Road</i>	35	
<i>Howards Close</i>	40	
<i>Battle Road</i>	50	
<u>Total</u>	<u>125</u>	

Each of the allocated sites obliges the developer to make a contribution towards the local infrastructure (planning gain) as follows:-

Site	Gain
Hellingly Hospital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site of 1.1 hectares for a new single form entry primary school or contribution towards cost of land and buildings for an off site school • 1.9 hectares adult/youth playspace • Children’s equipped play spaces • a community facility with car parking on around 0.4 hectare of land • measures to maintain and enhance the recreational and ecological interest of Park Wood, a Site of Nature Conservation Importance and an area of Ancient Woodland • The open parkland setting within the hospital grounds to be retained, allocated as public open space and access given to the general public. • Funding towards safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle routes including links to the primary school, community facility and the Cuckoo Trail • works to minimise any adverse affects on the local road network of additional traffic generated by any proposed development of the Hospital site, • contributions towards improved library, healthcare facilities, cost of land and buildings for additional secondary school places, a high frequency bus service to connect to the town centre, Polegate railway station and Eastbourne, for off-site surface water drainage, off-site highways and transportation works and schemes and the cost of the A27 West Polegate Trunk Road Improvement.
Welbury Farm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an improvement to the junction of Hempstead Lane and A22; • safe and convenient footpath and cycle routes, including links to the Wealdway footpath, to the proposed public open space, to Hailsham Country Park and to the existing residential area; an extension of the existing footpath along the north side of Hempstead Lane and improved pedestrian and cycle access to the town centre, the Cuckoo Trail and other local facilities • children’s play areas • a community facility with associated car parking accessible to new and existing residents • around 2.6 hectares of public open space to include formal playing pitches. • Developer contributions will also be required in accordance with the Plan’s policies for off-site foul and surface water drainage, off-site highways and transportation works and schemes, including improvements in accordance with policies TR3 and TR7 and other transport measures, new primary and secondary school places, health services, and library provision. Developer contributions may also be required towards the cost of the A27 West Polegate Trunk Road Improvement.

Site	Gain
Woodholm Farm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • connection to the Wealdway footpath which should be incorporated into new development; • a children's play area;
Battle Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement to the junction of Battle Road and the A271 • improved cycle and pedestrian measures • connection to the public footpath along the eastern boundary • children's play areas • junior playing pitch • provision made in the site for an access to the wastewater treatment works which should be segregated from the new housing areas as far as possible.
Woodside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an improvement to the junction of Hempstead Lane and A22; • connection to the public footpath along the eastern boundary; • a children's play area.
Arlington Road East	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appropriate measures to facilitate pedestrian access to the town centre; • a children's play area
Howards Close	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • connection to the public footpath in the north-eastern corner of the site; • a children's play area; • retention and strengthening of trees and hedgerows with new planting along the eastern and southern boundaries. • subject to review and the possibility of on-street parking restrictions in Howard Close, a small area of off-street parking should be provided adjacent to the end of Howard Close.
Station Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extension of the existing footpath along Station Road ; • a children's play area;
Grovelands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • children's play area.
Woodholm Farm, Battle Road Woodside Arlington Road East Howards Close Station Road Grovelands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contributions will also be required in accordance with the Plan's policies for off-site foul and surface water drainage, off-site highways and transportation works and schemes and other transport measures, new primary and secondary school places, health services, library provision and playing fields. • Developer contributions may also be required towards the cost of the A27 Trunk Road Improvement.

Under the provisions of the South East Plan, Wealden was required to provide an additional 8000 houses for the period 2006 to 2026 divided as to 4600 in the south of the district and 3400 in the rest of Wealden. As a result of the Inspectors report on the Plan, the figure was increased to 9600 with an additional 1000 allocated to the south. The Government's proposal on the Inspectors report, however, raises the housing requirement for Wealden to a minimum of 11000 new homes with the recommendation that 7000 of these should be provided in the South of the District.

Of the 11000, credit is given for the 3300 (2000 in the South) already allocated in the Wealden non statutory plan, but this still leaves a further 3000/5000 new homes to be provided in the south, a proportion of which may need to be provided in the Hailsham area.

Given the constraints on development identified elsewhere in this document, there is an argument for saying no to immediate further development in the town. However, this may not be a realistic or defensible position.

Therefore, if further development is likely to be imposed on the town the question is where this should be. The Wealden Issues and Options paper identified a number of possible urban extension sites on the periphery of Hailsham capable of taking significant numbers, if further new development is not to be focused on Polegate or on a new stand-alone settlement.

Of these, the two most sustainable appear to be:-

Land East of Battle Road: Where it is believed that there could be capacity for a further 1700 dwellings, and

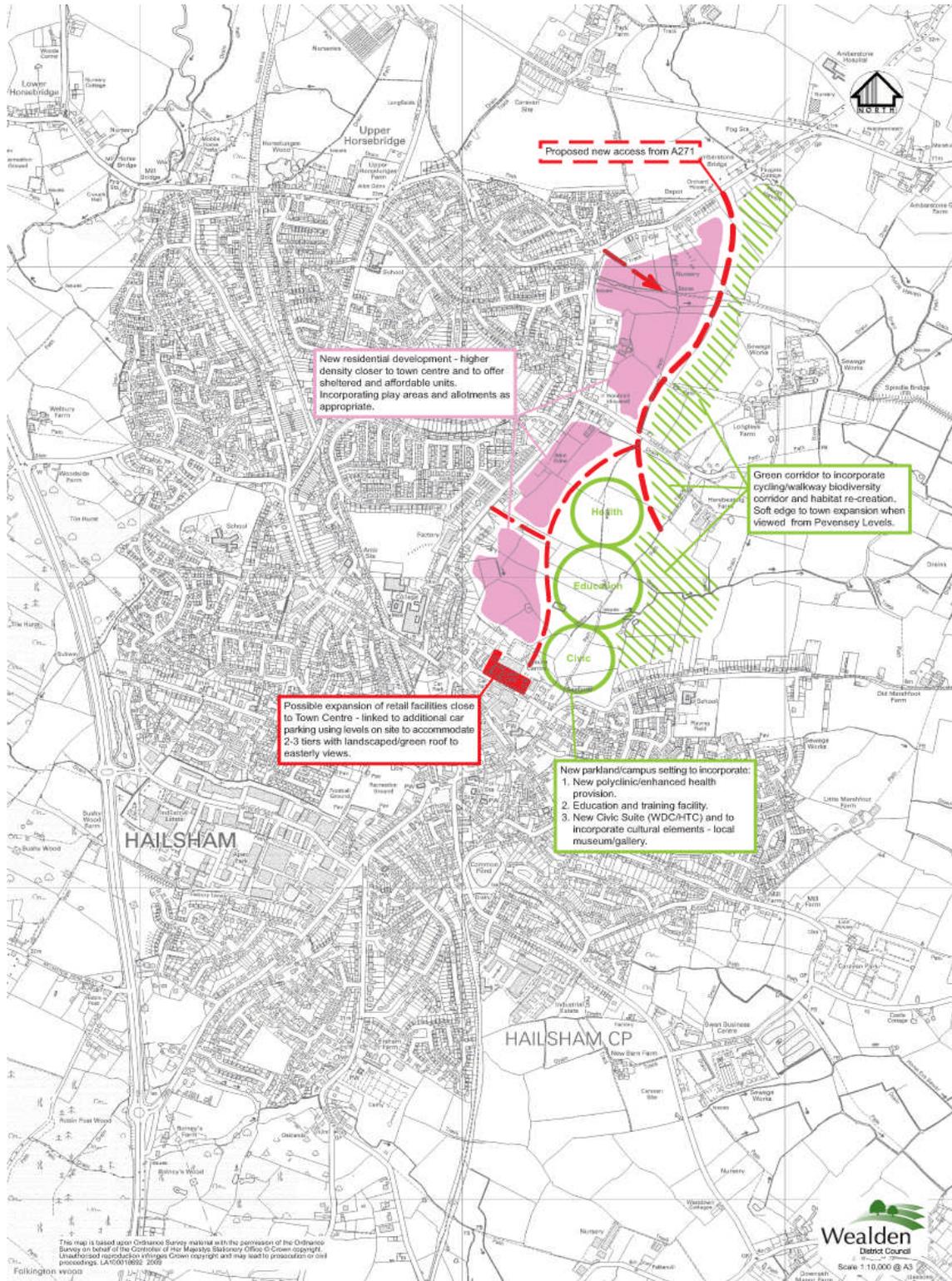
Land at North Hailsham: Where there have been previous proposals for 550 dwellings.

Neither option would be without difficulties, since both sites would add to the present drainage problems, both would require major road improvements and both would impose additional strains on the present inadequate schools and healthcare.

Of the two options, the land east of Battle Road is considered to be the more sustainable in view of the proximity of the site to the town centre and its services. Although, it would require a substantial new road in close proximity to an environmentally-sensitive internationally protected site.

Development at north Hailsham, however, would elongate the town and result in a less accessible development in a position which is likely result in more car journeys.

Significant additional development in the town could result in substantial further planning gain, as is evident from the table above. It is important therefore, to ensure that the required improvements in the local infrastructure are both identified in advance of the grant of planning consents, and adequate funds obtained to ensure their delivery.



Plan of retail area

HEALTHCARE

With the proposed increase in housing for both Hailsham and Hellingly, there is a projected growth in the population of approximately 8000 by 2026, which could be even greater as a result of needing to meet revised targets for the area set out in the South East Plan. As a consequence, it is necessary to review the health requirements for the area to meet the extra demands on the services that will be created by these developments.

Health Services

The Sussex Downs and Weald Primary Care Trust (PCT) is responsible for planning and securing the provision of health services in Hailsham and Hellingly. Local hospital services are provided by separate NHS Trusts. Residents in Hailsham and Hellingly are served by hospitals in Eastbourne. The East Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust advises that hospital services will require significant investment to meet the needs arising from the growth in population over the Plan period.

The Primary Care Trust anticipates that there will be a need for new and expanded doctors' surgeries in order to both meet increased patient demand from the new housing development and to achieve a qualitative improvement to existing services. Doctors' surgeries are an essential community service and it is important that new surgeries are located in close proximity to the population they are intended to serve. The Eastbourne Downs Primary Care Trust (PCT) has advised that the scale of new development proposed at Hailsham and at Polegate would necessitate additional health facilities to be provided.

The Wealden Non Statutory Plan therefore makes provision for new purpose-built health centres to be provided on land to the east of Battle Road, Hailsham and within the housing allocation west of the A22 at Polegate. These centres will provide accommodation for doctors, district nurses and health visitors.

Current situation in Hailsham:

Population served: -	25,361 (includes the present populations of Hailsham 19,836 and Hellingly 1,552 and the adjacent villages)
Health facilities: -	5 G.P. Practices; 1 Physiotherapy Unit; 3 N.H.S. Dental Practices; 1 Health Centre
General Practitioners: -	14
N.H.S. Dentists: -	8
District Nurses: -	25.54 w.t.e (whole time equivalent). (covering Seaford and Hailsham)
Health Visitors: -	18.53 w.t.e. (covering Seaford and Hailsham)
Community Midwives: -	4 w.t.e.
Community Physiotherapists: -	4.9 w.t.e.
Podiatrists: -	15.58 w.t.e. (covering Primary Care Trust)
Ancillary Staff: -	no figures available as these staff are employed directly by the practices and include Practice and dental nurses, dental hygienists, clerical officers, domestic staff and maintenance people and in some instances may employ pharmacy personnel.

There are three major hospitals within East Sussex used by the local people namely: the Eastbourne District General Hospital, the Conquest Hospital in Hastings and the Royal Sussex County Hospital at Brighton. The latter is a growing teaching hospital, which will over time certainly affect the roles of the other two as specialist and research work evolves in line with medical advances.

Eastbourne D.G.H. is 10 miles away but is the nearest and most accessible to the local population and currently offers a wide range of services, but this will inevitably change as the Medical School in Brighton advances.

The Conquest, sister hospital to Eastbourne D.G.H., is 14 miles away from Hailsham and is not easily accessible as the journey to Hastings involves some of the poorest major roads in the county.

Options available:

- 1) No change to the present services,
- 2) Enlarge each of the current health facilities,
- 3) Provide an additional G.P. surgery,
- 4) Provide a purpose-built Health Centre.

- *Option 1: No change to the present services*

With the increase in population, this option would not meet the demands created by the new housing and would no doubt eventually result in problems with recruitment and a high turnover of staff, due to the pressure of work and the inevitable consequence of a very poor service to the local people.

- *Option 2: Enlarge or replace each of the current health facilities*

The majority of the current facilities are central to the town but are very limited in space and so do not allow for much further expansion, not only for doctors, but also for additional support staff. There will be greater demands for more and more investigations and treatments to be undertaken in the surgeries by G.P.s and their staff and the present sites would not be able to meet these demands. Whilst replacement of unsuitable premises would be possible and could result in the new facilities being closer to the population that they will serve, it is possible that this would perpetuate the present dissipation and duplication of resource resulting in a poorer overall service.

- *Option 3: Provide an additional G.P. surgery*

This would need to be provided to the north of Hailsham, as most of the housing developments will be in this area, including those in Hellingly on the old hospital site. However, the additional G.P.s required by today's levels is likely to be two, and so the facility would be a limited development.

A satellite surgery could be built within the new housing area being complimented with extra services from one of the main practices in the town but again this would only have limited value by not being a full surgery. Small practices are currently being discouraged, as there are problems with cover and the overheads are disproportionately high.

- *Option 4: Provision of a purpose built Health Centre*

The provision of such a centre for diagnostics and treatment would meet the needs of the whole of the local population, including the surrounding villages. This would be a community-based diagnostic and treatment centre, including doctors' surgeries that would embrace the concept of bringing secondary care services to patients closer to home.

The local G.P. practices would lease their accommodation and be able to run their own practices from a central base, allowing investigations that are normally carried out in a hospital setting to take place locally. These would include radiography, ultrasound, endoscopy services, echocardiography, use of specialised blood testing machine, and could also include provision of a mobile M.R.I./C.T. scanner docking station.

The provision of more consultation rooms will allow visiting hospital consultants the opportunity to run specialist out-reach clinics from the building, creating a 'one-stop-shop' scenario in which patients can be diagnosed and treated locally. Day case surgery such as removal of cataracts, repair of carpal tunnel syndrome, varicose veins and arthroscopy, to name but a few of the surgical procedures to be carried out in such a clinic.

A Minor Injuries Unit could be provided, as well as a local base for SussDoc, the out of hours G.P. service. The latter would be more central for Wealden than the current provision which is sited in Eastbourne. There would be no in-patient overnight stay accommodation, as this would be catered for in the local hospitals where there would be more specialised medical and nursing staff available covering the 24 hours 7 days a week.

The additional consulting space within the building will allow for an increase in teaching and be of benefit to medical students, postgraduate G.P. trainees and hospital doctors, as well as other health related professions.

Additionally, other healthcare and welfare-related services could be housed within the same building, providing a comprehensive and integrated approach to delivery across a range of health and welfare services to the local community.

To support this proposal, it will be necessary to identify a large site that is fairly central to the majority of the population. This could be on the site on land to the East of Battle Road already allocated in the Wealden Non Statutory Plan or possibly the current ambulance service base, by relocating this facility on one of the industrial estates.

Conclusion

The advances in medical science make it difficult to predict the future health needs for the people of Hailsham in 2026. It is clear though that more and more investigations and treatments are being carried out on a day service basis nearer to the patients' homes and this trend will continue to rise for the foreseeable future.

The most logical outcome will be the development of a Diagnostic Treatment Centre as suggested in Option 4, which would meet the requirements of the people of Hailsham and the surrounding villages.

Existing surgeries that meet the requirements of the delivery of twenty first century healthcare services would continue alongside the new facility.

Current health service premises no longer considered suitable should be disposed of, and where in the ownership of the Primary Care Trust, the monies realised to go towards funding the new Centre.

In addition, the Section 106 agreement contributions relating to healthcare for each new housing development needs to be pooled to ensure these monies are used for the building of the new Centre.



Kingswood Dental Practice, North Street



Seaforth Farm Surgery, Vicarage Lane



Hailsham Health Centre, Vicarage Field

EDUCATION & TRAINING SKILLS

An Overview

Hailsham and its surrounds as a relatively isolated self-contained rural environment, form a microcosm for educational innovation and practice. The current provision comprises two Sure Start children centres (one to the northwest and one to the southeast of the town), a full day care nursery at Hailsham East, four town-based primary schools and three rural primary schools.

These in part act as the prime feeders for Hailsham Community College (HCC), an 11-18 comprehensive. HCC works in close partnership with Sussex Downs College (SDC) in the provision of the 14-19 curriculum and post-compulsory vocational education and training needs of the town. Sussex Downs currently operates from Prospects House in the town centre and on main campuses in Eastbourne and Lewes.

There is adequate provision at nursery, primary and secondary levels for the current population of Hailsham and Hellingly although there is still some need for greater locally-based vocational and skills training. This is recognised by HCC and SDC and to this end, there is an allocation of space for post-16 education and training, on a split site HCC, in the Wealden Non-Statutory Local Plan. Both HCC and SDC have been in early discussions on this development and the needs for the future.

The Effect of Planned Population Growth

- **The Growth**

In the current round of town expansion set out in the Wealden Non Statutory Plan, it is envisaged that there will be an increase in the order of 310 pupils of primary age and an increase by approximately 220 of secondary age. This suggests the need for the provision of an extra two-form entry school for primary age children and secondary school place expansion to cater for 220 plus.

In the Wealden Non Statutory Plan, it is stated that the developments proposed would necessitate the building of a new single-form entry primary school (capable of taking 210/235 children between the ages of 4 and 11) and 200 additional secondary places.

Wealden's Issues and Options paper states

6.1 *there is a shortage of secondary capacity broadly in the District. Half are full, half are on sites with limited capacity for expansion. Both secondary and primary schools will require expansion in the District depending on the location of growth. The local schools organisation plan anticipates the need to provide new secondary and primary school accommodation in Hailsham and Polegate/South Wealden depending on the implementation of housing schemes as identified in the Non-Statutory Plan... ..*

6.2 *As part of this, surveys will be needed of the children generated by new housing (child yield). Existing assumptions can undercount, as new housing is more likely to be occupied by younger families. There is more recent research from Oxfordshire and Kent which suggests that contributions need to be closely related to housing type and number of bedrooms. Failure to do so gives small unit dwellings financial disadvantages and could lead to shortages of school places¹.*

6.3 *In the Eastbourne and Polegate areas new housing development may generate a need to develop a new secondary school. Hailsham also needs a new primary school because of growth.....*

6.4 *The District is currently lacking in further and tertiary provision with opportunities to link to Brighton University. Uckfield may have the potential to develop such a facility serving areas now poorly provided for.*

In the Wealden Non Statutory Plan, the developer of Hellingly Hospital is required to offer a site of 1.1 hectares of land as a site for a new primary school (now rejected by the County Education Authority as an unsuitable location for a new primary school), or to make a suitable financial contribution towards the cost of additional secondary school places.

Other sites for which planning consents have been granted contain a similar financial contribution. Land at Battle Road behind the Leisure centre is allocated for additional secondary school provision.

In addition, the education authority already owns land to the south of the town at Ingrams Way previously identified as a potential primary school site. However, the current expansion of Hailsham is to the north.

- **Primary Provision**

School	Capacity	Present number on Roll*
Grovelands	630	603
Hawkes Farm	420	420
Hellingly	210	203
Marshlands	210	123
Whitehouse	210	149
Park Mead	105	96
Hankham	140	142

*(Information taken from October 2008 roll)

Hailsham has one three-form entry (Grovelands), one two-form entry (Hawkes farm), and two one-form entry (Marshlands and Whitehouse) town-based primary schools. All three rural primary schools (Hellingly, Park Mead, and Hankham) are one-form entry. The planned population growth in Hailsham is to the north of Hailsham in the general vicinity of Grovelands, Hellingly and Hawkes Farm schools. It is these schools whose future registers will be mainly affected in the current plan.

Of these three schools, Grovelands is a new, purpose-built school. East Sussex County Council has made it clear that it has no intention of increasing the size of Grovelands School beyond the three-form entry. Both Hawkes Farm and Hellingly schools, however, are in older buildings requiring some repair and upgrading. Hellingly in particular, relies on a number of port-a-cabins for classrooms.



Grovelands County Primary School, Hailsham



Marshlands Primary School, Hailsham



Hawkes Farm Primary School, Hailsham



Hellingly Primary School

The preferred primary option is to cater for the increase need for primary placements of additional two-forms of entry, by utilising the existing schools of Hawkes Farm and Hellingly through the provision of rebuilds. Both Hawkes Farm and Hellingly schools are in need of improvement.

In the case of Hawkes Farm (currently the only over subscribed school in the town), it was felt that the existing site would lend itself to a rebuild to provide for a second three-form entry school. It is understood that this option, building on the current popularity of this school, is supported by the current Head Teacher.

The removal of the existing buildings would further allow for improved vehicle access to and from the school and remove some of the present traffic congestion in Hawks Road. However, the education authority has advised that they do not consider the site to be large enough.

For Hellingly, there are two options available. Each provides for a new two-form entry school in the vicinity of the maximum population growth. The first option would require the purchase of some of the adjoining land to the current school, followed by a rebuild, utilising the existing site and again alleviating some of the parking and traffic problems.

The second alternative would be for a new two-form entry school to be built on an entirely new site. This would further provide a central and securely based school

appropriately placed for the developing population. The sale of the current site would provide top-up for primary allocations.

The net affect of these proposals would be to build on the existing strengths and minimise additional purchase for the new provision. In view of the doubts that exist as to the ability to expand Hawkes Farm School, the immediate need must be to expand or rebuild Hellingly Primary School. If expanded/rebuilt as a two-form entry school, there would be an increase in capacity of 210 primary places that would go some way towards satisfying the immediate problem.

- **Secondary Provision**

Hailsham Community College (HCC) is currently subject to government's policy to rebuild / renew old school buildings. Although the education authority has stated that East Sussex is in the last wave of the government's funding programme of "Building Schools for the Future" and that therefore funding for a new build is unlikely before 2012/13 at the earliest.

It was felt that the school had adequate site provision (particularly in the event of a new sixth form college being provided as part of the educational facility on the land on the opposite side of Battle Road) to enable a substantial programme of building renewal, without adversely affecting the on-going educational provision, and that the time frame for this renewal would be suitable to take into account the increased number in the order of 250 pupils required.

However, the education authority has expressed the opinion that HCC is already too large for its site in terms of DCSF Building Bulletin 98.

An alternative would be a complete rebuild on a new site, for example, on the opposite side of Battle Road, beside the proposed post-16 college. This would be a radical solution, creating a one site post-primary provision. This could be facilitated by the sale of the existing site for housing.

This option, however, might create major traffic problems. The site is presently only accessed from Battle Road, at what is to become a very dangerous and congested location. This might be difficult to resolve under any scheme and probably leaves this alternative impractical.



Hailsham Community College, Battle Road

- **Sixth Form College / Skills Centre**

Wealden District Council, in the Issues and Options document, identified the need for a skills centre/tertiary education/vocational training provision in the District with opportunities to link to Brighton University. The site on land on the East side of Battle Road allocated for community use in the Wealden Non Statutory Plan could provide the opportunity for meeting this need, with the current Sussex Downs provision at Prospects House being enhanced and relocated to a new post-16 college on the allocated site.



Prospect House, George Street, Hailsham

- **Current Co-ordination of Education in Hailsham**

Hailsham is currently under review as an innovative project. The provision of the *Every Child Matters* agenda in Hailsham has been centred on a co-coordinated project involving all the major primary heads and secondary principals along with Sussex Police, Wealden District Council Public Health, the Federation of Small Businesses, and Social Care representatives. This body is co-coordinating a unified provision with support via eight working groups. Any new educational provision in Hailsham (i.e. new schools) would be required to be integrated within this project.

- **Beyond 2016**

With the range of alternative sites for possible housing beyond 2011, it would be unwise to suggest locations for future schools. The need for 310 additional primary and 220 additional secondary places already exists, and should be being planned for delivery to coincide with the building of the 1250 new homes in Hailsham for which detailed planning consents have largely been given.

Given the three year delay between identifying possible sites and delivery of the finished facility, it is therefore imperative that a solution for the shortfall in the education provision is now addressed. Only after the sites for any new housing beyond 2011 have been allocated, will it be necessary to consider their impact on the existing system and any further new builds that may then be necessary.

LEISURE, RECREATION & THE ARTS

Recreation in the town falls into two major categories:

- (1) Free, and
- (2) Fee paying.

Free Facilities

Included in these are public open spaces in Hailsham, such as the Hailsham Country Park, Common Pond, Cuckoo Trail, Western Road Recreation Ground, Maurice Thornton Playing Field and play areas for children; and in Hellingly the Lower Horsebridge Recreation Ground and the children's' play area at Lower Dicker.

Apart from the Cuckoo Trail, they have been organised and maintained by the Town and Parish Councils. They are very well used by all ages.



Hailsham Country Park



Western Road Recreation Ground, Hailsham

Paying Facilities

Hailsham has a Leisure Centre including an indoor swimming pool and bowling facility, the schools, the Community Centre, Hailsham East Community Centre, a number of other smaller halls and Knockhatch Adventure Park, (although the latter is not strictly within the parish), and many sports clubs served by the Sports Alliance which require membership fees. In Hellingly, there is the Village Hall (which is not capable of being used for indoor sports) and a cycle speedway.

The Leisure Centre is widely used, but may need to expand and possibly include different uses in the future. Local opinions favour more bowling, a larger pool and cheaper fitness centres. The management is capable of this as shown by their recent restructuring of the building to become more modern with the ten-pin bowling – a feature well received by local people.

Schools have facilities, which may be hired but for small groups they can prove expensive. Contact with Hailsham Community College has shown there is a lack of artificial playing surfaces in the town:

“We could let our Astroturf area over and over again and to prioritise who can rent it is difficult”.

Knockhatch Adventure Park provides a variety of leisure pursuits on a large complex, including a ski and snowboard centre, birds of prey centre, tractor and trailer rides, boating lake, crazy golf and other activities. It is understood that there are plans to expand this operation.

The Sports Alliance co-ordinates sport in Hailsham, including football, athletics and cricket, whilst in Hellingly, the Sports Club manages the sports facilities on the Lower Horsebridge Recreation Ground.

Hailsham & Hellingly Sport



Freedom Leisure Centre, Vicarage Lane



Swimming Pool, Freedom Leisure (Hailsham)

Generally, a shortage of pitches has been identified. The recently completed Wealden Open Space Study Space report identifies this and comments from players, parents and organisers are that more pitches are needed, which it is suggested should be provided through planning gain. However, they must be adequately drained (if possible installed at the time of layout), appropriately located, and include changing rooms facilities within a suitable hall (such as the Maurice Thornton Pavilion).

The Welbury/Woodholm Farms development includes provision for an area of 2.6 hectares of public open space and a community facility (hall). This could be an appropriate place for an all-weather multi-purpose sports centre. The Sports Alliance confirms these needs. They also suggest a training/fitness track around the outside of the Welbury Farm development, linking to the Woodside development on the South side of Hempstead Lane and going on into the Country Park.

From there, it could link to the lake at Grovelands, then beyond Focus, through Town Council land into the public open space, to Arlington Road East. In this way, it would provide an interesting and safe recreational track/walk, open to all and encouraging personal fitness training and exercise for all ages and abilities.

The development at Hellingly Hospital will similarly provide an element of public open formal play space and another community facility. The present thinking is that the play

space should take the form of a cricket pitch, with the developer reinstating the former cricket pitch first created when the hospital was in use, and reinstating the former hard tennis court to provide a lit all-weather play surface for teenage users, as well as providing a new sports pavilion of 150 sq m and a new community hall of a further 275 sq m.

Additionally, the Hellingly hospital developer is committed to providing the Hellingly Country Park, which will take in the majority of the former parkland grounds that formed part of the setting of the former hospital.

Although there are some parks in Hailsham, there are not enough. “Green Lungs” must be included in development to maintain the market/rural town aspect as Hailsham expands. It is considered that the Eastern side of any new development on land east of Battle Road should incorporate an area of country park, and that new community facilities such as the sixth form college, healthcare centre, community hall and municipal office should be located within or immediately adjoining the open space, thereby providing a soft urban fringe to this part of the town and taking full advantage of the open setting.

The Wealden Open Space Study identified a shortage of allotment gardens and recommended additional provision be made on the West side of Hailsham. In addition, further space needs to be secured for an extension to the present Hailsham cemetery.

The Arts in Hailsham & Hellingly

Gallery North has brought exhibitions and workshops to the town. They have in three years shown the work of over 100 artists from the South East, the majority of whom live or work in the Wealden district. Forty workshops (subsidised) and three musical events have been organised and the Hailsham Arts Festival has been founded, but they do not have a permanent home which their efforts merit.

The town museum (Heritage Centre) is run completely by volunteers and housed in a small building to the rear of the Town Council offices. It has much to offer but is also poorly housed and poorly sited.

The town has a long and interesting history and the museum should be made into a tourist and local attraction.

The Hailsham Pavilion shows films, has a film club, and provides live entertainment of a high standard. Hailsham and Hellingly also have a number of performing arts societies, both choral and dramatic, all well-run and well-supported, but lacking a large hall with a good stage on which to perform. Although the town has a number of halls, none of these has a greater capacity than 200 seats and this is not large enough now - or for an expanding town.

Many other societies have identified a large hall as a requirement for the future.

When the large hall in the Freedom Leisure Centre was available, the Choral Society had over 400 people attending for *The Messiah*. This hall has now been lost and no other hall is available of comparable size.

Both parishes support a range of clubs and societies catering for a variety of age's interests and pursuits.



The Pavilion Cinema and Theatre, George Street, Hailsham

It is considered that the present Community Hall in Vicarage Lane is no longer fit for purpose. The space is too small for many functions, poorly located, badly designed and with inadequate parking and access. Wealden's Non Statutory Local Plan requires developer contributions to community facilities from various developments around the town.

At present, these contributions on the major housing releases take the form of the provision of an on-site building with little or no thought being given to the uses to which the buildings will be put, their detailed design, or their subsequent management.

In the case of provision for education and healthcare a different approach has been adopted with the developer being required to make a contribution towards the cost of a central facility to be located in a position, and built to a design and specification determined by the infrastructure provider.

It is considered that there is a compelling argument for the contributions to community facilities to be combined into a single fund and for the sums so raised to be used in the provision of a new central community facility, that could include a suitable performance venue capable of accommodating up to 500 seated patrons, a cultural centre/exhibition space/multi purpose hall capable of use both for indoor sports and recreational activities, an enlarged public library and larger town council offices, a council chamber, and a 'Mairie' (Town Hall).

Wealden District Council is presently considering its own accommodation needs. There could be possible benefits in creating a new combined local authority complex where facilities and resources might be shared. Such a municipal centre could also house a Citizens Advice Bureau, an information centre, and social services departments making it a truly one-stop experience.

Furthermore, was the police station to relocate, thereby releasing the present site in George Street for retail redevelopment, the police, Lifeline and the community camera surveillance teams might also be relocated within the same complex.

The Wealden Non Statutory Local Plan identifies land on the East of Battle Road as a suitable site for community use, including new secondary school provision and a healthcare centre, having concluded that housing would not be appropriate in this

open setting with long distance views from the Pevensey Levels. Provided that vehicular access could be arranged, a municipal /community development on this land, in parkland setting stretching out to the Levels yet with easy pedestrian access to the town centre, would provide an imaginative and exciting centre for residents of all Hailsham.



Welbury and Woodholm Farms site



Development land adjacent to the Leisure Centre

Summary

In conclusion and in summary, the town plan should provide for:

1. More formal pitches in appropriate locations, publically owned, and open to all with facilities for changing.
2. Support for Knockhatch Adventure Park in their wish to expand, if appropriate activities are provided.
3. The Welbury/Woodholm Farms site to incorporate an artificial surface multisport site with a hall including changing rooms and toilets.
4. Welbury/Woodholm Farms, along with other areas as outlined above, to include a walking/training track and linking through to other natural areas.
5. Consideration should be given to a site for a football stadium. (This would encourage a bid for promotion similar to Eastbourne Borough and also release a part of Western Road recreation ground to public use - possibly including a facility for young people).
6. A park to be included in the development behind the Freedom Leisure Centre (East of Battle Road), with a new civic centre located within the park. This would house Gallery North, the Town Museum, a good-sized Concert Hall (seating up to 500 people), a multi-use hall, the Town Council offices and Council Chamber, a 'Mairie' for Hailsham, and perhaps including new offices for Wealden District Council, the Citizens Advice Bureau and the police station.
7. Cycle and running area (fitness trail) into green network.
8. Additional land to enlarge the present cemetery.



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