

# Lewes District Public Realm Framework

Lewes District Council



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## Lewes District Public Realm Framework

Lewes District Council

Approved

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Watkins', is written over a vertical line that extends from the 'Approved' label down to the 'Revision' label.

Dominic Watkins

Position

Director

Date

5th August 2013

Revision

FINAL

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## SUMMARY

### Importance of Public Realm

The public realm collectively forms the spaces with which people interact and gather in towns and villages. It includes a wide range of spaces that provide opportunities to visit, shelter, connect and identify with, and includes the space between and within buildings that are publicly accessible – such as streets, squares, parks and open spaces.

### What is a public realm framework?

This Framework is a strategic document that sets out the vision, key principles and general interventions for the public realm in Lewes District.

### Why do we need it?

There is currently no strategic direction or lead on how the public realm is treated and developed. This Framework will encourage a more co-ordinated and consistent approach to public realm design, quality and appearance throughout the District and will promote local distinctiveness.

### What will it do?

This Framework will provide a guide for strategic public realm design principles and general interventions from a district-wide perspective to inform the delivery of specific detailed design proposals.

This Framework has been produced by Lewes District Council, East Sussex County Council and the South Downs National Park Authority in association with Seaford, Newhaven, Peacehaven, Telscombe and Lewes Town Councils, in consultation with local stakeholders and with expert advice from Chris Blandford Associates.



Lewes District Council

East Sussex  
County Council



South Downs  
National Park Authority

This document is **not a detailed plan for action**. The detail will be developed through other policy and delivery mechanisms which are currently being worked up by partners e.g. Local Plan and Regeneration Delivery Frameworks. The production of these policy and delivery mechanisms will provide opportunities for more detailed consultation so that local knowledge and aspirations are reflected and feed into the process.



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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Importance of Public Realm

- 1.1.1 The public realm collectively forms the spaces with which people interact and gather in towns and villages. It includes a wide range of spaces that provide opportunities to visit, shelter, connect and identify with, and includes the space between and within buildings that are publicly accessible – such as streets, squares, parks and open spaces. Through all of its forms, the public realm provides opportunities for expression, unity and a celebration of place. The public realm has a number of functions and is often the focus for community activities including meetings and play places, points of arrival and departure, celebration and movement spaces. High quality public realm is memorable, clear and meaningful, and provides versatile and well-connected spaces that are capable of accommodating a wide range of uses.
- 1.1.2 It is widely recognised that public realm improvements that enhance the quality of the urban environment and visual amenity have measurable benefits to the local economy through benefits in health, well-being, social interaction and safety. Importantly, investment in the quality of streets and public places is considered an essential element in attracting new investment from the private sector. Public realm improvements can help regenerate areas, encourage increased footfall, influence business location decisions and increase property values.
- 1.1.3 The quality of the public realm is strongly influenced by the choice and blend of hard surfacing materials, planting schemes and the design of street furniture – such as seating, signage, bins, lighting and public art for example.

## 1.2 Purpose of the Framework

- 1.2.1 Despite continual investment in Lewes District, there is currently no strategic direction or lead on how the public realm is treated and developed. In some parts of the District, the public realm is uninspiring, the streetscape dated and in poor condition, giving an impression of a tired District without a distinct identity. It often does not connect with the South Downs National Park or have a consistent District-wide relationship to its rich and diverse heritage.
- 1.2.2 In line with the ambitions of the Lewes District Regeneration Strategy, Lewes District Council and its partners are seeking to secure and sustain a high quality public realm throughout the District's towns and rural areas. Improving the public realm can help enhance civic pride by contributing to the quality of life of residents through enhancing the sense of place, identity and belonging. A high quality public realm is also important in attracting visitors, investors and businesses to the District, which helps underpin jobs and economic development and overall prosperity.
- 1.2.3 The purpose of the Lewes District Public Realm Framework is to set out a district-wide vision, that will encourage a more co-ordinated and consistent approach to public realm design, quality and appearance throughout the District whilst promoting local distinctiveness.
- 1.2.4 The objectives of the Framework are to:
- Expand and develop the unique features of Lewes District with a particular focus on the South Downs National Park and its main urban areas, Lewes Town, Seaford, Newhaven, Peacehaven and Telscombe Cliffs/East Saltdean.
  - Inform future development and funding opportunities for improving the public realm including spending and development plans of public sector bodies, investors and businesses and investment through grants

(e.g. Local Sustainable Transport Fund), Section 106 Agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy.

- Align with current and emerging public realm plans and policies at a local, county and national level.
- Provide the first point of reference for any proposed public realm work and inform the local planning process and regeneration delivery frameworks.
- Protect and enhance the character of the towns whilst embracing their gateway relationships to the South Downs National Park.
- Match and exceed best practice in the development of urban form and the public realm.
- Build on work undertaken, planned and in progress.

## 1.3 Scope of this Framework

- 1.3.1 This Framework is a strategic document that sets out the vision, key principles and general interventions for the public realm in Lewes District. It is not intended to be an implementation plan and does not provide detailed public realm proposals. The detail will be developed through other policy and delivery mechanisms which are currently in progress e.g. local plans and Delivery Frameworks.
- 1.3.2 This Framework should be regarded as a useful resource and source of information on strategic public realm design principles and general interventions from a district-wide perspective to inform the delivery of specific proposals.
- 1.3.3 Public realm design proposals should take into account the principles set out in this Framework, and will need to be informed by rigorous analysis and detailed design considerations specific to their locations and contexts.

- 1.3.4 This Framework considers the public realm from a District-wide scale. Detailed consideration of rural settlements outside of the District's main urban areas is beyond its scope. Public realm in rural areas, as with the more detailed work in other areas, will be managed and driven forward through the local planning process and other policy delivery mechanisms.

## 1.4 This Framework

### Structure

- 1.4.1 This Framework presents the analysis and findings based on a wide range of research, site visits and consultation undertaken as part of the project.
- 1.4.2 Chapter 2.0 of this Framework sets out the District-Wide Public Realm Framework. This includes:
- A contextual analysis of the District
  - A vision for the District's public realm
  - Strategic public realm design principles
  - Principles for selection of materials, finishes and elements
  - Delivery Mechanisms
- 1.4.3 Chapters 3.0 – 7.0 set out Public Realm Frameworks for each of the District's main settlements, namely:
- Lewes Town
  - Seaford
  - Newhaven
  - Peacehaven
  - Telscombe/East Saltdean
- 1.4.4 For each settlement, the following information is provided:
- Contextual analysis of the town
  - Public realm design principles for the town
  - Opportunities for public realm interventions in the town

**The opportunities for public realm interventions identified for each of the settlements provide the basis for developing and delivering detailed work programmes via the local planning process and regeneration delivery frameworks.**

### Background Documents

- 1.4.5 This Framework has been informed by the following key documents;
- Lewes District Local Plan Joint Core Strategy
  - English Heritage Streets for All
  - East Sussex Local Transport Plan 2011-2026
  - Building a Brighter Future, A Regeneration Strategy for Lewes District Council 2012-2015
  - East Sussex Economic Development Strategy
  - Lewes Conservation Area Character Appraisal
  - Lewes Conservation Area Management Plan
  - South Downs Integrated Landscape Character Assessment
  - Lewes Historic Character Assessment Report
  - Lewes District Landscape Capacity Study
  - Seaford Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal
  - Peacehaven Historic Character Assessment Report
  - Newhaven Historic Character Assessment Report
  - Natural England, National Character Areas (NCA), 2012
  - East Sussex County Landscape Character Assessment
  - Seaford Historic Character Assessment Report
  - Impact Seaford
  - Station Street/Fisher Street Improvements, Lewes Brief, ESCC
  - Rural Bus Stop Improvements, Brief, ESCC
  - Lewes Railway Station Forecourt Improvements, Brief, ESCC
  - Introduction of 20mph schemes in residential areas of Lewes, Brief, ESCC
  - Development and Implementation of a Pedestrian and Cyclist Signage Strategy for Lewes, Brief, ESCC
  - Newhaven A259 Corridor: Movement and Access Strategy, ESCC
  - Physical Development Vision for Newhaven,

April 2010, BBP Regeneration

### Consultation

- 1.4.6 Consultation has been an essential part of the preparation of the Framework. A series of consultation events were carried out with a range of stakeholders including the Town Councils. The purpose of the consultations was to gather the collective expertise, knowledge and aspirations of local stakeholders, and to engender a strong sense of ownership for the Public Realm Framework's vision, principles and proposed interventions to ensure that these are realistic, useful and applicable.
- 1.4.7 The consultation events involved a series of Workshops and Meetings during February and March 2013. The objectives of the Workshops included working with the local stakeholders to:
- Identify the key strategic public realm issues relevant to the District and to each of the main settlements.
  - Review and agree the overarching vision and design principles for the public realm.
  - Review and agree opportunities for public realm interventions within each of the main settlements.
- 1.4.8 The feedback from the consultation events was recorded and reflected within this Framework report as appropriate.
- 1.4.9 Further and more detailed consultation will be undertaken as part of the process of translating this Public Realm Framework into policy and delivery via key processes such as the Local Plan and the Regeneration Delivery Frameworks.
- 1.4.10 **Acknowledgements**  
The Lewes District Public Realm Framework was prepared by Chris Blandford Associates (CBA) under the guidance of a steering group comprising officers from Lewes District Council (LDC), East Sussex County Council (ESCC) and the South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA).

1.4.10 The Steering Group comprised:

- Greg MacDonald, Regeneration Project Manager (LDC).
- Kevin Kingston, Head of Regeneration & Economic Development (LDC).
- Chris Morris, Design & Conservation Officer (LDC).
- James Vaks, Project Manager Infrastructure Design and Delivery (ESCC).
- Deborah Parker, Contract Manager Infrastructure Design and Delivery (ESCC).
- Alison Tingley, Rural Economy Strategy Lead (SDNPA).

1.4.11 In addition, consultation was undertaken with a range of stakeholders as part of the Framework's preparation and their contribution is gratefully acknowledged - in particular, input provided by the following Town Councils:

- Lewes Town Council.
- Seaford Town Council.
- Newhaven Town Council.
- Peacehaven Town Council.
- Telscombe Town Council.

1.4.13 The views in this document are those of CBA. The CBA team comprised: Chris Blandford (Project Director); Mike Wood (Project Manager); Adrienne Soudain and Dominic Watkins (Project Advisor).

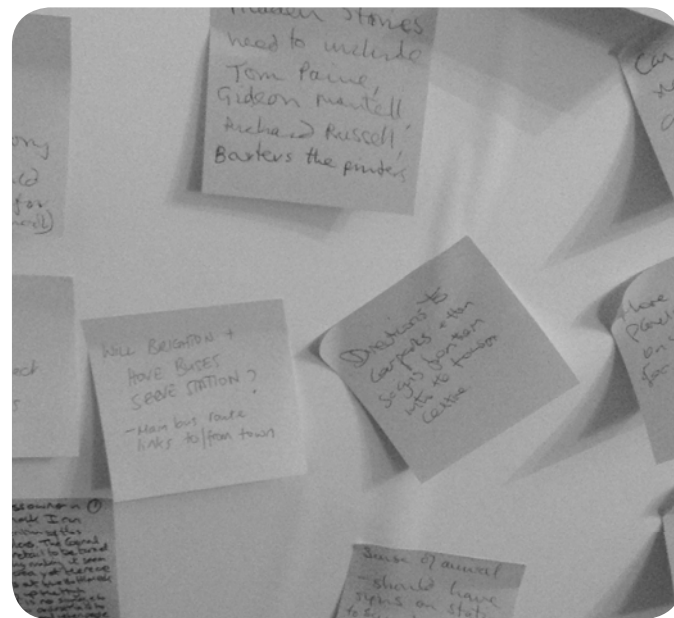
### Status of the Framework

1.4.12 This Framework is a strategic document that:

- Provides an overview of the current conditions of the public realm across the District
- Suggests general priorities and principles for potential intervention

This document is not a detailed plan for action. The detail will be developed through other policy and delivery mechanisms which are

currently being worked up by partners e.g. Local Plan and Regeneration Delivery Frameworks. The production of these policy and delivery mechanisms will provide opportunities for more detailed consultation so that local knowledge and aspirations are reflected and feed into the process.



Images of consultation events



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Firle and Caburn Crescent with Lewes in the background

Lewes District Public Realm Framework

Chris Blandford Associates

# District Wide Public Realm Framework

# 2 DISTRICT WIDE PUBLIC REALM FRAMEWORK

## 2.1 Contextual Analysis of the District

### Overview of the District

- 2.1.1 Lewes District is located within the county of East Sussex in the South East of England. It covers an area of 290km<sup>2</sup> and has 14.5km of coastline. Over half of the District lies within the South Downs National Park.
- 2.1.2 The District is home to 97,500 residents, 77% of whom live in the five main settlements of Lewes, Newhaven, Peacehaven, Seaford and Telscombe Cliffs/East Saltdean. The remainder of the population live in small settlements within the 23 predominantly rural parishes.
- 2.1.3 The settlements each have their own distinctive character influenced by their history and landscape setting. The high quality natural environment of much of the District is emphasised by the National Park, 16 Sites of Special Scientific Interest, two Special Areas of Conservation, two National Nature Reserves, four Local Nature Reserves and three Wildlife Trust Reserves. The District also has a rich built heritage including 35 Conservation Areas, 1,700 Listed Buildings, over 100 Scheduled Monuments and several other sites of archaeological interest, plus four registered parks and gardens and an historic battlefield site.
- 2.1.4 The major roads in the District are the A27 running west to east between Brighton and Eastbourne and the A26 running north to south from Royal Tunbridge Wells, via Uckfield to Lewes, Newhaven and Seaford. The Coastal Road, A259, runs between Brighton and Eastbourne, connecting Telscombe Cliffs, Peacehaven, Newhaven and Seaford along the way. There are good rail connections to London, Brighton and Eastbourne. At Newhaven there is a ferry connection to Dieppe in France. Promoted recreational routes include the South Downs Way, the Vanguard Way and the Ouse Valley Way. The National Cycle Network Route 2 runs along the coast.

### Character of the District

- 2.1.5 Lewes District encompasses a number of distinctive areas whose character is drawn from the local landscape and building materials. These elements contribute to the 'local distinctiveness' which helps to differentiate the District's landscape character areas from those found elsewhere in the country.
- 2.1.6 The South Downs covers the southern part of the District, with the Low Weald covering most of the northern part of the District (except for a small area which falls within the High Weald). The general characteristics of the key settlements and their landscape settings within these broad zones are highlighted below.
- The South Downs Landscape Character**
- 2.1.7 The South Downs are a prominent outcrop of chalk which stretches from Hampshire to East Sussex. The character of the South Downs features a steep north facing escarpment, rolling arable fields, dry valleys, chalk cliffs and broad river valleys.
- 2.1.8 Within Lewes District, the main settlement areas on the South Downs are Lewes Town, which is situated overlooking the River Ouse Valley, and Seaford, Newhaven, Peacehaven and Telscombe Cliffs/East Saltdean which occupy coastal locations. Other settlement on the South Downs is sparse, being confined to scattered villages, hamlets and farms. Strings of villages occupy the higher ground above the floodplain of the River Ouse. Churches built of flint are characteristic of the area. Flint has also been used to construct many other buildings and walls. Away from the coast, buildings are constructed from a mix of flint and brick or tile.

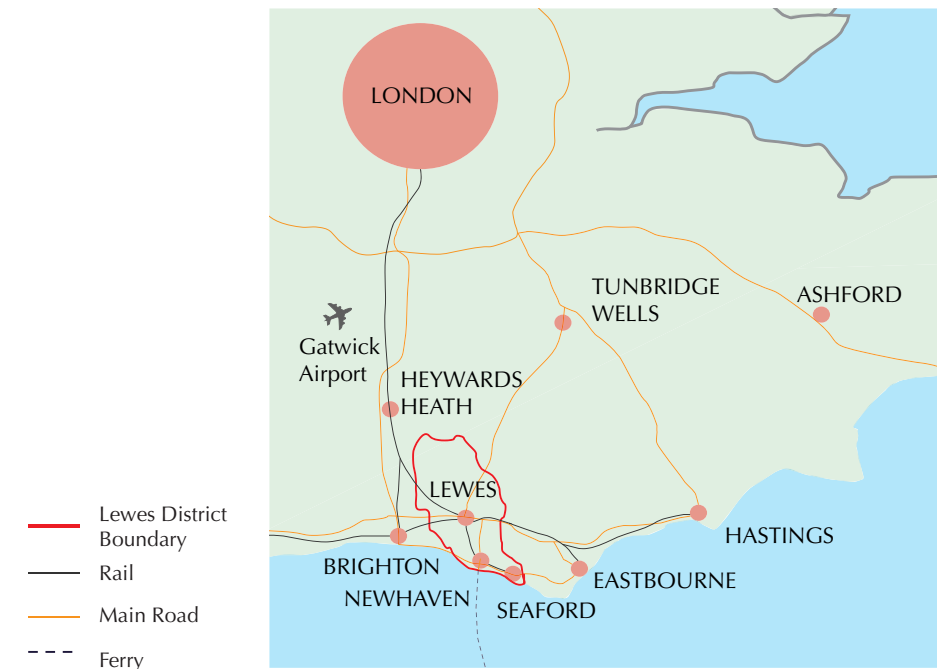


Figure 01 Context Map of Lewes District in the South East

2.1.9 The Medieval town of Lewes is located along a chalk ridge between a break in the Downs shaped by the River Ouse which runs through the middle of the town. The character of the town and surrounding landscape are influenced by the South Downs, which border the town to the south, and the Low Weald landscape character area which extends out to the north. The town itself is relatively close knit in character due to the constraints of the Downs and river floodplain which contain the outward expansion of development. The isolated block of downland of Malling Hill and Cliff Hill located to the east of the town provides an impressive backdrop. Several disused quarry pits line the sides of Malling Hill, which are either now occupied by industrial units or have returned to a semi natural state. To the south is the Brighton to Newhaven railway line and Lewes bypass (A27), beyond which lies the extensive flood plain and exposed Ouse Valley. The qualities of the landscape surrounding the town, as well as the character of the town itself, make an important contribution to the South Downs National Park which incorporates the entire town and immediate surrounding landscape area. See Section 3.0 for further details about the character of the town.

2.1.10 The town of Seaford is located on a gentle downland dip slope, at the eastern end of an expansive and exposed shingle beach which bridges the gap in the cliff-face between Newhaven and Seaford Head. The seafront is notably undeveloped. Isolated from the western edge of Seaford is the Bishopstone estate which is very visible from Newhaven but is contained to the north and north-west by Rookery Hill, a ridgeline that screens the development from the north. See Section 4.0 for further details about the character of the town.

2.1.11 The urban area of Newhaven is located at the mouth of the River Ouse and was built on downland slopes. Overlooking the town from the south is Newhaven Fort, a scheduled monument. The cliffs to the south, which extend from Newhaven to Brighton, are designated as SSSI. Much of the land along the river is in employment and industrial use with port related uses located along the southern section. The majority of the residential development is located west of the river, with some development in the area of Denton to the northeast which has several areas of archaeological interest. A significant proportion of the urban development is fairly elevated but along dry valleys and therefore relatively concealed from outside views. The Downs run along the eastern and western edges of the town and in the main fall within the South Downs National Park designation and provide a natural constraint to development spreading much beyond its current extent. The Downs also form a valued gap between the urban areas of Newhaven and Peacehaven. The Ouse Estuary Nature Reserve and Tide Mills, a large low lying area of designated National Park land between the River Ouse and Downs, provides an important undeveloped gap between Newhaven and Seaford. See Section 5.0 for further details about the character of the town.

2.1.12 The conjoined urban area of Peacehaven and Telscombe is located along a gently undulating part of the coast, on the south facing slopes of the Downs. The purpose built town was built on a grid and plotland system from the early part of the 20th century. The development extends along the A259 running east to west and stretches northwards forming an 'L' shaped pattern of development. The southern half and area along the coastal road are the more densely developed areas resulting in a hard, east facing, urban edge. The northern

part of Peacehaven has a more suburban sense of place, softened by mature trees inter-dispersed within the built up area. In addition to the cultural importance of the urban pattern of Peacehaven there are several areas of archaeological interest within the urban area and surrounding landscape around Lower Hoddern Farm and along the urban edge east of Peacehaven. The cliffs which span the length of Peacehaven and Telscombe, and beyond, are designated SSSI. The SDNP designation envelops the western edge of the town, including the extensive area of archaeological interest of Telscombe Tye, down to the cliff edge. This area of landscape provides a valuable gap between the developed area of Peacehaven and Telscombe to the east and Saltdean to the west. See Sections 6.0 and 7.0 for further details about the character of these towns.

2.1.13 Other key rural settlements within the South Downs are identified below.

2.1.14 The village of Falmer lies within the National Park, and is well contained and retains much of its rural character, despite the A27 dividing the village into north and south and the large campus of the University of Sussex and new football stadium bordering it to the west. To the east of Falmer lies open downland which slopes away. The open and steep topography adds to the sense of exposure.

2.1.15 The small linear village of Glynde lies on the eastern slopes of the isolated block of downland between Glynde and Lewes town and is within the National Park.

2.1.16 Kingston is a small downland village overlooked by numerous coombes and steep scarps of the Downs which surround the village. The village is completely within the National Park and has an extensive area of archaeological interest that runs along The Street.

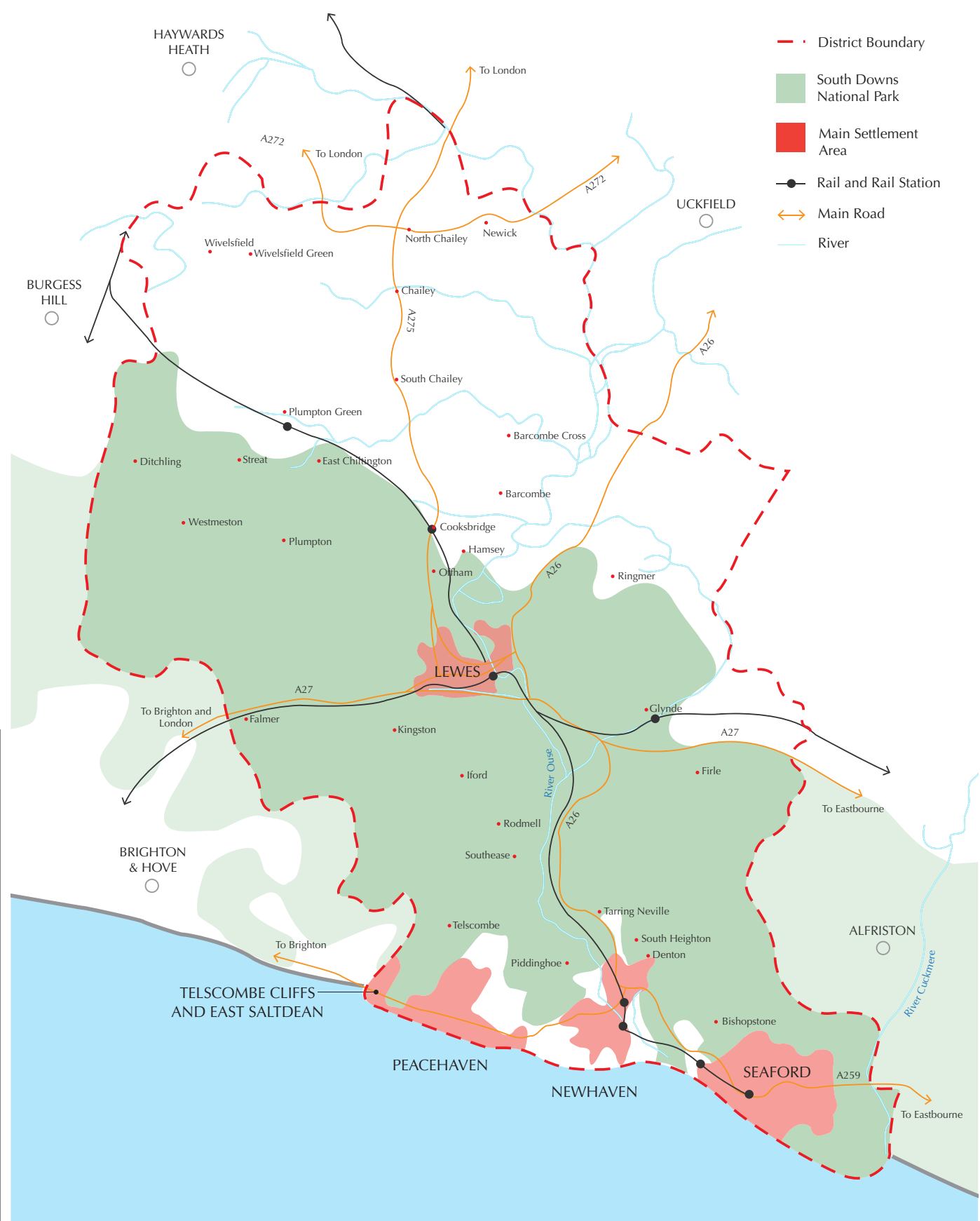
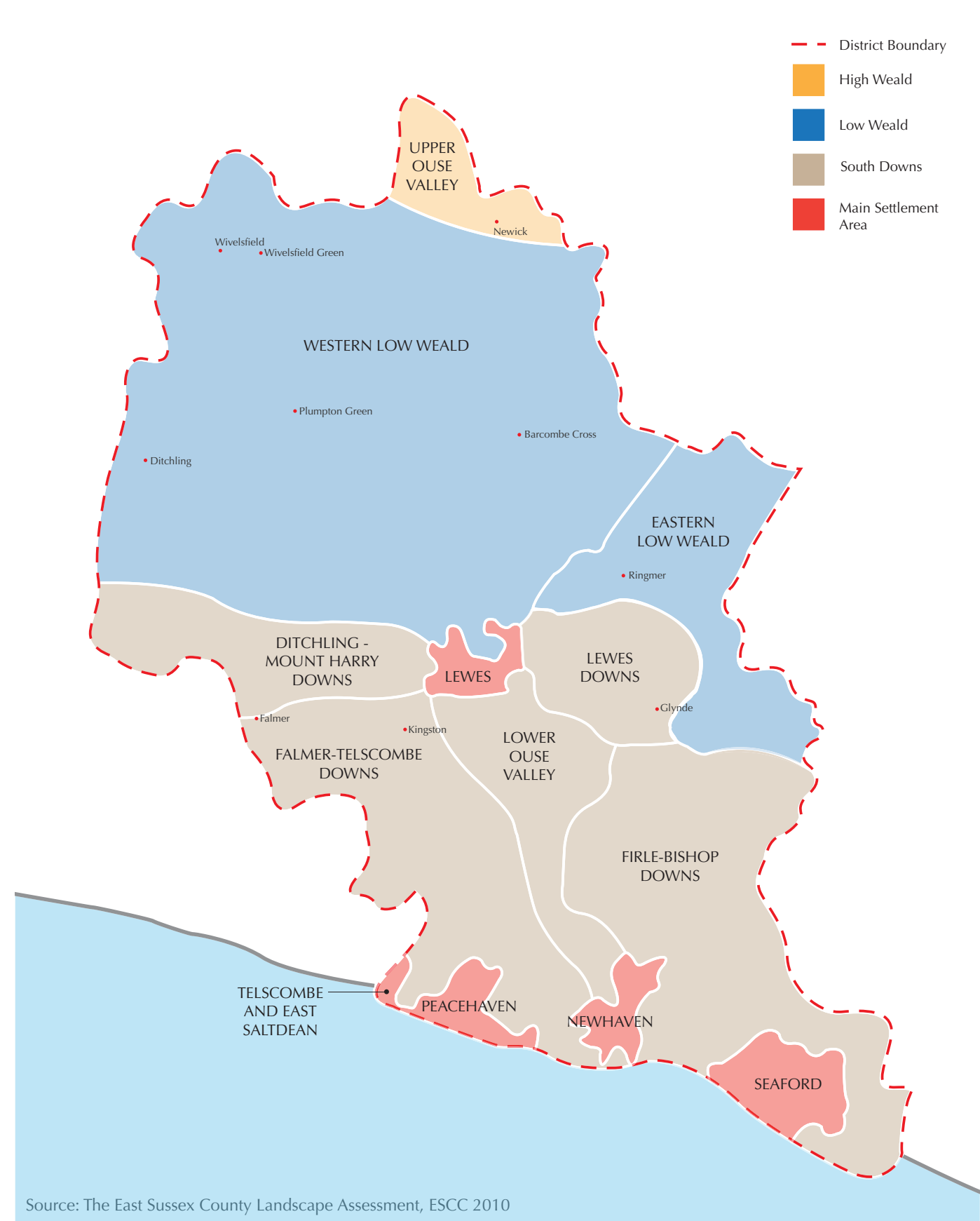


Figure 02 Lewes District Overview  
Lewes District Public Realm Framework  
Chris Blandford Associates



Source: The East Sussex County Landscape Assessment, ESCC 2010

Figure 03 Lewes District Landscape Character Areas  
July 2013



**The Low Weald**

- 2.1.17 The Low Weald comprises broad, low lying, landscapes that are comparatively intimate in scale. The area is characterised by numerous streams, small pockets of woodland and hedgerows which dissect the gently undulating landscape. Across the Low Weald, long views of the Downs can be gained. Many of the District's larger villages are located within the Low Weald, as described below.
- 2.1.18 The Medieval village of Ditchling lies at the foot of the Downs along the parallel greensand ridge. The village is located along one of the many lanes which run perpendicular to the Downs. Development is concentrated around the crossroads radiating from this point, particularly along the Lewes Road to the east. The majority of Ditchling is covered by several areas of archaeological interest, including the remains of the main east-west Roman road in Sussex.
- 2.1.19 Newick is located in the upper Ouse Valley close to the border of the Low and High Weald character areas. The existing built up area is concentrated between Western Road and Allington Road. To the north of Newick, the landscape takes on some of the landscape features associated with the neighbouring High Weald characteristics. Woodland and the steep topography of the landscape offer very little scope for development. The elevated landscape of this area provides long and exposed views to the north. Similar landscape traits can be found in areas south of Newick away from the immediate areas south of Allington Road. Some areas along the fringes of the existing built up area have been degraded and influenced by adjacent uses and heavy equestrian uses are also found in these areas. Mature hedges run parallel to the existing development in this area and provide visual barriers, as the landscape slopes away to the south.

- 2.1.20 Plumpton Green is a ribbon development which has grown along one of the numerous north-south old drove lanes which run perpendicular to the Downs to the south. The landscape areas surrounding the village are largely flat with mature hedges and pockets of woodland which surround a number of ponds. Intermittent long views of the Downs can be obtained from the majority of surrounding landscape areas. The south-east edge of the village is relatively open with medium sized fields, however land to the immediate east features several smaller fields bounded by mature trees and hedgerows. These features contain the landscape and obstruct outside views.
- 2.1.21 Ringmer is a relatively large built up area adjacent to the South Downs National Park. An extensive area of Ringmer is designated as an area of archaeological interest. Ringmer is fairly concentrated south of the village green. Areas to the south and west of Ringmer are notably open in character offering views to the Downs.
- 2.1.22 Wivelsfield and Wivelsfield Green are linear settlements running east to west along Green Road and North Common Road, along a greensand ridge which runs parallel with the Downs. The area lies outside of the National Park designation. The landscape surrounding the area has relatively large blocks of woodland which contain the existing development and restrict long views out of the area. Land north of Wivelsfield rises gently away from the built up area.
- 2.1.23 The village of Barcombe Cross is located on a ridge giving it an elevated position within the wider landscape. To the north and east of the village long and uninterrupted views of the Weald can be gained offering little scope for significant development. Land to the west in particular slopes away rapidly.

**Opportunities and Challenges for the District's Public Realm**

- 2.1.24 The District's public realm, including that of the key settlements contained within this Framework, is a collection of widely variable characters, quality and success. However there are several similarities within each key settlement that combine to create an overarching general character about the quality of all of the public spaces across the district.
- 2.1.25 Over time a number of ad-hoc improvements has in many cases led to a cluttered and often confused public realm. In particular, street furniture has been installed without a clear strategy for its placement, consistency and style.
- 2.1.26 As well as the lack of consistency of products used, there is often a lack of integration of such elements into the layout of streetscapes and spaces. This is compounded by the installation of a whole range of other street elements such as bus shelters and signs, phone boxes, utilities boxes, parking ticket machines, post boxes, signage, etc. These items are often installed in the street without due regard to the movement of pedestrians, resulting in clutter and obstructions. A-boards are temporary, but no less obstructive, street items that are actively deterred by the Council.
- 2.1.27 Typically the public realm around the District has suffered from a variety of ad-hoc interventions. These have tended to be concentrated around the main town centre core and shopping streets. A number of changes to the road network and other items of infrastructure have devalued these. For example, in the case of Newhaven the road network has completely isolated its town centre core leaving the heart of the town inaccessible and unconnected.
- 2.1.28 The lack of a true town centre core, and sense of place, is common in many of the District's main settlements, a common theme is the lack of a

distinct boundary or definition to the key areas of the town which in turn has a detrimental effect on one's experience and perception of the place.

- 2.1.29 In some places, ad-hoc public realm improvement schemes are now somewhat dated and contribute to an overall feeling of a tired and uncoordinated district-wide image.
- 2.1.30 In summary, the key strategic public realm issues from a district-wide perspective include:
  - Poorly promoted points of interest, sites of significance and natural assets.
  - Poor orientation, legibility and connectivity.
  - Uninspiring public spaces surrounding rich historic, cultural and natural assets.
  - Lack of a distinct identity for key towns and settlements.
  - Cluttered, disjointed public spaces.
- 2.1.31 The key strengths and opportunities presented by the existing public realm in Lewes District include:
  - Rich and varied historic environment and cultural heritage assets.
  - Spectacular natural assets including the South Downs National Park and the heritage coast.
  - A strong sub-regional economy including strong connectivity with Brighton and Eastbourne.
  - Good sub-regional, national and international connections.
- 2.1.32 The challenges and opportunities facing the public realm across Lewes District will require specific local responses which will be developed through delivery models and mechanisms shaped by this Framework; this will include, for example, exploring a 'quarter' approach to some areas in order to highlight particular assets and creating a distinct branding to help focus regeneration.

## 2.2 A Vision for the District's Public Realm

... A more ambitious and co-ordinated approach to investment in the public realm that contributes to the quality of life for people living and working in Lewes District, attracts tourists and encourages investment by businesses...

2.2.1 The proposed vision and strategic objectives for the public realm are intended to complement and support the Council's overall vision and priorities for the District - as expressed in the Lewes District Local Plan's Joint Core Strategy (LDC/SDNPA), the Sustainable Community Strategy for Lewes District and the Lewes District Regeneration Strategy 2012-2015. They also seek to support the strategic objectives of East Sussex County Council's Local Transport Plan and Economic Development Strategy.

### **The Vision**

2.2.2 The following vision for the District's public realm has evolved from engagement and consultation with local stakeholders during the preparation of this Framework:

*A more ambitious and co-ordinated approach to investment in the public realm that contributes to the quality of life for people living and working in Lewes District, attracts tourists and encourages investment by businesses. The individual character and identity of the District's towns, villages and rural environment is further enriched by positive improvements in the quality of public spaces through high standards of design, materials and maintenance.*

### **Strategic Objectives**

2.2.3 The vision for the District's public realm is underpinned by the following strategic objectives:

#### **Protected and Enhanced Natural Environment**

- The unique natural environment is maintained, enhanced and connected.
- Promote green initiatives in the district's towns and settlements for the benefit of the community.
- Greater access and integration with the South Downs National Park.

#### **A celebration of the District's unique Heritage Assets**

- Reinforce the recognition of the districts significant heritage assets.
- Conserving and enhancing the historic character of the built environment including conservation areas, listed buildings, scheduled monuments, archaeology and other heritage assets.
- Our heritage is respected, integrated and conserved.
- Interpret the natural and cultural heritage and educate people about the value of these assets and their conservation.

#### **Vibrant and Activated Public Places**

- Public places that provide for diverse activity and strengthen our social connections.
- Our culture and sense of place is valued, shared and celebrated.
- Safe and activated places that are used by people day and night.
- Attract visitors, investors and businesses to underpin job and business growth.
- Be a place for fun and enjoyment, for improving community health and renewing the spirit.

#### **A Liveable and Distinctive Built Environment**

- A built environment that maintains and enhances our sense of place, identity and belonging.
- Encourage best practice sustainability initiatives.
- Enhance civic connectivity, especially for pedestrian, cycle and public circulation.
- Recognition of the contribution that built heritage makes through vernacular traditions.
- Using the public realm to help identify and distinguish different land uses (eg. retail, industrial, residential, civic etc.).

#### **Promote a Distinct Local Identity with a broader District brand**

- Capture the spirit of the place and tell its story with confidence and sensitivity.
- Retain and enhance the natural assets of the district and its connection to the South Downs National Park.

2.2.4 It is intended that these objectives can be delivered through adoption of the strategic design principles (see below) and design principles for the main settlements set out in Sections 3.0 – 7.0 via the local planning process and the regeneration delivery frameworks.

...The individual character and identity of the District's towns, villages and rural environment is further enriched by positive improvements in the quality of public spaces through high standards of design, materials and maintenance.

## 2.3 Strategic Public Realm Design Principles

2.3.1 In line with the vision's aim of encouraging a more 'joined up' approach to improving the public realm, it is envisaged that the statutory bodies will work more collaboratively with each other and local stakeholders. It will also be important to reflect the views and aspirations of local communities, local businesses and potential investors.

2.3.2 The following strategic design principles are intended to assist local authorities, statutory undertakers/utility companies and other key stakeholders (including the local community, businesses and developers) by providing a common framework for guiding the development of public realm proposals in Lewes District:

### Reinforce Character and Local Distinctiveness

- Preserve and enhance the historic public realm.
- Relate to its surroundings to provide a lasting/timeless appeal.
- Distinctive with a high degree of quality and design.

### Minimise Clutter

- Create a clutter-free environment that is a backdrop for an active, vibrant community life.
- Well maintained, appropriately lit, safe, secure and minimise opportunities for crime.
- Attractive and appropriately furnished.
- Be fit for a diversity of uses and vibrant street life.

### Place Making

- Promote the unique natural setting and items of significance.
- Include opportunities for commissioning public art.
- Distinctive quality of environment to encourage economic development and investment.

### Long Term Performance

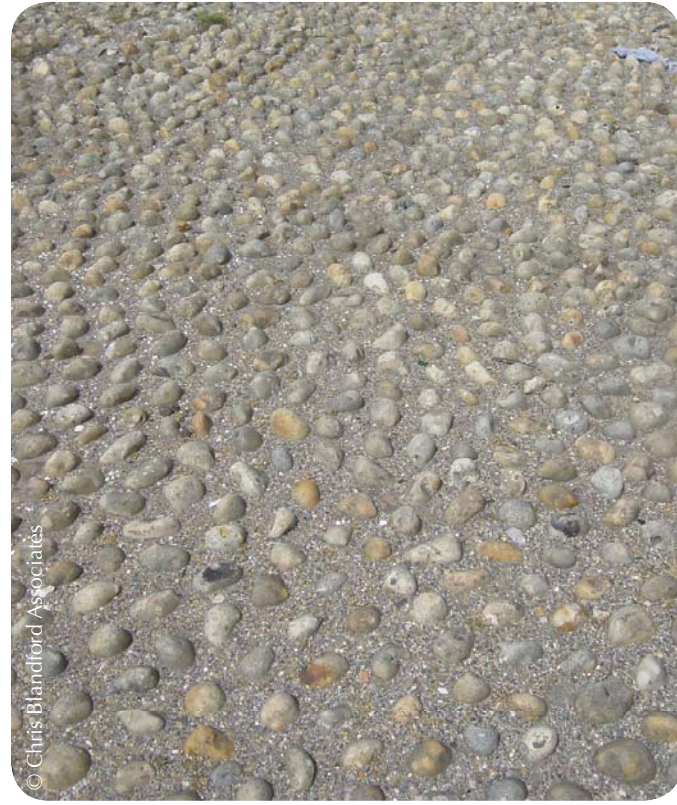
- Select robust and sustainable materials and elements that are suitable for their intended use.
- Comfortable, durable, easy to maintain, alter and clean.
- Represent good value for money.
- Select vernacular materials to reinforce local identity.

### Connection and Legibility

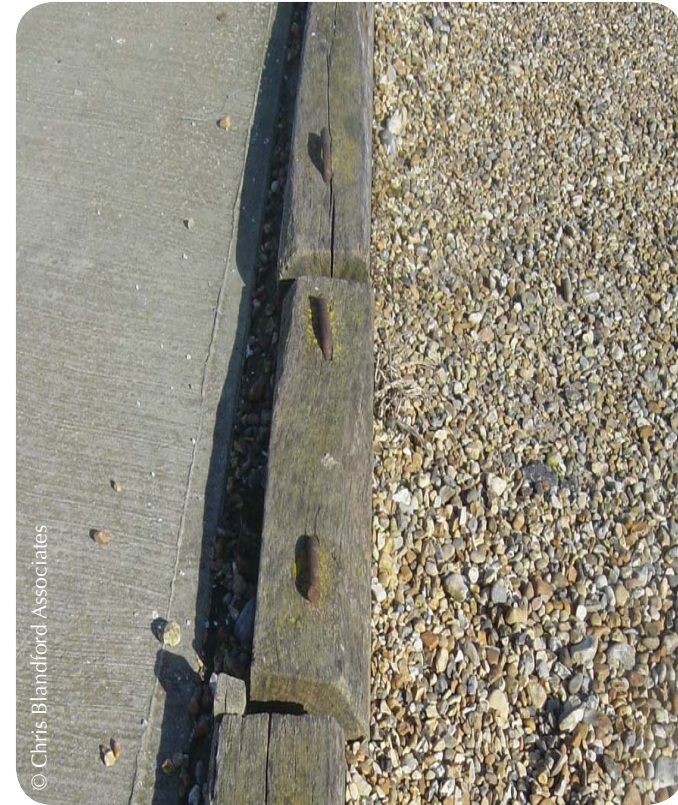
- Permeable, legible and well-connected to the surroundings.
- Achieve a sustainable balance between vehicles, public transport, cyclists and pedestrians.
- Define strong, legible and logical vehicular, cycling and pedestrian connections including connections to regional cycling and walking routes.
- Create places where public and private spaces are easily distinguished.
- Physical barriers to movement are minimised or eliminated.



Clay paviors in Seaford



Beach pebble paving in Peacehaven



Gravel car parking and timber edging in Seaford



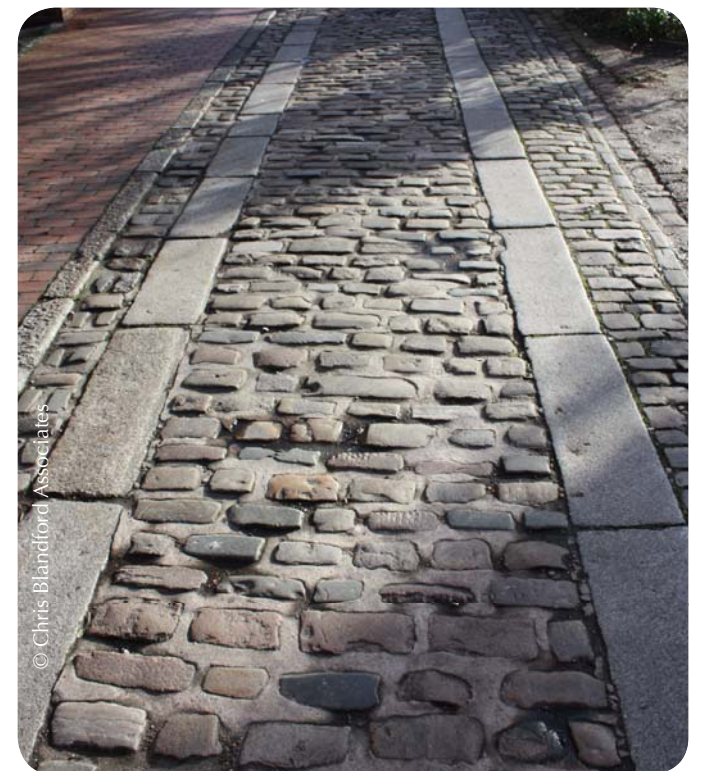
Historic clay paviors with wide granite kerb in Lewes



Granite block paving to demarcate crossing points in Peacehaven



Paving features and hard landscape in Newhaven



Historic paving pattern in Lewes

## 2.4 Principles for Selection of Materials, Finishes and Elements

2.4.1 The materials, finishes and elements used within the public realm can make a significant contribution to an area's sense of place. They should provide a neutral backdrop and respond to the unique character of their setting.

2.4.2 It is important that the use of a standardised palette of materials does not inhibit varied and innovative design responses that reflect locally distinctive townscape characteristics and features of particular settlements. In this context, more detailed materials palettes will be required to identify variations in materiality and/or detailing.

2.4.3 In addition, subtle changes in the scale and/or texture of a paving unit could clearly signify particular pedestrian pathway corridors or building entrances that could easily be overlooked in a busy street.

2.4.4 In some locations the materials that have been used around the District's streets and public spaces are of inconsistent quality and not always appropriate for their location.

2.4.5 A particularly sensitive approach needs to be adopted within areas of historic significance such as Conservation Areas. In these areas, the careful selection and coordination of materials are of paramount importance to ensure the protection and enhancement of the historic public realm.

2.4.6 Key design objectives for materials, finishes and elements in the public realm are to:

- Define a consistent palette of materials to express visual co-ordination across the public realm.
- Promote a seamless back drop to promote a busy, vibrant streetscape and complement existing building character.
- Define and promote a sense of place and local distinctiveness through use of vernacular materials and elements.

- Introduce appropriate variations to the materials palette, within an integrated whole, that allows for versatility and suitability.
- Legibly convey the core and peripheral areas of the public realm and clearly delineate pedestrian and vehicular zones.
- Achieve best practice environmental principles.
- Minimise the life cycle costs and maintenance requirements.

2.4.7 Taking into account the above design objectives, the following criteria should be used to guide the selection of materials, finishes and elements within the District's public realm:

### Safety

- Compliance to all relevant standards.
- Susceptibility to damage and misuse.
- Construction quality and material composition.
- Siting and function.
- Secure by design principles.

### Maintenance

- On-going maintenance obligations.
- Lifecycle cost and product warranty.
- Standardised parts, fixings and construction.
- Resistance to graffiti, vandalism and scratching.
- Ease of cleaning.
- Ease of handling.

### Sustainability

- Source of manufacturer.
- Embodied energy.
- Construction technique and materiality.
- Waste minimisation.

### Character

- Use of vernacular materials
- Simple materials of uncomplicated construction.
- Complementary to built form.
- Reinforce existing character.

### Durability

- Installation and delivery cost.
- Budget constraints.
- On-going maintenance costs.
- Cost of replacement parts and equipment.
- Use of standard sizes.
- Ability to minimise waste.

### Functionality

- Maximising user comfort.
- Not dominating the character.
- Performance of principal function.
- Flexibility and application for different situations.

### Availability

- Lead times for replaced and/or damaged elements.
- Supplier location and local manufacture.
- Ability to match discontinued products.
- Ease of replacement of elements and/or components.

2.4.8 Additional guidance on improving the public realm and on material selection is being developed by East Sussex County Council and should be read in conjunction with the points above.

### Materials and Element Schedule

2.4.9 The schedule outlines materials, finishes and elements that are considered to be appropriate for the public realm in Lewes District taking into account the vision, principles and objectives of this Framework.

2.4.10 The schedule is not intended to be prescriptive, but provides general guidance for the type, quality, form and character of materials and specific elements that may be acceptable.

## ELEMENT

### HARD PAVING

Hard paving materials should be selected based on a number of specific location related factors.

A palette of high quality and robust materials is required to be developed to create a seamless floorscape that complements the high quality of the Districts' buildings and that is responsive to the scale and nature of its streets and public spaces.

## SELECTION PRINCIPLE

- Paving materiality and scale should be appropriate to, and complement, adjacent building form.
- Paving quality, colour and finishes should be consistent and be appropriate to, and re-enforce, existing character.
- Paving composition and pattern shall be refined and avoid unnecessary "pattern making".
- Historic paving and kerbs shall be retained and carefully integrated with new paving wherever possible.

## EXEMPLAR IMAGES



Clay paviors

The choice of pavior should aim to reflect the variation in colour and texture found in historic precedents, particularly in conservation areas.

### TREE AND SHRUB PLANTING

The planting of trees and shrubs in urban environments has numerous benefits.

Careful consideration of their placement is required to ensure that they are selected on the basis of species suitability, scale and character.

- Select trees and shrubs to complement existing species and character and define strong "green corridors".
- Trees should be carefully placed to consider vehicular site lines and existing services infrastructure.
- Trees should complement, not block, views to existing important building facades.
- Trees should be planted to reinforce important views, links and desire lines.



Tree Planting

Trees in urban environments should be carefully sited with an expertly designed root zone to allow healthy tree growth and to avoid maintenance issues for years to come.

### STREET FURNITURE

The creation of a cohesive and legible public realm requires that the location of street furniture is well considered and that the relationship between different furniture elements is logical and ordered.

The critical priority is that furniture is located to minimise the impact to visual clutter and to maximise clarity in pedestrian movement.

- Street furniture with significant heritage value and overall contribution to character should be retained.
- Bespoke items of furniture are permissible but shall be carefully designed and restricted to specific locations.
- Locate furniture to complement pedestrian access and movement.
- Furniture selection shall be chosen on a balance between functionality and contribution to character.



Cycle parking

Cycle racks should be placed at strategic locations and should be integral part of a coordinated street furniture palette.

### SIGNAGE AND LIGHTING

Wayfinding and signage is the means by which people are able to identify where they are, the position of potential destinations and how they orientate to them. Importantly these elements can also be designed to create a means to relay additional information.

Signage should offer clear orientation but should not contribute to visual clutter.

- Signage location shall be selected from a proven as needed basis and to promote clear movement and orientation.
- Where possible signage shall be integrated with other public realm furniture to minimise visual clutter.
- Lighting fittings to be of a style appropriate for their location and minimising light pollution, especially near the National Park.



Historic Street Lighting

Where historic street lighting is present, this should be incorporated to strengthen the distinct character of an area.



### Natural Stone Paving

Prominent locations benefit from natural stone flag paving.



### Concrete Paving Materials

Modern concrete materials need to be selected with care to ensure appropriateness for the intended location.



### Kerbs and Edgings

Kerb and edgings should be of durable materials appropriate for their location. Dimensions should reflect historic precedents where appropriate.



### Tree Planting

Tree species should be appropriate for their intended location. Special regard should be paid to microclimate and their habit. Tree stock should be of the highest quality to promote healthy development and growth.



### Shrub planting

Shrub planting shall be carefully selected to be reflect site constraints including micro-climate, local landscape and town character, and feasible maintenance regimes.



### Bollards

Street bollards are a tactile piece of street furniture that help to inform the character of an area.



### Litter Bins

Litter bins should be of a sturdy material and should be an integral part of the street furniture palette of an area.



### Seating

Seating should be comfortable and located in carefully selected locations. The seating type should reflect the character of the area.



### Information Boards

Information boards should convey information in a legible and concise manner.



### Interpretation Panels

Timber interpretation panels are appropriate for out of town, rural and landscape settings.



### Finger Post

On occasion, signage can reflect a distinct local character.

## 2.5 Delivery Mechanisms

### Public Realm Responsibilities and Sharing of Information

2.5.1 No single organisation is individually accountable for the overall appearance of the public realm. The importance of effective collaboration, communication and sharing of information between the various organisations is critical to delivering the vision for the District's public realm promoted by this Framework. A critical role for all partner organisations is that they lead by example with their own assets and developments in order to set the standard for others. This should also include encouraging others to exceed and develop existing standards rather than just meeting them.

### Lewes District Council

2.5.2 The Council has a number of statutory and discretionary responsibilities covering issues such as planning, environmental health, recreation and tourism, economic regeneration, town centre management, parks and gardens, litter and waste collection, amenity lighting, drainage, street signing and enforcement. LDC has a particular role as the Local Planning Authority, which includes preparation of the Local Plan and development management. The Local Plan sets the planning strategy and development framework for the District.

2.5.3 In order to improve communication between stakeholders where schemes are being developed and implemented which affect the public realm, the Council should give consideration to:

- Liaising with East Sussex County Council (ESCC) and local Town and Parish Councils in the early stages of public realm schemes to develop and promote agreement on materials to be used.
- Adopting this Framework as a Supplementary Planning Document to the Lewes District Local Plan.

- Where appropriate, ensuring that development proposals include planning conditions for public realm schemes appropriate for that locality, liaising with the County Council to ensure materials used are acceptable in terms of future maintenance.
- Entering into a dialogue with stakeholders at early stages in the design process to discuss the proposed design, materials and street furniture for new schemes.

### South Downs National Park Authority

2.5.4 The South Downs National Park Authority is the statutory Planning Authority for the National Park area.

2.5.5 The role of the South Downs National Park as a Planning Authority is to control and influence the development of land and buildings within its boundaries. To do this effectively the SDNPA has to balance the statutory duties and purposes of the National Park, safeguarding the natural environment and existing built heritage, with the needs of individuals, the local population supporting rural communities and local businesses.

2.5.6 The SDNPA has agreed and implemented unique partnerships the Local Authorities operating within the Park boundaries, working alongside and overseeing applications to ensure that planning guidelines are adhered to.

2.5.7 Local Planning Authorities are responsible for the day to day processing and determination of the great majority of all planning applications. The SDNPA will deal with applications for more significant development within the Park.

### East Sussex County Council

2.5.8 ESCC has statutory and discretionary responsibilities for some planning and enforcement, roads, pavements, highway structures, street lighting, signing, traffic regulation and road safety, public transport co-

ordination, highway drainage, public rights of way and also economic development. ESCC is the Lead Local Flood Authority for East Sussex and has responsibility for flooding from local sources including surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses. The guiding principle of the East Sussex Local Flood Risk Management Strategy is to provide local leadership and work in partnership with public bodies, businesses, community groups, voluntary sector organisations and local people to manage the risk and associated social, economic and environmental impacts of flooding and coastal erosion across East Sussex. Detailed proposals for the management of flooding in Lewes District will be addressed through the emerging Regeneration Delivery Frameworks. Responsibilities for flooding and coastal erosion are shared with a range of other bodies known as Risk Management Authorities including the Environment Agency, all District and Borough Councils, Southern Water and Internal Drainage Boards. ESCC has a particular role as the Highway Authority, which is important as this has a major impact on public access by all modes of movement to schools, libraries, other public buildings and buildings used for community uses, including the upkeep of surfaces and street furniture.

2.5.9 In order to improve communication between stakeholders where schemes are being developed and implemented which affect the public realm, ESCC should give consideration to:

- Making available forward planning of highway works affecting the public realm.
- Entering into a dialogue with stakeholders at early stages in the design process to discuss the proposed design, materials and street furniture for new public realm schemes.
- Working in partnership with the District Council and local Town and Parish Councils on agreed use of appropriate materials for public highway works.

- Co-ordinating and promoting all proposed highway maintenance projects.
- Maintaining highways and footways including the use of appropriate materials.
- Giving adequate notice of any maintenance work.
- Co-ordinating the implementation of all the schemes in the Local Transport Plan.
- Co-ordinating the street lighting repair programme for the County.
- Reacting to reports received of faults, including use of inappropriate materials, from local town/parish councils, amenity groups and the public.



### **Local Town/Parish Councils and Amenity Groups**

2.5.10 Local Town and Parish Councils have certain responsibilities. These involve local planning, lighting, street furniture, bus shelters and some types of enforcement, plus they can offer a great deal of local knowledge. Local Amenity Groups can be an important source of advice and may also be able to apply for specific sources of funds.

2.5.11 The Town/Parish Councils and Amenity Groups could be encouraged to take greater 'ownership' of their local public spaces by undertaking audits using a 'Local Public Realm Checklist' based on the principles set out in this Framework. The checklists/audits would help ensure that all parties with an influence on delivery of public realm schemes (including maintenance/repair work) that would change or enhance a particular area of the District are aware of local concerns and aspirations.

### **Statutory Undertakers**

2.5.12 Utility companies (Gas, Water, Electricity, British Telecom, Cable Television, Post Office and other Telecommunication Companies) have statutory powers to place and maintain their equipment in and on the public highway. The exercise of these powers is controlled and co-ordinated by the Highway Authority. In addition, all these statutory undertakers may need to be consulted on the availability of their service, the condition of any infrastructure and whether there are any planned works to replace or improve infrastructure. If sympathetic repair works to the public highway do not take place, East Sussex County Council has powers under the New Works and Street Works Act to retrospectively enforce the Utility Company to 'make good' the surface with matching materials.

2.5.13 In order to improve communication between stakeholders where works to replace or improve infrastructure may affect the public realm, Utility Companies should be encouraged to:

- Share details of any major repairs proposed to the public highway via Asset Management meetings with the County Council, and to make this list accessible to all.
- Inform the County and Lewes District Council of any emergency works needing to take place and to repair the public realm with appropriate like-for-like materials.
- Consult the District Council about any proposal to change the appearance of the public realm in a Conservation Area.
- Where available, consult the relevant Local Public Realm Checklist to ensure that the appearance of the public realm is preserved.

### **Statutory and Non-Statutory Consultees**

2.5.14 Development proposals need to undergo consultation by statutory and non-statutory consultees and community groups. These include the Environment Agency on aspects such as proposals affecting the environment, flood risk management, water quality and resources, waste management, biodiversity, land contamination and soil.

2.5.15 Other consultees are Rail Network Operators, Network Rail, Newhaven Port Authority and Brighton Bus Company.

### **Developers**

2.5.16 In accordance with Local Plan design policies, developers should seek to design their schemes as part of a new development to integrate with its surroundings and enhance the existing public realm. Developers should be encouraged to seek early pre-application planning advice from the Council on their proposals, particularly in relation to the use of appropriate materials.

### **Public Realm Portal**

2.5.17 Delivery of the objectives promoted by this Framework would be supported through the provision of a 'Public Realm Portal' to provide easy access to relevant guidance and associated information, such as:

- The Lewes District Public Realm Framework.
- Links to relevant policy and other key documents.
- Links to other relevant web pages.
- Programme of Works for maintenance of the public realm.
- Local Public Realm Checklists/Audits.
- Conservation Area Appraisal reports.
- Extensive Urban Survey reports.
- Landscape Character Assessment reports.

2.5.18 Consideration should also be given to investigating storage and retrieval of digital data related to the public realm using a Geographic Information System (such as details of appropriate materials recommended for use in specific locations and the Local Public Realm Audits).



**Lewes District Public Realm Design Award**

2.5.19 Consideration should be given to establishing an annual 'Public Realm Design Awards' to promote high quality public realm design in Lewes District. The awards would recognise and celebrate schemes that demonstrate outstanding examples of public realm design that have made a positive contribution to the District's local character and identity. A special category to recognise the involvement of local communities in improving the public realm could be incorporated into the awards.

**Sources of Funding**

2.5.20 There are funding opportunities for financing improvements to the public realm from a variety of sources.

2.5.21 The two recently established business-led Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) – the South East LEP (covers East Sussex, Kent and Essex) and the Coast to Capital LEP (covers Croydon, Brighton & Hove and Lewes, the Gatwick Diamond and West Sussex) – have a potentially important role to play, in both representing the local business community and maintaining the 'economic health' and well-being of their areas. The LEPs may be able to provide 'enabling mechanisms' for progressing specific schemes for improving the public realm in the District to make it a more vibrant place for businesses to thrive. As such, they are key stakeholders in the process of developing a strategy for a specific area, and in some cases, may be able to contribute to the funding of a scheme through access to public and private sources of investment.

2.5.22 Sources of private sector funding may include developer contributions related to individual developments secured via Section 106 legal agreements, or potentially through inclusion of major public realm improvement schemes within the Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan

and Community Infrastructure Levy charging schedule. However, it should be noted that over-reliance on developer contributions may not result in the anticipated funding in the current economic climate. It is suggested that an investment strategy is developed to map and align planned and proposed investment into public realm so as to identify gaps and provide the basis for exploring other funding sources. A creative approach to the use of public and private sector grants and funding should be adopted, which may include investigation of the following potential sources:

- Local Transport Schemes acting as 'catalysts' for wider area enhancement schemes that may result in financial contributions from a variety of sources.
- The role of Local Amenity Groups in seeking other sources of funding from organisations such as English Heritage.
- Highway maintenance contributions from the County Council for necessary 'repair' works.
- Lottery funding – e.g. Heritage Lottery Fund.
- European funding initiatives.
- Small scale funding grants for community-based environmental projects – e.g. Big Lottery Fund's 'Changing Spaces' environmental programme.
- Private sector funding through property and financial endowments.
- Co-operative ownership and management of public spaces via 'gifts' from developers.
- Business sponsorship of public space improvement projects.

2.5.23 It should be noted the above list is not exhaustive and that other sources of funding may be available now and in the future.

### Establishing Priorities and Implementation

2.5.24 It is recommended that the District Council should be the lead authority for developing specific public realm proposals within Lewes District, and for setting priorities for implementation. The Council should give consideration to developing and agreeing 'Implementation Protocols' between all parties for progressing different types of public realm schemes, and establishing mechanisms for progressing individual schemes through the different stages of implementation. This should include appropriate consultation and communication arrangements to involve and engage stakeholders at all stages of the process. The emerging Regeneration Delivery Framework, which will cover the whole District, will provide the mechanism for achieving this recommendation.

2.5.25 It is suggested that a Public Realm Working Group (comprising officers/members from the District Council, ESCC and the SDNPA) be established to oversee the implementation of individual public realm schemes in the District. The remit of this Group could include:

- Coordinating initiatives across the District (e.g. Public Realm Design Awards).
- Identifying specific public realm improvement schemes in the District.
- Investigating possible funding opportunities for capital works.
- Monitoring progress of particular schemes.
- Adapting and refining priorities for public realm improvements as necessary in light of new challenges and opportunities.
- Investigating new ways of funding public realm maintenance works.

2.5.26 Consideration should be given to establishing a prioritised schedule of public realm schemes that includes: (i) existing/funded local authority initiatives; (ii) schemes by developers that are anticipated through the development control process; and (iii) locations where enhancement would be desirable at a future date should funds become available (identified by reference to the opportunities set out in this Framework). The schedule should include an indication of any preferred sequencing of schemes, together with an indication of possible start dates, the likely timescales for each scheme, and the levels of resources required from participating partners for each scheme.

### Summary

2.5.27 In summary the recommended actions to drive delivery are:

- Produce a **Public Realm Charter** to detail joint working arrangements.
- Produce a **Planning Discussion Paper** to explore how the findings of the Framework will be fed into the planning process.
- Scope the production of a **Public Realm Platform** as a knowledge development and sharing mechanism.
- Introduce **design awards** to promote best practice; this could include working with existing and emerging award programmes.
- Produce a **Public Realm Investment Plan** to map existing funding as the basis for shaping future budgets and funding streams and making bids for external sources of funding.
- Produce a Public Realm Plan as part of each Regeneration Delivery Framework including an **equalities assessment**.
- Put in place a **Public Realm Working Group** to consider and drive forward these recommendations.



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# Settlement Public Realm Frameworks



© J. Steffen and Dominic Melang

View East from Lewes Castle towards Culfail and Caburn Crescent

# 3 LEWES TOWN PUBLIC REALM FRAMEWORK

## 3.1 Contextual Analysis of Lewes Town

### Overview

- 3.1.1 Lewes is the County Town of East Sussex with a population of 16,400 and the largest settlement within the South Downs National Park. It has a thriving town centre with a healthy retail economy and a large number of independent shops. It is considered to be one of the best preserved small market towns in England. It lies entirely within the boundaries of the South Downs National Park which increases its already popular status as a tourist destination and potential for economic benefits. It has a rich history and a vibrant arts, cultural and industrial heritage with over 500 listed buildings, including the Castle and Medieval Priory.
- 3.1.2 Lewes has a well preserved historic core with many listed buildings and localised areas of historic paving materials. The town centre is designated as a conservation area. Unfortunately this character is not represented on the fringes and approaches to the town and, unless you are familiar with it, it is hard to appreciate this significant quality when approaching by car.
- 3.1.3 The overarching strategic objectives for the development of the public realm should be to draw the inner character and town qualities to its fringes. Proposals that improve the arrival experiences into the town should be prioritised.
- 3.1.4 The development of Lewes' public realm must carefully consider the balance of the permanent community needs as well as the demands of a significant tourist population which it attracts. This consideration should be at the core of all public realm proposals.

### Character

- 3.1.5 Lewes benefits from an outstanding setting on a natural ridge, with spectacular views over the Ouse Valley and towards the downland and chalk cliffs of the surrounding countryside.
- 3.1.6 The historic town centre boasts a rich architectural heritage that features an intimate character and a tight urban grain. There are a number of well-preserved historic road alignments and steep and narrow twittens and hidden flint walled alleys. Historic architectural features, building and paving materials lend the town and its public realm its special character. The bridge between the Precinct and Cliffe offers a rare view of the tidal River Ouse and the river corridor from the town centre.
- 3.1.7 Beyond the town centre, the town consists of a number of distinct neighbourhoods. Some of these are of historic significance and provide good views to the castle and town centre. Several high quality green spaces are integrated into the urban grain and add to the pleasant character of the town.
- 3.1.8 Lewes has good connections to local and national walking routes and is a hub within the South Downs National Park for road cycling and mountain biking.
- 3.1.9 Despite its charming character, the town has some distracting features, in particular the views of 'out of character' mid to late 20th century architecture challenging Lewes Castle's skyline dominance. There are a number of intrusive industrial estates with little or no landscape mitigation. The high volume of traffic and parking blights the experience of the public realm.



Impressions of Lewes

...There is a sense of excitement around every twitten and, for the inquisitive visitor, a wealth of hidden stories to be told...

**Opportunities and Challenges for the Public Realm of Lewes Town**

3.1.10 Further to comprehensive analysis of the town's public realm the following summarise the core challenges and opportunities facing its development. Each have been identified on the map on the facing page. They are summarised as follows.

- Poor sense of arrival, orientation and connection.
- Under promoted historical features and points of interest.
- Under promoted gateways to the countryside.
- Poor connectivity within town and to residential areas.
- A need to balance residents and tourist's needs alike.
- Poor identity in terms of promoting its location within the South Downs National Park.

3.1.11 Specifically the review, inspection and critique of the existing public realm identified that the quality of the paving materials in town is of inconsistent quality and appropriateness and does not represent a coherent palette to reflect the rich built heritage.

3.1.12 The streetscapes are cluttered due to a wide variety of type, form and quality of existing street furniture.

3.1.13 The following identify the priority areas for improvement. They will define and underpin the suggested development interventions:

- Promoting the sense of arrival and improving the approaches into town.
- Improving links from transport hubs to the town centre and promoting awareness of points of interest.
- Preserving, enhancing and promoting the town's rich historic and cultural heritage.
- Promoting links between the countryside and the town centre.

- Providing safe and legible pedestrian and cycle links within the town centre and to surrounding residential areas.
- Improve identity as being located within the South Downs National Park.

**Legend**

**Sense of Arrival and Orientation**

- 1 Poor town character and arrival sequence into town.
- 2 Poor pedestrian 'setting' at key transport hub with unclear links into town centre, pedestrian and vehicular conflict and lack of interpretation of points of interest and the South Downs National Park.
- 3 Poorly promoted and unattractive arrival points at public car parks with poor directions to town centre and points of interest.

**Connectivity and Town Character**






















- 4 Poor link between the town centre and college, secondary school and leisure centre.
- 5 Poor links between the town centre and surrounding residential areas.
- 6 Opportunity for improved links over the river.
- 7 Opportunity for improved cycle network and interpretation through town.
- 8 Under used river corridor with restricted accessibility, disjointed riverside walkways, opportunity for increased activity.
- 9 Uninspiring and cluttered public realm not in keeping with its prominent location.
- 10 Under promoted shopping precinct at top of High Street.

**Promotion of Historic and Cultural Assets**

- 11 Poor and under promoted link to the Lewes Priory ruins.
- 12 Missed opportunity to promote the town's 'hidden stories' and historical features.

**Gateways to the Countryside**

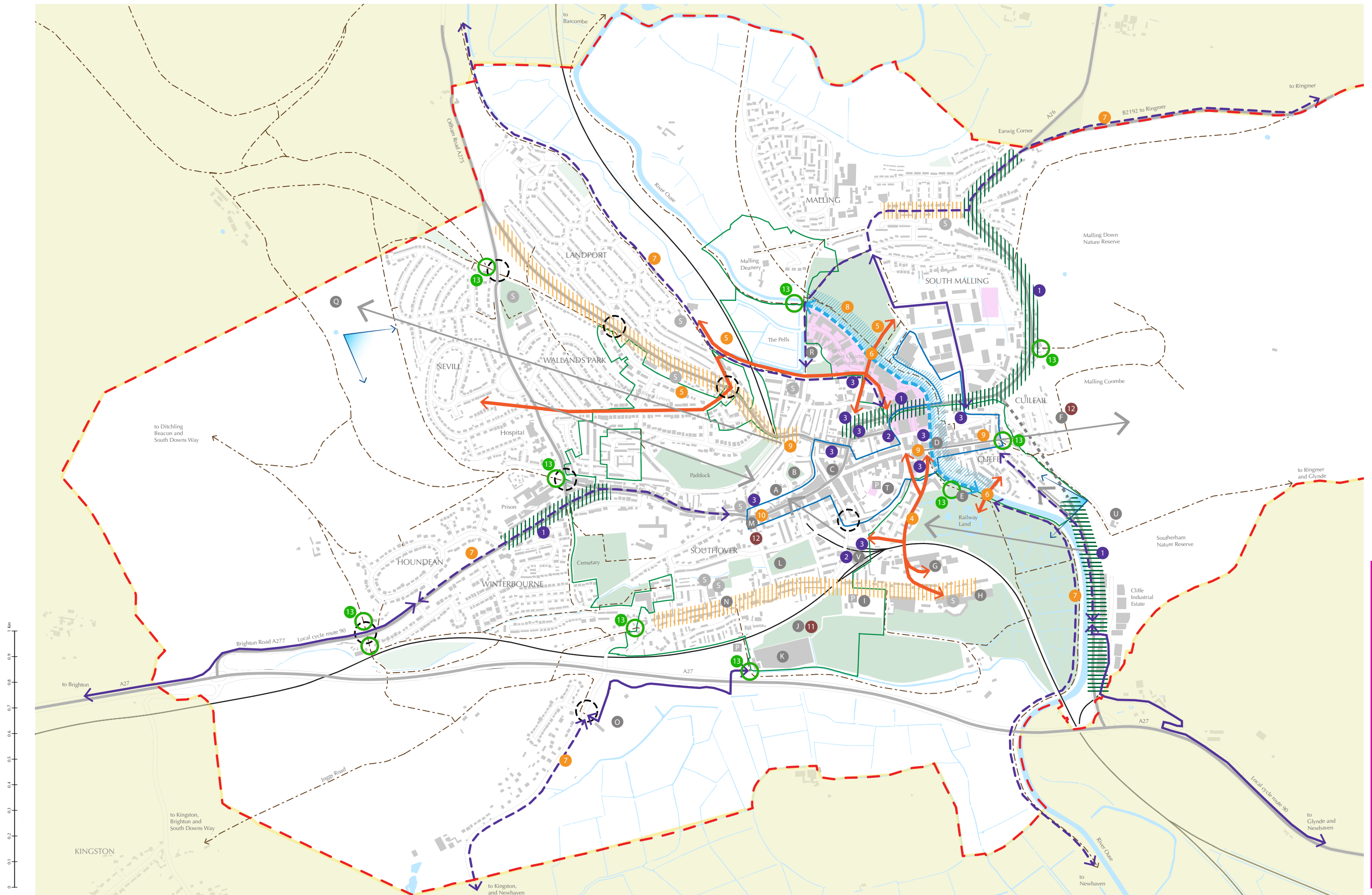
- 13 Poorly promoted gateway to the countryside and the South Downs National Park with pedestrian and vehicular conflict.

-  Town boundary
-  Point of interest and heritage feature
-  School
-  Parking
-  Town centre boundary
-  Conservation area
-  Existing walkways, bridleways and tracks
-  Main road
-  South Downs National Park (for clarity this is only shown on the edges of town)
-  Major regeneration area
-  Existing green space
-  Key view
-  Panoramic view
-  Potential for pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular conflict
-  Opportunity to strengthen link
-  Existing cycle network
-  Opportunity to strengthen cycle network
-  Opportunity to improve arrival sequence
-  Opportunity for traffic calming
-  Under used river corridor
-  Existing entry to the countryside

**Points of Interest and Heritage Features**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  Castle & Barbican House          |  Sports Club                |
|  Bowling Green                    |  Southover Grange & Gardens |
|  Tourist Information & Town Hall  |  Keere Street               |
|  Harvey's Brewery & Cliffe Bridge |  Anne of Cleves             |
|  Linklater Pavilion               |  Stanley Turner Sports Park |
|  Martyr's Memorial                |  Battle of Lewes Site       |
|  College                          |  Pells Pool                 |
|  Leisure Centre                   |  Library                    |
|  Football Ground                  |  Golf Course                |
|  Lewes Priory Ruins               |  Train Station              |





Note: For clarity, the South Downs National Park is only shown on the edges of town

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Figure 04 Lewes Town - Opportunities and Challenges

Lewes District Public Realm Framework

Chris Blandford Associates

### 3.2 Public Realm Interventions for Lewes Town

#### Key Priorities for the Public Realm

3.2.1 The following are considered to be priorities for the improvement of the town's public realm, based on the analysis of the opportunities and challenges and the District-wide public realm vision:

- Improve promotion of the town's unique built heritage and tourist attractions including Anne of Cleve's House.
- Improve and support public realm proposals that focus on reinforcing the quality of the public realm on the fringes of the town's historic core.
- Promote the character of the South Downs National Park through all aspects of current and new public realm.
- Promote the connection to, and character of, the countryside through enhancement of existing and creation of new gateways.
- Strengthen and simplify connections from the college to the centre of the town.
- Promote a new riverside corridor.
- Improve awareness of poorly promoted sites of interest and 'hidden stories', such as the trading route of Jugg's Road.
- Define clear, logical connections from key transport nodes to the town and beyond.
- Provide clearly sign posted coach drop-off and parking points at suitable locations
- Strengthening the awareness of Lewes' industrial heritage.
- Strengthen links and wayfinding along the High Street to promote the retail offer throughout town.
- Reduce conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicular access.
- Improve the public realm in retail and industrial areas to retain existing users and attract new investment
- Promote tree planting as a way of improving town character

#### Opportunities for Public Realm Interventions

3.2.2 The following key overall intervention categories have been developed to broadly group the type and scale of each suggested intervention. They are different for each settlement and have been developed to respond to each town's unique issues and opportunities.

3.2.3 In addition to providing an overarching structure the categories aim to ensure that each intervention meets the core focus and objectives set out in this Framework.

3.2.4 This grouping will also assist on-going assessment and monitoring and inform the preparation of future strategies for the direction and type of future proposals.

3.2.5 The networks and routes identified represent general intentions.

3.2.6 The overall intervention categories for Lewes are as follows. They are described in further detail in the following section.

- Sense of Arrival and Orientation
- Connectivity and Town Character
- Promotion of Historic and Cultural Assets
- Gateways to the Countryside



Poor bus station setting and links into Lewes town centre



Under promoted River Ouse corridor



© Chris Blandford Associates

Under promoted route between college and Lewes town centre



© Chris Blandford Associates

Uninspiring existing open space at look-out area on Castle Lane



© Chris Blandford Associates

Paving repairs on the precinct with varying materials



© Chris Blandford Associates

Bland approach of Lewes town via Phoenix Gateway










### Sense of Arrival and Orientation - Lewes Town

- 3.2.7 A memorable sense of arrival is a key factor in the experience of a place. It is the first opportunity to appreciate the quality and character of the town and what it has to offer.
- 3.2.8 The arrival experience is also an important orientation factor. Key landmarks that contribute to the sense of arrival often also act as reference and wayfinding points.
- 3.2.9 It should be noted that the suggested links and routes indicated on the plans are of a strategic nature. The detail will be developed through other policy and delivery mechanisms which are currently being worked up by partners e.g. Local Plan and Regeneration Delivery Frameworks.




### Sense of Arrival and Orientation

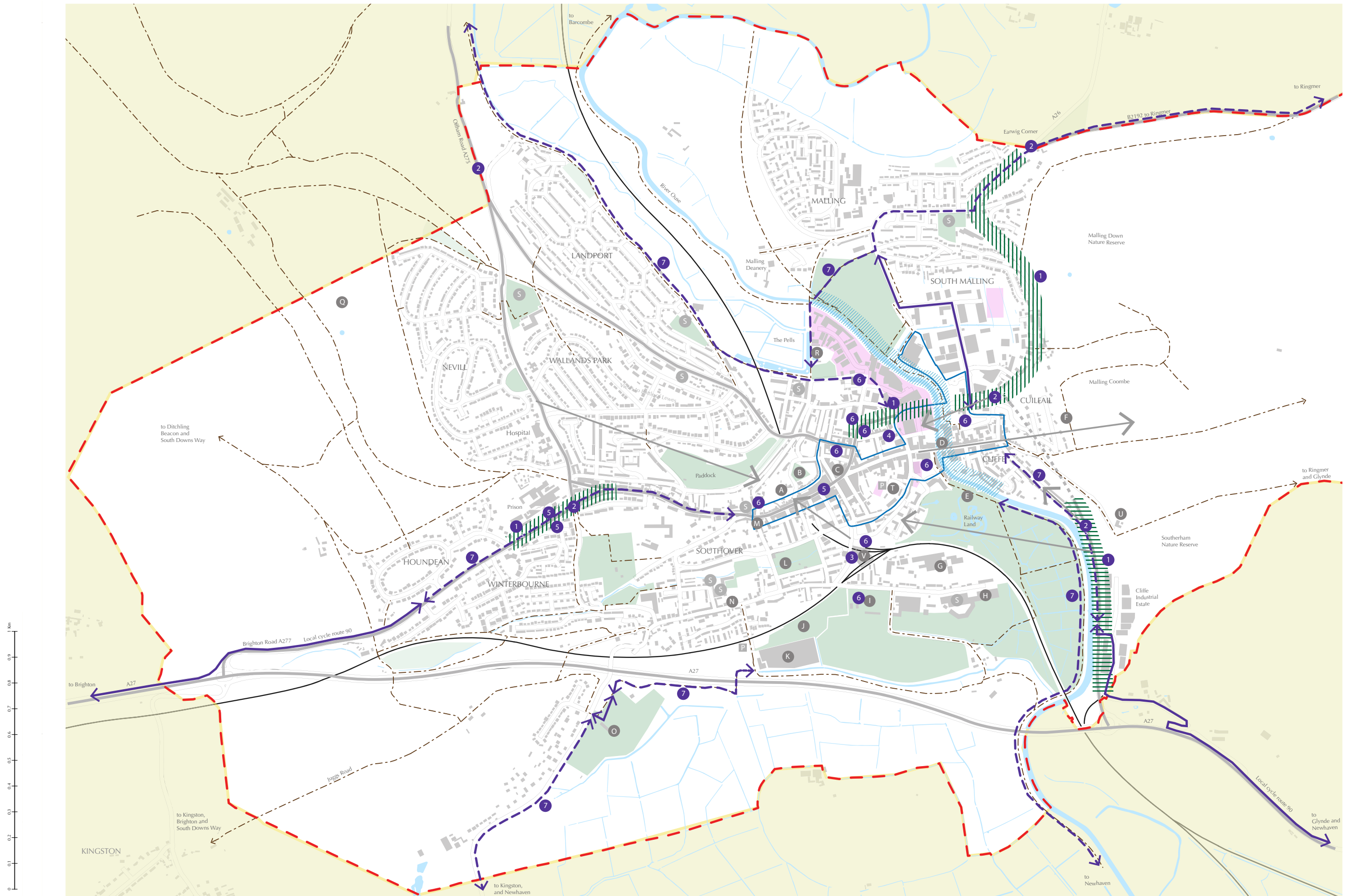
- 1 Strengthen town character and arrival sequence.
- 2 Improve vehicular gateway and arrival sequences at:
  - Malling Street to Malling Street car park; preserve good views of Lewes Castle.
  - Earwig Corner/junction of A26 with B2192 to Ringmer.
  - Nevill Road A275 on approach of town, just before Wallands School site.
  - Brighton Road A277 at junction with Nevill Road A275, opposite Lewes prison.
  - South Street A26 at junction with South Street.
- 3 Create an improved sense of arrival and public realm at train station with strong links to the town centre through:
  - Improved signage and interpretation of local points of interest (ESCC strategy under way).
  - Improved traffic interchange at front of train station (ESCC study under way).
  - Improved link over the bridge and into town centre.
  - Improved rear station entry with signage, interpretation clear and safe pedestrian routes to Station Road and to Pinwell Road.
  - Consideration of alternative vehicular access to station car park via Court Road to improve pedestrian/vehicular conflict at junction of Pinwell Road with Station Road.
- 4 Create improved bus station as gateway into town centre through:
  - Strengthening of pedestrian links to town centre.
  - Resolution of pedestrian and vehicular conflict.
  - Improved paving and street furniture.
- 5 Improve key bus stop locations.
- 6 Improve sense of arrival and connectivity at public parking areas.
- 7 Potential to promote local and regional cycle routes following detailed consultation.

### Legend

-  Town boundary
-  Point of interest and heritage feature
-  School
-  Parking
-  Town centre boundary
-  Conservation area
-  Existing walkways, bridleways and tracks
-  Main road
-  South Downs National Park (for clarity this is only shown on the edges of town)
-  Major regeneration area
-  Existing green space
-  Key view
-  Panoramic view
-  Existing cycle route
-  Opportunity to strengthen cycle network
-  Opportunity to improve arrival sequence

### Points of Interest and Heritage Features

- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  Castle & Barbican House          |  Sports Club                |
|  Bowling Green                    |  Southover Grange & Gardens |
|  Tourist Information & Town Hall  |  Keere Street               |
|  Harvey's Brewery & Cliffe Bridge |  Anne of Cleves             |
|  Linklater Pavilion               |  Stanley Turner Sports Park |
|  Martyr's Memorial                |  Battle of Lewes Site       |
|  College                          |  Pells Pool                 |
|  Leisure Centre                   |  Library                    |
|  Football Ground                  |  Golf Course                |
|  Lewes Priory Ruins               |  Train Station              |



Note: For clarity, the South Downs National Park is only shown on the edges of town

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Figure 05 Lewes Town - Sense of Arrival and Connectivity into Town Centre

















### Connectivity and Character of Lewes Town

- 3.2.10 Connectivity is defined by the available access and movement routes. The help to define the image of a place. They are one of the key elements that define the success of town centres and neighbourhoods.
- 3.2.11 In Lewes they are primarily defined by roads and twittens which surround the town centre and adjacent residential areas. These combine to define the gateways and entrances, key nodes of activity and gathering points within the town.
- 3.2.12 The overall character of the town is defined by a collection of its parts including its built form and urban structure. The streets and the way that they are designed, planned and detailed play important roles in the definition of the town's overall character. In the case of the Lewes the natural assets of the River Ouse valley, the topography and the surrounding hills contribute to a unique and identifiable town character. This is enhanced by several landmark buildings and focal features.

### Connectivity and Town Character

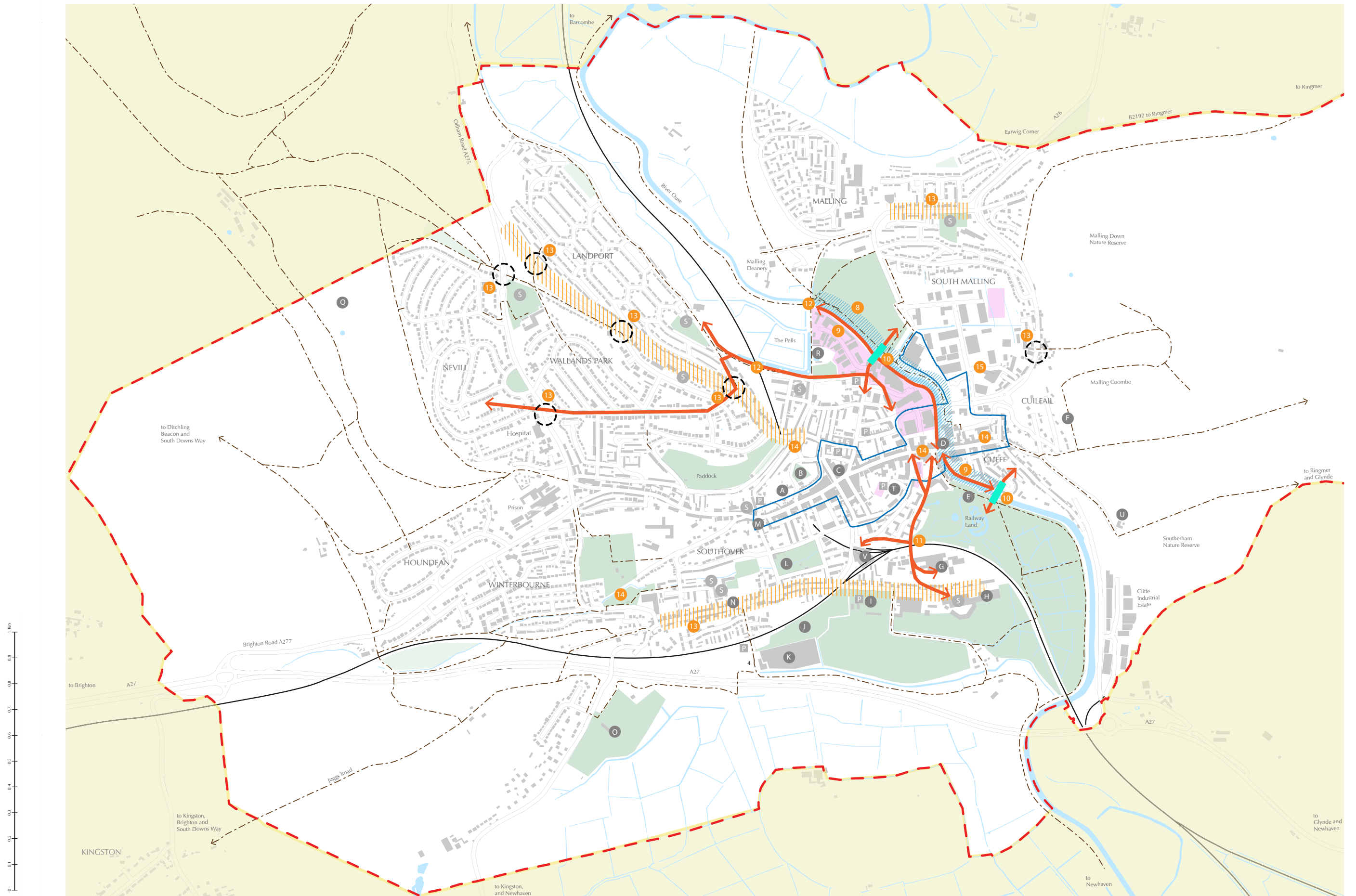
- 8 Promote activity along the River Ouse through:
  - Strengthened sense of engagement to the river.
  - New Pub/cafe spill out spaces .
  - New passive recreation opportunities.
  - Consideration of boating facilities.
- 9 Create a new continuous riverside walk through:
  - Linking North Street Quarter development to the existing River Ouse walkway upstream towards Barcombe and down stream towards the town centre, the railway land and Newhaven.
  - Provide continuous riverside walk through town centre.
- 10 Opportunity for new bridge over the River Ouse.
- 11 Improve the connection between the college, Priory school, the leisure centre with the town centre and train station.
- 12 Improve accessibility over bridge and associated pathways.
- 13 Introduce traffic calming and improve pedestrian crossing point.
- 14 Improve existing open space at:
  - Winterbourne river with a widened riverbed for play and learning experiences and interpretation of the Meridian Line.
  - Thomas a Becket Church.
  - Cliffe Precinct.
  - Castle Lande Viewing Areas and Battle of Lewes interpretation Area.
- 15 Improve the amenity of the industrial and retail area.

### Legend

-  Town boundary
-  Point of interest and heritage feature
-  School
-  Parking
-  Town centre boundary
-  Conservation area
-  Existing walkways, bridleways and tracks
-  Main road
-  South Downs National Park (for clarity this is only shown on the edges of town)
-  Major regeneration area
-  Existing green space
-  River corridor
-  Proposed river crossing
-  Potential for pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular conflict
-  Opportunity to strengthen link
-  Opportunity for traffic calming

### Points of Interest and Heritage Features

- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  Castle & Barbican House          |  Sports Club                |
|  Bowling Green                    |  Southover Grange & Gardens |
|  Tourist Information & Town Hall  |  Keere Street               |
|  Harvey's Brewery & Cliffe Bridge |  Anne of Cleves             |
|  Linklater Pavilion               |  Stanley Turner Sports Park |
|  Martyr's Memorial                |  Battle of Lewes Site       |
|  College                          |  Pells Pool                 |
|  Leisure Centre                   |  Library                    |
|  Football Ground                  |  Golf Course                |
|  Lewes Priory Ruins               |  Train Station              |



Note: For clarity, the South Downs National Park is only shown on the edges of town

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Figure 06 Lewes Town - Connectivity within Town and Strengthening of the Town Centre's Assets

### Promotion of Lewes Town's Historic and Cultural Assets

- 3.2.13 The preservation, enhancement and promotion of historic and cultural assets helps to strengthen the unique character of a town. They contribute to the sense of place and identity for local residents and attract tourism.
- 3.2.14 Lewes has a significant collection of unique listed buildings, scheduled monuments, archaeology and other heritage assets. In the context of the generation of an equally memorable, functional and robust public realm they should be protected, enhanced and promoted.

### Gateways to the Countryside from Lewes Town

- 3.2.15 Gateways define key entry points to announce the point of arrival. They are important in creating a legible and coherent set of experiences and to define start and end points of your journey.
- 3.2.16 For the entries to the South Downs National Park they are particularly important to celebrate the beauty of the setting and to enhance and promote the influence that this has on the character of the district.

### Gateways to the Countryside

- 16 Improve the existing pedestrian gateways to the South Downs National Park and provide visual links into the town centre. Overcome pedestrian and vehicular conflicts.

### Promoting and Enhancing Heritage Assets

- 17 Promote a heritage trail through the town centre linking its heritage features.
- 18 Improve the gateway and pedestrian link from Southover High Street and Mountfield Road to the Priory.
- 19 Promote a lookout point with views to Hamsey Church.

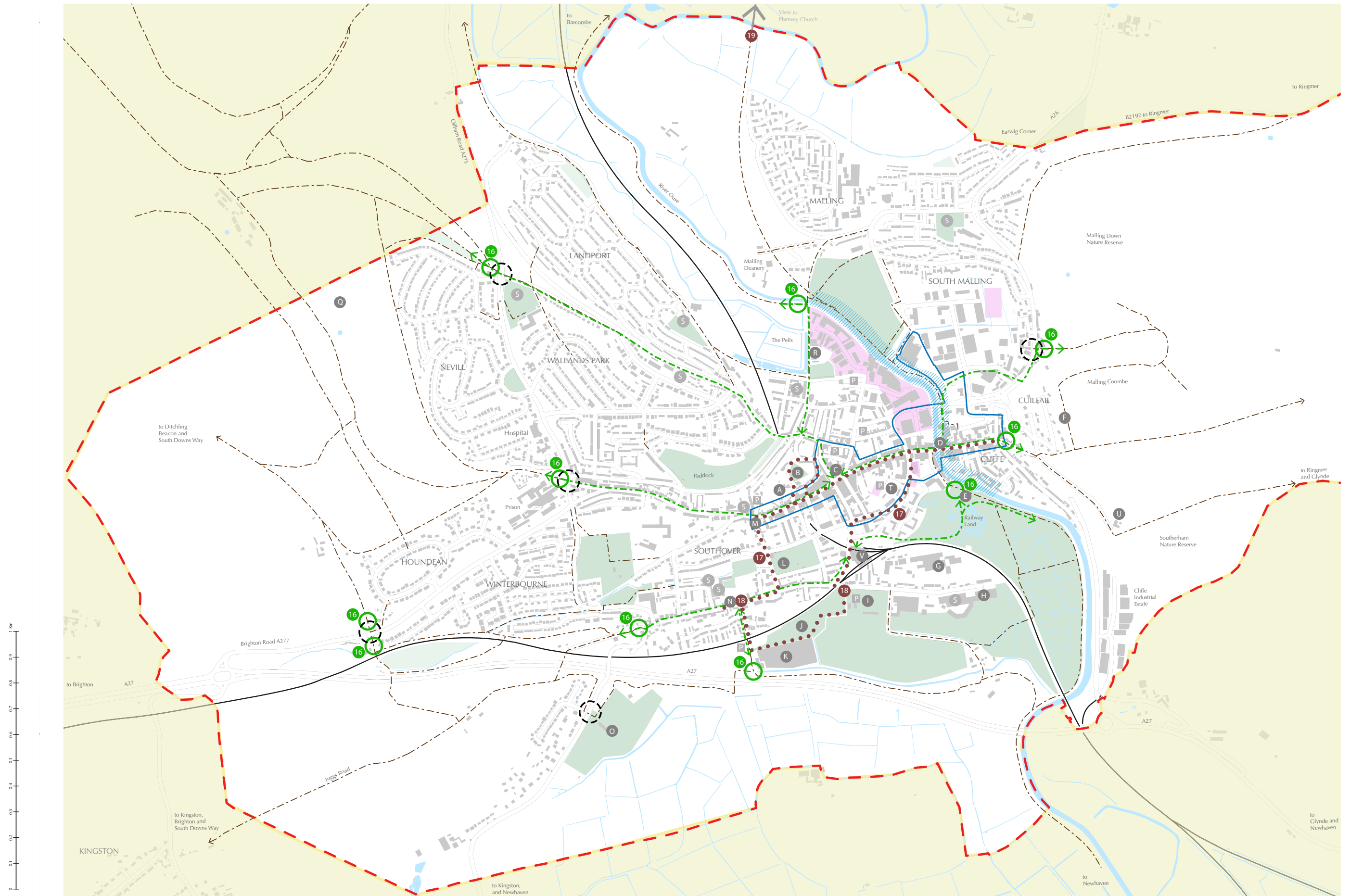
### Legend

-  Town boundary
-  Point of interest and heritage feature
-  School
-  Parking
-  Town centre boundary
-  Conservation area
-  Existing walkways, bridleway and tracks
-  Main road
-  South Downs National Park (for clarity this is only shown on the edges of town)
-  Major regeneration area
-  Existing green space
-  Opportunity for heritage trail
-  Potential for pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular conflict
-  Opportunity to interpret link to countryside
-  Gateways to the countryside

### Points of Interest and Heritage Features

- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  Castle & Barbican House          |  Sports Club                |
|  Bowling Green                    |  Southover Grange & Gardens |
|  Tourist Information & Town Hall  |  Keere Street               |
|  Harvey's Brewery & Cliffe Bridge |  Anne of Cleves             |
|  Linklater Pavilion               |  Stanley Turner Sports Park |
|  Martyr's Memorial                |  Battle of Lewes Site       |
|  College                          |  Pells Pool                 |
|  Leisure Centre                   |  Library                    |
|  Football Ground                  |  Golf Course                |
|  Lewes Priory Ruins               |  Train Station              |





Note: For clarity, the South Downs National Park is only shown on the edges of town

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Figure 07 Lewes Town - Gateways to the Countryside and Promotion of Points of Interest



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Seaford Beach Huts

Lewes District Public Realm Framework

Chris Blandford Associates

# 4 SEAFORD PUBLIC REALM FRAMEWORK

## 4.1 Contextual Analysis of Seaford

### Overview

- 4.1.1 With a population of just over 24,000 Seaford is the largest town in the District located on the coast between the River Ouse valley and Cuckmere Haven. The town has a vibrant historic town centre, with a mixture of chain stores and independent shops, set away from the seafront. The town centre is bounded by a variety of residential and industrial areas. Seaford is characterised by a large stretch of undeveloped seafront and beach with views across Tidemills to Newhaven Port and the cliff top Fort and of the dramatic cliffs of Seaford Head - the coastal gateway to the National Park. Closely located to several popular natural attractions, Seaford has potential to considerably increase its visitor economy.
- 4.1.2 Seaford's unique seaside character is restricted to the areas directly associated with the promenade and areas within view of the beach. The qualities of the seafront setting draws many visitors. Unfortunately, poor connectivity between the seafront and the town centre has failed to entice visitors from the seafront to the town core. The town centre is ill defined and a place that people want to pass through rather than dwell in.
- 4.1.3 A priority of the strategic objectives for the public realm should be to strengthen the town centre and to improve connectivity with the seafront. Proposals should aim to draw the seaside character through the rest of the town to stimulate it as a place that people want to visit.

### Character

- 4.1.4 Seaford is situated on the coast between Brighton and Eastbourne. Its historic town centre is set back from the shoreline with residential areas located north and east on the surrounding downland areas. The town benefits from spectacular views of the chalk cliffs of Seaford Head and is bounded by the South Downs National Park.
- 4.1.5 The train line from Lewes and Newhaven stops at the western edge of town at Bishopstone Station before terminating in the town centre at Seaford Station. The main road through town, the A259 coast road, connects Seaford with Newhaven and Eastbourne. Traffic volumes lead to some severance of northern town areas from the town centre and the seafront.
- 4.1.6 The historic town centre has a tight urban grain and is designated as a conservation area with a church at its centre. The main shopping area with Broad Street at its centre has undergone refurbishment and features a mixture of historic and modern paving materials.
- 4.1.7 Seaford seafront is located at the eastern end of the long and exposed shingle beach of Seaford Bay. The Esplanade and beach are popular destinations during the summer with many visitors taking advantage of free parking. A number of open green spaces provide opportunities for informal recreation but suffer from a lack of clearly defined purpose. Tourist attractions are the Martello Tower and the adjoining café area, the chalk cliffs at Splash Point and walks over Seaford Head and towards Tidemills ruins. The shingle beach functions as an important sea defence for the town. Prevailing winds and weather from the Atlantic challenge any development in the area.
- 4.1.8 Connectivity between the seafront and the town centre is poor. The urban character along the seafront is of little distinction and routes into the town centre are poorly defined.



Impressions of Seaford

...a small but bustling town in a dramatic setting that is brimming with the character of the English seaside and surrounded by incredible natural assets...

**Opportunities and Challenges for the Public Realm of Seaford**

4.1.9 Further to comprehensive analysis of the town’s public realm the following summarise the core challenges and opportunities facing its development. Each has been identified on the map on the facing page. They are summarised as follows.

- The beach and promenade draw visitors which then fail to be attracted to the town centre.
- Poor orientation, legibility and connectivity.
- Conflict between pedestrian and vehicular access.
- Loss of a town centre “core”.

4.1.10 In particular the challenges of the existing public realm are generated from the conflict between vehicles and the main pedestrian movement corridors. This is of particular concern when arriving at the station and trying to navigate by foot to the seafront.

4.1.11 Signage and wayfinding, particularly from the train station to the beach front and other parts of town, is poor and does not define clear orientation and connections from the town centre and the seafront.

4.1.12 The following identify the priority areas for improvement. They will define and underpin the suggested development interventions:

- Connection and sense of arrival.
- Definition of a core town centre.
- Access to the National Park.
- Connectivity between the town and the seafront.
- Promotion of open spaces and conservation areas.

**Sense of Arrival and Orientation**

- 1 Sense of arrival, orientation and interpretation of sites of interest are poor.
- 2 The arrival into town lacks definition and there is no sense of the seafront.
- 3 Unattractive view of station car park on arrival.
- 4 Lack of clear and legible routes from seafront to town centre.
- 5 The development along the seafront is less distinctive than older parts of town.

**Connectivity and Town Character**

- 6 The town centre appears dated without a coherent language of paving materials, street furniture, tree planting and lighting.
- 7 Seaford has distinctive tree planting which could be augmented to improve its edges against the Downs and strengthen neighbourhood identity.
- 8 There is no clearly defined town centre ‘core’.
- 9 Crossing points between Northern parts of the town and the seafront should be improved.

**Promotion of the Seafront and Points of Interest**

- 10 Existing heritage assets are under promoted.
- 11 The seafront lacks distinctiveness and suffers from ‘off the shelf’ street furniture that does not enhance local character.
- 12 Existing green spaces lack definition, infrastructure, interest and are poorly connected.
- 13 The edge of town is poorly defined against the South Downs National Park.

**Gateways to the Countryside**

- 14 Gateways to the South Downs National Park are under promoted.
- 15 Links to regional walkways such as the South Downs Way and the Vanguard Way are under promoted.
- 16 Local cycle routes are under promoted.

**Legend**

- Town boundary
- Point of interest and heritage feature
- School
- Parking
- Town centre boundary
- Conservation area
- Existing walkways, bridleways and tracks
- Main road
- South Downs National Park
- Existing green space
- Potential for pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular conflict
- Key view
- Opportunity to strengthen link
- Existing cycle route
- Opportunity to strengthen cycle network
- Opportunity to improve sense of arrival
- Opportunity for traffic calming
- Existing entry to the South Downs National Park

**Points of Interest and Heritage Features**

- |                                      |                                   |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Seaford Station                      | Salts Recreation Ground           |
| Bishopstone Station                  | Seaford Golf Course               |
| Tourist Information and Town Council | Seaford Head Golf Course          |
| Martello Tower and Museum            | Newhaven and Seaford Sailing Club |
| Downs Leisure Centre                 | Touring Caravan and Camping Site  |
| Seaford Head Swimming Pool           | Splash Point                      |
| Post Office                          | Seaford Head                      |
| College                              | Tidemills                         |
| Crouch Gardens                       | Buckle                            |



Figure 08 Seaford - Opportunities and Challenges

Lewes District Public Realm Framework

Chris Blandford Associates

## 4.2 Public Realm Interventions for Seaford

### Key Priorities

4.2.1 The following are considered to be priorities for the improvement of the town's public realm, based on the analysis of the opportunities and challenges and the District-wide public realm vision:

- Improve and support public realm proposals that re-enforce clear, logical connections from the town centre, particularly from the train station, to the seafront.
- Promote the connection to, and character of, the South Downs National Park through enhancement of existing and creation of new gateways.
- Improve the quality of the town centre, as a place to visit and stay, through promotion and extension of the seafront character.
- Strengthen connections and awareness of the seafront to the town centre.
- Draw the seafront character into the town centre to promote and define a new town centre "core".
- Improve the key connections into the National Park.
- Strengthen the promenade and continuous link from Seaford Head to Tide Mills and Newhaven.

### Opportunities for Interventions

4.2.2 The following key overall intervention categories have been developed to broadly group the type and scale of each suggested intervention. They are different for each settlement and have been developed to respond to each town's unique issues and opportunities.

4.2.3 In addition to providing an overarching structure the categories aim to ensure that each intervention meets the core focus and objectives set out in this Framework.

4.2.4 This grouping will also assist on-going assessment and monitoring and inform the preparation of future strategies for the direction and type of future proposals.

4.2.5 The overall intervention categories for Seaford are as follows. They are described in further detail in the following section.

- Sense of Arrival and Orientation
- Connectivity and Town Character
- Promotion of the Seafront and Points of Interest
- Gateway to the Countryside



Under promoted gateway to Seaford Head



Poor sense of arrival at Seaford Station



Poorly legible routes from the seafront to Seaford town centre



Lack of interest and distinctiveness along Seaford seafront



Poorly connected green spaces with lack of interest and definition

### Sense of Arrival and Orientation - Seaford

- 4.2.6 A memorable and experiential sense of arrival is a key factor in the experience of a place. It is the first opportunity to appreciate the quality and character of the town and what it has to offer. The arrival experience is an important orientation factor. Key landmarks that contribute to the sense of arrival often also act as reference and wayfinding points.
- 4.2.7 Legibility is important in the definition of an image of a place and the character that it promotes. It determines how easily it is to navigate and orientate yourself. For tourists, one particularly important community for Seaford, it directly affects your experience and memory of a place.
- 4.2.8 Legibility and wayfinding is directly influenced by how the public realm is composed, how each individual element is placed and the promotion of key views and linkages between the towns' key features.

### Connectivity and Character of Seaford

- 4.2.9 Connectivity to, and definition of, the town centre are critical considerations for the development of Seaford's public realm. The attraction of the seafront is arguably at the core of many of the reasons for the demise of the town centre.
- 4.2.10 Strategies and interventions should, in particular, seek to resolve the existing issues that primarily result in a general unwillingness to visit and experience it.
- 4.2.11 It should be noted that the suggested links and routes indicated on the plans are of a strategic nature. The detail will be developed through other policy and delivery mechanisms which are currently being worked up by partners e.g. Local Plan and Regeneration Delivery Frameworks.

### Promotion of the Seafront and Points of Interest in Seaford

- 4.2.12 The seafront and associated promenade is the town's main attraction. Nonetheless its attraction is an important factor in the definition of the place and where possible the town should embrace this character and harness it through all parts of the town as a catalyst for its regeneration.

### Gateways to the Countryside from Seaford

- 4.2.13 Gateways define key entry points to announce the point of arrival. They are important in creating a legible and coherent set of experiences and to define start and end points of your journey.
- 4.2.14 For the entries to the South Downs National Park they are particularly important to celebrate the beauty of the setting and to enhance and promote the influence that this has on the character of the District.

### Sense of Arrival and Orientation

- 1 Improve the gateway experience at Seaford rail station with interpretation of key points of interest and the seafront.
- 2 Strengthen the town character and arrival sequence .
- 3 Introduce traffic calming and improved crossing points.
- 4 Promote interpretation of the seafront, the South Downs National Park and Bishopstone.
- 5 Enhance and promote gateway and key view.
- 6 Create strong, attractive and safe pedestrian links between the town centre and the seafront .

### Connectivity and Town Character

- 7 Improve the public realm at key entry points to the town centre and strengthen two main shopping streets as the 'heart' of the town.
- 8 Promote the local cycle network.

### Promotion of the Seafront and Points of Interest

- 9 Promote conservation area along local walking and cycle route.
- 10 Enhance the character and interest at Seaford seafront by:
  - Softening 'built-up' edges with appropriate planting.
  - Use of durable, distinct paving and street furniture to build on the seaside character.
  - Promotion and enhancement of the existing recreational spaces and facilities along the seafront.

### Gateway to the Countryside

- 11 Promote and enhance the gateways to Seaford Head and Cuckmere Haven.
- 12 Promote link and interpretation of Tidemills and Newhaven.
- 13 Promote the gateways to the South Downs National Park, links to the South Downs Way and out of town destinations.

### Legend

- Town boundary
- Point of interest and heritage feature
- School
- Parking
- Town centre boundary
- Conservation area
- Existing walkways, bridleways and tracks
- Main road
- South Downs National Park
- Existing green space
- Potential for pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular conflict
- Key view
- Opportunity to strengthen link
- Existing cycle route
- Opportunity to strengthen cycle network
- Opportunity to improve sense of arrival
- Opportunity for traffic calming
- Existing entry to the South Downs National Park

### Points of Interest and Heritage Features

- |                                      |                                   |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Seaford Station                      | Salts Recreation Ground           |
| Bishopstone Station                  | Seaford Golf Course               |
| Tourist Information and Town Council | Seaford Head Golf Course          |
| Martello Tower and Museum            | Newhaven and Seaford Sailing Club |
| Downs Leisure Centre                 | Touring Caravan and Camping Site  |
| Seaford Head Swimming Pool           | Splash Point                      |
| Post Office                          | Seaford Head                      |
| College                              | Tidemills                         |
| Crouch Gardens                       | Buckle                            |



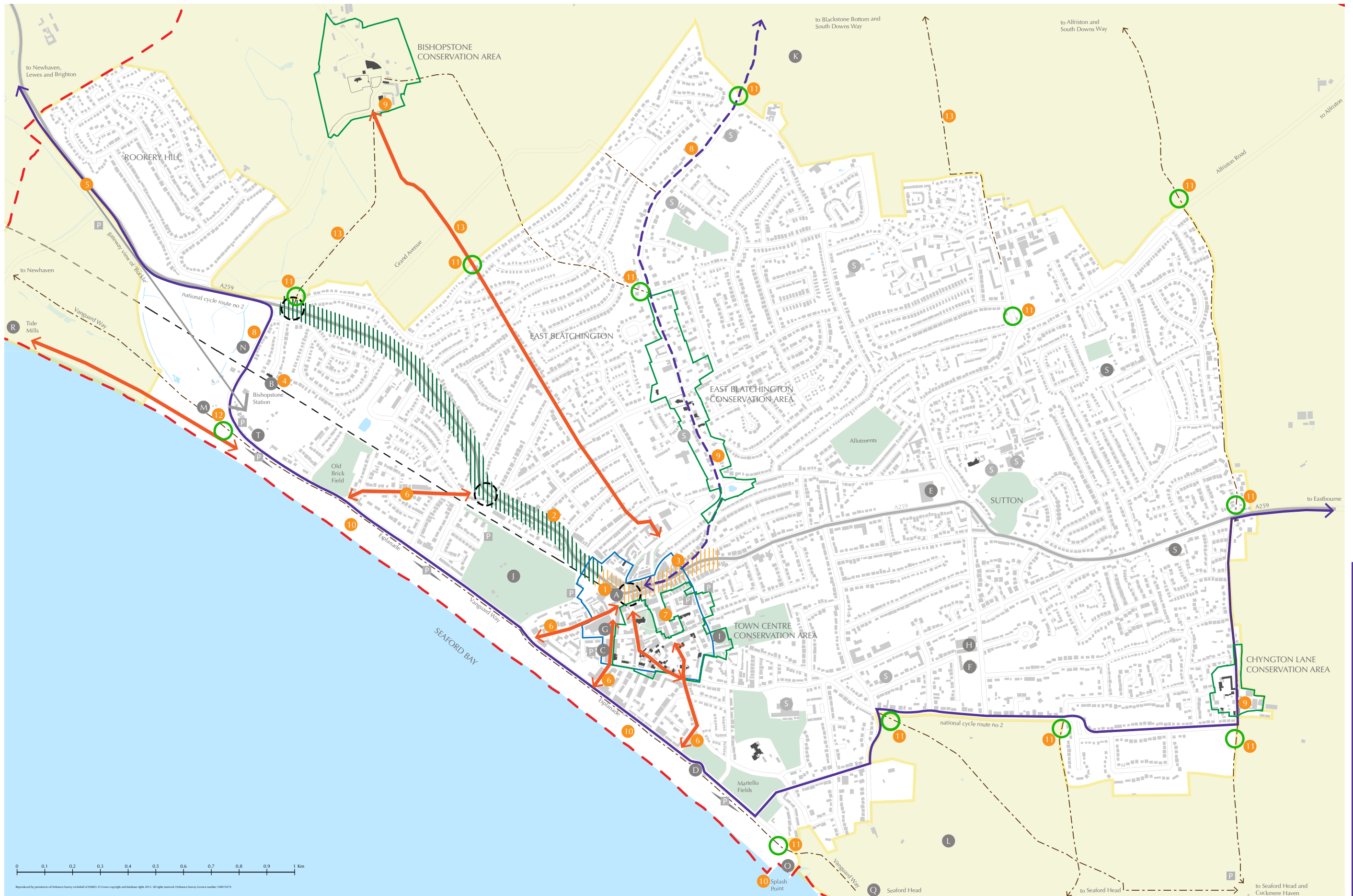


Figure 09 Seaford - Opportunities for Interventions

Lewes District Public Realm Framework

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# 5 NEWHAVEN PUBLIC REALM FRAMEWORK

## 5.1 Contextual Analysis of Newhaven

### Overview

- 5.1.1 Newhaven is a small seaside town with a population of approximately 12,240 inhabitants. The past is still visible in the town and historic features such as the landmark Newhaven Fort and the Tide Mills have helped to shape the town and attract local and regional visitors.
- 5.1.2 The marina is one of the main attractions in terms of water based leisure facilities. The port town is one of Lewes District Council's key priorities for regeneration with several substantial development proposals currently being considered on the Eastside of the port.
- 5.1.3 The main traffic from the port is the Newhaven-Dieppe ferry, a small fishing fleet and recreational and residential moorings. Newhaven Fort is a key visitor attraction in the town. The rich maritime and built heritage has potential for further development.
- 5.1.4 Newhaven is the European Gateway to the National Park within Lewes District.
- 5.1.5 The Newhaven Port and river mouth provide the town with enormous potential to generate an intimate relationship with its harbour and onwards to the ocean. This relationship has become somewhat lost but one that in the past was the driver behind the town's rich maritime heritage.
- 5.1.6 The overarching strategic objective for the public realm, and overall town character, should be to reinforce the town's maritime history through the promotion of connections to the foreshore.
- 5.1.7 **Character**  
The historic port and fishing town of Newhaven started to grow on the west side of the River Ouse where the town centre and most of the residential areas are situated. Newhaven has a working port with a regular ferry service to France, leisure and residential boating harbour and a small fishing

fleet. In modern times the town has experienced substantial industrial development which dominates the northern and eastern riverside areas of town.

- 5.1.8 Due to the size and position of the port, the town comprises two main areas; a West and East section, divided by the River Ouse which has only one swing bridge that connects both urban areas. A number of residential developments are located on the surrounding downland hills.
- 5.1.9 The town benefits from a regular train service to Lewes and London and to Seaford. The main train station is centrally located albeit on the opposite riverside from the historic town centre. Newhaven is located on the junction of the A259 coastal road between Brighton and Eastbourne and the A26 to Lewes. The historic centre is circled by the main through-routes, cutting it off somewhat from the rest of the town. The river crossing is via a swing bridge, occasionally halting traffic flow when the bridge is open.
- 5.1.10 Recent retail development on the eastern edge of town has shifted the retail focus and has contributed to a diminished footfall in the historic town centre.
- 5.1.11 The architectural character of the town features areas of Edwardian terraces, a new harbour side development, 1930s style housing estates and riverside warehouses. Modern housing estates are expanding on the edges of town with some harsh and open built up edges to the countryside and the South Downs National Park.
- 5.1.12 The Fort and Castle Hill are the main tourism attractions in town with a small sandy beach, imposing breakwater and chalk cliffs below. The hill top location offers spectacular views across town and to the east across Seaford Bay and to Seaford Head.



Impressions of Newhaven

...Newhaven has much opportunity for development. The new Railway Quarter and Marina will serve as catalysts for a new chapter of change...

**Opportunities and Challenges for the Public Realm of Newhaven**

5.1.13 Further to comprehensive analysis of the settlement's public realm the following summarise the core challenges and opportunities facing its development. Each have been identified on the map on the facing page. They are summarised as follows.

- Poor orientation, legibility and connectivity.
- Poor arrival experiences dominated by roadway infrastructure.
- An isolated underused and disjointed town centre.
- Poor connectivity of outer residential areas to the town centre.
- Poorly promoted sites of interest.

5.1.14 At the core of the challenges for the development of the public realm for Newhaven is the reconnection of its core with the rest of the town and residential areas. Roadways and infrastructure developments have grown to over power any true definition of a sense of place and public realm.

5.1.15 The opportunities for the development in Newhaven are well documented. It is particularly important that, within this context, the current issues regarding the lack of connectivity, permeability and integration of the town are not exacerbated and that the strategies for the developments for the public realm are targeted to deliver an integrated framework.

5.1.16 The following identify the priority areas for improvement. They will define and underpin the suggested development interventions:

- Connection and sense of arrival.
- Connection and definition of Denton Island.
- Access to the National Park.
- Promotion of the town's maritime and built heritage.
- Promotion of open spaces, points of interest and conservation areas.

**Sense of Arrival and Orientation**

- 1 Newhaven Town Station and the port access are situated within an unstructured and bleak industrial setting with poor pedestrian links to the town centre and no visual 'cues' to the riverside or the seaside (station interchange project underway)
- 2 On approaching Newhaven, the Energy Recovery Facility dominates the view giving the town an immediate industrial feel
- 3 A lack of trees and the industrial architecture give this road a somewhat bleak and harsh character
- 4 The gateway into town is confusing and under promoted contributing to high traffic speeds and to a severance of adjoining residential areas; there is little sense of the pedestrian town centre ahead (ESCC movement and access feasibility study under way)
- 5 The arrival sequence into town is bleak and exposed and dominated by road infrastructure; cycle routes and footpaths are exposed and could benefit from a stronger degree of separation from the road

**Town Character and Civic Connections**

- 6 The town's industrial and retail areas are located in prominent riverside locations and their character is insular resulting in severance between adjoining residential areas and the town centre
- 7 A lack of trees give the residential areas an exposed and bleak character and links to the town centre and public transport links are under promoted (ESCC movement and access strategy under way)
- 8 Denton Island is uniquely located next to the town centre but could benefit from improved connectivity
- 9 Links between the town centre and the surrounding areas are restricted by the ring road and the centre has a cluttered appearance (ESCC feasibility study into the reconfiguring of the ring road planned)

**Promotion of the Maritime Character and Points of Interest**

- 10 Opportunity to strengthen links between the town centre and the Fort and Castle Hill Nature Reserve along Fort Road with improved connectivity to the river corridor.
- 11 West Pier and West Beach offer opportunities for an increase in informal recreation.
- 12 Opportunity to strengthen the waterside walkway and cycle route from West Beach via the town centre, Denton Island towards Piddinghoe and Lewes.
- 13 Local points of interest and historical features are under promoted and could contribute to the character of the town.

**Gateways to the Countryside and Natural Assets**

- 14 Opportunity to strengthen the gateways to the South Downs National Park, the South Downs Way, the coastal walks and regional points of interest and their interpretation through town.

**Legend**

- Town boundary
- Point of interest and heritage feature
- School
- Parking
- Town centre
- Conservation area
- Existing walkways, bridleways and tracks
- Main road
- South Downs National Park
- Key regeneration area
- Existing green space
- Potential for pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular conflict
- Opportunity for new river crossing
- Key view
- Panoramic view
- Opportunity to improve pedestrian link
- Existing cycle route
- Opportunity to strengthen cycle network
- Opportunity to improve character
- Existing entry to the South Downs National Park

**Points of Interest and Heritage Features**

- |  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Civic Centre including Library                   | Newhaven Harbour Station          |
| Ferry Terminal and maritime industrial buildings | Ferry Entrance                    |
| Newhaven Town Station                            | Newhaven Fort                     |
| Coast Watch Tower                                | Shakespeare Hall                  |
| Sussex Downs College                             | Peacehaven Golf Club              |
| Indoor Bowling Centre                            | Newhaven and Seaford Sailing Club |
| Paradise Park                                    | St. Michael's Church              |
| Newhaven Local History and Maritime Museum       | Meeching Hall and Council Offices |
|  | Tidemills                         |



Figure 10 Newhaven - Opportunities and Challenges

## 5.2 Public Realm Interventions for Newhaven

### Key Priorities

5.2.1 The following are considered to be priorities for the improvement of the town's public realm, based on the analysis of the opportunities and challenges and the District-wide public realm vision:

- Define a new town centre core and encourage movement and connection to local points of interest and the seafront.
- Create an improved point of arrival and town character at Newhaven Town Station with strong links to the town centre and reference to the marine heritage of the area.
- Encourage public realm proposals that promote a safe, welcoming pedestrian character that minimises vehicular and pedestrian conflict and mitigates the presence of excessive infrastructure.
- Promote the connection to and character of the South Downs National Park through enhancement of existing and the creation of new gateways.
- Strengthen key arrival experiences and town approaches from the A259 and associated local roads.
- Respect and promote a rich industrial and maritime heritage.
- Strengthen the link from Castle Hill Nature Reserve and the Fort to the town centre.
- Promote engagement with the harbour and celebrate seaside character.
- Promote maritime character, points of interest and historic features.
- Improve connections into the town centre from residential areas.
- Improve connections to Denton Island and strengthen its contribution to the core of the town centre.

- Promote Stoney Beach, West Beach and West Pier as an informal recreation area.
- Improve identity, quality and amenity of the town centre.

### Opportunities for Interventions

5.2.2 The following key overall intervention categories have been developed to broadly group the type and scale of each suggested intervention. They are different for each settlement and have been developed to respond to each town's unique issues and opportunities.

5.2.3 In addition to providing an overarching structure the categories aim to ensure that each intervention meets the core focus and objectives set out in this Framework.

5.2.4 This grouping will also assist on-going assessment and monitoring and inform the preparation of future strategies for the direction and type of future proposals.

5.2.5 The overall intervention categories for Newhaven are as follows. They are described in further detail in the following section.

- Sense of Arrival and Orientation
- Town Character and Civic Connections
- Promotion of the Maritime Character and Points of Interest
- Gateways to the Countryside and Natural Assets



Poorly promoted link to the seafront and to the Fort



Poorly promoted seafront and recreational area



Lack of connectivity to and awareness of river frontage



Public realm dominated by road infrastructure



Poorly promoted look-out point and historic feature



Poor connectivity between town centre and residential areas

### Sense of Arrival and Orientation - Newhaven

- 5.2.6 A memorable sense of arrival is a key factor in the experience of a place. It is the first opportunity to appreciate the quality and character of the town and what it has to offer. The arrival experience is also an important orientation factor. Key landmarks that contribute to the sense of arrival often act as reference and wayfinding points.
- 5.2.7 Legibility is important in the definition of a place and the character that it promotes. It determines how easy it is to navigate and orientate yourself. For visitors it directly affects the experience and memory of a place.

- 5.2.8 Promotion of key views and linkages between the town's key features, careful composition of the public realm and placement of elements and wayfinding help to improve legibility.

### Town Character and Civic Connections

- 5.2.9 Connectivity is defined by the available access and movement routes. They help to define the image of a place. They are one of the key elements that define the success of town centres and neighbourhoods.
- 5.2.10 The overall character of the town is defined by a collection of its parts including its built form and urban structure. Our streets and the way that they are designed, planned and detailed play important roles in defining a town's overall character.

### Promotion of the Maritime Character and Points of Interest

Newhaven has a rich industrial maritime heritage. There is a wealth of stories of the past, and emerging ones for the future, that inform the town's developing character. Newhaven has many development and regeneration opportunities. Defining public realm interventions that strengthen this character is important for its development.

### Gateways to the Countryside and Natural Assets

- 5.2.11 Gateways define key entry points to announce the point of arrival. They are important in creating a legible and coherent set of experiences and to define start and end points of your journey.
- 5.2.12 For the entries to the South Downs National Park they are particularly important to celebrate the beauty of the setting and to enhance and promote the influence that this has on the character of the district.

#### Sense of Arrival and Orientation

- 1 Improve the town character with reference to its maritime heritage and with improved connectivity between Newhaven Town Station and the town centre (station interchange project underway)
- 2 Improve screening of the Energy Recovery Facility through tree planting (ESCC planting project under way)
- 3 Improve the character of the industrial and retail estates to strengthen links between residential areas and the town centre and to improve their integration into the grain of the town
- 4 Improve the road character, crossings, pedestrian, cycle and bus stop infrastructure and the arrival sequence
- 5 Improve the character of the port area as a gateway to Lewes District from Europe

#### Town Character and Civic Connections

- 6 Provide additional crossings to Denton Island and develop its informal recreation infrastructure
- 7 Increase connectivity between the town centre and the wider town and rationalise existing street furniture
- 8 Promote tree planting to improve the character and strengthen the network of local cycle and walking routes from residential areas into town (ESCC improvement proposals under way)

### Promotion of the Maritime Character and Points of Interest

- 9 Improve the character of Fort Road especially between Newhaven Marina and West Pier and encourage links to the river corridor between the Marina and the town centre.
- 10 Promote West Pier and West Beach as informal recreation areas with re-instated access from the Fort.
- 11 Promote interpretation and links from the town centre to St. Michael's Church and Meeching Down and to the Ouse Estuary Nature Reserve.
- 12 Promote a stronger waterside walkway and cycle route from West Beach via the town centre, Denton Island towards Piddinghoe and Lewes (ESCC study on improving walking and cycle routes under way).

### Gateways to the Countryside and Natural Assets

- 13 Promote the start of the seaside walk to Seaford and strengthen pedestrian and cycle links via Drove Road industrial estate to the town centre.
- 14 Promote and interpret the cliff top walk to and from Peacehaven and Brighton and improve the open space to the base of the coast watch tower as part of the coastal experience.
- 15 Interpret and promote the existing gateways to the South Downs National Park and the countryside through town and into the town centre.
- 16 Promote links and awareness of Seaford Bay and Tidemills.

It should be noted that the suggested links and routes indicated on the plans are of a strategic nature. The detail will be developed through other policy and delivery mechanisms which are currently being worked up by partners e.g. Local Plan and Regeneration Delivery Frameworks.

#### Legend

- Town boundary
- Point of interest and heritage feature
- School
- Parking
- Town centre
- Conservation area
- Existing walkways, bridleways and tracks
- Main road
- South Downs National Park
- Key regeneration area
- Existing green space
- Potential for pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular conflict
- Opportunity for new river crossing
- Key view
- Panoramic view
- Opportunity to improve pedestrian link
- Existing cycle route
- Opportunity to strengthen cycle network
- Opportunity to improve character
- Gateway to the South Downs National Park

#### Points of Interest and Heritage Features

- |  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Civic Centre including Library                   | Newhaven Harbour Station          |
| Ferry Terminal and maritime industrial buildings | Ferry Entrance                    |
| Newhaven Town Station                            | Newhaven Fort                     |
| Coast Watch Tower                                | Shakespeare Hall                  |
| Sussex Downs College                             | Peacehaven Golf Club              |
| Indoor Bowling Centre                            | Newhaven and Seaford Sailing Club |
| Paradise Park                                    | St. Michael's Church              |
| Newhaven Local History and Maritime Museum       | Meeching Hall and Council Offices |
|  | Tidemills                         |





Figure 11 Newhaven - Opportunities for Interventions



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# 6 PEACEHAVEN PUBLIC REALM FRAMEWORK

## 6.1 Contextual Analysis of Peacehaven

### Overview

6.1.1 Peacehaven is a quiet, largely residential settlement that extends from the cliff edge to open downland. Together with Telscombe Cliffs and East Saltdean, it has a population of 21,657. The built heritage of the town is of the early 20th century but it is rich in archaeological remains from the Stone Age to the early Romans. The A259 coast road is the only vehicular route in and out of the towns with a frequent bus service to Brighton and Eastbourne. The Meridian line monument is a unique feature of Peacehaven.

6.1.2 Peacehaven has a significant green network which, combined with its cliff top and beach, presents a strong and unique character.

6.1.3 On approach along the South Coast Road from Newhaven, and specifically when making the final sweeping turn into the town, you are greeted with your first glimpse of the sea and the meandering dramatic cliff edge. Every effort should be made to maximise and strengthen this view as a first impression of the town and a reminder of the beauty of the setting.

6.1.4 Development of the public realm should seek to connect the seaside character, which is strictly bound to the southern parts of the town, across the South Coast Road and onwards into the northern residential areas of the settlement.

### Character

6.1.5 Peacehaven was established in 1916 by Charles Neville who was influenced by the American grid system of planning. The layout of straight roads and avenues is still visible today. Plots of land were sold off cheaply for people to build on themselves and early developments were makeshift homes for weekends and holidays. Until the 1950s the roads were largely unsurfaced.

6.1.6 The town is set on a gently undulating cliff top providing panoramic views across the sea. A narrow strip of open green space along the edge of the cliff top provides a number of informal

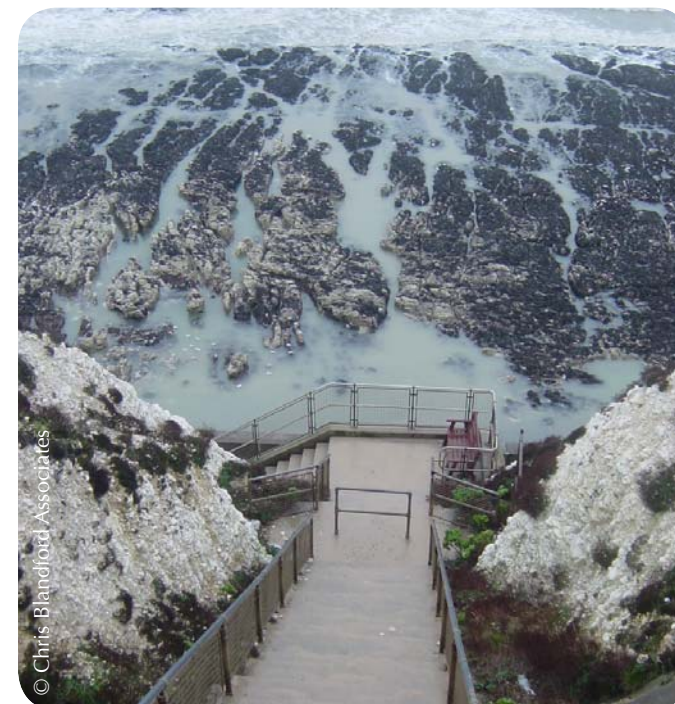
recreational spaces and forms part of the regional cliff top walk connecting Peacehaven with Brighton and Newhaven. The cliff face is protected by a concrete sea defence which features an under cliff walkway and access to the seafront.

6.1.7 The character of Peacehaven has retained its loose knit, low density urban form today. Houses are mainly bungalows, semi-detached or terraced houses. The main high street, the A259, is featureless and suffers from an array of uncoordinated street furniture and lighting. A number of retail premises are located along it. Traffic levels are high during peak times contributing to severance between northern areas of town and the seafront. The main road provides few 'cues' of the seaside location and it is only at few breaks in the urban grain that open green spaces such as the 'Dell' offer glimpses of the open sea.

6.1.8 The Meridian Centre was opened in 1979 to provide a main centre for the town. It has a variety of shops and other services including the Town Council Offices, Social Services and Library. It is surrounded by groups of mature trees and gentle mounding resulting in a rather insular appearance. The centre is isolated from the small number of businesses and retail along the A259.

6.1.9 Following the construction of the new water treatment works a new park is being developed close to the Meridian Centre. The park is expected to boost visitor numbers in the area and it will be a new gateway to the surrounding countryside and the South Downs National Park.

6.1.10 The Greenwich Meridian Line leaves Britain on the coast of Peacehaven and is commemorated by a 3.5m tall obelisk.



...the town feels perched on the edge of a dramatic cliff top setting. There is opportunity to strengthen and draw this character into the core of the town...

Impressions of Peacehaven

**Opportunities and Challenges for the Public Realm of Peacehaven**

6.1.11 Further to comprehensive analysis of the settlement's public realm the following summarise the core challenges and opportunities facing its development. Each has been identified on the map on the facing page. They are summarised as follows:

- A place to pass through but not to stay.
- Safety along cliff top and under cliff walk.
- Poorly promoted sites of interest.
- Cluttered and fragmented character of A259.
- Competing "town centres" and lack of defined arrival experience.

6.1.12 The challenge Peacehaven has is the South Coast road with its heavy traffic, featureless appearance and pedestrian unfriendly character. The road facilitates a character that promotes swift through traffic. It does little to promote a real sense of place or promote access to those unique features that make Peacehaven an opportunity to stop, explore and experience.

6.1.13 The road creates a significant barrier between the town's most significant asset, the cliff top and its associated green network of parks and walks, and the residential areas of the town.

6.1.14 The following identify the priority areas for improvement. They will define and underpin the suggested development interventions:

- Connection and sense of arrival.
- Connection to the Meridian shopping centre and integration into the town.
- Access to the National Park.
- Promotion of the town's natural assets and cliff walks.
- Promotion and interpretation of the town's Meridian Monument.
- Connection to and from the South Coast Road.

**Arrival and Orientation**

- 1 There is a sudden view over the town and seafront on approach from the A259 and an opportunity to capitalise on the special setting.
- 2 The edge of town lacks definition.
- 3 The character of the streetscape along the A259 is 'hard' and bleak with uncoordinated street furniture and signage. There is little appreciation of or 'cues' to the seafront or the town centre.
- 4 The South Coast Road benefits from a number of unique 'pocket spaces' at the ends of the streets. These could be developed to improve the character of the streetscape and improve links to and from the town centre and seafront.

**Connectivity and Town Character**

- 5 The cliff top setting and scarcity of large trees give the residential roads a bare and exposed character uniform in appearance. Generous grass verges provide the opportunity for environmental improvements through street tree planting providing a hierarchy of roads, interest and variation, wind protection and a 'softening' of appearance.
- 6 Pedestrian and cycle routes linking northern parts of the town to the town centre and to the South Coast Road are under promoted.
- 7 Peacehaven town centre appears disjointed from the rest of town and lacks legible links to residential areas, leisure and educational facilities and the South Coast Road.

**Promotion of the Seafront and Points of Interest**

- 8 The cliff top open space is largely uniform, exposed and bleak, lacking variation and interest.
- 9 A number of larger green spaces and the promotion of access points to the under cliff walk offer the opportunity to strengthen this asset.
- 10 The Meridian line and monument are special features of Peacehaven but currently appear under promoted.
- 11 Public car parking areas are important gateways to the town and the seafront and offer the opportunity to promote the town and local points of interest.

**Gateways to the Countryside**

- 12 Gateways to the South Downs National Park are currently under promoted and could benefit from signage and interpretation at strategic locations.

**Legend**

- Town boundary
- Point of interest and heritage feature
- School
- Parking
- Town centre
- Existing walkways, bridleways and tracks
- Main road
- South Downs National Park
- Existing green space
- Key view
- Panoramic view
- Potential for pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular conflict
- Opportunity to improve pedestrian link
- Existing cycle route
- Opportunity to strengthen cycle network
- Opportunity to improve character
- Existing crossing
- Existing entry to the South Downs National Park

**Points of Interest and Heritage Features**

- |                                 |                                    |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Meridian Shopping Centre        | Under Cliff Walk and Sea Defence   |
| Leisure Centre                  | Access to Under Cliff and Beach    |
| Park                            | Beach                              |
| Meridian Park and War Memorial  | The Dell Green Space               |
| Big Parks Project               | Peace Park (planned)               |
| Water Treatment Work            | Chatsworth Park (Telscombe Cliffs) |
| Football Ground and Sports Park | Sports Park (Telscombe Cliffs)     |
| Meridian Monument               | Historic Town Boundary Marker      |
| Cliff Top Green Space           |                                    |

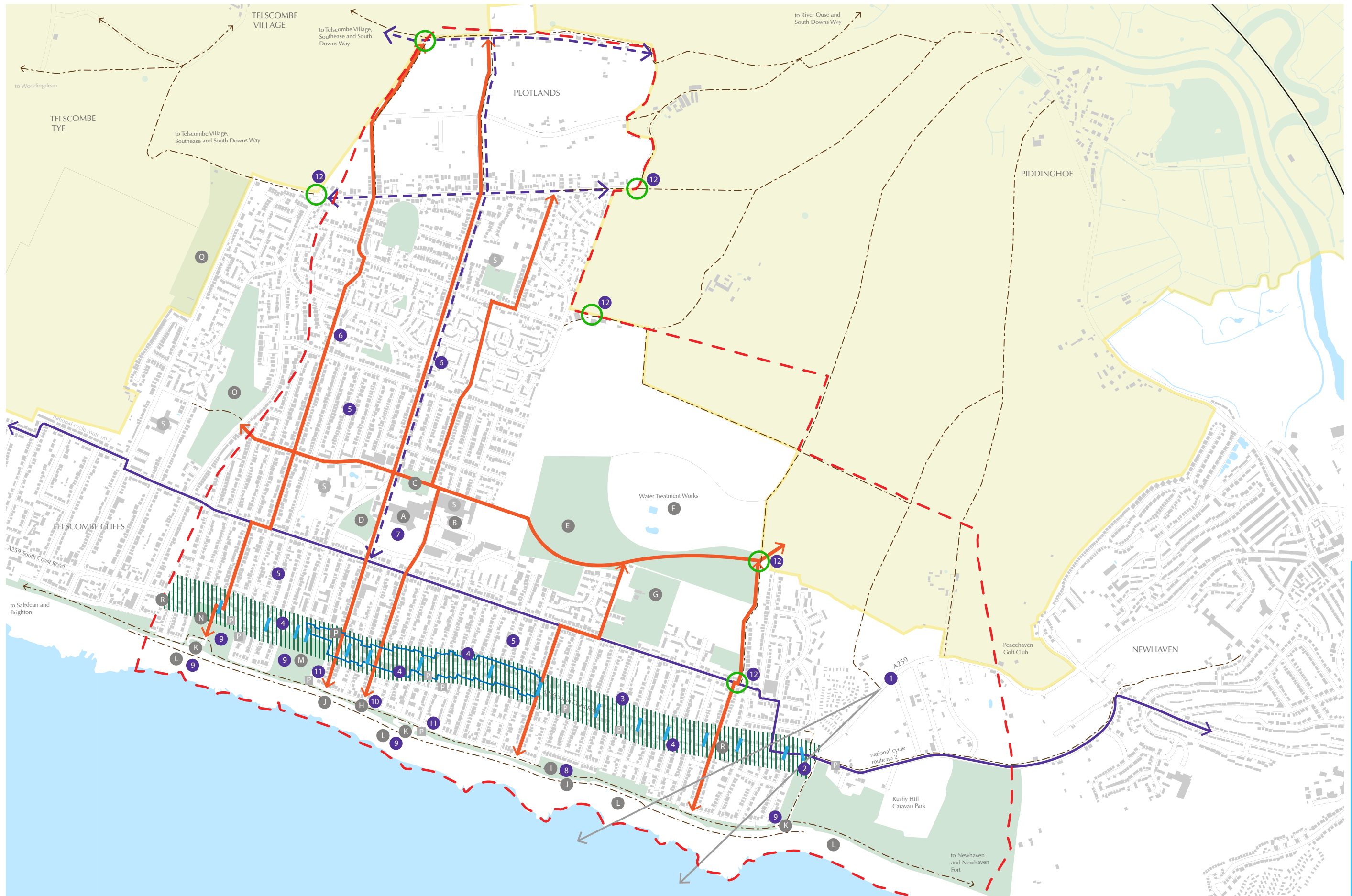


Figure 12 Peacehaven - Opportunities and Challenges

## 6.2 Public Realm Interventions for Peacehaven

### Key Priorities

6.2.1 The following are considered to be priorities for the improvement of the town's public realm, based on the analysis of the opportunities and challenges and the District-wide public realm vision:

- Re-enforce and strengthen a new town "heart" and the Meridian Centre and promote connectivity to the Big Parks project.
- Encourage the public realm to develop a holistic character through the connection of the northern and eastern parts of the town to its "heart".
- Promote a unified character to the South Coast Road through the town and encourage public realm proposals that strengthen pedestrian safety and connection to the cliff top.
- Promote the creation of a green network... "Garden by the Sea".
- Strengthen the connection of the green spaces along the cliff top walk into a continuous whole.
- Promote continuous character along the South Coast Road.
- Promote and encourage connections to the seafront.
- Improve connections and links from residential areas to green network.

### Opportunities for Interventions

6.2.2 The following key overall intervention categories have been developed to broadly group the type and scale of each suggested intervention. They are different for each settlement and have been developed to respond to each town's unique issues and opportunities.

6.2.3 In addition to providing an overarching structure the categories aim to ensure that each intervention meets the core focus and objectives set out in this Framework.

6.2.4 This grouping will also assist on-going assessment and monitoring and inform the preparation of future strategies for the direction and type of future proposals.

6.2.5 The overall intervention categories for Peacehaven are as follows. They are described in further detail in the following section.

- Sense of Arrival and Orientation
- Connectivity and Town Character
- Promotion of the Seafront and Points of Interest
- Gateways to the Countryside



The Meridian Shopping Centre obscured by mature trees and landform with poor connectivity to surrounding areas



Featureless coastal road unattractive to pedestrians and cyclists



Under promoted Meridian Line Monument and Cliff Top Green Space



One of several green spaces along the coastal road with potential to make positive contribution to the public realm



Interrupted pedestrian routes along the coastal road



Featureless residential road with lack of vegetation

### Sense of Arrival and Orientation - Peacehaven

- 6.2.6 A memorable sense of arrival is a key factor in the experience of a place. It is the first opportunity to appreciate the quality and character of the town and what it has to offer. The arrival experience is an important orientation factor. Key landmarks that contribute to the sense of arrival often also act as reference and wayfinding points.
- 6.2.7 Legibility is important in the definition of a place and the character that it promotes. It determines how easy it is to navigate and orientate yourself. For visitors it directly affects the experience and memory of a place.
- 6.2.8 Promotion of key views and linkages between the town's key features, careful composition of the public realm and placement of elements and wayfinding help to improve legibility.

### Connectivity and Character of Peacehaven

- 6.2.9 Connectivity is defined by the available access and movement patterns. For pedestrians they can easily define the image of a place, they are one of the key elements that define the success of town centres and neighbourhoods.
- 6.2.10 The overall character of the town is defined by a collection of its parts including its built form and urban structure. Our streets and the way that they are designed, planned and detailed play important roles in the definition of a town's overall character.
- 6.2.11 It should be noted that the suggested links and routes indicated on the plans are of a strategic nature. The detail will be developed through other policy and delivery mechanisms which are currently being worked up by partners e.g. Local Plan and Regeneration Delivery Frameworks.

### Promotion of the Seafront and Points of Interest of Peacehaven

- 6.2.12 The attraction of the seafront is an important factor in the definition of the place and where possible the town should embrace this character and harness it through all parts of the town as a catalyst for its regeneration.

### Gateways to the Countryside

- 6.2.13 Gateways define key entry points to announce the point of arrival. They are important in creating a legible and coherent set of experiences and to define start and end points of your journey.
- 6.2.14 For the entries to the South Downs National Park they are particularly important to celebrate the beauty of the setting and to enhance and promote the influence that this has on the character of the district.

### Sense of Arrival and Orientation

- 1 Create improved gateways into Peacehaven through:
  - Streetscape improvements such as tree planting and planting between carriageways.
  - Framing and preserving of key views over the town and to the sea.
  - Sensitive integration of a viewing and parking area.
  - Removal of signage clutter.
- 2 Improve the character of the South Coast Road through:
  - Softening its appearance with street tree planting.
  - Distinctive way marking and use of a consistent street furniture palette to strengthen local town character.
  - Strengthen the character of the 'pocket spaces' and improve links to the town centre, the seafront and northern parts of town.

### Connectivity and Town Character

- 3 Strengthen the neighbourhood character of the residential streets by:
  - Preparing and implementing a street tree strategy for the town.
  - Creation and definition of street hierarchy emphasising key routes between the A259, the town centre and northern parts of town.
- 4 Improve the connectivity and integration of the town centre through:
  - Promotion of a network of links to residential areas.
  - Define new connections and promote the Big Parks Project.
  - Simplify cluttered boundaries and improve sense of arrival.

### Promotion of the Seafront and Points of Interest

- 5 Promote the cliff top green space and walk as a local and regional recreation asset linking Peacehaven with Newhaven and Brighton through:
  - Introduction of variety and interest.
  - Incorporation of larger green spaces.
  - Introduction of play spaces and public art.
  - Planting and interpretation of native coastal vegetation along its edges.
  - Improved interpretation of the Meridian line and monument.
  - Interpretation of the chalk cliffs, erosion and coastal habitats.
  - Signage and interpretation of points of interest within town.
- 6 Promotion and improvement of access to the under cliff walk and beach.

### Gateways to the Countryside

- 7 Interpret the national cycle route and promote the local cycle network.
- 8 Improve the gateways to the South Downs National Park and the countryside promote these at strategic points throughout town.

### Legend

- Town boundary
- Point of interest and heritage feature
- School
- Parking
- Town centre
- Existing walkways, bridleways and tracks
- Main road
- South Downs National Park
- Existing green space
- Key view
- Panoramic view
- Potential for pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular conflict
- Opportunity to improve pedestrian link
- Existing cycle route
- Opportunity to strengthen cycle network
- Opportunity to improve character
- Existing crossing
- Gateway to the South Downs National Park

### Points of Interest and Heritage Features

- |                                 |                                    |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Meridian Shopping Centre        | Under Cliff Walk and Sea Defence   |
| Leisure Centre                  | Access to Under Cliff and Beach    |
| Park                            | Beach                              |
| Meridian Park and War Memorial  | The Dell Green Space               |
| Big Parks Project               | Peace Park (planned)               |
| Water Treatment Work            | Chatsworth Park (Telscombe Cliffs) |
| Football Ground and Sports Park | Sports Park (Telscombe Cliffs)     |
| Meridian Monument               | Historic Town Boundary Marker      |
| Cliff Top Green Space           |                                    |



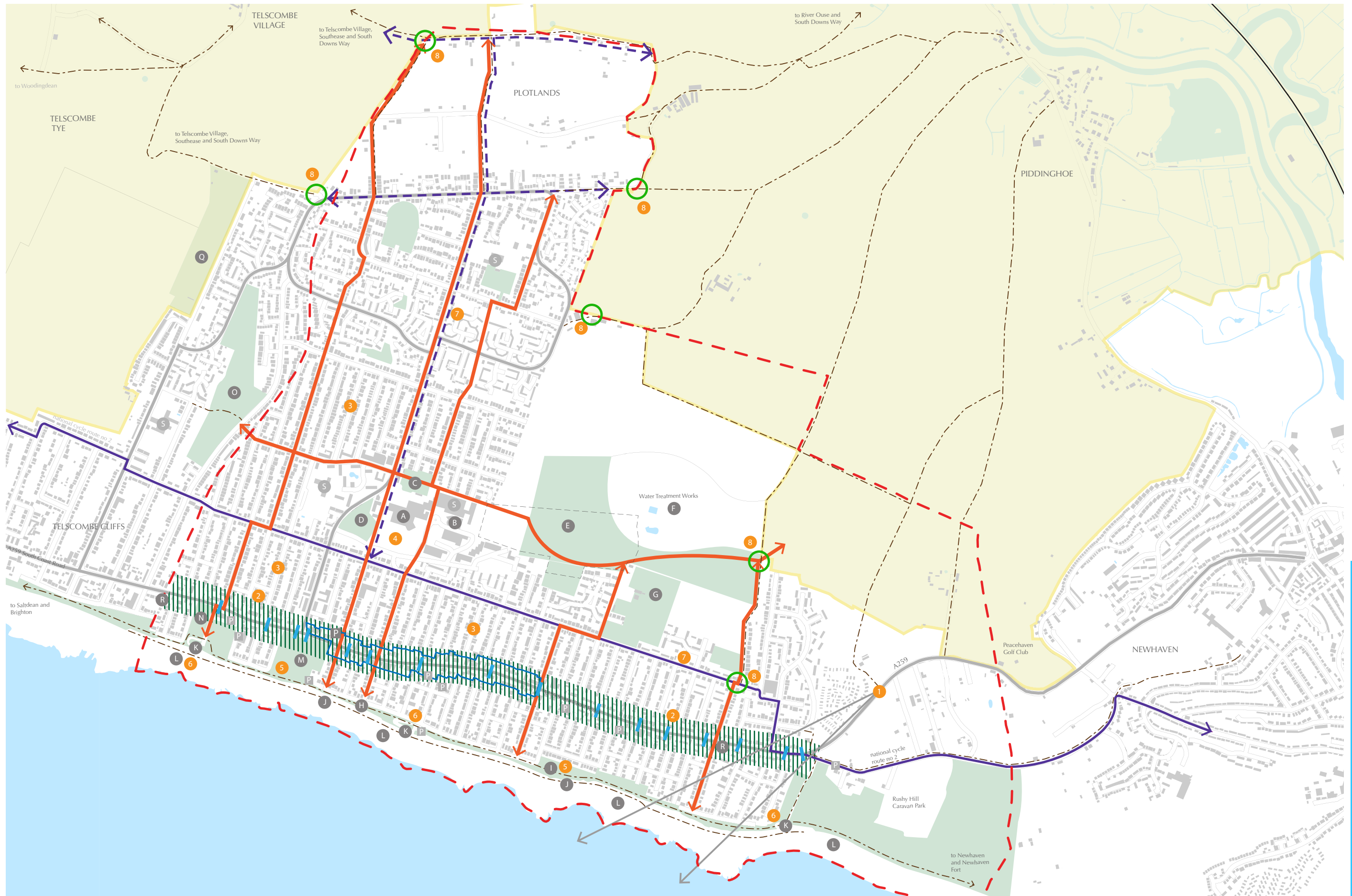


Figure 13 Peacehaven - Opportunities for Interventions



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# 7

## TELSCOMBE CLIFFS/EAST SALTDEAN PUBLIC REALM FRAMEWORK

### 7.1 Contextual Analysis of Telscombe Cliffs/ East Saltdean

#### Overview

7.1.1 Telscombe Cliffs and East Saltdean are largely residential areas situated between Brighton and Peacehaven. Together with Peacehaven they have a population of 21,657. The A259 coast road is the only vehicular route in and out of the towns with a frequent bus service to Brighton and Eastbourne. The built heritage of the towns are of the early 20th century.

7.1.2 Telscombe Cliffs and East Saltdean benefit from a particularly enviable relationship with the South Downs National Park through the proximity and scale of the Telscombe Tye that separates the two towns. The Tye is the only place in the District where the National Park meets sea and these two magnificent characters combine.

7.1.3 The Tye should not be seen as a binding factor for each of the towns, rather they should promote their own specific characteristics. However they should each share an intimate relationship where, at the highest strategic level, all public realm developments should re-enforce the character of the National Park and its continued role as a unifying element for a collection of adjacent communities.

#### Character

7.1.4 Telscombe Cliffs and East Saltdean are situated on exposed cliff top locations of gently undulating downland. They were built in the early 1900s as planned settlements and have retained their loose, open knit urban form until today. The two settlement areas are separated by the ridge of the Telscombe Tye, common land, extending from Telscombe Village to the coast. The Tye forms a natural break between the settlements and serves the community as a valued recreation area. The Tye is contained within the South Downs National Park, and is one of the few places where the park boundary reaches the seafront.

7.1.5 The ancient Telscombe Village is nestled in a tight valley two miles north of the coast line. It consists of a small cluster of buildings around a church dedicated to St Laurence.

7.1.6 The cliff edge between Peacehaven and Saltdean does not benefit from sea defences and erosion is common place.



Impressions of Telscombe Cliffs and East Saltdean

...The Tye is a constant reminder of the beauty and contrast of a unique setting. Restriction to access and underwhelming entries do not promote its use to those that are unfamiliar...

**Opportunities and Challenges for the Public Realm of Telscombe Cliffs/East Saltdean**

7.1.7 Further to comprehensive analysis of the settlements public realm the following summarise the core challenges and opportunities facing its development. Each has been identified on the map on the facing page. They are summarised as follows:

- Safety along cliff top and under cliff walk.
- Poorly promoted links to the Tye, wider National Park and Telscombe Village.
- Poorly promoted points of interest and individual town character.

7.1.8 With many similarities to Peacehaven the challenge for these small settlements is the presence and dominance of the South Coast Road. The road facilitates a character of passing through and does little to promote access to the National Park or the coastal setting.

7.1.9 On the other hand, the road does provide an easy opportunity to access, explore and experience the National Park yet this is terribly under promoted.

7.1.10 The following identify the priority areas for improvement. They will define and underpin the suggested development interventions:

- Connection and sense of arrival.
- Access to the National Park and in particular Telscombe Tye.
- Access and connectivity to Telscombe Village.
- Connection to and from the South Coast Road.

**Arrival and Orientation**

- 1 The character of the streetscape along A259 is open and bleak with uncoordinated street furniture and signage. There is little appreciation or 'cues' to the seafront and northern parts of town.
- 2 Between the towns, the A259 widens with a grass verge between carriageways, providing the opportunity for further greening and provision of additional interest.
- 3 Provisions for cyclists and associated signage are under promoted.

**Connectivity and Town Character**

- 4 Residential roads are bare and uniform in appearance with a lack of neighbourhood feel. Generous grass verges provide the opportunity for environmental improvement through street tree planting to provide interest and variation, wind barriers and frame views.
- 5 Existing traffic calming measures appear over-engineered with no benefit to the local amenity.
- 6 Pedestrian route is under promoted.
- 7 The urban edge of the town distracts from the landscape character and could benefit from screening and softening with tree planting. Proposals to be carefully sited with sensitivity around topography, historic landscape and land use patterns.
- 8 Local retail nodes lack attractive amenity spaces.
- 9 Cycle routes to Telscombe Village, Piddinghoe, Newhaven and Lewes are under promoted with a lack of signage.

**Promotion of the Seafront and Points of Interest**

The cliff top open space and access to the seafront is a valuable recreational asset for local residents and provides the opportunity for attracting visitors to the area.

- 10 The cliff top open space is largely uniform, lacking variation and interest.
- 11 Access to the seafront and under cliff walk is under promoted.
- 12 Legibility of the cliff top walk is unclear with the path interrupted and under promoted.

**Gateways to the Countryside**

Telscombe Tye is a valuable recreational asset to local residents as well as being a gateway to the South Downs National Park and the countryside.

- 13 The main entry to Telscombe Tye is under promoted. It lacks interpretation of regional points of interest.
- 14 There are numerous local access points to Telscombe Tye some of which could benefit from improved approaches, landscape improvements and signage.

**Legend**

- Town boundary
- Point of interest and heritage feature
- School
- Parking
- Conservation area
- Existing walkways, bridleways and tracks
- Main road
- South Downs National Park
- Existing green space
- Key view
- Panoramic view
- Potential for pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular conflict
- Opportunity to improve pedestrian link
- Existing cycle route
- Opportunity to strengthen cycle network
- Unattractive character in town
- Unattractive character between settlements
- Existing crossing
- Existing entry to the South Downs National Park

**Points of Interest and Heritage Features**

- |                        |                                  |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Telscombe Tye          | Saltdean Library and Lido        |
| Cliff Top Green Space  | Beach                            |
| Telscombe Village      | Access to Under Cliff Walk/Beach |
| Chatsworth Park        | Under Cliff Walk                 |
| Sports Fields          | Peace Park, Peacehaven (planned) |
| Retail/Shops           | The Dell, Peacehaven             |
| Telscombe Civic Centre | Portobello Pumping Station       |
| Peacehaven Town Centre | Town Boundary Marker             |
| Saltdean Park          |                                  |

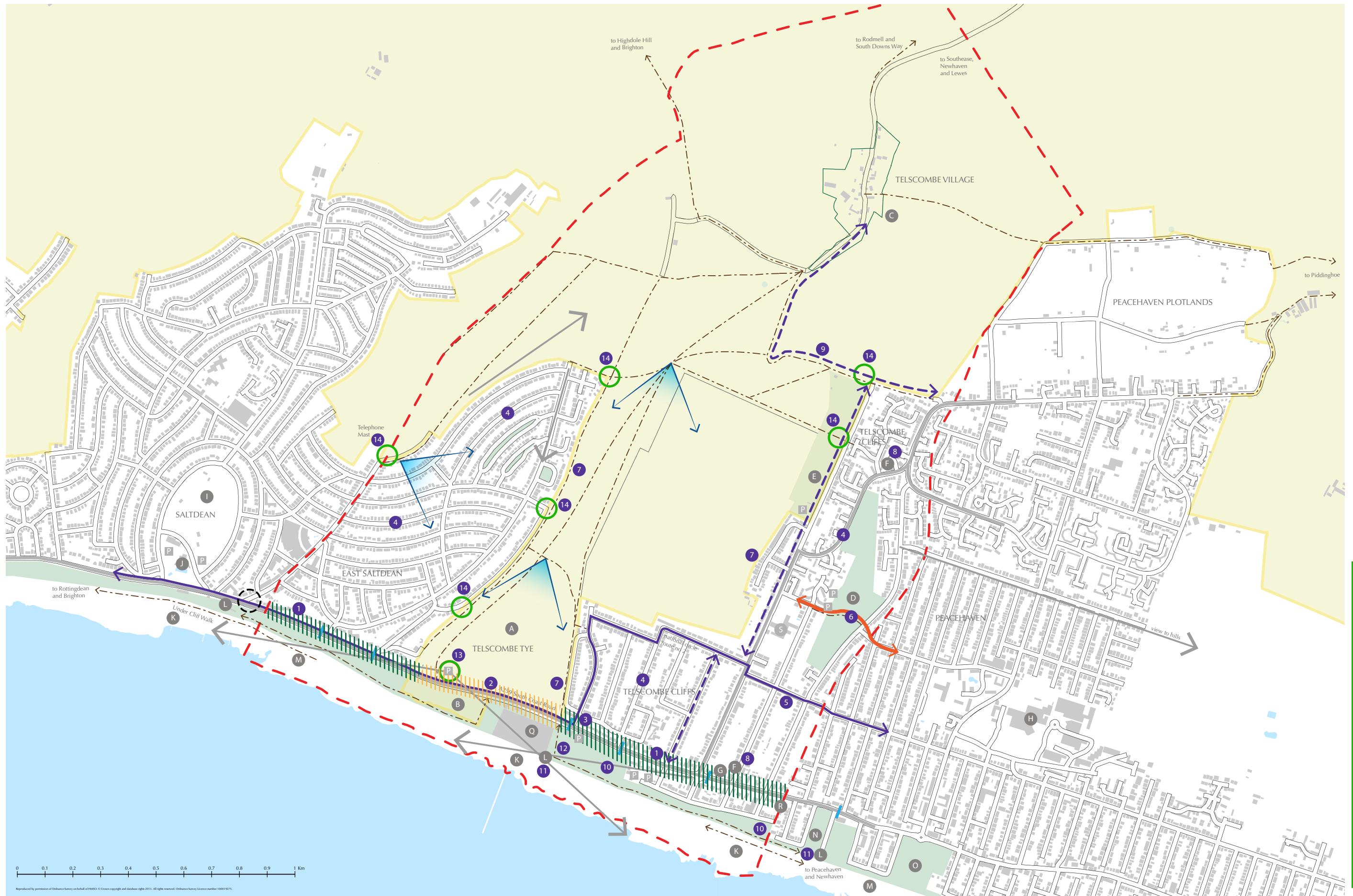


Figure 14 Telscombe Cliffs/East Saltdean - Opportunities and Challenges

**7.2 Public Realm Interventions for Telscombe Cliffs/East Saltdean**

**Key Priorities**

7.2.1 The following are considered to be priorities for the improvement of the towns' public realm, based on the analysis of the opportunities and challenges and the District-wide public realm vision:

- Encourage public realm proposals that strengthen the connection of the town to the upper and lower cliff walks.
- Promote the connection to and character of the South Downs National Park through enhancement of existing and the creation of new gateways.
- Strengthen local landscape character, and encourage the celebration of the Tye and its ability to directly influence the character of the setting.
- Strengthen the connections to, and promote the presence of, the Tye to 'draw' the communities together.
- Promotion of access to, and improvements of, the cliff top and under cliff walk.
- Improve awareness and orientation to specific points of interest to strengthen identity and sense of place.
- Promote connection of the series of cliff top green spaces

**Opportunities for Interventions**

7.2.2 The following key overall intervention categories have been developed to broadly group the type and scale of each suggested intervention. They are different for each settlement and have been developed to respond to each town's unique issues and opportunities.

7.2.3 In addition to providing an overarching structure the categories aim to ensure that each intervention meets the core focus and objectives set out in this Framework.

7.2.4 This grouping will also assist on-going assessment and monitoring and inform the preparation of future strategies for the direction and type of future proposals.

7.2.5 The overall intervention categories for Telscombe Cliffs and East Saltdean are as follows. They are described in further detail in the following section

- Sense of Arrival and Orientation
- Connectivity and Town Character
- Promotion of the Seafront and Points of Interest
- Gateways to the Countryside



Featureless coastal road



Featureless residential road with lack of vegetation



Opportunity to strengthen links and awareness of seafront



Opportunity to improve interest along the Cliff Top Walk and green space

### Sense of Arrival and Orientation - Telscombe Cliffs/ East Saltdean

7.2.6 A memorable and experiential sense of arrival is a key factor in the experience of a place. It is the first opportunity to get a sense of the quality and character of the town and what it has to offer. The arrival experience is an important orientation factor, key landmarks that contribute to the sense of arrival often also act as reference and wayfinding points.

7.2.7 Legibility is important in the definition of a place and the character that it promotes. It determines how easy it is to navigate and orientate yourself. For visitors it directly affects the experience and memory of a place.

7.2.8 Promotion of key views and linkages between the towns' key features, careful composition of the public realm and placement of elements and wayfinding help to improve legibility.

### Town Character and Civic Connections of Telscombe Cliffs/East Saltdean

7.2.9 Connectivity is defined by the available access and movement patterns. For pedestrians they can easily define the image of a place, they are one of the key elements that define the success of town centres and neighbourhoods.

7.2.10 The overall character of the town is defined by a collection of its parts including its built form and urban structure. Our streets and the way that they are designed, planned and detailed play important roles in the definition of a town's overall character. In the case of the Lewes District there are also several unique natural assets that contribute to a unique and identifiable character which is also defined by a number of landmark buildings and focal features.

7.2.11 It should be noted that the suggested links and routes indicated on the plans are of a strategic nature. The detail will be developed through other policy and delivery mechanisms which are currently being worked up by partners e.g. Local Plan and Regeneration Delivery Frameworks.

### Promotion of the Seafront and Points of Interest

7.2.12 The dramatic cliff top setting and seafront are important natural assets for the town. They offer a unique character and also provide, in conjunction with the Tye and National Park, the main opportunity for recreational experiences.

7.2.13 Promotion of these, and the significant points of interest that define a sense of place, are important considerations for the development of the public realm.

### Gateways to the Countryside from Telscombe Cliffs/East Saltdean

7.2.14 Gateways define key entry points to announce the point of arrival. They are important in creating a legible and coherent set of experiences and to define start and end points of your journey.

7.2.15 For the entries to the South Downs National Park they are particularly important to celebrate the beauty of the setting and to enhance and promote the influence that this has on the character of the district.

### Sense of Arrival and Orientation

- 1 Improve the character and arrival sequence of the South Coast Road.
- 2 Promote the retail area on Central Avenue and links to the seafront.
- 3 Soften the appearance of the junction, promoting a seafront character and rationalising signage and street furniture.
- 4 Improve the character of the South Coast Road and promote the sense of Telscombe Tye continuing to the seafront.

### Connectivity and Town Character

- 5 Strengthen the neighbourhood character of the residential streets by:
  - Implementing a street tree strategy.
  - Introduce traffic calming and improve character through landscape interventions.
- 6 Strengthen the key pedestrian and cycle link to Peacehaven shopping centre and leisure facilities.
- 7 'Soften' the urban edge of town.
- 8 Promote local cycle routes and signage.

### Promotion of the Seafront and Points of Interest

- 9 Promote the cliff top green space as a local and regional asset linking the towns with Brighton and Newhaven through:
  - Introduction of variety and interest.
  - Introduction of play spaces and public art.
  - Planting and interpretation of native coastal vegetation along its edges.
  - Interpretation of the chalk cliffs, erosion and coastal habitats.
  - Signage and interpretation of points of interest within town.
- 10 Promote and improve access to the seafront.

### Gateway to the Countryside

- 11 Improve main entry point and interpretation of regional points of interest .
- 12 Improve signage and access to local access points to Telscombe Tye.

### Legend

- Town boundary
- Point of interest and heritage feature
- School
- Parking
- Conservation area
- Existing walkways, bridleways and tracks
- Main road
- South Downs National Park
- Existing green space
- Key view
- Panoramic view
- Potential for pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular conflict
- Opportunity to improve pedestrian link
- Existing cycle route
- Opportunity to strengthen cycle network
- Opportunity to improve character in town
- Opportunity to improve character between settlements
- Existing crossing
- Gateways to the South Downs National Park

### Points of Interest and Heritage Features

- |                        |                                  |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Telscombe Tye          | Saltdean Library and Lido        |
| Cliff Top Green Space  | Beach                            |
| Telscombe Village      | Access to Under Cliff Walk/Beach |
| Chatsworth Park        | Under Cliff Walk                 |
| Sports Fields          | Peace Park, Peacehaven (planned) |
| Retail/Shops           | The Dell, Peacehaven             |
| Telscombe Civic Centre | Portobello Pumping Station       |
| Peacehaven Town Centre | Town Boundary Marker             |
| Saltdean Park          |                                  |





Figure 15 Telcombe Cliffs/East Saltdean - Opportunities for Interventions





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# 8 NEXT STEPS

## 8.1 Translation into Policy and Delivery

This Public Realm Framework is a strategic document that:

- Provides an overview of the current conditions of the public realm across the District
- Suggests general priorities and principles for potential intervention

This document is not a detailed plan for action. The detail will be developed through other policy and delivery mechanisms which are currently being worked up by partners e.g. Local Plan and Regeneration Delivery Frameworks. The production of these policy and delivery mechanisms will provide opportunities for more detailed consultation so that local knowledge and aspirations are reflected and feed into the process.

## 8.2 Collaboration

8.2.1 This Framework provides the opportunity for local authorities, statutory undertakers/utility companies and other key stakeholders (including the local community, businesses and developers) to work collaboratively in developing a common approach to the planning, design and maintenance of the District's public realm. A strategy for stakeholder engagement and consultation is required to support the delivery of the Framework's vision and strategic objectives.

## 8.3 Public Realm Technical Guidance

8.3.1 In order to take forward the principles and opportunities for interventions set out in this Framework, technical guidelines are required to define the detailed design parameters/specifications for the District's public realm. The preparation of a Public Realm Technical Manual would determine a palette of appropriate materials, finishes and elements for each type of public space identified within the District's main settlements.

## 8.4 Actions

8.4.1 The following points summarise the suggested actions to drive the delivery of this Framework's aspirations:

- Produce a **Public Realm Charter** to detail joint working arrangements
- Produce a **Planning Discussion Paper** to explore how the findings of the Framework will be fed into the planning process
- Scope the production of a **Public Realm Platform** as a knowledge development and sharing mechanism
- Introduce **design awards** to promote best practice; this could include working with existing and emerging award programmes
- Produce a **Public Realm Investment Plan** to map existing funding as the basis for shaping future budgets and funding streams and making bids for external sources of funding
- Produce a Public Realm Plan as part of each Regeneration Delivery Framework including an **equalities assessment**
- Put in place a **Public Realm Working Group** to consider and drive forward these recommendations



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