

# ***“Ringmer to 2030”***

## **Consultation Statement**



*Photographs courtesy of Nick Wates of Nick Wates Associates, [www.nickwates.co.uk](http://www.nickwates.co.uk)*

***Ringmer Parish Council  
August 2014***

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This consultation statement is drawn up in accordance with Regulations 15 (1)(b) and 15(2) of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (2012). It explains the background to the decision to develop a Neighbourhood Plan for Ringmer, the three main stages in which it has been developed, and the community engagement that has accompanied each stage.
- 1.2 Our starting point was the 2003 Ringmer Village Plan, and its 2006 and 2009 Strategies for Employment and Residential Development. The development of the Neighbourhood Plan has occurred in three main stages. In the first stage we explored with residents and other stakeholders the issues and options for the Neighbourhood Plan, including its scope, vision and key principles, and the types of policies that it might contain. This led to the development of a draft Neighbourhood Plan, and we carried out an informal consultation on this with residents and other stakeholders early in 2013. This led to further refinement and improvement of the Neighbourhood Plan, which was then subject to a formal consultation in the autumn of 2013 as required by Regulation 14 of the 2012 Neighbourhood Planning Regulations. Further modification has been agreed in the light of the responses received, to create the Neighbourhood Plan now submitted to our Local Planning Authorities, Lewes District Council and the South Downs National Park Authority.
- 1.3 This Neighbourhood Plan has been created by and for the people of Ringmer, to guide the future development of their community. This Consultation Statement demonstrates the steps that have been taken to engage with Ringmer residents and other stakeholders, as envisaged in paragraphs 183-184 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

## 2. The Ringmer Village Plan (2003)

- 2.1 In developing the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan, we did not start with a blank canvas.
- 2.2 The **Ringmer Village Plan** was published in **2003** by the Ringmer Village Plan group, sponsored and supported by Ringmer Parish Council. The Village Plan was based on a comprehensive, high-return, community survey. This emphasised the very high importance to residents of maintaining Ringmer's "village feel". There was also a wish to see the village become more sustainable, with more local employment opportunities being seen as the way forward to reducing the need to commute to employment outside the village. The Village Plan also expressed concern about the nature of recent development in Ringmer: recent development at that time had been predominantly high-value executive housing, when what was felt to be needed to correct a growing imbalance in the village community was smaller and more affordable housing. It was a particular concern that relatively few families with young children could afford to live in Ringmer, so that the community age structure was becoming unbalanced. This was reflected in the reduced number of children entering Ringmer Primary School, which had fallen from a peak of up to 75 per year in the 1970s to barely 25 per year. This had resulted in the 1993 demolition of Victorian school buildings, and the consolidation of the school on the former Infants School department site on Harrisons Lane. A principal aim of the Village Plan was to redress this imbalance, with the annual demand for entry to the Primary School an indicator for monitoring purposes. Demand has risen steadily over the past decade, and there are 55 new entrants registered for the Reception class in Sep 2014.
- 2.3 An **Employment Strategy** was developed as part of the Village Plan and approved by the Parish Council in **2006**. Ringmer has exceptionally high levels of out-commuting via a heavily-congested local road network, and the strategy was based on the provision of more local employment opportunities, to reduce the need to commute. The strategy, developed by the Parish Council over

a period of two years, and involving extensive local publicity and formal community consultation, identified the employment-generating potential of the conversion of redundant agricultural buildings, and also two larger sites in Ringmer parish capable of development for employment use. The council has also liaised with site owners and local entrepreneurs, and consistently supported appropriate applications for change of use to employment generating purposes. It has actively liaised with new employers to resolve issues such as car-parking by new in-commuters creating nuisance for residents. The past decade has seen substantial growth in employment in Ringmer in areas as diverse as the provision of occupational health advice and the rebuilding of canal boats. The council facilitated the development of the new Ringmer Health Centre by the provision of a central site on council-controlled land in Ringmer village, thus both improving local health services and increasing Ringmer employment in that field.

- 2.4 A **Strategy for Residential Development** was also developed as part of the Village Plan and approved by the Parish Council in **2009**. This strategy was also developed over a period of about two years, with extensive discussion, public meetings and drafts published for formal community consultation. This led to much local debate about the extent and the type of new housing required in Ringmer, building on the views expressed in the 2003 Village Plan and, indeed, those in the earlier 1988 Ringmer Village Appraisal, also based on an extensive household survey carried out by the Parish Council a generation ago. The results were clear. A key conclusion was that most residents were not opposed to new development as such, but that their very high priority was that new development should not be of such a nature as to change Ringmer from a large village to a small town (with village facilities). The very strong community priority to protect Ringmer's 'Village Feel' was impressed on the Parish Council long before the start of work on the Neighbourhood Plan. Some of the specific policies necessary to achieve this were also identified at this stage. Especially clear was the community view that delivery of a given number of houses through a regular series of small-scale developments would be far more acceptable than delivery through a smaller number of larger estates. The type of new housing was also considered an important issue, with new housing suitable for young families a priority. The identification of inadequate off-road parking provision as a principal cause of neighbourhood discord also dates from the Village Plan.
- 2.5 Work was just getting underway in **2011** on developing a Village Plan strategy on **Social & Leisure Facilities** when the Parish Council was made aware of the new opportunity to develop a **Neighbourhood Plan**, under what was then the Localism Bill. The Village Plan and its Strategies were of course shared with our Local Planning Authority, Lewes District Council. However, we had been disappointed that little consideration had been given to them, either in collecting evidence, in developing planning policies or in considering actual planning applications.
- 2.6 The Ringmer Village Plan and its strategies are available on the Ringmer Parish Council website, <http://www.ringmerparishcouncil.org.uk/>.

### **3. An overview of the development of the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan**

- 3.1 When Neighbourhood Plans were first proposed by the government, a District Councillor representing Ringmer, and aware of the work done under the Village Plan, raised with both the District and Parish Councils the possibility of Ringmer applying for Vanguard status. An application, based on the Village Plan, to develop an employment-led Neighbourhood Plan to create a more sustainable community, was selected by the DCLG in Spring 2011 as one of 17 Wave 1 Vanguard Neighbourhood Development Plans.
- 3.2 Initial consultations with stakeholders began in September 2011, though the progress was somewhat delayed by the need to await the passing of the Localism Act (November 2011) and the publication of

its regulations (April 2012). The first round of community consultation was carried out between November 2011 and February 2012, including a series of four public meetings (Seminars 1-4) and a Thursday-Saturday Exhibition in an empty shop in the Ringmer Shopping precinct. The principal objective of this first round of community engagement was to identify the issues to be included in the Neighbourhood Plan and to gain a preliminary view of the options for addressing them. Views of residents and other stakeholders attending the public meetings and the exhibition were collected.

- 3.3 Further progress was delayed by the Lewes District Emerging Core Strategy (published in Autumn 2011), which consulted on a very wide range of new housing development for Ringmer (176-647 new homes in the Plan period). While consultations and engagement with stakeholders continued throughout 2012, it was clear that no Neighbourhood Plan compatible with a number at the upper end of the range would be supported in a local referendum. Nevertheless, a formal application for **designation of Ringmer parish as a Neighbourhood Plan area** was made as soon as this was permitted under the Localism Act's Neighbourhood Planning regulations (April 2012). The designation was consulted upon and formally approved by both our two Local Planning Authorities, Lewes District Council and the SDNP Authority in September-October 2012.
- 3.4 In July 2012 a **Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment) Scoping Report** was prepared by Ringmer Parish Council. This SA/SEA Scoping Report identified a total of 19 sustainability objectives, each with a set of indicators. These included five economic objectives (objectives ECON1-ECON5), six social objectives (objectives SOC6-SOC11) and eight environmental objectives (objectives ENV12-ENV19). A consultation with statutory consultees, residents and other stakeholders was carried out between 6 July 2012 and 17 August 2012, to coincide with the consultation on the designation of the Neighbourhood Plan area. A total of six responses were received, four from residents (including a Parish Councillor and a District Councillor) and two from statutory consultees, Natural England and the Environment Agency. None suggested any changes to the 19 sustainability objectives or their indicators. One resident suggested that there should be a numerical scoring system for each objective, but a Neighbourhood Planning Officer advised against the use of a scoring system of the type proposed. Ringmer Parish Council Planning Committee received a report on the consultation at its meeting held on 25 October 2012. This set of 19 sustainability objectives was adopted and has been used to appraise the policies included in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 3.5 Publication of the draft Lewes District Submission Core Strategy, proposing 220 new homes for Ringmer in the Plan period, triggered a second round of community consultation and engagement. This took place in January-March 2013, and considered specific potential housing sites as well as more general principles. This consultation was based on a **draft Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan and its appendices**, published in **January 2013**. This consultation included a further three public meetings, and a Friday-Saturday drop-in session with councillors. A total of 70 responses to the consultation were received from residents, developer interests and other stakeholders. Views of residents and other stakeholders attending the public meetings were also collected.
- 3.6 Consideration of these responses was followed by a formal regulation 14 consultation conducted in September-October 2013, based on a proposed Neighbourhood Plan that had been further revised in the light of the responses to the draft Neighbourhood Plan and ongoing information and comment from other stakeholders. The regulation 14 consultation attracted 103 formal responses, ranging from brief notes of support to a response from a planning agent acting on behalf of Gleeson Strategic Land that ran in total to over 100 pages and addressed a wide range of the policies proposed. Discussions with a range of stakeholders, including landowners and developers, service providers and village organisations has continued throughout 2013 and 2014, and of course attention has been

paid to changes in national planning policy and its interpretation. A formal resolution to submit the revised Neighbourhood Plan to our Local Planning Authorities was passed in July 2014.

#### 4. Organisation

- 4.1 The **Steering Group** for the Neighbourhood Plan is composed of the members of the Parish Council Planning Committee, chaired by Cllr Richard Booth. The Planning Committee includes all 13 Ringmer parish councillors. The Steering Group has met regularly throughout the development of the Neighbourhood Plan, to receive information, updates and reports, and to oversee the development of the Plan.
- 4.2 More detailed work has been undertaken by a **Drafting Group**, including Cllrs John Kay (Council chair), Richard Booth (Planning Committee chair), Martin Whitlock (Council vice-chair), Nick Hall & Jenny Hill. Cllrs Colin Mitchell and Louise Forder were added to the Drafting Group in July 2014.
- 4.3 The overall management of the development of the Neighbourhood Plan has been the responsibility of **Ringmer Parish Council**. The Neighbourhood Plan has been a standing item on the agendas of the monthly meetings of the Parish Council and its Planning Committee since early 2012. All Parish Council and Planning Committee meetings are held in public and include an opportunity for members of the public attending to raise issues or express their views on matters on the agenda before they are discussed. The agenda and minutes of Parish Council and Planning Committee meetings are published on the parish council notice board and on the parish council website.
- 4.4 Members of the Steering Group have held regular meetings and discussions with representatives of both planning authorities, and the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). The Neighbourhood Planning officers for Lewes District Council have been Susie Mullins, Tal Kleiman and James Garside. Andrew Triggs was the Neighbourhood Planning Officer for the SDNP Authority. Other officers, including senior officers of both planning authorities, and senior councillors of Lewes District Council have attended some meetings. Miranda Pearce was identified by the DCLG to oversee the development of this Vanguard Neighbourhood Plan. There have also been a very large number of meetings and other communications with a very wide range of organisations and stakeholders, including residents' groups and individual residents, landowners and agents acting on their behalf, employers and employment site owners, farmers, wildlife experts, officers of local councils and officers of utility or other service providers. The organisations and individuals consulted are listed more fully in Neighbourhood Plan appendix A.
- 4.5 The Parish Council has also benefitted from initial DCLG-funded technical support and advice from the CPRE-NALC consortium. Two Planning Aid volunteers, Andrew Wood and Felicity Newman, assisted us in the first cycle of consultations between November 2011 and February 2012. DCLG-funded support from Locality, through the provision of specified time commitments in late 2012 and early 2013 from an independent planning consultant, Professor Mike Gibson, and an expert in community consultation, Nick Wates of Nick Wates Associates, was extremely valuable in contributing to the development of, and the consultation on, the draft Neighbourhood Plan.

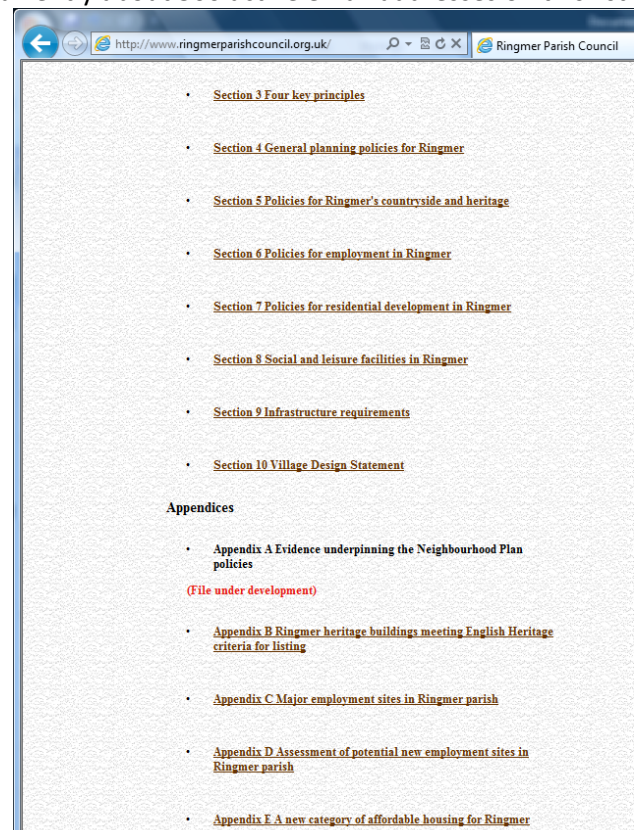
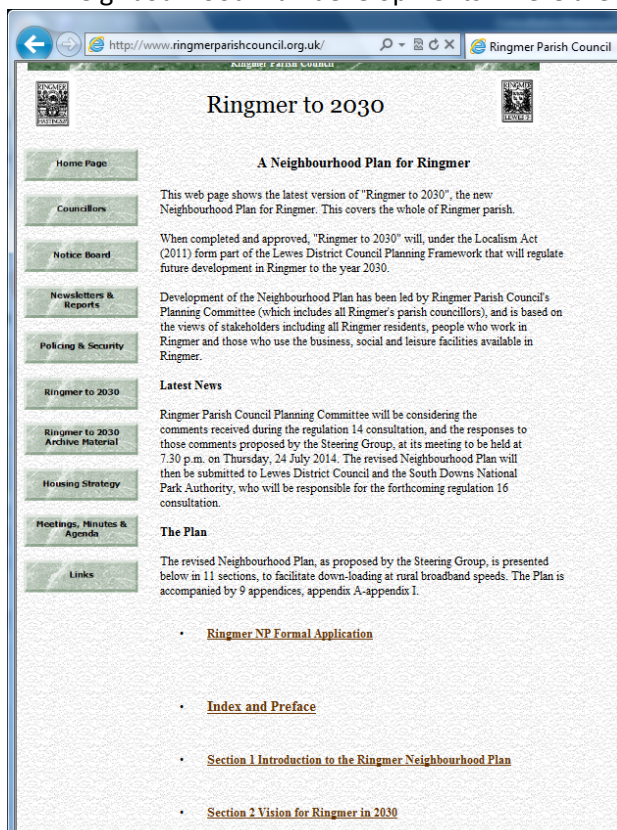
#### 5. Communication and Publicity

- 5.1 The Parish Council has communicated with Ringmer residents about the development of the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan and advertised meetings and events via a variety of media.
  - The Parish Council website, <http://www.ringmerparishcouncil.org.uk/>, is managed very efficiently on the council's behalf by webmistress Edwina Morris. The Neighbourhood Plan has had its own dedicated webpages, "*Ringmer to 2030*", throughout its development. These contain the latest news,



information about future developments and the full text of the most recent drafts of the Neighbourhood Plan and its appendices. This is a very well-constructed and supported website, and if you google 'Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan' the top result takes you directly to the "Ringmer to 2030" homepage. For the duration of public consultations a prominent notice and link to these pages has been provided on the Parish Council homepage.

- Parish Council Newsletters are planned for quarterly publication. At least one Newsletter each year, in advance of the Annual Parish Meeting, is distributed to all households in Ringmer parish. Copies of others are available for collection from Ringmer Village Hall. Each significant stage in the development of the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan has been preceded by a Parish Council Newsletter delivered to each Ringmer household. Parish Council Newsletters published since March 2011 are all available on the Parish Council website, <http://www.ringmerparishcouncil.org.uk/>.
- Notices placed via the parish correspondent in the Parish Pump pages of the Lewes-Ringmer edition of the *Sussex Express*, the local newspaper serving this area. The Parish Pump section advertises forthcoming local events and is one of the most-read sections of the newspaper by residents.
- Notices placed by the Parish Council in 'Ringmer Church and Village News', a local publication distributed monthly by volunteers to 850 Ringmer households. The latest edition of this publication, edited by Edwina Morris, is available online at <http://www.tbds.org.uk/ringmernews/mag.pdf>.
- Notices placed on the Parish Council notice board.
- All monthly Parish Council and fortnightly Planning Committee meetings are open to the public, and include an agenda item at which members of the public attending can ask questions or make comments. The agenda and minutes of each meeting are available on the Parish Council website. The Annual Parish Meeting, typically attended by about 100 residents, includes an open question session that is a feature of the meeting. These opportunities have been taken on a number of occasions by individual residents or groups of residents to express views about aspects of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Notices sent by email from the dedicated email address [ringmerto2030@gmail.com](mailto:ringmerto2030@gmail.com) blind copied to a list of residents and stakeholders who have asked to be informed whenever there are Neighbourhood Plan developments. There are currently about 300 active email addresses on this list.



**Screenshots of the 'Ringmer to 2030' webpages on the Parish Council website.**



**Example of a Neighbourhood Plan notice posted on the main Parish Council home page**

- 5.2 The development of the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan has also been advertised and commented on by others. Some relevant examples are included in appendix 2 below.
- The *Sussex Express* has carried news articles on the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan, in addition to those items published in the Parish Pump section from the Parish Council.
  - An independent Ringmer village Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/ringmernews>) has carried notices of all meetings and events. The Facebook page is run by Edwina Morris, who also manages the Parish Council website and is thus aware of all Neighbourhood Plan developments
  - The 'Focus' newsletters published by the Ringmer Liberal Democrats have carried notices of all major Neighbourhood Plan events, together with some comments.
  - The Ringmer News Service, run by a Liberal Democrat District Councillor, is an electronic news service reporting items about Ringmer, and the possible impact on Ringmer of changes in local government policies, circulated by email to interested parties. This includes the weekly planning applications for Ringmer, and has mentioned all Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan developments.
  - Two local residents' associations, the Broyle Community Association and the North Ringmer Residents Group, have arranged their own discussions and surveys about issues relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan, the results of which they have shared with the Parish Council.
  - The Ringmer Liberal Democrats and a developer, Gleasons Strategic Land, have carried out their own opinion surveys of Ringmer opinion on topics relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan. The Ringmer Liberal Democrats have published the results of their surveys in 'Focus'. Gleeson Strategic Land have shared the results of their survey with the Parish Council.
  - A landowner and his developer, Croudace Strategic Land, arranged their own distribution of a leaflet promoting their site to all village residents to coincide with both the informal and regulation 14 consultations. Some respondents to the regulation 14 consultation (e.g. nos.98, 99) wrote their responses on copies of this leaflet.



- Several developers accepted the opportunity to promote their sites at consultation events arranged by the Parish Council. Another developer, Gleeson Strategic Land, planned its own exhibition in Ringmer Village Hall to promote its site in June 2013. They collected evidence from those attending the event, and the North Ringmer Residents Group independently surveyed the views of those attending. Croudace Strategic Land held an exhibition at Ringmer Community College in July 2014 to promote its own proposals.
  - South East Water also arranged an event in Ringmer in April 2013 as part of the consultations associated with the development of its Water Resources Management Plan WRMP14. It has a major water treatment works in Ringmer, and was both planning improvements there and developing its water supply options to serve it, topics addressed in the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.3 In addition the Parish Council has held a large number of bilateral and multilateral meetings with stakeholders including landowners, developers, business site owners, business managers, shopkeepers, the owners of the Ringmer shopping precinct, residential and commercial estate agents, infrastructure and service providers, local societies and interest groups, etc. The evidence thus collected is detailed in appendix A of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.4 All the Neighbourhood Plan consultation events were well attended by village meeting standards. The best attended was the exhibition held from Thursday 2 February to Saturday 4 February 2012 in a vacant shop in the Ringmer Shopping Precinct. This attracted 339 people who signed in as attending, 320 of whom identified themselves as Ringmer residents. About two thirds of these completed the two main response forms. The other main consultation events attracted 50-120 attendees. 70 responses were received in response to the informal consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan and 103 responses to the formal regulation 14 consultation. Most, but by no means all, of these were from village residents. This raises the issue of how representative the consultees making responses can be considered to be.
- 5.5 Three approaches to this issue were taken. The first was to reach out to village organisations established for other purposes. Few responded, apart from local community organisations such as the North Ringmer Residents Group and the Broyle Community Association, and the Ringmer Liberal Democrats. The Ringmer History Group responded to both consultations and the Ringmer road safety organisation RADAR and the Delta Disability Group to the first, but all focused on aspects of the Neighbourhood Plan directly relevant to their primary interests. The responses of these organisations were essentially similar to those of other stakeholders consulted directly about their specific interests, who were very ready to express views on issues directly relevant to their primary concerns but rarely expressed other than personal views on wider issues.
- 5.6 The second approach was that on the final day of the February 2012 exhibition a Planning Aid volunteer and a parish councillor directly approached a sample of nearby householders in a door to door survey of whether they had attended the exhibition, and if not, why not. Sample responses of those who had not attended included:
- *"Is it today?" [Respondent then rushed up to the exhibition]*
  - *"I haven't got the time" (several)*
  - *"I'm in my nineties. I'm not interested"*
  - *"We are moving to Australia in six weeks"*
  - *"I don't know anything about it"*
  - *"The dog ate the Newsletter"*
  - *"I leave that sort of thing to my husband (who was out)"*
  - *"We've rented this house and just moved in. We are Lewes people, but couldn't find anywhere to rent there. We hope to be able to move back there soon"*

- 5.7 The third approach was to compare the responses to the same question asked in three different surveys, with different respondent groups. The key question was how many new homes the respondent thought should be built in Ringmer during the period of the Neighbourhood Plan. The three surveys asking this question were:
- (i) Consultation meeting 2. Respondents had first listened to a presentation based on the Ringmer Village Plan emphasising the reasons that some new housing was required and then discussed the issues with others.
  - (ii) The Exhibition. A larger number of respondents, who had the opportunity to consider the arguments presented on a poster display.
  - (iii) A door-to-door survey hand-delivered to households in Ringmer village north of the Lewes Road by the North Ringmer Residents Group. The survey forms were collected by knocking on the door a few days later, and a high response rate (over 50%) was obtained.

More than two thirds of those attending consultation meeting 2, who had listened to the arguments, were prepared to agree to a new housing target of 100-200 new houses. Most of the remainder sought a smaller number. Broadly similar results, but with a somewhat lower median number, were obtained from the larger sample attending the Exhibition. However, the respondents in the door-to-door survey, who were provided with much less background information but could be argued to be a much more representative sample of residents, were very much less tolerant of new housing than the two groups above. Very few of those responding to this survey were happy to contemplate as many as 100 new homes being built during the Plan period. In all three surveys the proportion of respondents prepared to consider over 200 new homes was very small, and (in the first two samples) such responses were largely confined to those with development interests. There was thus no evidence at all to support the view that those residents engaging with the Neighbourhood Plan are a small, obstructive group, unrepresentative of wider village opinion. The evidence rather supports the alternative view, that most residents prefer their village as it is, but many of those willing to engage with the issues can be convinced by argument that a reasonable level of development is necessary.



*Participants at the February 2012 exhibition*

## 6. Informal ‘issues and options’ consultation November 2011 – February 2012

- 6.1 The first cycle of public consultation involved four evening seminar sessions in November-December 2011 held at the Caburn Field premises of Ringmer F.C. and a three-day public exhibition in a vacant shop in the Ringmer Shopping Precinct held from Thursday 2 February to Saturday 4 February 2012.
- 6.2 The topics for discussion at each evening seminar session were pre-circulated in a Parish Council Newsletter (Autumn 2011) distributed to each household in Ringmer parish shortly before the first session.
- 6.3 The format at each meeting was:
- A presentation of the issues for discussion by the Parish Council;
  - At sessions 2, 3 & 4 an opportunity to discuss the issues in small groups with others attending;
  - At sessions 2, 3 & 4 those participating were invited to complete questionnaires with both structured questions and opportunities for open comment.
- 6.4 The outcomes were considered by the Steering Group and the initial presentations, a synopsis of the meeting prepared by a parish councillor who has experience as a parish clerk and an analysis of the responses to the structured questions were published on the “*Ringmer to 2030*” webpages shortly after the meeting. The analysis was published on a copy of the questionnaire used. The notes and analysis are available on <http://www.ringmerparishcouncil.org.uk/>.
- 6.5 The topics for the four evening seminar sessions were:
- Monday 21 November 2011: Vision, Key Principles & Countryside
  - Tuesday 29 November 2011: Housing
  - Friday 2 December 2011: Employment and Housing
  - Tuesday 13 December 2011: Social & Leisure facilities and Infrastructure requirements
- 6.6 The outcomes of responses received at the four evening seminar sessions were considered by the Steering Group. Three main issues were identified and comments on these were sought at the February 2012 Exhibition.
- How many new homes would Ringmer need in the next 20 years?
  - What types of new homes were needed and where should they go?
  - Where should the new employment sites be?
- 6.7 In addition potential Neighbourhood Plan policy areas were divided into four categories.
- Category A policies appeared uncontroversial, supported by at least 90% of respondents. Many policies in this category were developed from policies in the 2003 Village Plan and its Strategies.
  - Category B policies were those that appeared from the evening seminars to have fairly clear overall support but also at least some opposition. There were six draft policies in this category, and Steering Group wished to get a clearer view of the balance of residents’ opinions.
  - Category C policies were potential new policies developed in response to the ‘open’ comments made at the evening seminars. There were eleven of these.
  - Category D policy areas were topics that Steering Group felt should be addressed in the Neighbourhood Plan but was still developing a view.
- 6.8 The Exhibition was held from Thursday 2 February to Saturday 4 February 2012 in an empty shop in the Ringmer Shopping Precinct kindly made available to us by the leaseholder. The key issues, as above, were advertised and explained in the January 2012 Parish Council Newsletter distributed to

each household in Ringmer parish shortly before the Exhibition. The same issues were explained, in a little more detail, in poster presentations at the Exhibition itself.

- 6.9 Respondents were invited to complete three, differently coloured, response sheets. The blue sheet sought respondents' views on the three main issues. The white sheet sought views on the category B and C policies. The yellow sheet, in an open format, sought views on the category D policy areas. There was an opportunity to indicate dissent from any of the category A policies, but the Steering Group view, based on the earlier evening seminars, that these were very largely uncontroversial was confirmed.
- 6.10 The number of people who signed in as attending the Exhibition was 339. Over 90% identified themselves as Ringmer residents. Most stayed at the Exhibition for long enough to complete all three response sheets, though inevitably there were a minority who were pressed for time. There were 232 completed white response sheets, the majority addressing all the policies raised. There were 202 completed blue response sheets, again with the majority addressing all three main issues. Under 200 yellow response sheets were completed: these varied from responses that made brief comments on one or two topics to long and detailed expressions of views on a wide range of issues. The responses to the structured questions on the white and blue response sheets were summarised (on a copy of the relevant questionnaire) and published on the "Ringmer to 2030" webpages shortly after the exhibition. They remain available. The outcomes of these responses gave the Steering Group a sufficiently clear indication of the views of respondents on the key issues to enable it to progress to developing a Draft Neighbourhood Plan.

## **7. Informal consultation on the Draft Neighbourhood Plan, January-February 2013**

- 7.1 The sections and appendices of the draft Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan were approved by the Parish Council on 13 December 2012 or by the Parish Council Planning Committee on 20 December 2012 and published on the parish council website in January 2013, for consultation over an 8 week period from 11 January-8 March 2013. The sections were designed to facilitate downloading at rural broadband speeds. Printed copies were available in the Parish Council Office and in Ringmer Library. Statutory consultees were notified of the consultation on our behalf by Lewes District Council Neighbourhood Planning Officers. The consideration of the draft Neighbourhood Plan aligned with the consultation on the proposed submission Lewes District Core Strategy (Local Plan part 1).
- 7.2 Two Ringmer Parish Council Newsletters were published in January 2013 and February 2013. A developer also distributed a leaflet supporting their proposals throughout the village (included in appendix 2 below). While comments on all aspects of the Neighbourhood Plan were invited, the January Parish Council Newsletter, distributed to all households in Ringmer parish, explained the four key issues. These were:
- Consideration of potential new employment sites, including three identified since the previous consultation and one whose scale and boundaries had been refined;
  - The proposed distribution of new housing between Ringmer village, the Broyleside and the rural areas of the parish;
  - The amount and types of affordable housing to be provided;
  - Alternative new housing sites.
- 7.3 Three further evening meetings were arranged in Ringmer Village Hall.
- Wednesday 29 January 2013: Included presentations by Tal Kleiman, Lewes D.C. Neighbourhood Planning Officer, and by the Steering Group. Topics on which views from residents and other



- stakeholders were sought included countryside policies; new employment sites; the total amount, distribution and phasing of new housing; and the amount and type of affordable housing.
- Wednesday 13 February 2013: Included presentations by three developers and by the Steering Group. The main topic was proposed new greenfield development sites around the Broyleside settlement and in the rural areas of the parish. Some questions from the previous session were repeated, as this session was particularly well attended by Broyleside residents.
  - Wednesday 20 February 2013: Included presentations by three developers and by the Steering Group. The main topic was proposed new greenfield development sites around Ringmer village.
- 7.4 These meetings were well attended, including by those with development interests. At the end of each evening those present were invited to complete a questionnaire, giving their views and expressing comments. The outcomes were considered by the Steering Group and the initial presentations (where available), a synopsis of the meeting prepared by a parish councillor who has experience as a parish clerk and an analysis of the responses to the structured questions in the questionnaires were published on the “*Ringmer to 2030*” webpages shortly after the meeting. These analyses remain available on <http://www.ringmerparishcouncil.org.uk/>.
- 7.5 In addition two drop-in sessions were arranged in Ringmer Village Hall for Friday 8 February (4 p.m. to 7 p.m.) and Saturday 9 February (10 a.m. to 2 p.m.) when members of the Steering Group were available to discuss any Neighbourhood Plan issue with members of the public. These were not especially well attended, with only 20-30 residents or other stakeholders attending each session. However, some of the questions asked were detailed and searching.
- 7.6 In addition to the structured consultation responses received at the public meetings held, a total of 70 written or emailed consultation responses commenting on the draft Neighbourhood Plan were received. These ranged from a single paragraph on a specific point to long, considered responses addressing many aspects of the draft Neighbourhood Plan. Some were completed at the “Drop-in” sessions.
- 7.7 Responses were received from both Local Planning Authorities (Lewes District Council and the SDNP Authority), from the Environment Agency, Natural England, the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (National Office), the North Ringmer Residents’ Group (two responses), Ringmer Rovers Junior Football Club and one of Ringmer’s District Councillors. There were seven responses from landowners, their developers or agents or members of their families. There were 57 responses from Ringmer residents, including 35 resident in Ringmer village, 14 resident in the Broyleside and 6 residents in Ringmer’s countryside. Two residents did not identify where in the parish they lived. 13 of the residents’ responses were from couples.
- 7.8 Many of the responses concerned issues that were also discussed in detail at the public meetings, and were therefore considered in conjunction with the views collected there. Some responses were from people who had been unable to attend these meetings, but still wished to express their views. Others were from people who had attended the meetings, and wished to reinforce their views expressed in the consultation sheets returned there. This consultation also offered the opportunity to express views on topics not focused on at the public consultation meetings or to make additional suggestions. The majority of responses indicated support for, or opposition to, specific residential development sites.
- 7.9 Steering Group considered these responses on a policy-by-policy basis. Its response, approved by Ringmer Parish Council Planning Committee at its meeting on 22 August 2013, is published in full on the “*Ringmer to 2030*” webpages on <http://www.ringmerparishcouncil.org.uk/>.

## 8. The Regulation 14 consultation, September-October 2013

- 8.1 The Regulation 14 consultation on the proposed Neighbourhood Plan and its appendices was carried out by Ringmer Parish Council between 6 September 2013 and 18 October 2013. The Neighbourhood Plan and its appendices were approved for consultation by Ringmer Parish Council Planning Committee at its meeting on 22 August 2013 and were posted (in sections designed to facilitate downloading at rural broadband speeds) on the “*Ringmer to 2030*” webpages. Printed copies were made available in the parish office, in Ringmer Library, in the Lewes District Council planning office reception and in the Midhurst offices of the SDNP Authority. A parish councillor who was not then a member of the Drafting Group (Cllr Colin Mitchell) was delegated to check on the first morning of the consultation that all intended elements of the Neighbourhood Plan were correctly mounted on the website and down-loadable, and this was confirmed.
- 8.2 A list of statutory consultees and their contact details was provided to us by Lewes District Council Planning Department. They were given notice of the Regulation 14 consultation, normally by email, as indicated in appendix 1 below. The covering message read: *“This is to notify you that the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan has now been published and is open for consultation from today, Friday 6 September 2013, to Friday 18 October 2013. The Neighbourhood Plan, and the evidence on which it is based, is available on the “Ringmer to 2030” webpages of the Ringmer Parish Council website, [www.ringmerparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.ringmerparishcouncil.org.uk). Printed copies are available in the Ringmer Parish Council Office (Ringmer Village Hall, Lewes Road, Ringmer, East Sussex, BN8 5QH), in Ringmer Library and in the Lewes District Council reception area. Comments can be made by email to [ringmerto2030@gmail.com](mailto:ringmerto2030@gmail.com) or by letter to the Ringmer Parish Council Office.”*
- 8.3 The September 2013 Parish Council Newsletter, entirely focused on this consultation, was hand-delivered by parish councillors to all households in Ringmer parish. Copies were also hand-delivered to many businesses and services within Ringmer parish, including all retail premises in Ringmer and the providers of health services and dentistry. Confirmation that this delivery had been effective was obtained by sending an email to all residents and stakeholders on the Neighbourhood Plan email consultation list requesting a response if the Newsletter had not been received at any Ringmer residential address. Recipients included multiple residents living on each parish councillor’s distribution round. Three negative emails were returned. Two came from a small group of 6 houses in a rural part of the parish, where the councillor concerned realised that he had omitted to make delivery. This was promptly corrected. The third was from an address where the councillor concerned was confident that she had in fact delivered a Newsletter, but an additional copy was promptly provided.
- 8.4 Other means used to ensure that as many residents and other stakeholders as possible were informed of the consultation were as in section 5 above. In addition a press release was issued to local media. A prominent illustrated article containing almost the full information from the press release was published in the 6 September 2013 issue of the *Sussex Express* [appendix 2 below]. A ‘*Focus*’ Newsletter published by the Ringmer Liberal Democrats that also featured the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan consultation was also distributed to all Ringmer households at the start of the consultation, and information about the consultation was also included in the Ringmer News Service e-bulletin circulated to its membership list by a Liberal Democrat District Councillor. The Ringmer Village News Facebook site also carried an article about the start of the consultation, with a link to the “*Ringmer to 2030*” webpage, and provided a further prompt shortly before the end of the consultation. The North Ringmer Residents Group also distributed information about the consultation to its members, again with a link to the website, and arranged a special meeting of its members. Croudace Strategic Land distributed a leaflet, soliciting support for their development

proposals, widely within the village during the consultation period. This leaflet encouraged consultation responses in support of their proposals, as noted above.

- 8.5 A total of 103 responses to the Regulation 14 consultation were received. The majority (85%) were from individual residents, including two residents who are also District Councillors. There were several responses from those with developer interests, some of them very detailed – one ran to over 100 pages of text and appendices. There were also responses from East Sussex County Council, Lewes District Council, Natural England, Southern Water, the head and chair of governors of Ringmer Primary School, the governors of the Ringmer Academy, the North Ringmer Residents Group, the Ringmer History Study Group, the South Downs Society, CPRE Sussex and the Marine Management Organisation.
- 8.6 Most responses from residents were either supportive of the Neighbourhood Plan overall, or made site-specific comments in support of, or opposition to, individual development sites. As in previous consultations, there was strong support for policy 5.4, which seeks to retain the strategic Green Gap between the two Ringmer settlements, and a minority who did not support this policy. Residents' responses included several that were wide ranging, knowledgeable and thoughtful, especially about infrastructure consequences of new development and the need for new sporting facilities. A few were based on detailed local knowledge or the resident's professional expertise. A response from a resident with professional experience as a planning agent has been particularly helpful in improving the Village Design Statement in section 10 of the Neighbourhood Plan, an aspect that otherwise attracted rather few comments. One additional resident response, no.104, was received a few days after the close of the consultation. This made very similar points to those already made by several others about a particular proposed development site.
- 8.7 While most responses from developers promoted the sites in which they had a particular interest, some also made valuable comments about broader aspects of the Neighbourhood Plan. The response from East Sussex County Council incorporated expert advice and guidance assembled from the comments made by several different departments. Lewes District Council made detailed responses and recommendations on a policy-by-policy basis. The responses from other statutory consultees and groups reflected their areas of primary interest. No responses were received from Wealden District Council, Lewes Town Council or any of our neighbouring parish councils. A detailed response was made by the South Downs National Parks Authority, but was received well after the formal close of the consultation. This response has been taken into account as part of the ongoing discussions with stakeholders.
- 8.8 The full list of responses was published on the "*Ringmer to 2030*" webpage, with only personal details (signatures, private telephone numbers and private email addresses) redacted. They remain available. The Steering Group considered the responses received at a series of meetings. Its proposed responses, and consequent amendments to the Neighbourhood Plan, were considered and approved at the Parish Council Planning Committee meeting held on 24 July 2014. The paper summarising the comments made and the changes proposed was published in advance of the meeting on the "*Ringmer to 2030*" webpage and is included as appendix 3 below. The revised Neighbourhood Plan, with proposed new text distinguished in red, was also published on the "*Ringmer to 2030*" webpage in advance of the meeting.

## **9. Consultation with stakeholders, 2011-2014**

- 9.1 Discussions with stakeholders were held in the course of the public engagement and consultation events described above; in public meetings of Ringmer Parish Council and its Planning Committee; in private meetings with members of the Steering Group; in telephone conversations and by letter and

email. Full details are included in Neighbourhood Plan appendix A, in which the evidence underpinning the development of the Neighbourhood Plan is more fully documented. As noted above, a range of stakeholders contributed to the informal 'issues and options' consultation, the informal consultation on the Draft Neighbourhood Plan and the formal Regulation 14 consultation.

9.2 Examples of stakeholders who contributed to the development of the Neighbourhood Plan include:

- East Sussex County Council, including discussions with the County Councillor representing Ringmer, staff of the Highways, Children's Services and Adult Social Care departments and the County Archaeologist, the County Landscape Architect, the County Ecologist and the head of Public Health Intelligence. Note that the Highways Department are also, directly and through their principal sub-contractors, important Ringmer employers.
- Lewes District Council, where in addition to discussions with staff of the Planning, Housing, Waste & Recycling and Corporate Affairs Departments, discussions were also held with senior councillors including the (then) Council Leader, Cllr James Page, the lead councillors for Planning, Housing and Waste & Recycling, the chair and other members of the Council's Scrutiny Panel, and with the three District Councillors representing Ouse Valley and Ringmer ward.
- Representatives and officers of the SDNP Authority.
- Representatives of the Environment Agency, Southern Water and South East Water. During the development of this Neighbourhood Plan Ringmer Parish Council also contributed to the development of South East Water's water resources management plan WRMP14 as members (along with the Environment Agency and Natural England) of the company's Environmental Focus Group.
- Representatives of the Highways Agency, and of local groups and individuals with sustainable transport and road safety interests, including the Ringmer road safety campaign group RADAR.
- Representatives of Natural England; the High Weald AONB; the Ringmer Ramblers; the RSPB; a proponent of the development of a Ringmer Community Woodland; the Design & Conservation Officer of New Forest District Council; and several local wildlife experts.
- Local farmers Harold Stroude, Richard Monnington, Sarah Farnes, Andrew Brinkhurst and Colin Turner (another prominent local farmer is a parish councillor); the proprietor of the Goldcliff Nursery; tree surgeons R.W. Green, Mark Watts and Andrew Winsbury.
- Representatives of local cultural, historical and archaeological groups.
- Representatives of local and regional estate agents specialising in residential sales and lettings, and in commercial property, and with the owners of several Ringmer business sites.
- Owners, managers and representatives of a number of current, recent or prospective Ringmer businesses.
- Owners and their representatives of a large number of potential Ringmer development sites. We made it known, via Lewes District Council planning policy officers that we would wish to hold discussions with the proponents of all the Ringmer SHLAA sites submitted for consideration, and over 90% of the landowners or their representatives responded positively to this approach. Direct discussions were also held with the owners of a number of small sites, including potential barn conversion sites, and with the owners of a number of local housebuilding and construction companies.
- Representatives of the Hastoe Housing Association, the Retirement Leasing Housing Association, Retirement Villages Ltd, Galleon Care and members of a Brighton-based Co-Housing group.
- Representatives of the North Ringmer Residents Group, the Broyle Community Association and an informal group of residents whose properties adjoin the proposed 'Westbourne' development.
- Representatives of the Glyndebourne Opera House, Raystede Animal Welfare Centre, Bentley Wildfowl and Motor Museum and the East Sussex Gliding Club, and local providers of Bed & Breakfast accommodation.
- The senior partner and practice manager of the River Lodge Primary Care Practice, who provide medical services at the Ringmer (Anchor Field) Health Centre; the chief executive of the Lewes &



Havens Clinical Commissioning Group; the owner of the Ringmer Dental Surgery; and the manager of the Lime Tree House care home.

- The heads teachers and governors of Ringmer Community College, Ringmer Primary School, Ringmer Nursery School and the proprietor of a private Montessori nursery school in Wellingham, Ringmer.
- Providers of social and leisure facilities in Ringmer including representatives of the Ringmer Village Hall Management Committee, the Wave Leisure Trust, Ringmer F.C., AFC Ringmer, Ringmer Rovers Junior Football Club, Ringmer Cricket Club, Ringmer Bowls Club, Ringmer Croquet Club, The Landscape Group (providers of sports pitches), Ringmer Scout Group and the Ringmer Children’s Centre.
- The chair of the Ringmer Shopkeepers Association and several individual shop owners and managers; retail consultants G.L. Hearn; and with the commercial estates manager of CHP Management Ltd, who manage the Ringmer Shopping Precinct.
- Representatives of the Lewes-based green energy company Ovesco.
- The Operations Director of the Brighton & Hove Bus Company.
- The Vicar of Ringmer and representatives of the Diocese of Chichester re future cemetery provision.
- Many individual residents of Ringmer, concerning a very wide range of issues.

## 10. Abbreviations used

AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
CPRE	Campaign for the Protection of Rural England
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
NALC	National Association of Local Councils
RADAR	Ringmer Against Drivers Acting Recklessly
Ringmer F.C.	Ringmer Football Club
RSBP	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SA/SEA	Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment)
SDNP	South Downs National Park
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

## **Appendix 1. Advice from Neighbourhood Planning Officers, received by email 16 August 2013, about Statutory Consultees for the Regulation 14 consultation, and how these recommendations were implemented [text in blue below].**

Dear John,

This is exciting news and many thanks for your email updating us of the steering groups decision and your next step, of presenting the draft neighbourhood plan to the parish council for their recommendation. I think you should congratulate yourselves for the amount of work you've managed to produce in a relatively short period of time.

I note that you intend to start your 6 week period of consultation (as required by regulation 14 in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012) on the 6th September and I attach the list of consultation bodies referred to in paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 in the regulations.

Regulation 14 (b) states that a qualifying body (the parish council) must consult any consultation body referred to in paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 whose interests the qualifying body considers may be affected by the proposals for a neighbourhood development plan. Schedule 1 is set out below and obviously is wide ranging. I would imagine that there are consultation bodies on the list that the steering group consider it would not be appropriate to consult with - such as the Coal Authority. Ultimately, it is up to yourselves which bodies you decide to consult with but we have provided (attached) our contact details for each of the groups listed in paragraphs (a)-(l) - it may be that you have your own contacts for some of the groups, in which case it may be more appropriate to use them. Obviously, you will have a better idea of local groups in your area paragraphs (m)-(q).

### **SCHEDULE 1 Consultation Bodies - Neighbourhood development plans**

1. For the purposes of regulations 14 and 16, a "consultation body" means—

(a) where the local planning authority is a London borough council, the Mayor of London;

*Not applicable to Ringmer*

(b) a local planning authority, county council or parish council any part of whose area is in or adjoins the area of the local planning authority;

*Lewes District Council (LPA)*

*Email to Tal Kleiman, Susie Mullins, Neighbourhood Planning Officers*

*Email to Nilam Popat (corporate affairs)*

*Email to Leighton Rowe (housing policy)*

*Email to Cllr James Page (Council Leader), Cllr Tom Jones (Cabinet member for planning), Cllr Sharon Davy (Chair, Planning Applications Committee)*

*South Downs National Park Authority (LPA)*

*Email to Andrew Triggs, Neighbourhood Planning Officer*

*Email to Lara Southam, [lara.southam@southdowns.gov.uk](mailto:lara.southam@southdowns.gov.uk)*

*Wealden District Council (LPA whose area immediately adjoins Ringmer parish)*

*Email to Wealden District Council planning policy team via their website form*

*Email to [claire.ashdown@wealden.gov.uk](mailto:claire.ashdown@wealden.gov.uk)*

*Email to [Marina.Brigginshaw@wealden.gov.uk](mailto:Marina.Brigginshaw@wealden.gov.uk)*

*East Sussex County Council (County Council)*

*Email to [ellen.reith@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:ellen.reith@eastsussex.gov.uk)*

*Email to [rupert.clubb@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:rupert.clubb@eastsussex.gov.uk)*

*Lewes Town Council (boundary adjoins Ringmer)*

*Email to [townclerk@lewes-tc.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@lewes-tc.gov.uk)*

*Hamsey Parish Council (boundary adjoins Ringmer)*

*Email to [clerk@hamsey.net](mailto:clerk@hamsey.net)*

*Barcombe Parish Council (boundary adjoins Ringmer)*

*Email to [Barcombe.pc@homecall.co.uk](mailto:Barcombe.pc@homecall.co.uk)*

*Isfield Parish Council (boundary adjoins Ringmer)*

*Email to [isfieldpc1@aol.co.uk](mailto:isfieldpc1@aol.co.uk)*

*Little Horsted Parish Meeting (boundary adjoins Ringmer)*

*Email to [simonautie@gmail.com](mailto:simonautie@gmail.com)*

East Hoathly Parish Council (boundary runs close to Ringmer)  
 Email to [clerk@easthoathlywithhalland.org.uk](mailto:clerk@easthoathlywithhalland.org.uk),  
 Laughton Parish Council (boundary adjoins Ringmer)  
 Email to [laughtonclerk@gmail.com](mailto:laughtonclerk@gmail.com)  
 Glynde and Beddingham Parish Council (Glynde parish boundary adjoins Ringmer)  
 Email to [barbara.knight@secamb.nhs.uk](mailto:barbara.knight@secamb.nhs.uk)  
 Confirmed by telephone message to clerk's number 01273 858261

(c) the Coal Authority;  
 The Coal Authority responded to the consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan to say that Ringmer was not in an area of interest to them

(d) the Homes and Communities Agency;  
 Email to [mail@homesandcommunities.co.uk](mailto:mail@homesandcommunities.co.uk)

(e) Natural England;  
 Email to [southeastplanning@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:southeastplanning@naturalengland.org.uk),  
 Email to [angela.marlow@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:angela.marlow@naturalengland.org.uk)

(f) the Environment Agency;  
 Email to [planningSSD@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:planningSSD@environment-agency.gov.uk),  
 Email to [mark.luker@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:mark.luker@environment-agency.gov.uk)

(g) the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (English Heritage);  
 Email to [alan.byrne@english-heritage.org.uk](mailto:alan.byrne@english-heritage.org.uk),  
 Email to [southeast@english-heritage.org.uk](mailto:southeast@english-heritage.org.uk)  
 After response from Alan Byrne, redirected to [e-seast@english-heritage.org.uk](mailto:e-seast@english-heritage.org.uk)

(h) Network Rail Infrastructure Limited (company number 2904587);  
 Email to [townplanningse@networkrail.co.uk](mailto:townplanningse@networkrail.co.uk)

(i) the Highways Agency;  
 Email to [elizabeth.cleaver@highways.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:elizabeth.cleaver@highways.gsi.gov.uk)

(j) the Marine Management Organisation;  
 Email to [info@marinemanagement.org.uk](mailto:info@marinemanagement.org.uk)

(k) any person—  
 to whom the electronic communications code applies by virtue of a direction given under section 106(3)(a) of the Communications Act 2003; and  
 who owns or controls electronic communications apparatus situated in any part of the area of the local planning authority;  
 Email to [peter.r.cowen@bt.com](mailto:peter.r.cowen@bt.com) (BT)  
 Email to [stuartpaul.stone@openreach.co.uk](mailto:stuartpaul.stone@openreach.co.uk) (BT Openreach)  
 Email to [info@ukmoa.org](mailto:info@ukmoa.org) (Mobile Operators Association)  
 Standard letters sent to each of the seven mobile phone network operating companies active in this area

(l) where it exercises functions in any part of the neighbourhood area—  
 a Primary Care Trust established under section 18 of the National Health Service Act 2006 or continued in existence by virtue of that section; [PCT now abolished, replaced by High Weald, Lewes & Havens CCG, chief exec Frank Sims]  
 Email to [frank.sims@nhs.net](mailto:frank.sims@nhs.net)  
 and a person to whom a licence has been granted under section 6(1)(b) and (c) of the Electricity Act 1989;  
 Email to [chris.winch@ukpowernetworks.co.uk](mailto:chris.winch@ukpowernetworks.co.uk) (UK Powernetworks)  
 Email to [damien.holdstock@amec.co.uk](mailto:damien.holdstock@amec.co.uk) (Amec on behalf of the National Grid)  
 and a person to whom a licence has been granted under section 7(2) of the Gas Act 1986;  
 Email to [stuart.forrest@sgn.co.uk](mailto:stuart.forrest@sgn.co.uk), (Southern Gas Networks)  
 and a sewerage undertaker;  
 Email to [Susan.Solbra@southernwater.co.uk](mailto:Susan.Solbra@southernwater.co.uk), (Southern Water)  
 And a water undertaker;  
 Email to [lee.dance@southernwater.co.uk](mailto:lee.dance@southernwater.co.uk), (South East Water)  
 Email to [paul.holton@southernwater.co.uk](mailto:paul.holton@southernwater.co.uk) (South East Water)

(m) voluntary bodies some or all of whose activities benefit all or any part of the neighbourhood area;  
 Email to [info@cpresussex.org.uk](mailto:info@cpresussex.org.uk), (CPRE Sussex)

(n) bodies which represent the interests of different racial, ethnic or national groups in the neighbourhood area;  
 The Parish Council is not aware of any such bodies

(o) bodies which represent the interests of different religious groups in the neighbourhood area;  
 Email to Ringmer church, [administrator@ringmerchurch.org.uk](mailto:administrator@ringmerchurch.org.uk)

(p) bodies which represent the interests of persons carrying on business in the neighbourhood area;  
*There is no chamber of commerce or similar business organisation in Ringmer other than the Shopkeepers Association (chair informed verbally 6 Sep 2013). However, a number of local businessmen, business site owners and other employers are included in the Neighbourhood Plan email list – see below.*

and

(q) bodies which represent the interests of disabled persons in the neighbourhood area

*Email to Oyster Project ([admin@oysterproject.org.uk](mailto:admin@oysterproject.org.uk))*

*Email to Delta Disability Group ([Councilweb@btinternet.com](mailto:Councilweb@btinternet.com))*

### **Additional consultees**

*District Councillors for Ouse Valley & Ringmer ward*

*Email to Cllrs Chris Bowers, Paul Gander & Peter Gardiner*

*County Councillor for (inter-alia) Ringmer*

*Email to Cllr Rosalyn St Pierre*

*Sussex Police, Neighbourhood Policing Team*

*Email to [jason.tingley@sussex.pnn.police.uk](mailto:jason.tingley@sussex.pnn.police.uk)*

*Response 7 Sep 2013 that he had forwarded the notice to Inspector Stephen Tullett & Sergeant Rosemary Hanson of the Lewes Neighbourhood Policing Team*

*Ringmer Community College*

*Email to [reception@ringmeracademy.org](mailto:reception@ringmeracademy.org)*

*Ringmer Primary School*

*Email to [schooloffice@ringmer-pri.e-sussex.sch.uk](mailto:schooloffice@ringmer-pri.e-sussex.sch.uk)*

*Ringmer Nursery School*

*Message sent via website form*

*Ringmer History Study Group*

*Email to [hall830@btinternet.com](mailto:hall830@btinternet.com)*

*RADAR (Ringmer road safety group)*

*Email to [ringmer.radar.speedwatch@gmail.com](mailto:ringmer.radar.speedwatch@gmail.com)*

*Raystede Animal Welfare Centre*

*Email to [info@raystede.org](mailto:info@raystede.org),*

*Email to [NMason@raystede.org](mailto:NMason@raystede.org)*

*Ringmer Football Club*

*Email to [bobmunnerly@ringmerfc.co.uk](mailto:bobmunnerly@ringmerfc.co.uk),*

*Email to [tedchitty@ringmerfc.co.uk](mailto:tedchitty@ringmerfc.co.uk)*

*Ringmer Cricket Club*

*Message sent via website form*

*Wave Leisure*

*Email to [info@waveleisure.co.uk](mailto:info@waveleisure.co.uk)*

*Neighbourhood Plan email list*

*Email to list of 228 residents, developers, local businesses and others who have expressed a wish to be kept informed of developments in the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan*

In terms of making hard copies available at the locations mentioned, along with your intention to publicise on the web and local newsletter etc, we consider these approaches would meet the requirement of regulation 14 (a) that the details of the proposals for a neighbourhood plan are publicised in a manner that is likely to bring to the attention of people who live, work or carry on a business in the neighbourhood area. It is also a requirement that you send a copy of the plan to the planning authorities. For our part we will display a copy at our Planning Reception, which is currently in Lewes House but will move during your consultation period back to Southover House (supposing building work is completed on time).

Kind Regards,

Susie and Tal

*Planning Officer/Neighbourhood Planning Officer,*



*Planning Policy,  
Southover House,  
Southover Road,  
Lewes,  
East Sussex  
BN7 1AB  
Tel: 01273 484410/484417*

**Appendix 2. Examples of publicity published by third parties during the development of the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan**

**Focus Update ... Focus Update ... Focus Update ... Focus Update**  
 Your Councillors report on developments affecting Ringmer

**Have your say on Ringmer's future**

**In October we asked you to have your say on the Lewes District Plan. Now's the time to have your say on the future of Ringmer!**

Ringmer is one of 17 localities across the country pioneering a Neighbourhood Plan, and the parish council wants to know what Ringmer people want in it. It recently held meetings in the village hall that were reasonably well attended, but not everyone can get to evening meetings, so it's consulting every household in the village via a questionnaire dropped through letterboxes.

There are several ways you can take part:

- Visit the exhibition in the

shop next to Lew Howard's butchers in the precinct. It is expected to be there from 2 to 5 February.

- Visit the parish council website at <http://www.ringmerparishcouncil.org.uk/> and click on 'Ringmer to 2030' to see the report.

- Comment by letter or email. Write, giving your name and address, to Chris Elphick, Ringmer Village Hall, Ringmer, BN8 5QH.

**The main issues**

Housing and transport are probably the main issues.

Too many houses would change the nature of Ringmer, but without some development shops and



Ringmer's two Lib Dem district councillors Peter Gardiner and Chris Bowers want residents to make their views known

social clubs might suffer. Ringmer's own needs would generate 150-200 new houses over 18 years (9-11 a year). We are recommending most new Ringmer housing should be homes for the elderly and affordable housing rather than houses for commuters. The recent sale of the Lewes Phoenix site will relieve pressure for more building in Ringmer.

On transport, we believe improvements such as a roundabout at New Road/ Lewes Road, Earwig Corner improvements, and safety measures within Ringmer (eg. pedestrian crossings) must be part of the plan.

**Your Focus team helping the village**

Ringmer Liberal Democrats' team of Focus deliverers took on a rapid delivery of the parish council's autumn newsletter explaining about the Neighbourhood Plan. Not only did this save the parish council money, but the news reached everyone in time for the public meetings in December. If needed we have offered to help again with the next leaflet due out later this month.

**How to contact the Lib Dems working for Ringmer**

*Parliament*

• **Norman Baker MP**  
 bakern@parliament.uk  
 Tel: 01273 480268



*Lewes District*

• **Chris Bowers**  
 chris.bowers@lewes.gov.uk  
 Tel: 01273 813331



*East Sussex County*

• **Rosalyn St Pierre**  
 cllr.rosalyn.stpierre@eastsussex.gov.uk  
 Tel: 01273 400093



• **Peter Gardiner**  
 peter.gardiner@lewes.gov.uk  
 Tel: 01273 814246



**Do you get RNS?**

Do you receive Ringmer News Service? This is a free digest of local news sent by email roughly fortnightly to anyone who registers to receive it. Send an email from the address to which you would like bulletins sent to [rns.news@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:rns.news@yahoo.co.uk).

**Ringmer Liberal Democrats 'Focus' Newsletter no.178, published in January 2012, to coincide with the consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan**

# YOU can help shape the future of Ringmer

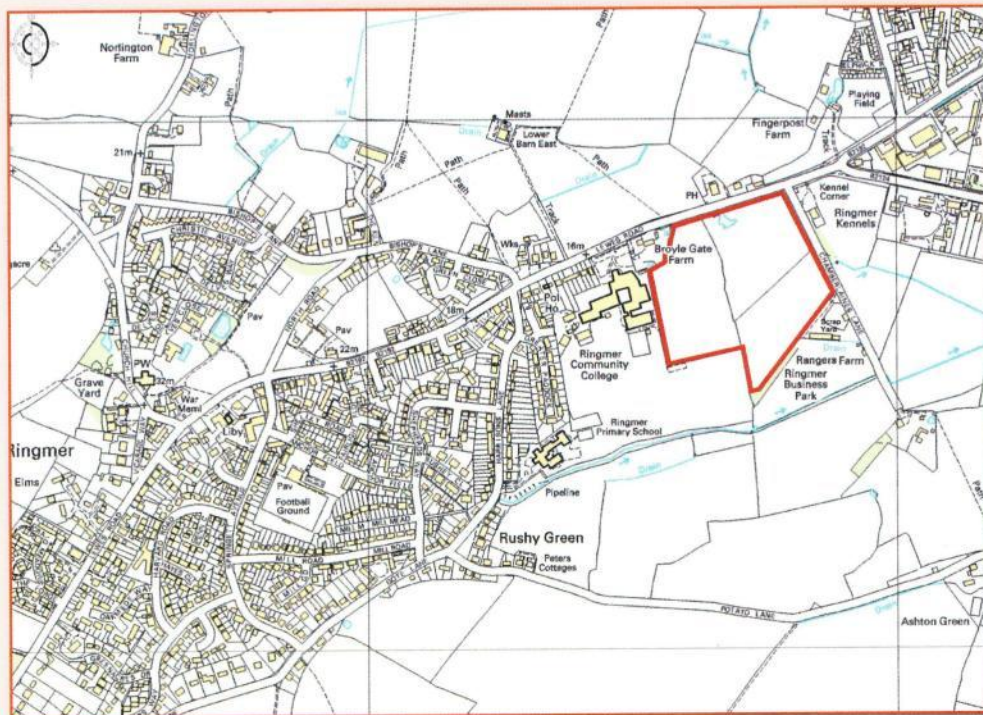
For many years **Croudace Strategic** has been promoting development at Broyle Gate Farm for housing, open space and recreational uses.

We appreciate that local residents may feel themselves to be victims of planning consultation overload (e.g. Lewes District Local Plan; Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan), but this is a vital time.

**Decisions made now will  
SHAPE the FUTURE of  
Ringmer for at least 20 years.**

**Croudace** is convinced that **Broyle Gate Farm** is the most appropriate strategic site available in Ringmer because, not only is it in a good location for the provision of approximately 100 new homes, but because it can also provide easily accessible land necessary to bolster Ringmer's community and recreational facilities.

**Broyle Gate Farm** is the only site capable of delivering such a beneficial package of mixed-use opportunities.



BROYLE GATE FARM SITE

Page 1 of the flyer circulated by Croudace Strategic Land during the consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan



## BROYLE GATE FARM SITE BENEFITS

**Broyle Gate Farm** has had a positive assessment in Lewes District Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (as **Suitable; Available; Achievable** and therefore **Deliverable**), but **Croudace** is concerned that the potential community benefits of the site have not been brought to the attention of local residents.

**These are:**

- Highly sustainable location close to the village centre on an existing bus route
- Approximately 100 houses including affordable dwellings to secure the viability and vitality of the village for future generations
- Negligible impact on existing adjoining residential properties
- Convenient location adjacent to Ringmer Community College offering the land for potential expansion or shared facilities
- Provision of enhanced public open space; sport and other recreational facilities to help overcome recognised deficiencies in the village (e.g. football pitches, tennis courts)
- Direct safe access onto the main Lewes Road (B2129) rather than a minor highway
- Landscaping to preserve the integrity of Ringmer and Broyle Side as separate settlements and to ensure a firm eastern edge to Ringmer

**Croudace believes that no other site in Ringmer can offer the same package of benefits to the local community. Such benefits will not be delivered without funding through new housing.**

We urge you to support our proposals for the development of **Broyle Gate Farm** and the benefits it will bring to your community. Please send your views in support of **Broyle Gate Farm** to the **DISTRICT COUNCIL'S PUBLIC CONSULTATION** on the **DRAFT JOINT CORE STRATEGY** by Friday March 22nd 2013 in writing to: Lewes District Council | Planning Policy Team | Southover House | Southover Road Lewes | BN7 1AB or by email to: [ldf@lewes.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@lewes.gov.uk)

Please also make your views known to Ringmer Parish Council in respect of their emerging **NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN** by 8th March 2013 in writing to the Parish Council Office | Village Hall Lewes Road | Ringmer | BN8 5QH or by email to: [ringmerto2030@gmail.com](mailto:ringmerto2030@gmail.com)

**Croudace**  
STRATEGIC

Further information on the Croudace proposals can be obtained from:  
**Martin Harrop** | Croudace Strategic Limited | Croudace House | Caterham | Surrey | CR3 6XQ  
T: 01883 346464 E: [martin.harrop@croudace.co.uk](mailto:martin.harrop@croudace.co.uk)

**Tony Charles** | Portchester Planning Consultancy | F8 | Fareham Heights | Standard Way | Fareham  
PO16 8XT | T: 02392 299504 E: [tony@portchesterplanning.co.uk](mailto:tony@portchesterplanning.co.uk)



Page 2 of the flyer circulated by Croudace Strategic Land during the consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan. Note the request that residents make their views known during this consultation, with contact details included.





Ringmer Village News shared a link

14 October 2013

Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan. A reminder that the formal statutory consultation on the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan ends this week on Friday, 18 October. This is the last chance for comments that will influence the content of the plan, which will influence development in Ringmer up to 2030. The next time the plan is up for consultation will be in a straight 'yes or no' referendum. Copies of the plan are available from Ringmer Library and from the Parish Council website [www.ringmerparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.ringmerparishcouncil.org.uk).

Ringmer Parish Council

[www.ringmerparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.ringmerparishcouncil.org.uk)

Local Government Information for Ringmer

Like · Comment · Share

1

96 people reached

Boost Post

Notice posted on the Ringmer Village News Facebook page as a reminder of the end date of the Regulation 14 consultation.



Public exhibition  
relating to  
**Potters Field and  
Bishops Field**  
**Bishops Lane, Ringmer**

Gleeson invites you to discuss development proposals on the above site  
and the emerging Neighbourhood Plan

The exhibition will inform and seek views of local residents and  
stakeholders with members of the Gleeson development team on hand  
to answer questions

The public exhibition is being staged at:

**The Village Hall**  
**Lewes Road, Ringmer**

**Saturday, 29 June 2013 10.30am – 3.30 pm**

*Information will be available after the event for those  
unable to attend the exhibition  
by emailing: **bishopslane@tfa-ltd.co.uk***

Flyer circulated by Gleeson Strategic Land to advertise the June 2013 exhibition to promote their proposals for residential development on Bishops Field and Potters Field, Bishops Lane



## LOCAL NEWS

## ENVIRONMENT

# Chance for villagers to decide their destiny

BY RUPERT TAYLOR  
rupert.taylor@jpress.co.uk  
01273 484738

Views from residents, and other interested parties, are now being sought on the formal Neighbourhood Plan that has been prepared by Ringmer Parish Council.

The plan is for the period up to 2030 and covers all aspects of local life that earlier consultations have shown are important to Ringmer people.

These include the number of new houses and the size, location and design of new housing and commercial developments. Also addressed are concerns about the strain development will place on key village infrastructure, especially the village roads, primary school and drainage system.

Crucially the plan also defines three countryside areas of the parish where new development will be restricted. One is an area of northern Ringmer, including the Plashett Wood SSSI, that is protected on the grounds of its exceptional biodiversity. The second is the east bank of the River Ouse, where it is hoped to provide the missing link in a long distance riverside path. The third is the 'strategic Green Gap' between Ringmer village and the Broyleside that consultations have confirmed is widely seen as vital to retaining Ringmer's 'village' feel.

The consultation runs from



Heart of the community: St Mary the Virgin Church in Ringmer and the Village Green

today (Friday) until October 18, and the full Neighbourhood Plan can be seen on the parish council website, [www.ringmerparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.ringmerparishcouncil.org.uk). Paper copies are available at the parish council office and Ringmer library. Comments can be made in writing to the Clerk of the council at Ringmer Village Hall, BN8 5QH, or by email to [ringmerto2030@gmail.com](mailto:ringmerto2030@gmail.com)

Council chairman John Kay said: "Ringmer was pleased to

be chosen as one of only 17 councils nationwide to trial this new approach to local planning. Difficult choices have had to be made. Parts of the draft plan may disappoint some people, but our aim has been to achieve what best meets the long-term needs of the whole community."

He hoped that everyone would comment on which aspects they supported and what changes they wanted the council to consider.

Once all the consultation stages are completed the plan will be formally examined by an appointed examiner.

If it passes that examination it will be put to a referendum in May 2014 in which Ringmer residents will simply be asked to vote 'yes' or 'no' on the plan.

A 'no' vote would mean all planning policies, including development sites, being decided by Lewes District Council.

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Friday a

Press coverage of the start of the Regulation 14 consultation in the 6 September 2013 *Sussex Express*.

# Ringmer Community Primary School

Public Open Event

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> July 2014

5pm – 7pm

Ringmer Community Primary School

Harrisons Lane, Ringmer BN8 5LL

Ringmer Community Primary School together with East Sussex County Council invite you to attend our Public Open Event to share with you the proposals for the expansion of the school.

Following the consultation to expand the school by 0.5FE (15 places per year group) in 2013 the proposals for expansion include:

- Providing additional permanent classrooms
- Re-modelling of internal spaces
- Re-modelling of the external play areas and proposals for car parking

The Design Team will be on hand to talk through the plans and listen to your views. This will be your opportunity to take part and actively get involved in shaping the future of the schools.

We look forward to seeing you.

For more information please contact:  
Ringmer Primary School 01273 81 2463 (before 23 July end of term)

**East Sussex County Council flyer concerning their proposals to increase the capacity of Ringmer Primary School from a 1-class entry to 1.5 class entry, July 2014**



### **Appendix 3. Comments received and amendments proposed to the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan in the light of the responses received to the Regulation 14 consultation.**

The Regulation 14 consultation was carried out by Ringmer Parish Council between Friday 6 September 2013 and Friday 18 October 2013.

A total of 103 consultation responses were received from 100 different individuals or organisations within the consultation period. The full consultation responses received are available on the “Ringmer to 2030 “ (Archive Material) webpages of the Parish Council website <http://www.ringmerparishcouncil.org.uk/>.

The great majority of these responses (86) were from Ringmer residents. Of these 57 were from residents in Ringmer village, 20 from Broyleside residents and 9 from residents in Ringmer’s countryside. A further 5 responses were from those representing residential developer interests, and three responding residents also had personal or family interests in proposed developments.

A detailed response was received from East Sussex County Council, incorporating responses from the Education & Highways Departments, the County Landscape Architect, the County Ecologist and the County Archaeologist [no.73]. Responses were also received from Lewes District Council [nos.6, 7 & 87] and from two residents who are also District councillors representing Ringmer [nos.30 & 83].

Responses were also received from:

- Natural England [no.40]
- Southern Water [no.89]
- the head and the chair of governors of Ringmer Primary School [nos.2 & 97]
- the governors of the Ringmer Academy [no.86]
- the North Ringmer Residents’ Group [no.85]
- the Ringmer History Study Group [no.62]
- the South Downs Society [no.78]
- CPRE Sussex (Lewes District branch) [no.77]
- The Marine Management Organisation [no.60]

Steering Group has analysed and considered these responses, and recommends consequent amendments to the Neighbourhood Plan as below.

About a quarter of all responses were entirely supportive of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan, and a number of others generally supportive, despite comments on particular policies or aspects. These supportive responses are included below only where specific policies were singled out for support.

#### **General comments**

A Lewes D.C. Neighbourhood Planning Officer [no.6] commented that the Neighbourhood Plan should be downloadable as a single document, with continuous pagination, rather than as separate sections or chapters. A developer [no.76] made broadly similar recommendations. **Response:** *The use of separate sections for the purposes of consultation had been adopted to improve accessibility by facilitating downloading of relevant sections at rural broadband speeds, but the principle is accepted and will be adopted for the submitted version of the Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan is now presented as a single document, and the evidence appendices have also been merged and presented as a single document, appendix A. It should be noted that some appendices, containing numbers of site plans, are inevitably very large files, and these will be maintained as separate documents, appendices B-I. The new appendices are as follows:*

*Appendix A former appendices 2.1, 3.1, 4.1, 5.1, 6.1, 7.1, 8.1, 9.1 & 10.1*

Appendix B	former appendix 5.2
Appendix C	former appendix 6.2
Appendix D	former appendix 6.3
Appendix E	former appendix 7.2
Appendix F	former appendix 7.3
Appendix G	former appendix 7.4
Appendix H	former appendix 8.2
Appendix I	former appendix 10.2

The same response [no.6] also commented that the document had a great deal of text but was not visually appealing, which might impact on community perception. **Response:** *This point is recognised, and additional illustrations will be included. However, it should be noted that such illustrations do inevitably increase file size, and thus download times, affecting accessibility in a different respect.*

A planning agent acting on behalf of a developer [no.8] commented that the Neighbourhood Plan as loaded onto the Ringmer parish council website had been changed in the course of the consultation. **Response:** *After further discussion it was established that the planning agent had in fact downloaded an earlier version of the Plan prior to the start of the consultation. It was confirmed that the final consultation version of the Plan had been uploaded to the website (by a third party) as intended on the day before the start of the consultation. No changes were made during the consultation. A member of the parish council had been deputed to audit the website version of the Plan on the first morning of the consultation, and had confirmed that all was present and correct in the format agreed by the Parish Council.*

A developer [no.76] argued that the Examination of this Neighbourhood Plan should be deferred until the outcome of the District Core Strategy examination is known. **Response:** *This is contrary to the advice we have received from District and SDNP Neighbourhood Planning officers, from officers of the DCLG team supporting Neighbourhood Planning and that provided directly to the Parish Council chair by Planning Minister Nick Boles. There is nothing in the NPPF to require this, and if accepted this argument would prevent effective neighbourhood planning in substantial parts of England in which there is no up-to-date Local Plan. Further clarification has since been provided by the National Planning Policy Guidance issued in March 2014.*

A developer [no.76] and a resident [no.67] commented that the Regulation 14 consultation should have been accompanied by a sustainability appraisal (SA). **Response:** *Different advice about the requirement to include an SA and a strategic environmental assessment (SEA) has been provided to us at different stages of the development of this Neighbourhood Plan. Initial advice was that a full SA/SEA would be required, and an SA/SEA scoping report was produced and consulted upon at the same time as the Ringmer Neighbourhood Planning Area was designated. This led to the identification of an appropriate set of 19 SA/SEA economic, social and environmental objectives and indicators. We were then advised that the requirements of the SA/SEA process were considered too onerous for Neighbourhood Plans, and understood that this would not be required for the regulation 14 consultation. Nevertheless, all the policies and key options proposed have been assessed against the set of 19 SA/SEA economic, social and environmental objectives and indicators, and this information will be submitted to the local planning authorities for consideration during the regulation 16 consultation.*

A developer [no.76] requested that the Examination of this Neighbourhood Plan should be held in public. **Response:** *This is a matter for the Examiner to determine.*

## **Section 1 Introduction to the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan**



- 1.1 Legislative background**
- 1.2 Geographic area covered by the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan**
- 1.3 The Local Planning Authorities for Ringmer**
- 1.4 Development of the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan**
- 1.5 Presumption in favour of sustainable development**
- 1.6 A portrait of Ringmer parish**

Only six respondents made comments on section 1, including two residents, East Sussex County Council, the South Downs Society, the North Ringmer Residents Group and Lewes D.C. East Sussex County Council [no.73] suggested some additional information for inclusion in the Introduction and the evidence base, and suggested some clarification to the wording. Some additional comments made by East Sussex County Council and residents under section 9.1 (below) are best accommodated by an amendment to this section. The South Downs Society [no.78] welcomed the references to the statutory duties of the SDNP and the reference to its special qualities. The North Ringmer Resident’s Group [no.85] was supportive of the Introduction, and Lewes D.C. [no.87] described the information collected as extensive and helping to describe the parish. A resident [no.16] commented that there was nothing to explain why Ringmer had been singled out for so much proposed new development, and also commented (under section 2) that population numbers, rather than household numbers, should have been used. Another resident [no.33] made extensive comments under this section. However, the comments did not suggest that any changes were needed to this section, but were focused more on adverse changes that would occur as a result of some of the policies proposed later in the plan. These comments are covered under the policies referred to.

**Response:** *The suggestions made by East Sussex County Council, in one case also supported by residents and the South Downs Society, are welcomed and have been adopted. Population and household numbers can be related by average household size (2.34 in the 2011 census) but census information, on which much of this section depends, is collected by household. The reasons for the new employment and residential development proposed for Ringmer are addressed in detail in sections 6 and 7 and appendices 6.1 and 7.1 [both now included in appendix A] below. Since the consultation additional statistical information from the analysis of the 2011 census returns has become available and there has been some progress with Local Plans, and this more up-to-date information, plus a few recent Ringmer developments that are matters of fact, have been included in the revised version.*

## **Section 2 A vision for Ringmer in 2030**

### **2.1 A vision for Ringmer in 2030**

Nine respondents made comments on the Vision included in section 2. They included 4 residents, a District councillor, a developer [no.74], the South Downs Society, the North Ringmer Residents Group and Lewes D.C. A resident [no.16] queried the tense in which the Vision was written, and made two other comments that are covered under sections 1 & 3. Another resident [no.33], did not criticise the Vision, but commented that it was incompatible with the high level of residential development proposed. The District councillor [no.30], the developer [no.74] and Lewes D.C. [no.87] were supportive of the Vision. Two residents [nos.29 & 31], the South Downs Society [no.78] and the North Ringmer Residents Group [no.85], while broadly supportive, suggested inclusion of references to sustainable travel and road traffic levels.

**Response:** *It seems appropriate that a Vision for Ringmer in 2030 should be written in the future tense. A new sentence has been added to paragraph 4 of the Vision to meet the comments made by respondents 29, 31, 78 & 85.*

## **Section 3 Four key principles**

- 3.1 Ringmer is, and should stay, a village**
- 3.2 Ringmer should regain sustainability**
- 3.3 Ringmer should be a balanced, healthy and inclusive community**
- 3.4 Ringmer and the South Downs National Park**

Twenty respondents including a District councillor, a developer, the South Downs Society, the North Ringmer Residents Group and Lewes D.C. [nos.1, 16, 30-33, 45, 51, 53-55, 63, 67, 68, 78, 79, 85, 87, 88 & 101] made comments relating to the four key principles. Sixteen of these were references to the importance of maintaining Ringmer's village character or 'village feel' – either explicit support, or concern that specific proposals would result in its loss. One resident [no.16] felt that concern about 'village feel' might be translated as nimbyism, and another [no.67] that 'village feel' could not be considered a material planning consideration and that its protection would be contrary to the NPPF presumption in favour of sustainable development. The South Downs Society [no.78] and the North Ringmer Residents Group were supportive of the four key principles, but one resident [no.33] thought the principle of regaining sustainability too ambitious and another [no.16] did not agree with key principle 3.4, taking the view that areas of Ringmer within and outside the SDNP should be given equal consideration for any necessary new development. Lewes D.C. [no.87] comment that the principles of section 3 feed directly from the Vision to guide the Plan's policies. **Response:** *The balance of comments re-emphasises the importance to most residents of retaining Ringmer's village character. Contrary to response no.67, NPPF para.58 exhorts Neighbourhood Plans to establish a strong 'sense of place', represented for Ringmer by 'village feel'. The comment by resident no.16 is considered below under policy 4.1. No changes to section 3 are proposed.*

## **Section 4      General planning policies for Ringmer**

### **4.1      The South Downs National Park**

This policy was strongly supported by the South Downs Society [no.78] and supported by the North Ringmer Residents Group [no.85] but not supported by a resident [no.16]. Lewes D.C. [no.97] considered this policy redundant. A developer [no.63] objected to a section of the text leading up to the policy. East Sussex County Council [no.73] made a comment on policy 4.1 that appears to relate more directly to policy 4.3 [see below]. **Response:** *While it is accepted that this policy is heavily influenced by, and reflects, higher level policy on the National Park with which a Neighbourhood Plan must comply, it is nevertheless considered appropriate to include in the General planning policies section of the Neighbourhood Plan a specific policy on those sections of Ringmer parish within, and on the borders of, the South Downs National Park. Plans are also required to give special consideration to impact on landscape character and environment within National Park boundaries by NPPF para.115. The developer's objection is accepted, and the wording of the text has been amended to meet this point. This policy has been update to reflect the adoption of the SDNP Management Plan.*

### **4.2      New development to conform to the Village Design Statement**

This policy was supported by the South Downs Society and the North Ringmer Residents Group [nos.78 & 85]. It was considered redundant by Lewes D.C. [no.87] as already covered by section 10 of the Neighbourhood Plan. **Response:** *The point made by Lewes D.C. is recognised, but it is considered helpful to be explicit in this section on General Planning Policies that the Village Design Statement in section 10 applies to all categories of development, not just residential development. No changes to this very short policy are proposed.*

### **4.3      Landscape impact and screening**

This policy was welcomed by Natural England [no.40], supported by the South Downs Society and the North Ringmer Residents Group [no.85] and considered clear by Lewes D.C. [no.87]. A developer [no.63] objected on the grounds that there was no NPPF requirement that new development should make a positive contribution to the landscape, so that a neutral impact should be acceptable. The comments on screening made about policy 4.1 by East Sussex County Council [no.73] were considered to apply more directly to this policy. **Response:** *The developer's comments are not accepted as this policy is not considered incompatible with the NPPF, and some potential development sites in Ringmer have been rather neglected by their*

owners. The wording of this policy has been amended to take into account the comments of East Sussex County Council.

#### **4.4 Quiet lanes to be maintained for recreational use**

This policy was supported by the South Downs Society and the North Ringmer Residents Group [nos.78 & 85]. Three residents [nos.29, 31 & 33] would have liked to see parts of Bishops Lane included, and another resident [no.16] pointed out that 'Quiet Lane' was a legally recognised term used here in a somewhat different context. East Sussex County Council [no.73] commented that this should be included in an overall green infrastructure policy in section 9, and proposed changes to the criteria, to control the design of the lane rather than development thereon. Lewes D.C. [no.87] recognised that the policy had been modified to meet their previously expressed concerns, but expressed some residual concerns and suggested further changes to the wording. **Response:** *This is part of an important general policy to provide residents with access to enjoyment of the countryside, and seems more relevant here than in section 9. The point made by respondent no.16 is recognised, but what is intended here is carefully described. The wish to see parts of Bishops Lane included in this network is understood, but the existing level of vehicular use of Bishops Lane is substantially heavier than in the quiet lanes covered here, a point that is explained in some detail in appendix 4.1 [now included within appendix A]. The wording changes proposed by Lewes D.C. are accepted. The reference to 'large vehicle traffic' does indeed mean large, heavy vehicles, and this has been clarified by the inclusion of a hyphen. The wording changes proposed by East Sussex County Council have been in part incorporated, but the reference to new development is considered essential and is retained. This text was requested by Lewes D.C. to provide clear guidance for development control purposes on the types of development here that would and would not be appropriate.*

#### **4.5 Access to the local road system**

This policy was supported by the South Downs Society and the North Ringmer Residents Group [nos.78 & 85]. Two residents [nos.29 & 31] commented that the B2192 and B2124 were not main roads in the same sense as the A26, and should be distinguished. Another resident [no.16] made a comment that appears to relate to problems with the main road system (see section 9) rather than the more minor local roads. East Sussex County Council commented that evidence should be provided to justify the description of specified 'country lanes with limited capacity for additional large vehicle traffic' or this section removed, and made an additional suggestion for a wording change. Lewes D.C. [no.87] requested clarification of the terminology, and the wording change suggested for policy 4.4 would also seem applicable to this policy. **Response:** *The point that the B2192 & B2124 are a different category of road from the A26 is correct, and this error is now corrected in the Introduction. However, they are all 'main roads' in the context of Ringmer. The phrase 'local roads' refers to all other roads in the parish. The statement that the specified country lanes do not have the capacity to accept additional large-vehicle traffic is now fully justified in appendix 4.1 [now included within appendix A]. The wording has been amended to meet the other comments of East Sussex County Council and Lewes D.C.*

#### **4.6 Provision of adequate off-road parking**

This policy was supported by 4 respondents including the South Downs Society and the North Ringmer Residents Group [nos.16, 78, 79 & 85]. A District councillor [no.83] considered the parking ratios good, but wished it to be made difficult to access parked cars to encourage more sustainable modes of transport. Another District councillor [no.30] confirmed the importance of adequate parking provision, commented that the complexity of the new county council guidelines was an issue, and recommended that the proposed Neighbourhood Plan guidelines should be adopted except where the county council guidelines indicated a higher level of provision should apply. A resident [no.33] wished the required parking to be increased, especially for larger houses, to avoid on-street parking. East Sussex County Council [no.73] noted that this policy was similar to but not the same as the county council guidance, and that there was no reference to shared or visitor parking or to cycle parking. A resident [no.21] and a developer [no.63] also pointed to the lack of provision for visitor parking. Lewes D.C. [no.87] expressed concern that the level of

parking provision required could make appropriate development densities difficult to achieve, that provision of high levels of parking provision might reduce sustainability and that different provision might be appropriate in different parts of Ringmer. **Response:** *The new county council parking guidance is seen as a considerable advance, recognising the increased levels of car ownership shown by the 2011 census, the problems caused by under-provision, and that flexible policies are required to ensure that the needs of car-dependent rural areas are met, as specified in NPPF para.39. Unfortunately the tool provided depends either on ward or superoutput area data, both of which link Ringmer to very different rural communities with different levels of car ownership and use and (in some cases) very different public transport facilities. We are not aware of any evidence at the sub-parish level to suggest that car ownership and use is different in different parts of Ringmer parish, and in any case most new provision will be in the two main settlements. As noted in appendix 4.1 [now included within appendix A], the hypothesis that restricting parking provision will restrict car ownership and use in rural areas has been tested in some recent (and some older) Ringmer developments, and has failed the test. We are confident that the parking provision proposed is compatible with the residential development densities of 20-30 units/hectare proposed in the Neighbourhood Plan. Existing problems in Ringmer are predominantly encountered in areas of the village where there are mainly smaller homes, and there is little evidence of such difficulties affecting larger housing units. The policy has now been revised to include specified provision for visitor parking. Cycle provision is not covered in the Neighbourhood Plan because higher level policy in the county council guidance is considered satisfactory. The accompanying evidence base in appendix 4.1 [now included within appendix A] has been amended to include and make reference to the East Sussex County Council guidance for parking at new residential development (approved Oct 2012), which was not previously included.*

#### **4.7 Avoidance of light pollution**

This policy was strongly supported by the South Downs Society [no.78] and supported by 2 other respondents including the North Ringmer Residents Group [nos.16 & 85]. It was considered a workable policy by Lewes D.C. [no.87]. **Response:** *No changes are proposed.*

#### **4.8 Avoidance of nuisance to neighbours**

This policy was supported by 3 respondents, including the South Downs Society and the North Ringmer Residents Group [nos.16, 78 & 85]. Lewes D.C. [no.87] suggested a change to the wording. **Response:** *The new term suggested by Lewes D.C. has been incorporated into the policy for the reasons given, but the phrase 'health or quality of life' has been retained as reflecting the specific criteria used by Environmental Health when considering complaints.*

### **Section 5 Policies for Ringmer's countryside and heritage**

#### **5.1 The countryside in Ringmer**

This policy was supported by 4 respondents, including CPRE Sussex, the South Downs Society and the North Ringmer Residents Group [nos.16, 77, 78 & 87]. A resident [no.33] commented that the new greenfield housing proposed in section 7 was incompatible with this policy, and with other countryside policies. Lewes D.C. [no.87] and a resident [no.35] commented that this policy was too positively worded, and that developments that harmed the countryside should not be approved as they would be incompatible with the NPPF. Lewes D.C. suggest an alternative wording. **Response:** *The Neighbourhood Plan envisages the Ringmer village and Broyleside planning boundaries being extended during the planning period, and the areas then incorporated will no longer be countryside. The wording of the policy has been revised to reflect the alternative approach suggested by Lewes D.C.*

#### **5.2 The Plashett Wood SSSI, Plashett Park Farm and Clay Hill Farm**

This policy was supported by 5 respondents including Natural England, CPRE Sussex, the South Downs Society and the North Ringmer Residents Group [nos.16, 40, 77, 78 & 85] and considered clear by Lewes D.C. [no.87]. **Response:** *No changes are proposed.*

### **5.3 The River Ouse banks between Lower Stoneham and Barcombe Mills**

This policy was supported by 4 respondents including the South Downs Society and the North Ringmer Residents Group [nos.16, 78, 79 & 85]. Lewes D.C. [nos.6 & 87] considered that map 5.2 was not sufficiently accurately drawn, and that the wording could be interpreted as giving support to a wider range of activities than intended. **Response:** *The area is proposed as a suitable site for a range of potential recreational uses, though this will be subject to the agreement of the landowners and other safeguards included in the policy. Map 5.2 will be redrawn. No other changes are proposed.*

### **5.4 The strategic Green Gap between the Ringmer village and Broyleside settlements**

This was one of the most frequently mentioned policies in responses. The proposal to maintain this strategic Green Gap was supported, often in strong terms, by 24 respondents including the South Downs Society, CPRE Sussex and a developer who had originally proposed development within this area [nos.1, 16, 30, 31, 42-45, 51-58, 68, 77-79, 90, 92, 101 & 102]. A Ringmer village resident who is also a District councillor [no.30] saw this as “*the single most important feature which controls the understanding of Ringmer as being a village*”. Only the planning consultant promoting the development of Broyle Gate Farm (located within the proposed strategic Green Gap) and six residents who all supported residential development at Broyle Gate Farm, either because they supported the proposal for co-delivery of sports facilities or saw it as an alternative to development on Bishops Lane nearer their own properties [nos.3, 27, 63, 65, 71-72 & 88], opposed this policy in principle. The North Ringmer Residents Group and six other residents, all of whom supported development at Broyle Gate Farm and/or Rangers Farm [nos.25, 48, 70, 75, 85, 95 & 96] for similar reasons, supported or recognised the principle of the strategic Green Gap considered that such development could be accommodated without losing the principle of retaining a Green Gap, but by amending its boundaries. Lewes D.C. [no.87] commented that this policy was clear and understood. Southern Water [no.89] expressed concern that the policy might prevent the development of essential sewerage infrastructure. **Response:** *At each earlier stage in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan this issue has been discussed in detail, and the policy has been supported by a substantial majority of residents, but with a minority opposed. Despite an active campaign by the developer in favour of the proposed Broyle Gate Farm development during the present consultation, the present consultation reflects a similar balance of opinion. It is not considered that the policy as proposed would prevent the development of essential sewerage infrastructure needed at this location, for the reasons given in the detailed response from Southern Water. No changes to this policy are proposed.*

### **5.5 Access to the countryside: public footpaths**

This policy was supported by 4 respondents including Natural England, the South Downs Society and the North Ringmer Residents Group [nos.16, 40, 78 & 85] and considered clear by Lewes D.C. [no.87], if more a community aspiration. East Sussex County Council [no.73] considered that this should be incorporated into a green infrastructure policy in section 9. **Response:** *The need to protect, and if possible extend, the public footpath network may be a factor relevant to the consideration of planning applications. This policy seems more relevant to section 5 than section 9. No changes are proposed.*

### **5.6 Accessible countryside and natural or semi-natural greenspace**

This policy was supported by 5 respondents including Natural England, the South Downs Society and the North Ringmer Residents Group [nos.16, 21, 40, 78 & 85]. Lewes D.C. [no.87] suggested a wording change and considered this policy more a community aspiration. East Sussex County Council [no.73] considered that this should be incorporated into a green infrastructure policy in section 9. **Response:** *The need to provide additional land in these categories may be a factor relevant to the consideration of planning*

applications. This policy seems more relevant to section 5 than section 9. The wording of the policy and its preamble has been changed to reflect the comments of Lewes D.C.

### **5.7 Heritage buildings**

This policy was supported by 4 respondents, including the Ringmer History Study Group, the South Downs Society and the North Ringmer Residents Group [nos.16, 62, 78 & 85]. A developer [no.63] objected that this was the role of the District Council, and that the parish council should play no role and lacked the necessary expertise. Lewes D.C. [no.87] expressed qualifications about the compatibility of this policy, as presently drafted, with the National Planning Policy Framework. **Response:** *It is recognised that the protection of Ringmer's built heritage should be the duty of English Heritage supported by Lewes D.C., but we have received unambiguous evidence that there are substantial errors and omissions in the present list and that neither body has the current capacity to carry out the review necessary to give effect to NPPF paras.126-141 in Ringmer. This policy is seen as an interim solution necessary to protect Ringmer's built heritage assets, as required by NPPF paras.126-141, until such time as the necessary capacity becomes available. No changes are proposed.*

### **5.8 Archaeological sites in Ringmer**

This policy was supported by 4 respondents, including the Ringmer History Study Group, the South Downs Society and the North Ringmer Residents Group [nos.16, 62, 78 & 85]. A developer [no.63] commented that one area (on Bishops Lane) was known to have archaeological potential and this should be investigated before the site was allocated for development. Lewes D.C. commented that the policy was clear, but would benefit from the inclusion of a map. **Response:** *The developer is correct that there is a large area around Ringmer Green that is archaeologically sensitive, including the area specified. The preliminary work necessary for the area specified by was in fact completed in 2012-2013. A map is not included because the areas identified as archaeologically sensitive change with time, so that any map would quickly become obsolete – indeed a major new Roman settlement in western Ringmer has been identified in 2011-2013. Its boundaries and road connections are not yet defined, but a new Roman road has been identified in 2013 as passing between Ringmer village and the Broyleside. An up-to-date map is maintained by the County Archaeologist, which all developers will need to consult. This policy was drafted with detailed help from the County Archaeologist, and no changes are proposed.*

### **5.9 Green corridors, ponds and streams**

The policy was welcomed by Natural England [no.40] and supported by 3 respondents including the South Downs Society and the North Ringmer Residents Group [nos.16, 78 & 85]. East Sussex County Council [no.73] suggested that it should be incorporated into a new green infrastructure policy in section 9. Southern Water [no.89] objected to the present wording, requesting the inclusion of additional wording. Lewes D.C. [no.87] considered this a workable policy but noted that not every new site would have a development brief, so that this sentence should be omitted. **Response:** *This policy seems more relevant to section 5 than section 9. It is not the intention that this policy should create barriers to the provision of essential infrastructure by statutory utility providers such as Southern Water, and in the unlikely event that such provision in Ringmer proved contrary to this policy then the special circumstances covered by the NPPF paragraphs quoted would apply. The revised version of Neighbourhood Plan policy 5.1 makes this principle clear. The recommendation made by Lewes D.C. is accepted.*

### **5.10 Maintaining and enhancing biodiversity**

This policy was welcomed by Natural England [no.40], supported by 4 respondents including CPRE Sussex, the South Downs Society and the North Ringmer Residents Group [nos.16, 77, 78 & 85] and considered clear by Lewes D.C. [no.87]. **Response:** *no changes are proposed.*

## **Section 6 Policies for employment in Ringmer**



### 6.1 Employment in Ringmer

This policy was welcomed by a District councillor [no.30] and supported by the North Ringmer Residents Group [no.85]. Natural England [no.40] supported the emphasis on re-use of brownfield sites, but noted that their environmental value may need to be assessed. Three residents [nos.29, 31 & 33] and a developer [no.76] noted a conflict between this policy and residential development proposed for the Diplocks & Busy Bee sites in section 7, and two of them were also concerned that nearby residential development might affect the viability of the Old Forge Pine workshop. Lewes D.C. [no.87] understood and supported the intention of the policy but noted that the sites considered as employment sites in the Neighbourhood Plan had a range of different planning use classes, based on function rather than employment they generated, and suggested an amendment to the wording. **Response:** *The residents are correct that there is a conflict between policy 6.1(a) and the proposals for mixed use redevelopment of the Diplocks site on Bishops Lane. However, this is a site with low quality buildings that are expensive to operate and, especially, expensive and wasteful to heat. The major activity carried on here by the site owners (a knackers yard) is essential for the rural economy, but inappropriately located very close to subsequently-built residential property in Tilekiln. This employment site is a prime candidate for upgrading and, after discussions with the site owners, it is accepted that this would only be viable if facilitated by the inclusion of an element of residential development. It is also accepted that it would be beneficial to re-locate the existing knackers yard to an alternative location during phase 2 of the Neighbourhood Plan, and we are satisfied that suitable alternative locations will be available in Ringmer through the policies in this section. The Busy Bee garage and petrol station is a valued village facility that would be missed if it closed. It is the last survivor, outside the Ringmer core retail area (site EMP1), of the many small shops and services that once lined the B2192 at Ringmer Green. However, this site is too small to qualify for protection under policy 6.1(a), and in the past it has not proved possible to protect such sites for continued business use in the face of alternative residential use that would be more advantageous to the site owner. After discussions with the site owner, we accept that this site too is very likely to be lost, almost certainly to residential redevelopment, during the period covered by the Neighbourhood Plan. We are aware of the potential environmental value of some brownfield sites, especially sites that have laid derelict, and this will be a matter to be considered when planning applications are made, in the light of policy 5.10 and policies in the NPPF. The point made by Lewes D.C. is recognised and correct. However, services such as education, health, local government, leisure and tourism and utility provision are very important sources of employment in Ringmer that it would be inappropriate to ignore in developing an employment policy, and the site labelled as a substation also houses an important office facility for the utility. Such services are also considered from the viewpoint of infrastructure provision in section 9. The amendment to the wording of the policy suggested by Lewes D.C. has been accepted.*

### 6.2 Agriculture, horticulture and woodland management

This policy was supported by Natural England, CPRE Sussex and the North Ringmer Residents Group [nos.40, 77 & 85]. A resident [no.33] considered the policy to be in contradiction to proposals for new greenfield housing on agricultural land in section 7. The policy was largely supported by Lewes D.C. [no.87] though they commented that policy 6.2(d) would not be enforceable. **Response:** *No changes are proposed.*

### 6.3 Retail facilities in Ringmer

This policy was supported by the North Ringmer Residents Group [no.85], and considered clear and reasonable by Lewes D.C. [no.87]. A resident [no.9] asked whether any influence could be exerted on the owner of the shopping precinct to fill the shops by offering more favourable terms and conditions to tenants. Another resident [no.19] expressed the view that there are more shops than the village can sustain and that the precinct should be redeveloped to incorporate fewer shops and more housing. A District councillor [no.83] expressed the view that the emphasis on car dependency should be reduced and that cycle parking should be provided and suggested alternative wording for policy 6.3. **Response:** *It is common ground that the demand for shops in Ringmer will depend on their profitability, which in turn will depend on the terms and conditions on which they are let. Management policies for the shopping precinct are of course*

*a matter for its owners, but views on the importance of the shopping precinct to the community and on the importance of appropriate terms and conditions have been conveyed directly from the parish council to the management company [see appendix 6.1, now included within appendix A]. The number of empty shops in 2013 was larger than usual because many long-term leases ended in that year. This issue is being addressed by the management company, if not so speedily as residents would wish. There are now only 2 unused units, both awaiting renovation following the end of a long tenancy. The policy proposed facilitates alternative business or service use of these retail premises, should that be a more viable use. The management company have told us that they have considered alternative futures for the shopping precinct, including complete or partial redevelopment, but that their calculations were that this would be unlikely to be viable within their forward planning period. They do have medium term plans for more effective use of the precinct frontage and car park that are compatible with Neighbourhood Plan policies. It is also likely that the accommodation above the shops may be restructured to provide more, smaller, units during the Neighbourhood Plan period. The prosperity of retail or other service premises in a rural service centre is crucially dependent on freely-available parking [see appendix 6.1, now included within appendix A] but while improved cycle parking for more local users would be welcomed, this cannot be insisted upon in the absence of other development. However, a reference to cycle parking has been included in the preamble. The additional comments made by the District councillor are supported and can be influenced by the parish council, but are management rather than planning matters, so a matter for ongoing parish council action rather than inclusion in a Neighbourhood Plan.*

#### **6.4 Services for the elderly & disabled**

This policy was supported by the North Ringmer Residents Group [no.85]. A resident [no.19] suggested that the [closed] care home site at 39 Harvard Road might be redeveloped for affordable housing. Lewes D.C. [no.87] requested clarification of what was meant by 2010 levels of care home provision, and asked why the policy applied only to Ringmer village, and not also to the Broyleside. A resident who is a District councillor [no.83] suggested amendments to the wording. **Response:** *The former care home site at 39 Harvard Road has been successfully marketed as a site for a new, larger, care home, which demographic evidence suggests will be greatly needed. It is this site that was included, along with extant care homes, in the 2010 level of provision. Revisions have been made to the wording to clarify this, and to meet the point made by the District councillor. The reason that this policy applies specifically to Ringmer village is that it is considered that such facilities would be far better located in a 'rural service centre' than in a 'local village'.*

#### **6.5 Ringmer Community College**

This policy was supported by the North Ringmer Residents Group [no.85], and considered clear and reasonable by Lewes D.C. [no.87]. The planning agent representing the owner of site RG3 [no.63] commented that expansion of The Community College's recreational activities onto site RG3 would only be permitted by the landowners as part of the larger development of Broyle Gate Farm that they were promoting. The head of Ringmer Primary School [no.2] requested that the Primary School should also be considered here as an important Ringmer employer. **Response:** *It is self evident that expansion of the Community College on to the adjoining land could only take place if the land became available. The purpose of this policy is to facilitate such a development, should it be proposed. This section has been broadened to include employment in education at the Primary and Nursery school levels.*

#### **6.6 Tourism and leisure activities**

This policy was supported by the North Ringmer Residents Group [no.85]. A resident [no.35] considered that the East Sussex Gliding Club should not, as a private club that caused considerable noise nuisance to local residents, be listed alongside the other tourist and leisure activities in this category. The same resident regretted the withdrawal of the proposal to create a new reservoir in Ringmer, that could also have provided new leisure activities. Lewes D.C. [no.87] expressed concerns that the statement that there was no suitable site for a roadside motel-style development in Ringmer was unproved, and suggested some changes to the wording. **Response:** *The resident is correct that, unlike the other tourist attractions*

mentioned, the East Sussex Gliding Club does not contribute directly to local employment, though it would be harder to sustain the case that there is no indirect contribution. The noise issues raised by the respondent are recognised and are addressed elsewhere in the Neighbourhood Plan [see policy 4.8]. The Gliding Club differs from the other activities considered comparable by the respondent in that it has exclusive use of a large countryside site with dedicated buildings, and that the activity is much more frequent. The comment about the roadside motel-style development should have been qualified to indicate that there were no suitable countryside sites, for the landscape impact and light pollution reasons given. All possible sites along appropriate roads have been considered. The changes to the policy wording suggested by Lewes D.C. have been accepted. The preamble is updated to note that a second seasonal camp site has been opened in the parish.

## **Section 7 Policies for residential development in Ringmer**

This section attracted by far the largest number of comments from residents and developers. These comments were focused especially on sections 7.9-7.11 and the associated appendix 7.3 (now appendix F).

### **7.1 Total new housing numbers in “Ringmer to 2030”**

There were a range of comments on the proposal that the minimum number of new housing units planned for Ringmer under the Neighbourhood Plan should be 240. Some residents considered the number to be too high [nos.1, 16, 29 & 31] or unnecessarily higher than the number required by Lewes D.C. [no.33]. A District councillor [no.30] applauded the decision to plan for a larger number of units than were needed to meet Ringmer’s own needs, while another District councillor [no.83] considered the 220 required by the proposed Core Strategy to be the maximum number that should be considered, given that the community need was much lower than this. The North Ringmer Residents Group [no.85] and a planning agent acting for a developer [no.74] supported the policy (the former suggesting a change to the wording), but a resident [no.67] and two planning agents acting for developers [nos.63 & 76] considered that a larger number might be required. The two developers argued that the Neighbourhood Plan could not rely on the proposed submission Core Strategy, and one suggested that instead its own robust and detailed evidence should be provided to justify the number selected. Lewes D.C. [no.87] responded that the policy complied with the proposed submission Core Strategy, but that the allocations proposed in policies 7.9-7.11 might deliver a larger number. Both Lewes D.C. and a resident [no.21] commented that a maximum number of units that might be delivered should also be included in the policy. **Response:** *The parish council is very well aware from the community engagement we have undertaken, and from opinion surveys carried out by ourselves and by others, that the minimum number of 240 new housing units proposed is higher than the numbers considered reasonable and acceptable by most Ringmer residents. A Neighbourhood Plan with a significantly larger total would be unlikely to be supported at a referendum. To the extent that new housing is for new commuters, this would further reduce the sustainability of Ringmer as a community, and be directly against the Vision underpinning this Neighbourhood Plan. However, we are convinced that to meet Ringmer’s own needs there is a real need for additional affordable and low cost housing [see section 7.2] and also for additional housing for the elderly, as considered in detail in appendix 7.1 (now included within appendix A). We also expect that the policies in section 6 will deliver significant new employment in Ringmer, and that new approaches to be followed outwith the Neighbourhood Plan will result in increased uptake of local employment by local residents. The developers’ argument that the Neighbourhood Plan cannot rely on a Core Strategy that has yet to be adopted, but should itself include robust evidence to justify the number adopted is recognised, so the preamble to the policy and the underpinning evidence in appendix 7.1 (now included in appendix A) have been amended to meet this point. We are confident that the policies in sections 7.9-7.11 below will deliver at least the target number of new houses in the planning period, and we recognise that there is the potential for them to deliver a larger number. However, we do not expect the full number of ‘developable’ units to be delivered within the planning period, so do not think it useful to specify a maximum number that might be delivered, even were to do so compatible with national policy*

*expressed in the NPPF. The change in wording suggested by the North Ringmer Residents Group is accepted. No other changes to this policy are proposed, but the underpinning evidence in appendix 7.1 (now within appendix A) has been reconsidered and amended as recommended by the planning agent [no.63].*

## **7.2 Affordable housing numbers and types**

Comments were received from 4 residents, from CPRE Sussex and from the North Ringmer Residents Group [nos.44, 54, 77, 85, 95 & 101] confirming the need for affordable housing in Ringmer. Another resident [no.33] commented that the number of 80 affordable units proposed would do little to meet the needs of young families, and also that the needs of single people would not be met. There was a minority view that affordable housing lowered the tone of an area [no.80]. One resident [no.16] commented that the use of the term 'affordable housing', as defined in the Neighbourhood Plan and elsewhere, was inappropriate and misleading. A District councillor [no.30] supported this policy as reflecting Ringmer's needs. Lewes D.C. [no.87] broadly supported the policy but commented that it would be hard to ensure that 80 affordable houses were built, and that this should perhaps be considered as an aspiration rather than a target. They also recommended that, as the Neighbourhood Plan might well be approved in advance of the District Core Strategy, the Neighbourhood Plan should itself include Core Policy CP1 of the proposed submission Core Strategy on affordable housing provision, as it would not otherwise apply until the Core Strategy was approved. A developer [no.63] made a similar point, albeit from a different perspective.

**Response:** *The reservations about the use of the often misunderstood term 'affordable housing', are appreciated, but this is, perhaps unfortunately, the term that is used in national and local planning. The estimation of the numbers and types of affordable housing to be provided are covered in appendix 7.1 (now within appendix A). A clear target for the delivery of at least 80 affordable units during the Neighbourhood Plan is included as a policy for the purposes of monitoring. The minority view that affordable housing lowers the tone of an area is not accepted. Lewes D.C. advice that the Neighbourhood Plan should specify an interim policy on affordable housing in case the adoption of the District Core Strategy is delayed has been accepted. An interim policy, based on PSCS policy CP1, has therefore been incorporated into policy 7.2.*

## **7.3 Housing for families with a local connection**

Three respondents including CPRE Sussex and the North Ringmer Residents Group supported the provision of such housing for local people [nos. 54, 77 & 85]. A developer [no.63] objected to this policy on the grounds that discrimination in favour of local families had no precedent in planning policy and was fundamentally flawed. Two other developers [nos.74 & 76] were willing to include housing in this category within their developments, in one case in addition to the standard type of affordable housing. Lewes D.C. [no.87] commented that this policy was intriguing and pushed the edges of planning policy, but that the concept would need to be finalised before the Plan was in place. **Response:** *This policy is developed from the well-established exception site policy, supported by NPPF para.54, which does indeed discriminate in favour of local people in rural communities. Such policies can apply to new greenfield developments outside planning boundaries. Housing allocation policies in Lewes District and many other public authorities also discriminate in favour of social housing tenants with a village connection. The comment from Lewes D.C. is accepted and will be met. No changes are proposed.*

## **7.4 Distribution of new housing within Ringmer parish**

This policy was supported by the North Ringmer Residents Group [no.85] and by a developer [no.74]. A District councillor [no.30] supported this policy only on the basis that a large proportion of the countryside housing was on sustainably located exception sites close to the village. Two other developers [nos.63 & 76] and a resident [no.67] opposed the policy. One developer [no.63] argued that the policy should be deleted because it was dependent on policy 7.1, to which the developer also objected. The second developer [no.76] objected that development in the countryside would not normally be considered as sustainable, nor would it contribute to the provision of affordable housing or infrastructure. Very small sites, such as many of the countryside sites, were not normally included in allocations. The (Broyleside) resident [no.67] argued that a higher proportion of housing should be located in or around Ringmer village, because of its relative

sustainability. Lewes D.C. [no.87] commented that this was a statement rather than a policy, and suggested that it was included in the background text. They also questioned the inclusion of countryside housing within the total in their comments to policies 7.8-7.11. **Response:** *This policy was tested in a previous round of community engagement, and strongly supported by residents. The relative proportions planned for delivery in and around the 'rural service centre' and the 'local village' in Ringmer parish are also broadly in line with those recommended in the proposed submission Core Strategy [see appendix 7.1 (now included within appendix A)]. The majority of new housing in the countryside will be delivered either on exception sites adjoining the existing settlements or through the conversion of existing buildings, a sustainable approach supported by NPPF para.55 and encouraged by proposals in the subsequent DCLG consultation 'Greater Flexibilities for Change of Use' (2013). The countryside housing will make a good contribution to the delivery of affordable housing overall, because a third of it represents exception site units, which will be 100% affordable housing. The policy is indeed dependent upon policy 7.1, but policy 7.1 is retained. The reason that this is included as a separate policy, when specific sites for new housing are allocated in policies 7.9-7.11, is for the purposes of monitoring. No changes are proposed.*

### **7.5 Priorities in selecting residential development sites**

This policy was supported by the North Ringmer residents Group [no.85] and Lewes D.C. [no.87] considered it to be workable. A resident [no.33] opposed all new greenfield development and two other residents [nos.29 & 31] did not agree that the development of greenfield sites in the countryside was any less acceptable than on greenfield sites adjoining planning boundaries. A District councillor [no.30] thought that exception sites should be located adjacent to village planning boundaries. Another resident [no.67] considered policy 7.5 fundamentally flawed in that it would encourage development on public open spaces, employment sites and environmentally sensitive areas. A developer [no.63] considered that this policy should be deleted, as dependent on policy 7.1, which should also be deleted, and also argued that release of greenfield sites should have a higher priority than redevelopment of existing buildings in the countryside. **Response:** *This policy is not considered dependent on policy 7.1, which is in any case not deleted. This policy is developed from policies in the 2003 Local Plan, and is in line with proposals in the proposed Core Strategy and those in NPPF paras.17, 55, 89 & 111. The policy does not distinguish in priority between the first four bullet points, as all such sites that are available will be needed. The argument that greenfield development should have a higher priority than re-use of existing buildings in the countryside is considered incompatible with the NPPF. Sites in categories covered by bullet points 1-4 are to have priority over those in bullet point 5, while sites in the final bullet point will be developed only in exceptional circumstances. NPPF para.55 recommends the avoidance of new isolated homes in the countryside except under special circumstances, and it is these special circumstances that are reflected in this policy. Unfortunately the new residential development required under policies 7.1-7.3 cannot all be accommodated on sites within planning boundaries or by the re-use of previously developed sites, so some greenfield development will be required to meet the target set in policy 7.1. The District councillor is correct that suitable exception sites will normally be located immediately adjacent to planning boundaries, but there may be acceptable exceptions, given that some Ringmer properties on the edge of the settlements are excluded from the planning boundaries. The sites within planning boundaries of concern in response no.67 are protected by other policies within this Neighbourhood Plan [e.g. policies 5.10, 6.1, 8.2 & 8.9]. No changes are proposed.*

### **7.6 Conversion of redundant agricultural buildings to residential use**

This policy was supported by the North Ringmer Resident's Group [no.85] and opposed by two developers and a resident. One developer [no.63] considered that this policy should be deleted, as dependent on policy 7.1, which should also be deleted. The other developer [no.76] considered that there was insufficient evidence that the barn conversions proposed in policies 7.9-7.11 met the criteria included in this policy. The resident [no.67] pointed out that this policy might become inoperable if proposed changes in permitted development rights are brought into effect. Lewes D.C. [no.87] responded that this policy was likely to be superseded by changes to permitted development rights, and that the terms 'high quality' and 'useful remaining life' needed to be clarified. **Response:** *This policy is not considered dependent on policy 7.1,*

which is in any case not deleted. The properties concerned have all been assessed as able to meet the criteria proposed in this policy, but it is accepted that evidence should be included in appendix 7.3 (now appendix F) to establish this. It is correct that this issue was subject to a 2013 DCLG consultation 'Greater Flexibilities for Change of Use' (2013), considering the introduction of more liberal policies in this respect. This has since resulted in the introduction in March 2014 of new national regulations governing permitted development of redundant agricultural buildings for residential use in areas outside National Parks, subject to conditions (prior approval). This policy has been revised in the light of these new national regulations and the wording has been amended to meet a point made by Lewes D.C.

### **7.7 Scale of new residential developments**

This policy was supported by 4 respondents including the North Ringmer Residents Group and a developer [nos.1, 79, 85 & 90]. Two other residents expressed support for the general principle, but one [no.25] considered that a single larger site of up to 100 would be acceptable, while the other [no.26] expressed concern about how the policy could be applied to the larger sites, and suggested changes to its wording. One developer promoting a large site [no.63] considered that this policy should be deleted, as dependent on policy 7.1, which should also be deleted. Another developer [no.76] preferred the comprehensive development of a large site that they controlled, subdivided in the Neighbourhood Plan, arguing that this could be achieved without damage to Ringmer's 'village feel'. Lewes D.C. [no.87] noted that the examination of the Tattenhall (Cheshire) Neighbourhood Plan had approved a similar policy to that proposed here, but commented that the last sentence of the policy could be difficult to enforce. **Response:** *This policy (with a maximum proposed development site of 20, since increased to 30) was tested in a previous round of community engagement, and strongly supported by residents. The policy is not considered dependent on policy 7.1, which is in any case not deleted, and is very similar to a policy included in the Tattenhall (Cheshire) Neighbourhood Plan, which has now been adopted after a judicial review in which the compatibility of this policy with national planning regulations was confirmed. The point made by resident no.26 is a fair one. It is envisaged that the application of this policy to any allocated sites capable of delivering more than 30 units would be controlled at the planning application stage, and a minor change to the wording has been made to clarify this.*

### **7.8 Phasing of new residential development to 2030**

This policy was supported by a resident [no.1] and by the North Ringmer Residents Group [no.85], who proposed a change in wording, and a reduction in the number of new units to be included in phase 1. One resident [no.33] considered that the policy should be more firmly worded to ensure steady development of new properties. Another resident [no.67] noted that developers were confident that more housing could be accommodated in the early years of the Plan. A District councillor [no.30] supported the proposal that phase 2 development should be deferred until the capacity of the section of the A26 between Earwig Corner & Southerham roundabout was improved.

A developer [no.63] considered that this policy should be deleted, as dependent on policy 7.1, which should also be deleted, and also that there was no justification for the inclusion in the plan of arbitrary phasing, which was not supported in the NPPF, and that timing of delivery with respect to infrastructure provision could be dealt with in another way. Another developer [no.76] proposed that the phasing should be revised in a way that they thought would be better aligned with proposals in the proposed Core Strategy, and which would also have the effect of bringing more development forward early in the plan period. Lewes D.C. [no.87] understood the wish to phase development throughout the Neighbourhood Plan, but were concerned that delaying the start of phase 2 until the necessary infrastructure was in place would be unfair to developers, if the delays were beyond their control. **Response:** *This policy was tested in a previous round of community engagement, and strongly supported by residents. The principle of this policy is not considered dependent on policy 7.1, which is in any case not deleted. It is a very high priority for residents (emphasised by the comments of the North Ringmer Residents Group) that necessary infrastructure must be in place by the time new housing is delivered (see also comments on section 9), and it is considered unreasonable and unfair to existing residents to permit development without, or in advance of, delivery of*



*the necessary supporting infrastructure. NPPF paras. 7 & 177 emphasise the importance of ensuring the coordinated delivery of the infrastructure necessary to support new sustainable development. This Neighbourhood Plan has made its own assessment of the number of new homes that can reasonably be accommodated in Ringmer in advance of the delivery of the key new infrastructure required (see section 9) and is convinced that the view of some developers that a larger number can be accommodated in this initial phase is misplaced. Phasing is considered essential. In addition steady development is far more compatible with the maintenance of 'village feel', a key principle of the Neighbourhood Plan. It is also considered far more likely to meet local needs, as envisaged in the emerging Core Strategy. It is recognised that some developers promoting larger sites have different priorities from local people. It is also appreciated that many residents would wish to see this policy more prescriptive. However, given the number of sites and developers involved, and also infrastructure delivery and market uncertainty, the present policy is considered a reasonable compromise. The relationship between the delivery of new housing and the delivery of key infrastructure is discussed below under sections 7.9-7.10 and in section 9. Overall it is not considered that the proposals in this policy and those made by developer no.76 would have significantly different impacts on the rate of housing delivery after the planned delivery of key infrastructure – both would be likely to result in a relatively high rate of new housing delivery in the second half of the present decade. The wording change proposed by no.85 is not considered necessary to achieve the desired effect. No changes to this policy are proposed.*

**7.9-7.11 (General aspects) Sites selected for development within Phase 1, 2010 to 2015, Phase 2, 2016-2024 and Phase 3, 2025-2030**

A developer [no.63] considered that policies 7.9-7.11, on the basis that they were dependent on policy 7.1, which should also be deleted. Another developer [no.76] objected to the allocation of a large number of specific sites, on the basis that their suitability, availability and/or achievability had not been demonstrated. The same developer objected that very small sites, such as many of the countryside sites, were not normally included in allocations. A District councillor [no.30] queried the drawing of the new planning boundary shown in map 5.2 part way down the Laughton Road house plots. A resident [no.26] and the North Ringmer Residents Group [no.85] suggested that the second phase of development of Bishops Field should be moved from phase 2 to phase 3. The same resident [no.26] also queried the rationale for changing the Ringmer village planning boundary at the start of phase 2. The North Ringmer Residents Group also suggested a change in the wording to policy 7.11. Southern Water requested an addition to policies 7.10 & 7.11 re sewerage. **Response:** *It is accepted that the numerical aspects of these policies are based on policy 7.1, but that policy has been retained. The point made that there was insufficient evidence provided for the suitability, availability and/or achievability of many allocated sites is recognised, and appendix 7.3 (now appendix F) and appendix 7.1 (now within appendix A) have been revised and amended to present the criteria used and the evidence more clearly. It is recognised that large scale District Plans ignore very small sites, on the basis of practicality, but we are aware of no planning regulation that requires this, and the local knowledge that underpins Neighbourhood Plans, coupled with their local scale, makes it practicable to include such sites. The proposed extension of the Broyleside planning boundary to include the long-established houses on the south side of Laughton Road is to rectify a long-standing anomaly. The boundary is drawn to exclude their large gardens to make it clear that extensive garden redevelopment would be inappropriate here. Steering Group has some sympathy with the suggestion that the second development phase for Bishops Field should be transferred from phase 2 to phase 3, but did not feel that, given phase 2 continues over 9 years, this could be justified. The proposed revision of the Ringmer village and Broyleside planning boundaries at the start of phase 2 is indeed to accommodate new residential and employment developments. The planned locations for this new development were selected on a basis of the criteria described in sections 6 & 7 and their appendices, which include all the considerations mentioned in response no.26. The comments made by Southern Water are better addressed under section 9.10 below, and the addition requested here has instead been made to that policy, where it seems more appropriate. Some minor changes to the policies and preambles of policies 7.9-7.11 have been made, and there have*

*been some relatively minor changes to the sites allocated and their phasing to reflect the points made below under specific sites.*

#### **7.9-7.11 (Specific sites)**

##### **Westbourne [now site RES1]**

An owner of one element of this site, who is also an executor for the main part of the site [no.79], requested that the site should now be considered as available for development in phase 1, rather than phase 2. A further 24 respondents, the majority though by no means all neighbouring residents [nos.15, 17, 18, 22, 23, 32, 34, 37, 38, 41, 47, 49, 50, 59, 61, 64, 66, 80, 81, 83, 91, 93, 94 & 103], opposed the development of the site in principle or expressed concerns about the manner in which the development might take place. The most widespread comments were about access, overdevelopment and existing bungalows adjoining part of the site being dominated by new houses. Other concerns were noise (especially during construction), affordable housing, loss of views, character, trees and wildlife, overlooking, drainage issues and the introduction of light pollution. Another resident [no.19] included this amongst a number of garden sites whose development was opposed because of the value of the residential gardens to wildlife. Two residents pointed out, correctly, that the part of the site adjoining the B2192 is within an Area of Established Character. A developer [no.76] opposed the inclusion of this site on the grounds that its availability had not been demonstrated. There were views expressed both for (3) and against (4) the inclusion of a twitten within the new development, connecting the Lewes Road to Sadlers Way. **Response:** *Having received confirmation from those controlling all three elements of the site that their land has now become available (availability previously expected only for phase 2), this site has been moved from phase 2 to phase 1. Development at this location within the Ringmer village planning boundary is considered reasonable in principle – indeed it would be challenging to oppose. The development number proposed (12) is calculated on the basis of 0.75 ha site area at 20/hectare, with a deduction of 3 for the existing houses on the site, which it is expected will be retained. The density is at the lower end of the density range proposed in policy 10.2 to recognise that part of the site is within an Area of Established Character. Road access can be obtained from the B2192 within the 30 mph zone, which already has other similar accesses along its length. It is considered that the twitten proposed would be an asset to both existing and new residents in this part of Ringmer, but it is recognised that this could only be achieved with the consent of adjacent landowners, so it cannot be required. It is intended that all developments of this size should contribute to the affordable housing required, and that this would be a benefit arising from the development. The other concerns of neighbours are covered by saved planning policies from the 2003 Local Plan, other Neighbourhood Plan policies (e.g. 5.10), requirements that have been introduced into the development brief for this site in the light of comments received (see appendix I) and by standard planning conditions.*

##### **Careys Cowshed, Broyle Lane [now RES4]**

A resident [no.67] opposed residential development here on the basis that the site was not redundant and served a useful recreational function. **Response:** *There have been a series of recent planning applications by the current landowners for residential development here. These were refused because the site was then identified in the Local Plan for future provision of community facilities. However, evidence collected for this Neighbourhood Plan has led to the conclusion that the proposed community facilities would not be viable at this location (see appendix 8.1, now included within appendix A). The great majority of the site lies within the current planning boundary. No changes are proposed.*

##### **Parcels of land at Broyle Close [now RES5]**

A resident [no.67] opposed residential development on the basis that it would not be compatible with policies 4.6, 8.2 & 8.9. **Response:** *This site is owned by Lewes D.C., within the planning boundary and could deliver new affordable housing. The detailed design of new development here would need to meet the policies referred to above, but this is considered possible by the landowner. No changes are proposed.*

### **Diplocks Business Park [now site RES13]**

See the points made, and response, to policy 6.1 above

### **Behind Old Forge Pine [now RES14]**

One resident [no.43] supported this allocation but two others [nos.29 & 31] drew attention to key conditions that would be required, and noted that the site was regularly waterlogged. **Response:** *The drainage issues would be covered by policy 9.10 and the other issues mentioned by the development brief for this site in appendix 10.2 (now appendix I). No changes are proposed.*

### **Bishops Field, stages 1 & 2 [now site RES15]**

The planning consultant acting for the developer [no.76] supported an early and comprehensive large scale development of both Bishops Field and Potters Field. Two Broyleside residents [nos.43 & 67] also supported a larger scale development on Bishops Lane than envisaged in the Neighbourhood Plan. Another developer [no.63] opposed the allocation of Bishops Field, considering the site that he was promoting preferable. A local resident [no.26] expressed strong reservations about the proposed phasing of Bishops Field development and, like the North Ringmer Residents Group [no.85], proposed that the development should be divided between phase 2 and phase 3. A District councillor and another resident [nos.83 & 88] suggested reducing the number of units to be developed on Bishops Field, on local access grounds, while a resident [no.46] noted the value to birds and other wildlife of the scrub thicket separated from the rest of the field by the public footpath, and suggested that it should be retained to enhance biodiversity. Several other residents, most but not all living in the area served by Bishops Lane [nos.11, 24, 27, 71, 72, 88 & 99], supported development at Broyle Gate Farm (see below) on the basis that it was a better site for development than Bishops Lane. **Response:** *Steering Group have some sympathy with the proposals that the second phase of development in Bishops Field should be deferred until phase 3. However, as phase 2 is planned to last for 9 years, it is not considered that this can be justified. The recommendation about the retention of the thicket by the ancient hedgerow, for the benefit of birds, is accepted and has been added to the development brief for this site (appendix I).*

### **Lower Lodge Farm [now RES18, also RES12]**

The developer [no.74] promoting the mixed use scheme here, including new employment site provision, some exception site housing, some market housing and land for a new community woodland, confirmed support for the details of the proposal. East Sussex County Council [no.73] noted that a residential proposal here had been considered but discounted in the SHLAA, and that the site was sensitive because of its open nature, but that there was scope to conserve and enhance the local landscape in this area. From a landscape perspective the area had potential for development with a very well-defined new edge to the village created by bold woodland planting. A resident [no.67] and another developer [no.76] also noted that the site was discounted in the SHLAA and considered its location unsustainable and its allocation unjustified. Another resident, responding both for himself and for Ringmer Academy [nos.86 & 96] opposed 'Laughton Road development' as less sustainably located than other options. **Response:** *It is correct that this site was discounted in the SHLAA, though the principal reason given appears in conflict with the Landscape Capacity Study conclusion that this site had a lower landscape quality and a higher capacity to change than any other Ringmer site considered. The site was considered suitable for development as an employment site in the EELA, though considered in this Neighbourhood Plan as much larger than required for that purpose (see appendix C). While the point about location sustainability is recognised, this is considered to be more than counterbalanced by other positive aspects of the overall proposal (see appendix 7.1, now included within appendix A, and appendices F & G). No changes are proposed.*

### **Caburn Field [now site RES26]**

Two residents [nos.19 & 101] supported re-development of the Caburn Field, preferably in an earlier phase than phase 3, but a developer [no.76] opposed inclusion of this site on the grounds that it was not available. **Response:** *This site was allocated (subject to provision elsewhere of replacement sports facilities)*

in the 2003 Local Plan, but achievement of the key condition has proved challenging. Planned development of the site was omitted from the PSCS, as against the plans of the owner, but it was restored as a 'deliverable' site in the PSCSFA and in the 2014 SHLAA. Evidence collected by this Neighbourhood Plan is that this site does not currently meet the key 'deliverability' criteria required for allocations to be included in phases 1 & 2, but is considered as realistically 'developable'. It is recognised that, if an agreement for the provision of alternative sports facilities can be concluded, this site may in fact be developed in phases 1 or 2 rather than phase 3. No change is proposed.

#### **Shopping Precinct [now site RES27]**

A resident [no.19] supported this proposal. **Response:** *No change is proposed.*

#### **Busy Bee Garage [now site RES28]**

See the points made, and response, to policy 6.1 above

#### **East of Chapters, Bishops Lane [now RES31]**

Although this small site within the existing planning boundary (allocated for phase 1) has been rated as suitable, available and achievable in the 2010-2013 SHLAA sites, and no objections have been received to its development, the developer [no.76], who also controls the adjoining Potters Field, responded that they would not wish to develop it on its own, because of access considerations to Potters Field. **Response:** *Potters Field is allocated as a reserve site for phase 3, and no site of this size can be developed prior to the delivery of key infrastructure (see section 9). Allocation of this site has thus been moved from phase 1 to phase 3.*

#### **Orchard adjacent to Vicarage Close [now site RES32]**

East Sussex County Council [no.73] noted that long-established orchard sites could make important contributions to biodiversity. A developer [no.76] opposed the allocation of this site on the grounds that this would be considered C2 rather than C3 accommodation. **Response:** *This is a very recently planted orchard. Occupancy of new accommodation here would carry an age-restriction, but would be otherwise normal C3 apartments sold on long leases. No changes are proposed.*

#### **Potters Field, Bishops Lane [now site RES35]**

The only specific comments on the proposals for Potters Field were those by the planning consultant acting for the developer [no.76], who supported an early and comprehensive large scale development (see under Bishops Field below), two Broyleside residents [nos.43 & 67] who supported a larger scale development on Bishops Lane than envisaged in the Neighbourhood Plan, and a Ringmer village resident [no.95] who specifically opposed development on Potters Field. The developer commented that if only 30 houses were to be built on Potters Field in phase 3, this would give an overall development density below the minimum recommended in policy 10.2. There were a number of comments directed generally to new development on Bishops Lane, which are covered under the Bishops Field, below. **Response:** *If development of up to 30 units on the Potters Field reserve site were to be approved in phase 3 under policy 7.11, only an appropriately-sized part of the site would be allocated for development, with the remainder continuing in, or changed to, other uses. Otherwise see under Bishops Field, below. A minor amendment has been made to appendix 7.3 (now appendix F) to clarify this.*

#### **Garden redevelopment sites**

A resident [no.19] objected to a number of garden developments within the Ringmer village planning boundary, on the grounds that such gardens provide important support for wildlife. **Response:** *The resident's viewpoint that domestic gardens can be an important resource for wildlife is considered correct, but all proposed development must meet the test of policy 5.10. NPPF para.53 permits planning authorities to include in their plans specific policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens when*

*development would cause harm to the local area, but Lewes D.C. has not included such a policy in its proposed Core Strategy. No changes are proposed.*

**Barn conversion at 8 The Holdings** [not allocated in the draft Neighbourhood Plan]

A proposed barn conversion to 2-bed holiday accommodation has recently been approved [application LW/13/0399]. The landowner [no.13] requested that this barn conversion should instead be allocated for residential use. **Response:** *This request was supported, and this property has been included in phase 1 allocations.*

**Broyle Gate Farm** [not allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan]

Residential development at Broyle Gate Farm, with the proposed co-provision of new sports facilities, was supported by a planning agent acting on behalf of the developer [nos.8 & 63], by 20 residents [nos.3, 5, 11, 24, 25, 27, 36, 39, 48, 65, 70, 71, 72, 75, 88, 95, 96, 98, 99 & 100] and the governors of Ringmer Academy [no.86]. Half of the responses supporting this proposal were from addresses served by Bishops Lane, and the majority of this group explicitly considered residential development here as a better option than additional development on Bishops Lane [see comments above on Bishops Field]. Others supported residential development here as a price worth paying to achieve delivery of sports facilities. Some comments received quoted, or were written on, copies of the campaign leaflet circulated during the consultation by the promoters of residential development at Broyle Gate Farm. Against this view, 5 Broyleside residents [nos.43, 52, 58, 92 & 101] explicitly opposed development at Broyle Gate Farm, while an additional 18 respondents, including a District councillor, CPRE Sussex and the South Downs Society [nos.1, 16, 30, 31, 42, 44, 51, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 68, 77, 78, 79 & 102] supported the strategic Green Gap policy, often in strong terms and frequently as the principal element of their response (see comments above on policy 5.4). Residential development at Broyle Gate Farm would be in conflict with this policy, as currently formulated. A further dozen respondents supported the Neighbourhood Plan as a whole, without mentioning this specific aspect. **Response:** *This site was identified under policy RG3 of the 2003 Lewes District Local Plan (a saved policy that is continued in the proposed Submission Core Strategy) as reserved for recreational use. This use would be compatible with policy 5.4. This would be a good location for the additional sports fields required in Ringmer (see section 8.4). Residential development here has been proposed by the landowner and refused as inappropriate at regular intervals over more than 50 years, and would be contrary to policy 5.4. The comments and arguments made in this consultation reflect those made previously, and were already taken into account in the construction of the Neighbourhood Plan. Development at the location proposed by the developer would adjoin the Ringmer Business Centre planning boundary, but no other residential development. It would in other respects represent an isolated housing development in the countryside, contrary to NPPF para.55, and is not considered a logical extension of the village boundary. The housing site is close to Ringmer Community College but further from village shops and services than alternative developments proposed to extend Ringmer village. No changes are proposed.*

**Fingerpost Field & Fingerpost Farm** [not allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan]

A detailed proposal for a development of 40 houses (partly on Fingerpost Field and partly on the field to the west of Elphick Road) coupled to the donation of a substantial area of land for new sports facilities was put forward by the landowner [no.90], with support in principle from Lewes D.C. (the owners of Fingerpost Field). Some of the new housing would intrude into the edge of the strategic 'Green Gap' (see policy 5.4). Four Broyleside residents [nos.43, 68, 92 & 101], in supporting the overall Neighbourhood Plan, made clear their specific opposition to any proposal for new development in the Elphick Road/Fingerpost Field area. See also comments made on policy 5.4. **Response:** *While the new proposal by the landowner has significant attractions that may merit further investigation, the proposal cannot be considered deliverable at the present time. More detailed information about the extent to which the land offered could meet the currently unmet needs for outdoor sports pitches and tennis courts, outdoor space for leisure facilities and accessible semi-natural countryside, without conflicting with other Neighbourhood Plan policies, will be required, and further consultation with residents would be essential. In particular the access arrangements as presently*



*proposed, exclusively from Broyle Lane, are not acceptable, and a successful scheme would need access to the B2192 from nearer to Ringmer village across land not currently within the developer's control. No changes are proposed.*

### **Rangers Farm** [not allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan]

The North Ringmer Residents group and one resident [nos.85 & 96] supported the allocation of Rangers Farm for residential development, noting the proportion of low cost housing offered for delivery here by the landowner. **Response:** *While the strengths of this proposal are recognised, the reasons for preferring the alternative allocation of Lower Lodge Farm are explained in appendix 7.1 & 7.4 (now included within appendix A and appendix G respectively). No changes are proposed.*

### **Other changes to residential site allocations proposed**

Since the regulation 14 consultation we have continued to collect evidence from landowners. Some properties have changed hands, and some new small sites have been put forward. Some minor additions have been made to the sites proposed for development, and some of these have already gained planning permission. The largest new proposal is for the redevelopment of the one acre garden of the house called Sunnymede, Norlington Lane, which immediately adjoins Bishops Field, in the same phase as the development of Bishops Field. **Response:** *Several minor amendments have been made to policies 7.9-7.11 and appendix F.*

## **Section 8 Social and leisure facilities in Ringmer**

There were relatively few comments on this section, other than comments on section 8.4

### **8.1 Community meeting facilities**

East Sussex County Council [no.73] welcomed the proposal to provide additional indoor space for cultural and leisure activities, this policy was supported by the North Ringmer Residents Group [no.85] and Lewes D.C. [no.87] considered this a workable policy. **Response:** *No changes are proposed.*

### **8.2 Ringmer Green & other managed open spaces**

This policy was supported by the North Ringmer Residents Group [no.85] and considered workable by Lewes D.C. [no.87]. **Response:** *No changes are proposed.*

### **8.3 Ringmer community swimming pool**

This policy was supported by the North Ringmer Residents Group [no.85] and considered workable by Lewes D.C. [no.87]. **Response:** *No changes are proposed.*

### **8.4 Sports pitches and tennis courts**

This policy was supported by the North Ringmer Residents Group [no.85] and considered workable by Lewes D.C. [no.87]. East Sussex County Council [no.73] would welcome additional outdoor space for leisure activities. 13 residents [nos.3, 5, 28, 39, 48, 65, 70, 72, 75, 95, 98, 99 & 100] and the Ringmer Academy governors [no.86] emphasised the importance of the provision of such facilities. Several of these respondents enclosed or quoted the campaign leaflet circulated during the consultation by the promoters of residential development at Broyle Gate Farm, offering such facilities if associated with residential development. A planning agent responding on behalf of the promoters of residential development at Broyle Gate Farm [no.63] outlined in detail the sports and recreational facilities offered as part of the proposed development. Another developer [no.90] offered for consideration an alternative location for sporting facilities, as part of a different residential development proposal. A third option is currently being explored by Ringmer F.C. A District councillor [no.83] emphasised the potential benefit of existing and potential new sporting facilities at Ringmer Academy being accessible to the community. A resident [no.33] responded that a new gym was needed to replace that at Ringmer Community College that was formerly

open to the community. **Response:** *Since the consultation was carried out a vacant shop in the Ringmer shopping precinct has been converted into a Toning Lounge and an Adizone, with public access, has been introduced at Ringmer Community College. It is common ground that additional space is needed for sports pitches and other outdoor leisure facilities in Ringmer, and the site proposed in this policy was identified as the most suitable location in the 2003 Local Plan (policy RG3). An alternative proposal was made during the course of the consultation [see section 7.9-7.11 above] and another new proposal has emerged since the consultation closed. While these new proposals deserve further study, neither can be considered deliverable at the present time. No changes are proposed.*

#### **8.5 Outdoor play facilities for children**

This policy was supported by the North Ringmer Residents Group [no.85] and a resident [no.21] and considered workable by Lewes D.C. [no.87]. A developer [no.63] noted that if their proposal was accepted it would include provision of a new equipped play facility. **Response:** *No changes are proposed.*

#### **8.6 Outdoor facilities for young people & adults**

This policy was supported by the North Ringmer Residents Group [no.85] and considered workable by Lewes D.C. [no.87]. East Sussex County Council [no.73] would welcome additional outdoor space for leisure activities. A developer [no.63] noted that if their proposal was accepted it could include facilities for outdoor activities. **Response:** *No changes are proposed.*

#### **8.7 Allotments and the community orchard**

This policy was supported by the North Ringmer Residents Group [no.85] and considered workable by Lewes D.C. [no.87]. **Response:** *No changes are proposed.*

#### **8.8 Tourist attractions in and around Ringmer**

There is no policy 8.8.

#### **8.9 Community assets**

This policy was supported by the North Ringmer Residents Group [no.85]. Lewes D.C. [no.87] supported the intention, but commented that this was an action for the parish council rather than a policy. **Response:** *The advice of the Planning Minister was that a strong Neighbourhood Plan should include a Community Assets register. The wording of the policy has been improved to make its intention clearer, and to meet the comments made by Lewes D.C.*

### **Section 9 Infrastructure requirements**

#### **9.1 The main road network serving Ringmer parish**

East Sussex County Council [no.73] comment that the references to past (failed) attempts to find a solution to the traffic problems created by the inadequate capacity of the section of A26 between Earwig Corner and the Southerham roundabout were quite harsh, and that options for a signalised junction scheme are being undertaken to assess whether the current queues could be alleviated. The policy should also include that new development in Ringmer (along with new development elsewhere) should be expected to contribute via the Community Infrastructure Levy or section 106 agreement to any agreed scheme for improvement. Policy 9.1 was supported as important, or considered too weak, by 6 residents, including two District councillors [nos.1, 29, 30, 31, 79 & 83] and by the South Downs Society [no.78]. The South Downs Society noted the negative impact on minor roads and country lanes of the present unacceptable congestion on the principal road system. Another resident [no.9] considered it ridiculous to build additional housing until infrastructure issues, including the provision of improved roads, preferably dual carriageways, had been addressed. This resident also considered that a by-pass for Ringmer was required. The North Ringmer Residents Group [no.85] were broadly supportive but noted that only the A26 was a main road,

the B2192 and B2124 secondary roads, and suggested a change to the wording of the policy. The point that only the A26 can be considered as a main road was also made by two residents [nos.29 & 31] and East Sussex County Council [no.73]. A developer [no.63] objected to policy 9.1 on the basis that it was the statutory role of the County Council to determine whether development was acceptable in highway terms, and that the views of the parish council should have no role in this. Lewes D.C. [no.87] commented that they recognised traffic issues, including the specific issue of Earwig Corner. However, they felt that deferring development on these grounds would be unreasonable, and that in any case without development funds would not be available for the improvements required. They also did not think that the Neighbourhood Plan could seek to address issues physically outside the Neighbourhood Planning area, as the remainder of the congested area of the A26 was. They recommended an alternative form of wording, with a significantly different effect. **Response:** *The comments about the relative status of the A26, compared to the B2192 and B2124, are accepted as correct, and section 1, the preamble to 9.1 and appendix 9.1 (now included within appendix A) have been amended to make this explicit. The reference to the three roads as together comprising Ringmer's 'main road system' is thus qualified, though for simplicity the term is retained elsewhere in the plan. It is common ground that there are substantial current traffic problems, experienced daily, on the problematic section of the A26 north and east of Lewes; that these problems are expected to grow due to new development at Ringmer and elsewhere (including Lewes and Uckfield); that the present issues have wider impacts on other minor roads within Ringmer (as noted by the South Downs Society) and that without action being taken these impacts will increase unacceptably; and that while there are studies currently underway as to how these problems can be ameliorated, it is not currently clear how, or indeed whether, this can be achieved. Extensive design work in the 1990s did not identify an affordable solution and the purposes and duty of the SDNP, in which all the key junctions are located, and the designation of the Lewes Downs SAC may well impose additional constraints. It is very unlikely that any improvement can be delivered earlier than 2016. This is recognised by Ringmer residents as a substantial daily problem affecting their lives, especially the lives of those who need to travel along these roads at peak hours to access employment or education. A key principle of this Neighbourhood Plan is to seek to reduce Ringmer's contribution to this problem by providing more local employment for local residents, and thus reducing the need to commute, but this is expected to be an on-going process, unlikely to achieve short-term impact. It is agreed that new development in Ringmer that would house new commuters (along with other new development elsewhere having a similar impact) should contribute financially to any scheme developed to ameliorate the current problems. It would be unreasonable to expect the costs of any improvement to be borne by development in Ringmer alone, given that larger scale development elsewhere (especially in Lewes and Uckfield) also exacerbates the problem. However, the first step must be to identify and cost an effective solution, and the attempt to do so in a recent planning application [LW/14/0127] is just as unconvincing as the earlier 1990s attempts. The evidence, in the 1990s and in 2014, appears unambiguous: simple signalisation schemes would exacerbate rather than alleviate the problem. The developer's view that a Neighbourhood Plan should not concern itself with such infrastructure issues is considered a misunderstanding of the principles of Localism, where the views, experiences and local knowledge of local residents are considered a strength and given new weight. While it is recognised that a Neighbourhood Plan can have direct policies only for development within the Neighbourhood Planning Area itself, the sustainability of new development must depend, inter alia, on the availability of key infrastructure, and the validity of this consideration is not dependent on whether the key infrastructure is located within or outside the designated area. The key consideration is not whether traffic emanating from new development within a parish can reach the parish boundary; it is whether it can reach its destination. We are keenly aware from previous rounds of consultation that the alternative wording suggested by Lewes D.C. would not be acceptable to Ringmer residents. Similarly new development will require school places for the children of new residents and a sewage system able to process the additional waste, whether or not the school and the sewage works actually lie within the designated area or in a neighbouring parish. No changes other than the changes to the preamble noted above are proposed.*

## 9.2 The local road network within Ringmer parish

Three residents confirmed the view that Bishops Lane (and North Road and Church Hill/Church Crescent) had little if any capacity to accept additional traffic [nos.24, 26 & 33]. One response [no.26] suggested clarification of the improvements that would be required in this area to accommodate additional traffic from new development. Three residents, including a District councillor [nos.11, 79 & 83], considered it important that the northern section of Bishops Lane retain its present 'country lane' appearance. The District councillor [no.83], three residents [nos.11, 33 & 88] and a developer [no.63] thought this policy incompatible with the allocation of Bishops Field as a development site on the scale proposed. East Sussex County Council [no.73] considered that the housing allocation in Bishops Lane was likely to result in a change to the nature of the routes mentioned, but that they would seek mitigation to prevent rat-running. The North Ringmer Residents Group and two local residents [nos.29, 31 & 85] suggested a change to the wording of the policy and the inclusion of additional pinch points. Lewes D.C. [no.87] commented that this policy would appear difficult to enforce, and it was not clear how it related to the proposed allocation of some new development to Bishops Lane, which appeared particularly vulnerable. Seeking mitigation by improvement of these roads was suggested as an alternative. **Response:** *Most of these comments address a single key issue. This is the conflict between the desire to maintain the attractive country lane appearance of the routes shown in map 9.2, several of which lie within the Ringmer Green conservation area, and the recognition that the areas served by one of these lanes, and accessed via others, include some potential development sites that are, by other planning criteria, relatively sustainable. Normal development procedures would simply widen and enhance, from an engineering viewpoint, the lane most concerned (Bishops Lane) and upgrade the junctions at its northern end to accommodate the extra traffic. This is considered unacceptable by residents (a) because of the unnecessary loss of highly desirable and valued character within the conservation area, (b) because it would result in the loss of a valued wooded verge that serves an important landscape function and also acts as a green corridor and (c) because such an upgraded road would attract "rat-running" commuter traffic seeking to avoid delays at Earwig Corner. The compromise solution proposed in this Neighbourhood Plan has two key features: (i) a level of development on Bishops Lane lower than desired by the developer, albeit higher than considered acceptable by many local residents, and the location of this development mainly near one end of the lane where it will be less likely to produce additional traffic along the length of the lane and along North Road; (ii) the retention of the traffic calming features that have been quite successful in discouraging rat-running by cars and preventing use of the lane by larger through traffic; and (iii) retention of as much as possible of the 'lane-like' appearance of the northern section of Bishops Lane itself, including the green corridor along the southern side of its northern section. The congestion noted at the southern end of Bishops Lane, and by Ringmer Community College in the morning and afternoon, is recognised, but of a different nature. This end of Bishops Lane retains less of its 'country lane' character, and the junctional problems are little different from those experienced at other Ringmer village junctions where local traffic must queue to access the B2192, such as those at Harrisons Lane/B2192 and Springett Avenue/B2192. Redevelopment of the forecourt in front of Old Forge Pine may provide some limited amelioration. Thus no changes to this policy are proposed.*

### **9.3 Provision of cycleways and safe routes for cycles and mobility scooters**

A resident [no.79] considered this policy important and the North Ringmer Residents Group [no.85] supported this policy. The South Downs Society [no.78] welcomed the policies on safe routes for cyclists and mobility scooters. A District councillor [no.83] supported the policy for the Ringmer-Lewes cycleway, but thought the provision of a separate cycleway linking Ringmer village to the Broyleside was a lower priority, as this section of the B2192 was subject to a 30 mph limit. Lewes D.C. [no.87] considered this a clear and laudable policy. **Response:** *No changes are proposed.*

### **9.4 Road safety**

The North Ringmer Residents Group [no.85] supported this policy. East Sussex County Council [no.73] considered the policy very rigid about what road safety requirements were needed and where they should be, and suggested alternative wording. Lewes D.C. [no.87] considered it reasonable for a Neighbourhood

Plan to seek to improve road safety but noted that new development could not be required to remedy existing problems. **Response:** *These are detailed policies but have been identified in conjunction with local residents and the village road safety organisation RADAR. No changes are proposed.*

### 9.5 Public transport

A District councillor [no.83] supported this policy, but considered that more attention should be given to the possibility of Ringmer residents making greater use of Glynde railway station. The South Downs Society [no.78] considered that there should be support for the re-opening of the Lewes-Uckfield railway line. A resident [no.79] supported changes to bus routes so that additional no.29 services should be routed through Ringmer. The North Ringmer Residents Group [no.85] and two residents [nos.29 & 31] stated that there were factual inaccuracies in the text that needed to be corrected and suggested changes to the wording of the text to improve accuracy. East Sussex County Council [no.73] commented that the benefits of diverting a larger number of no.29 buses via Ringmer had to be balanced against increased journey times for long distance passengers, and that in general what was needed was an increase in services. Lewes D.C. [no.87] considered this proposal in the policy laudable, but a community aspiration rather than something that could be controlled by the planning system. They recommended that this was not included as a policy.

**Response:** *The track of the former Lewes-Uckfield railway line does not lie within the Ringmer Neighbourhood Area, and previous (failed) proposals to re-open it did not include re-opening the station at Barcombe Mills, just beyond the Ringmer parish boundary. Glynde is indeed the closest functioning railway station to Ringmer village, but is inaccessible by public transport and has never been used by more than a tiny minority of residents. Encouraging such use is beyond the scope of a Neighbourhood Plan. The information provided about bus services serving Ringmer has been updated to the information available on current bus company websites, but it should be noted that there are current proposals by East Sussex County Council to reduce the frequency of the few buses to Hailsham and Eastbourne from every weekday to two days per week. The benefits of the improved bus services identified as required are relevant to some other policies, including housing allocations, but the Lewes D.C. comment that this is a community aspiration rather than a planning matter is accepted. The aspiration is thus included only in the preamble, and the policy itself has been deleted.*

### 9.6 Primary & nursery education

The North Ringmer Residents Group [no.85] supported this policy. The Primary School head teacher [no.2] and East Sussex County Council [no.73] agreed that the capacity of the school was an important issue, but commented that they believed it would be possible to extend the capacity of the school within its existing site. The County Council also suggested that it would be helpful if the policy included a statement that new development should be expected to contribute to the provision of extra primary school accommodation via the Community Infrastructure Levy or a section 106 agreement. The chair of the Primary School governors [no.97] and a District councillor [no.83] noted that the proposed increase in capacity to a 1.5 class entry by 2015/6 was very largely to meet existing need, and provided evidence that unless the school were expanded to 2-class entry there would still be insufficient capacity to meet the new need created by phase 2 & 3 housing development. Lewes D.C. [no.87] noted that this was a County Council matter but considered that development could not be deferred until educational improvements were in place, as this would be outside the control of the applicant. **Response:** *The points made by the Primary School head teacher and East Sussex County Council are accepted, with the proviso that this is firmly established only for the proposal for extension to 1.5 class entry. We accept their judgement that expansion to 2 class entry will be necessary to accommodate the children from the total level of development envisaged in this Neighbourhood Plan, and also that such expansion can be accommodated within the present site, though we believe that improved arrangements for the delivery to and collection from the site would be required for a 2 class entry school. Any level of development beyond that envisaged in this Neighbourhood Plan would require a new primary school on a new and larger site. The comments made by the chair of governors and the District councillor are considered very important, as it is essential for retaining 'village feel' that all Ringmer children of primary school age who wish to do so should be able to attend the village primary school. It would have a*

*strong adverse impact on both existing and new residents, and on the village community as a whole through additional unsustainable commuting, if new residential development were permitted without the co-provision of the necessary primary school places. This policy and the corresponding section of appendix 9.1 (now included within appendix A), have been revised in the light of this new evidence.*

### **9.7 Secondary & further education and services for young people**

This policy was supported by the North Ringmer residents group [no.85] and considered laudable but a community aspiration rather than a planning policy by Lewes D.C. [no.87]. **Response:** *The comment by Lewes D.C. is accepted, and the policy has been revised to make it clear that it is proposals **for development** necessary to meet this need that will be supported.*

### **9.8 Health service provision**

This policy was supported by the North Ringmer residents group [no.85] and considered a workable policy by Lewes D.C. [no.87]. **Response:** *No changes are proposed.*

### **9.9 Water supply**

A resident [no.9] considered it ridiculous to build additional housing until infrastructure issues, including the provision of adequate water supplies, had been addressed. Another resident [no.35] regretted the withdrawal of a proposal to develop a new reservoir in Ringmer, and queried how the water required by new development would be provided. A District councillor [no.83] commented that any expansion of Barcombe Mills water treatment works should be accompanied by a requirement to encourage more responsible attitudes to water use. The North Ringmer Resident Group [no.85] supported this policy. Lewes D.C. [no.87] considered this policy to be clear. **Response:** *Respondents nos.9, 35 & 83 are correct that Ringmer lies in a water stressed area. However the recently approved South East Water WRMP14 water resources management plan does include new proposals to control use (by compulsory metering) and to further reduce water leakage. The WRMP14 plans to improve the efficiency of the Barcombe Mills water treatment works early in the Neighbourhood Plan period, and also plans to provide it with substantial new water supplies later in, and beyond the end of, the Neighbourhood Plan period using both recycled water and a proposed new reservoir located outside Ringmer parish. It is considered that enhanced water efficiency in new housing and other development should be required at a District rather than a parish level. Relevant proposals are included in the most recent version of the Lewes District Core Strategy. No changes are proposed.*

### **9.10 Drainage & sewerage**

One resident [no.1], strongly supporting this policy, provided first hand accounts of the occasions on which the main sewer serving the southern section of Ringmer village has over-spilled onto farmland near his countryside property. Another resident [no.9] considered it ridiculous to build additional housing until infrastructure issues, including the provision of adequate additional sewerage facilities, had been addressed. A District councillor [no.83] considered this policy to be too weak – the sewage works should be considered to be at maximum capacity already given the evidence of the poor water quality of Glynde Reach. Another resident [no.67] noted that both the developer promoting development on Bishops Lane and the District Council were evidently, from the proposed submission Core Strategy, confident that adequate drainage and sewerage could be provided once the planned sewage works upgrade had been delivered in 2016. Another resident [no.68] drew attention to the recurrent flooding history of a section of the Broyleside which would be exacerbated by any new development nearby on Fingerpost Farm. The North Ringmer Residents Group [no.85] supported the policy, but suggested a minor change to the wording. East Sussex County Council [no.73] suggested that the second part of the policy is over-complicated and could be simplified to cover all forms of flooding, and that the evidence did not explain why the 15 m contour had been selected. Alternative wording was suggested. Southern Water [no.89], as the main sewerage contractor for Ringmer, suggested additions to the wording of policies 7.10 & 7.11 with respect to sewerage connections, an addition to the text of section 9.10 to include their perspective, and an



addition to the text of policy 9.10. Lewes D.C. [no.87] considered the intention behind the first part of policy 9.1 to be reasonable, but did not believe that they could refuse development because of inadequate sewerage capacity, though this could be addressed by conditions. The second part of the policy was considered reasonable, though the reason for specifying the 15m contour was queried. **Response:** *The importance attached by residents to ensuring that the impact of new development on drainage, sewerage and waste water treatment does not adversely affect existing amenity has been repeatedly emphasised to us during the consultations leading up to this Neighbourhood Plan. There are specific concerns about drainage and sewerage in a number of locations, and evidence from experts, residents and local farmers about the poor water quality of Glynde Reach downstream of the Ringmer (Neaves Lane) sewage works. The need to coordinate new development with the provision of additional sewerage capacity emphasised by Southern Water is endorsed. The text and policy have been amended in the light of up-to-date evidence and the comments by Southern Water, and the policy here has been amended to meet the comments made by Southern Water on policies 7.10 & 7.11. These changes also address to at least some extent the concerns expressed by Lewes D.C.*

#### **9.11 Electricity & gas supply**

This policy was supported by the North Ringmer residents group [no.85] and understood by Lewes D.C. [no.87]. **Response:** *No changes are proposed.*

#### **9.12 Waste disposal & recycling**

This policy was supported by the North Ringmer residents group [no.85] and considered laudable but a community aspiration rather than a planning policy by Lewes D.C. [no.87]. **Response:** *The comment by Lewes D.C. is accepted. The policy has been amended to make it clear that it is developments to facilitate the changes sought that will be supported (subject to conditions). The last sentence of the policy has been removed as the action required has already been achieved.*

#### **9.13 Cemeteries**

This policy was supported by the North Ringmer residents group [no.85] and considered a clear and workable policy by Lewes D.C. [no.87]. **Response:** *No changes are proposed.*

#### **9.14 e-communications**

This policy was supported by the North Ringmer residents group [no.85]. Lewes D.C. [no.87] supported the intention but did not consider it a legitimate policy. **Response:** *The comment by Lewes D.C. is accepted. The policy has been amended to make it clear that it is **development** to facilitate the changes sought that will be supported (subject to conditions).*

## **Section 10 Village Design Statement**

### **Key aspects of the Village Design Statement**

- 10.1 Context**
- 10.2 Historical setting**
- 10.3 Landscape setting**
- 10.4 The evolving settlement pattern**
- 10.5 Character areas**

### **Village Design Statement policies**

#### **Policy 10.1 Design, massing and height of buildings**

A resident [no.21] supported avoiding 3-storey houses in village locations. She also supported being open-minded about the appropriateness of modern design. Another resident [no.25] supported the importance of good design, but wondered whether this would be achieved by the locational policies of sections 7.9-

7.11. Lewes D.C. [no.87] considered the principles of this policy fine, but suggested simplifying the wording. **Response:** *The wording has been amended in response to the comment of no.21. The wording has been modified in the light of the suggestions by Lewes D.C.*

#### **Policy 10.2 Making good use of available land**

A resident [no.21] supported the requirement for reasonably-sized gardens, and recommended inclusion of a reference to 'Secured by design' standards. Lewes D.C. [no.87] had no problems with the first two sentences of this policy, thought they suggested alternative wording. They were concerned that the remaining part was contrary to the spirit of NPPF para.59, that it might make the desired development densities difficult to achieve, and that its aims might be covered by policy 10.1. **Response:** *A reference to 'Secured by design' standards has been included in policy 10.4 below. The Lewes D.C. comment re NPPF para.59 is accepted and the policy has been modified accordingly.*

#### **Policy 10.3 Materials**

This policy was welcomed by the South Downs Society [no.78]. A resident [no.21] opposed roof pitches of 45 degrees or more, as these could be overbearing, and were very likely to be converted to additional residential space – she suggested 35 degrees. She also supported being open-minded about the appropriateness of modern materials. Lewes D.C. [no.87] considered this policy compliant, and made some detailed suggestions. **Response:** *The policy has been amended to take into account the comments of respondent no.21 and Lewes D.C.*

#### **Policy 10.4 Internal house space standards**

Lewes D.C. [no.87] understood this policy, but did not believe it could be implemented because of the policy document on which it proposed reliance was obsolete. A resident [no.21] suggested alternative space standards than those specified in the policy. **Response:** *This policy has been revised to meet the objections of Lewes D.C., using a suggestion made by the resident. A reference to 'Secured by design' has been included (see comments under policy 10.2 above). The title of this policy has been changed to 'Housing space standards'.*

#### **Policy 10.5 Pedestrian movement – twittens**

A resident [no.33] supported this policy, while noting that twittens were no substitute for country footpaths. Another resident [no.21] suggested that homezones should be considered within this category. Lewes D.C. [no.87] had no problems with the intention of this policy, but recommended that any comments from the County Council should be given careful consideration [none were made]. **Response:** *Homezones have been included as suggested.*

#### **Policy 10.6 Hard & soft landscaping**

This policy was welcomed by the South Downs Society [no.78]. East Sussex County Council [no.73] commented that in rural areas soft landscaping should use appropriate native species, where possible of local provenance, and that in other areas planting schemes should use species of known value to wildlife. A resident [no.21] commented that it was important for parking provision to be broken up by landscaping. Another resident [no.33] supported the retention of existing hedgerows within new development sites. Lewes D.C. [no.87] had no problems with the intent of this policy but recommended an alternative wording. **Response:** *The suggestions that existing hedgerows should be retained and that appropriate native species should be used where possible have been incorporated. The alternative wording recommended by Lewes D.C. has been accepted. The other comments are supported but are better covered at the planning application stage.*

#### **Policy 10.7 Types of residential development**

A resident [no.21] noted that Lifetime Homes standards applied to houses and apartments as well as bungalows, and should be more widely required. A developer [no.63] objected to this policy on the grounds

that it was not the role of the parish council to dictate to the development industry the mix of houses that it should build. Lewes D.C. [no.87] considered this a workable policy. **Response:** *It is noted that the draft Wealden District Strategic Sites Local Plan published for consultation in Dec 2013 requires that all market and affordable homes should be constructed to Lifetime Homes standards, and similar policies are included in other Sussex Core Strategies. The developer's view is not accepted, as contrary to a key principle of Localism. The text has been amended to reflect the comments of respondent no.21.*

#### **Policy 10.8 Housing for the elderly & disabled**

A developer [no.63] objected to this policy on the grounds that it was not the role of the parish council to dictate to the development industry the mix of houses that it should build. Lewes D.C. [no.87] considered this a workable policy. **Response:** *The developer's view is not accepted, as contrary to a key principle of Localism. A minor change to the wording reflects a change to policy 10.7.*

#### **Policy 10.9 Housing for supported living**

Lewes D.C. [no.87] considered this a workable policy. No other comments were received. **Response:** *No changes are proposed.*

#### **Policy 10.10 Development briefs**

A developer [no.76] noted a typographical error in policy 10.10, as consulted upon. Lewes D.C. [no.87] supported the intention of the policy but suggest a minor alteration to the wording. No other comments were received. **Response:** *The typographical error has been corrected and wording has been changed to the alternative suggested by Lewes D.C.*

#### **Policy 10.11 Roadside advertising in the countryside**

Lewes D.C. [no.87] support the policy, while recognising that many advertisements fall under permitted development. No other comments were received. **Response:** *No changes are proposed.*

## **Appendices**

### **Appendix 2.1 Evidence supporting the Vision for Ringmer in 2030**

No comments were received on appendix 2.1. **Response:** *No changes are proposed. This appendix is now included within appendix A.*

### **Appendix 3.1 Evidence supporting the four Key Principles**

No comments were received on appendix 3.1. **Response:** *No changes are proposed. This appendix is now included within appendix A.*

### **Appendix 4.1 Evidence supporting the general planning policies for Ringmer**

No specific comments were received on appendix 4.1. However, there were comments on policies in section 4 that they were insufficiently supported by evidence. **Response:** *Sections 4.5 & 4.6 of appendix 4.1 have been amended to provide the additional evidence and addition to the evidence base referred to in the responses to comments on these sections above. This appendix is now included within appendix A.*

### **Appendix 5.1 Evidence supporting the policies for Ringmer's countryside and heritage**

East Sussex County Council commented that the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre should be included in the evidence base. **Response:** *Comment accepted and suggested revision made. Several changes have been made to incorporate updated evidence and to reflect comments made on policies in section 5. This appendix is now included within appendix A.*

### **Appendix 5.2 Ringmer heritage buildings meeting English Heritage criteria for listing**

The owner of South Norlington House [no.82] commented that the relevant text and photograph were out of date, given the recent development of Orchard House in the garden. **Response:** *This comment is correct, and the text and photograph have been amended. Appendix 5.2 is now appendix B.*

### **Appendix 6.1 Evidence supporting the policies for employment in Ringmer**

No specific comments were received on appendix 6.1, but additional information is included consequent on the inclusion of primary and nursery education in policy 6.5. **Response:** *Several changes have been made to incorporate updated evidence and to reflect comments made on policies in section 6. This appendix is now included within appendix A.*

### **Appendix 6.2 Major employment sites in Ringmer parish**

A planning agent [no.74] acting on behalf of the relevant landowner confirmed that the site for the proposed extension to EMP7 would be made available. East Sussex County Council [no.73] commented that the open and rural character of the area would not allow further development of sites EMP13 [Gliding Club Field] and (to some extent) EMP14 [Shortgate Industrial Estate] without detracting from local landscape character and visual amenity, while large scale woodland planting, to provide new screening, would be out of character with the open landscape. The dense conifer hedge enclosing the proposed extension to site EMP19 [Goldcliffe Nursery] was considered not to complement the local landscape character, and should be replaced over time with a more natural woodland screen. Development of site EMP23 [Bridge Farm, Barcombe Mills] would need to be low key, with small units, to be in character with the farmyard setting and surrounding countryside. **Response:** *The points made by East Sussex County Council about sites EMP13 & EMP14 are accepted as correct, but we believe are covered by the requirement that all new development at these two sites should be subject to acceptable landscape impact. The point about the conifer screening to the proposed extension to site EMP19 is well made, and a new condition has been included as proposed. Employment site EMP23, Bridge Farm, Barcombe Mills, was incorrectly named in this appendix (though correct on the map), but this error has now been corrected. The point made by the county council is accepted, but the proposal is for alternative use of existing buildings. This appendix is now appendix C.*

### **Appendix 6.3 Assessment of potential new employment sites in Ringmer parish**

No specific comments were received. **Response:** *No changes are proposed, except that this appendix is now appendix D.*

### **Appendix 7.1 Evidence supporting the policies for residential development in Ringmer**

No specific comments were received on this appendix, but see the comments on policy 7.1. **Response:** *A number of changes have been made to incorporate updated evidence and to reflect comments made on policies in section 7. The first section of this appendix has been amended to provide a robust justification of the new housing number proposed; the second section to provide the evidence on which the new affordable housing policy is based. This appendix is now included within appendix A.*

### **Appendix 7.2 A new category of affordable housing for Ringmer**

No specific comments were received on this appendix, except one from a developer [no.63] addressed to the principle of the policy rather than the detail included in this appendix, but see comments on policy 7.3. **Response:** *No changes are proposed, except that this appendix is now appendix E.*

### **Appendix 7.3 Housing sites allocated for development, 2010-2030**

Neighbourhood Planning Officers [nos.6 & 7], two planning agents [nos.8 & 76], East Sussex County Council [no.73] and a resident [no.67] argued that proposed development sites should be more clearly identified by plans, that identification by SHLAA site numbers was insufficiently precise and that additional evidence about site suitability, size and capacity was required. **Response:** *The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by local residents, with other local residents, local businessmen and service providers primarily in mind as the target audience. It is accepted that those unfamiliar with Ringmer may have found detailed*

aspects of the plan, such as the complete list of development sites proposed, inadequately described. Appendix 7.3 has been modified to include additional information and plans as suggested. This appendix is now appendix F.

#### **Appendix 7.4 Assessment of Ringmer sites in the 2011 & 2012 Lewes District SHLAA**

No comments were received on this appendix. **Response:** *No changes are proposed. This appendix is now appendix G.*

#### **Appendix 8.1 Evidence supporting the policies for social and leisure facilities in Ringmer**

No specific comments were received on this appendix. However, proposals received from two developers [nos.63 & 90] should be recorded in the evidence base. **Response:** *Section 8.4 of this appendix has been revised to include the new evidence. This appendix is now included within appendix A.*

#### **Appendix 8.2 Register of community assets in Ringmer parish**

No comments were received on this appendix. **Response:** *No changes proposed. This appendix is now appendix H.*

#### **Appendix 9.1 Evidence supporting the policies for infrastructure requirements**

East Sussex County Council [no.73] commented that there was insufficient evidence about such issues as accident statistics or traffic flows to support the statements made. Southern Water [no.89] suggested several changes to the wording and meaning of section 8.10. Significant new evidence has been received about future demands and future provision of primary and nursery school places. **Response:** *Several changes have been made to incorporate updated evidence and to reflect comments made on policies in section 9. Section 9.10 has been revised to include the changes proposed by Southern Water. This appendix is now included within appendix A.*

#### **Appendix 10.1 Evidence supporting the Village Design Statement**

No specific comments were received on this appendix. However, some responses to the policies in section 10 identified some additional issues and some additional documents for inclusion in the evidence base. **Response:** *The text and evidence base have been updated in the light of comments and suggestions made. This appendix is now included within appendix A.*

#### **Appendix 10.2 Development briefs for allocated sites**

A number of comments made about specific development sites [sections 6 & 7] are best met by amendments to the development briefs for these sites. **Response:** *The following development briefs have been amended: Westbourne; Behind Old Forge Pine; Bishops Field, Goldcliff Nurseries. New development briefs have been added for: Diplocks Business Park redevelopment; Busy Bee redevelopment. This appendix is now appendix I.*